

	<b>Policy Title:</b>	Successor Policy
	<b>Approved by:</b>	LFCDG Board of Directors
	<b>Approval Date:</b>	October 3, 2024
	<b>Effective Date:</b>	October 3, 2024
	<b>Policy Owner:</b>	Client Services

## Purpose

The purpose of this successor policy is to outline the criteria and process for existing Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides (LFCDG) clients seeking to apply for a subsequent Dog Guide. The successor program aims to ensure a smooth transition for applicants who have benefited from an assistance Dog Guide and need a successor dog. Having had a previous Dog Guide in no way guarantees subsequent acceptance into the program.

## Eligibility Criteria for Successor Status

### Previous Dog Guide Recipient:

- Applicants must have previously received and successfully worked with and cared for a Dog Guide from LFCDG. If the gap between having your prior Dog Guide and reapplying is more than 24 months, eligibility will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- The applicant's previous Dog Guide must be retired, no longer able to perform its duties, or a plan to retire the dog within the next 18 months (about 1 and a half years) must be shared with LFCDG.
- If an applicant requests to transfer to a different program, their eligibility for successor client status will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

### Demonstrated Ability to Care for a Dog:

- Applicants must have demonstrated the ability to provide proper care, attention, and a suitable environment for a successor dog.
- Prior Dog Guide removal due to neglect, abuse, or improper care would make an individual ineligible for reapplication.

### In Good Standing:

- Applicants must be in good standing with LFCDG, including:
  - Having maintained consistent, regular and positive communication with staff;
  - Having submitted annual vet records for prior Dog Guide;
  - Having submitted regular weight reports for prior Dog Guide.

- Having maintained the training and skills of the Dog Guide and utilizing them for their intended purpose.
- Applicants must have no prior conviction of cruelty, abuse, or neglect of animals or humans, crimes against humanity, or violence against animals or humans.

## **Application Process**

### Verification of Eligibility:

- LFCDG will verify the applicant's eligibility according to program requirements at the time of reapplication based on the information provided.
- The applicant will also be granted successor status if they meet the successor eligibility criteria. Successor applicants will be given priority status on our program waitlists.
- At any point in the application process, your application for a Dog Guide may be denied. You also have the option to withdraw from the application process at any time.

### Submission of Application:

- Applicants must complete and submit the successor application form, which includes personal information, details about their previous assistance dog guide, and reasons for needing a successor.

### Assessment:

- Shortlisted applicants will undergo an assessment process to evaluate their current needs, lifestyle, and ability to benefit from a successor dog.

### Home Visit:

- A representative from LFCDG will conduct a home visit to assess the living environment and ensure it is suitable for a successor dog.

## **Successor Dog Placement**

### Matching Process:

- LFCDG will use information gathered during the assessment to match the applicant with a suitable successor dog based on the individual's needs, lifestyle, and preferences.

### Team Training:

- The applicant will undergo a complete team training class with the new successor dog to establish a strong bond and ensure effective communication and collaboration.

#### Follow-Up Support:

- LFCDG will provide ongoing support to the applicant, including follow-up visits, training reinforcement, and assistance in addressing any challenges that may arise.

### **Responsibilities of Successor Dog Recipient**

#### Healthcare:

- Ensure regular veterinary check-ups and necessary medical care for the successor dog as outlined by LFCDG.

#### Training Maintenance:

- Commit to maintaining the training and skills of the successor dog through regular practice and reinforcement as directed by an Instructor.

#### Communication with Organization:

- Maintain open communication with LFCDG, reporting any changes in the dog's health, behavior, or the recipient's needs.

#### Retirement Planning:

- Collaborate with LFCDG to plan for the successor dog's retirement when the time comes.

### **Confidentiality**

All information provided by the applicant will be treated with utmost confidentiality, adhering to privacy and data protection regulations.

### **Policy Review**

This policy will be periodically reviewed and revised to ensure its relevance and effectiveness in meeting the needs of LFCDG successor applicants.