

UDC 376

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GUIDE DOGS

The guide dog is a specially trained animal which can help blind and visually impaired people to move outside and avoid obstacles.

The first schools for preparation of such dogs have been created in Germany during World War I for the increase of mobility of veterans who have gone blind as a result of military operations. In 1929 the first school in the USA was created (in Nashville, the State of Tennessee; since 1931 – in Morrystown, New Jersey). In Great Britain similar schools were created in 1931.

In a number of the countries guide dogs have no restriction for presence in such places as places of public catering and transport. In Russian Federation the passage of similar animals in public transport is free.

Guide dog is a unique means of rehabilitation of visually impaired persons. The independence acquired by means of the guide helps blind people to find work, friends, hobbies, to get an education, to cope with daily household problems. People who train such dogs tell a big number of stories about how their "pupils" not only helped blind people, but also saved them from criminals and burglars.

Such breeds as Rottweilers, German shepherds, labrador retrievers, criesenschnauzers, and collies are trained to be guide dogs, with the latter being one of the most wide spread guide dogs because they are specially trained to interact with children – they are friendly, quickly become attached and like to care for the youth. Thanks to its devotion and loyalty a collie always becomes a favorite of the owner. However training of other breeds as guide dogs is possible.

Thanks to unique techniques of training the modern guide dog is able to do a lot of things. They are well adapted for work in the noisy city where it leads its owner in crowded streets, keeping its owner safe from collisions and warning about obstacles. In the course of training, such dogs are trained to lead the person across roads, to find a staircase, the necessary door, a bench. Sometimes before receiving a guide dog the blind person hasn't left his house for years.

Rehabilitation of disabled people by means of dogs also positively influences the emotional condition of blind people. It is important that the dog - a cheerful and active being – helps to overcome the psychological difficulties arising before the people who have lost sight.

The guide dog serves as a link between the blind person and the world of people not visually impaired. Drawing to itself positive attention of people around, it motivates them to belong to the problems of the owner more attentively.