



Thank you for your interest in raising a puppy for South African Guide-Dog Association for the Blind (GDA)

Puppy Raisers (PR) are crucial to the training, wellbeing and successful outcome of our pups for the first 12 to 18 months of their lives

Basic requirements:

- Be 18 years and older
- Love dogs
- Have a calm and patient temperament
- Be physically fit and capable
- Have flexible hours
- Have own transport and drivers' license
- Be able to commit for up to 18 months
- Be available to attend weekly Training sessions on weekdays for a 21-week period during office hours
- Attend monthly to bi-monthly outings with pup and a group of Puppy Raisers during office hours on weekdays
- Allow the Puppy Raising Supervisors to do regular assessments and Training visits at your home during office hours on weekdays
- Take pup out at different ages according to GDA protocol to positively and sufficiently expose it to the environment as well as to unusual sights and sounds
- Be willing to attend Events with pup on behalf of Guide Dogs
- Young pups cannot tolerate long trips
- Have a private garden with enough space for pup to run and play
- Have puppy living and sleeping indoors with the family
- Not leave puppy alone at home with the domestic worker or other animals until old enough
- Always have pup with you age dependant: during month 1-2, 30-40 min, building up to 3-4 hours at a year
- Adhere to your Municipal bylaws regarding the number of dogs and cats in the home
- If you have a pool; preferably fenced in, if not fenced in the Puppy Raiser must be willing to supervise puppy around the pool at any time to prevent a drowning accident.
- If you have a trampoline: it must be either raised off the ground, fenced in or if it is sunken into the ground all the holes must be closed
- Willing to learn basics of training based on positive reinforcement
- Willing to cooperate with the Puppy Raiser Supervisors regarding all problems arising
- Be an ambassador for GDA

We breed our own puppies from approved lines in our Breeding Centre (Puppy Block) at 126 Wroxham Road, Paulshof.

They remain with mom in the centre doing extensive Socialisation Training from day 3 to 49 which is when they go to their new Puppy Raiser's homes.

Johannesburg	T +27(0)11 705 3512	126 Wroxham Road, Paulshof, 2191
Cape Town	T +27(0)21 674 7395	89 Belvedere Road, Claremont, 7740
Durban	T +27(0)82 875 6244	54 St. Andrews Drive, Durban North, 4051

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When pups are 5 weeks old, an Induction is held for all potential Puppy Raisers at the premises to introduce you to the requirements for raising a Guide / Service or Autism Support puppy. After this an email is sent containing the Puppy Raising Manual for you to read through before you commit yourself and collect a puppy. It is imperative you familiarise yourself with the protocols and information laid out before receiving a pup. A detailed induction session will be held before you collect your puppy to get any last questions and information shared before puppy is collected. This session is approximately 2 hours so please make sure to have time available for us to go through crucial information of the Puppy Raising Program.

When you arrive to collect the pup at 7 weeks you will go through a detailed introduction session of approximately 1½ hours. You will need to bring a person with to hold the pup on the drive home as although they have been introduced to car rides prior, these have been short sessions and longer drives can have negative connotations for the pup if it is not soothed throughout the trip and held correctly.

Puppies are highly active, mobile creatures therefore require a person with a lot of energy to keep a close eye on them 24/7 as they don't have hands and fingers with which to explore the environment, therefore have to use their mouths and will very quickly bite / chew electrical cables, furniture, clothing, etc.

Read up and implement how to "Puppy Proof your House AND Garden" **BEFORE** collecting your pup.

You may need to remove toxic plants from your garden or at least fence them in to avoid a chewing pup from ingesting it as pups explore with their mouths. Make sure you have a wall height of 1.8m on perimeter towards any street side due to dog that can jump walls when they are older and fully grown.

It is preferable for the Puppy Raiser to have pet dogs and cats that are highly sociable and willing to accept a pup mouthing and climbing on and over them. Your own pets must be house trained, fully vaccinated, dewormed within the last 3 months and have had Tick and Flea control applications up to date. We require Veterinary proof of this. We only accept veterinarian approved Deworming and parasite control.

GDA is an internationally recognised Association who by law are required to respect municipal bylaws; in light of this we are, by necessity, required to be aware of not creating over-population within personal homes. Because of this we may not place one of our dogs in a home with more animals than stated by different Municipalities.

Your pets must be sterilised as our females are only sterilised after 12 months, the males are sterilised from 7 months

The females are likely to come into season from 6 months onwards; they are to be brought into the kennels at the first sign of season for safe keeping. Seasons can last between 15 to 28 days and in some cases even longer, in young dogs it is common to have irregular heat cycles.



Your PRS will arrange “kennel time” with you before this to get the pup acclimatised to being in kennels; this is done in time increments.

Your PRS will also discuss doing “alone time” in the home with your pup to avoid separation anxiety.

Crate training is a great positive way of giving the pup a “safe” place to go when it needs peace and quiet, your PRS would instruct you on how to go about training this as no pup may ever simply be shut into a crate or room without having been correctly introduced to it.

The Puppy Raising Supervisors holds “Open Days” which is to be attended so the pup can be assessed by them and the Trainers; it is a great opportunity to meet the Trainers who will be training your pup later during formal training and for you to see how your pup reacts to different stimulus

The pups and Puppy Raiser are tested throughout the Program in an effort to determine their progress and establish any concerning behaviours which require intensive follow up training requiring more sessions

GDA covers the financial aspects of:

Veterinary costs – our partner approved Veterinary Hospitals are -

- Bryanston Veterinary Hospital (BVH) (Permission given by Supervisor or Emergency Line prior to visit)
- Valley Farm Veterinary Hospital (VF) (Permission given by Supervisor or Emergency Line prior to visit)
- Vaccinations
- Deworming
- Tick and Flea monthly treatment
- Bob Martin pellets which is sponsored by Martin & Martin
- Collar and lead
- GDA tag
- Puppy jacket

You cover the financial aspects of:

- Toys and Chew toys (check suitability / safety with the PRS before purchasing) (No plastic)
- Training treats (puppy will use Bob Martin pellets initially and change to a “higher value treat” as advised by the PRS)
- Bedding (keep it simple, wicker is not advisable)
- A stainless-steel water bowl and food bowl (No plastic)
- A brush (ask the PRS to show you the correct brush)
- Travel

The pups are commonly called in for “Intake” where they begin their formal training around 16 months of age (it could be earlier or later) for a period of approximately 20 weeks; this means that you would bring your pup in on a Monday and collect on a Friday as in “weekend boarding” situation. You will meet the Trainer your pup has been allocated to for an interview at GDA Your pup may be chosen as a brood after 12 months and her training will be discontinued or she may have one or two litters and return to training.



We are always looking for Puppy Raisers and would like to welcome you into the South African Guide-Dogs Association for the Blind's fold.

Please email us if you are interested; we will send you an application form.

Please ensure we have your phone number for us to call you and give you more insight as to the requirements

We first do a phone interview, if the result is positive; we will meet you / Family to do a home check, only once these have both been approved will we contact you to become a valued Puppy Raiser.

We look forward to hearing from you

Kind regards

Puppy Raising Team

Abbreviations:

GDA South African Guide-Dog Association for the Blind

PR Puppy Raiser

PRS Puppy Raising Supervisor