

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The South African Guide-Dogs Association invites South Africans to Wear Their Shades for a Cause this October

The South African Guide-Dogs Association for the Blind is proud to announce the return of its annual Shades Day campaign, taking place nationwide on Friday, 16 October 2026, in celebration of World Sight Month.

Now firmly established as one of the Association's signature awareness and fundraising campaigns, Wear Your Shades Day encourages South Africans to put on their favourite pair of sunglasses, purchase a R20 campaign sticker, and show their support for people living with visual impairments.

More than simply wearing sunglasses, the campaign is a reminder that something as small as an R20 sticker can help change someone's life forever.

Every year, the South African Guide-Dogs Association for the Blind transforms the lives of approximately 400 South Africans through its Assistance Dogs (Guide Dogs, Service Dogs and Autism Support Dogs), as well as Orientation and Mobility training, where individuals with visual impairments learn essential daily living skills and white cane techniques, empowering them to live lives of freedom, confidence and independence.

"Wear Your Shades Day is an opportunity for every South African to become part of someone else's journey to independence. Every sticker purchased helps us continue providing life-changing services to people with visual impairments and other disabilities—at no cost to our beneficiaries," says Pieter van Niekerk, Head of PR for the South African Guide-Dogs Association and a Guide Dog owner himself.

The campaign also highlights the importance of protecting eye health.

According to the World Health Organization, at least 2.2 billion people worldwide live with near or distance vision impairment, with at least one billion of these cases being preventable or yet to be addressed through access to eye care and preventative measures such as protecting eyes from harmful UV exposure.

Getting involved is simple:

- **STEP 1**
Buy a R20 Shades Day sticker
 - Purchase a digital sticker online via the South African Guide-Dogs Association website.
 - Contact the Johannesburg or Cape Town offices to order bulk physical stickers.
 - Purchase stickers at participating retailers nationwide, including:
 - Petworld
 - Big Blue
 - SPAR stores nationwide
 - PetStorey

- **STEP 2**

Wear your shades on Friday, 16 October 2026 Wear your sunglasses and your campaign sticker with pride to show your support and spark conversations about visual impairment, inclusion and eye health.

- **STEP 3**

Enter the Shades Day Competition

Strike a pose, snap a photo wearing your shades and your Shades Day sticker, then tag @sa_guide_dogs and use #ShadesDay. Whether it's a selfie, a team/group photo, or an adorable snap with your furry best friend, you could win one of three R2 000 vouchers, proudly sponsored by our retail partners.

Prizes will be awarded for the Best Individual Photo, Best Pet Photo, and Best Group Photo.

Every sticker sold helps fund life-changing Assistance Dog and Orientation and Mobility services, empowering people with disabilities to live with greater freedom and independence.

The Association thanks its 2026 partners **SPAR, PetStorey, Pick n Pay, Petworld, Big Blue, Sherbet and DSV** for their support in making the campaign a success.

This October, **wear your shades, wear your sticker and help change a life.**

For more information, to purchase your sticker or make a donation, visit www.guidedog.org.za or email Nicole Barros on NicoleB@guidedog.org.za