

STATE BOARD OF
GUIDE
DOGS
FOR THE BLIND

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
BOARD OF GUIDE DOGS FOR THE BLIND
2016-2020 STRATEGIC PLAN



DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS — OCTOBER 2015

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It is with great pride that I present to you the 2015 Strategic Plan for the California State Board of Guide Dogs for the Blind. The contents of this plan will help direct the members of the Guide Dog Board and staff as we prioritize resources to address pressing practice issues and regulatory matters over the next four years.

I would like to thank the staff members of the Department of Consumer Affairs' SOLID Training and Planning Solutions, who helped organize, drive, and complete this plan. In particular I would like to recognize Noël Cornelia and Elisa Chohan for their outstanding work.

The Board completed an environmental scan to identify the strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities the Guide Dog Board will face over the next four years. Both staff and Board members participated in analyzing the results of the data collected.

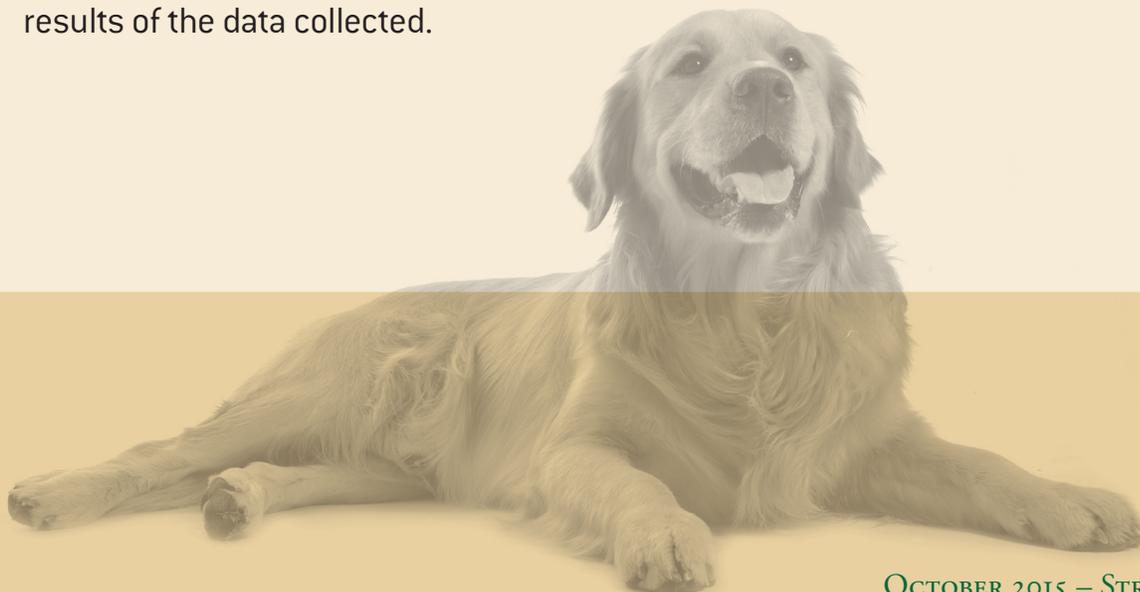
The program areas include:

- Legislation and regulations
- Outreach
- Licensing and examinations
- Enforcement

Beginning with our previous mission statement and by using the input of our various stakeholders, this strategic plan will not only allow us to refine our current strengths to meet our primary mandate of consumer protection, but also prepare us for the challenges ahead.

This strategic plan will help the Board to ensure safe, effective, and efficient guide dog instruction while creating greater mobility and independence for guide dog users.

With warmest regards,
Eric P. Holm, JD
Board President



MISSION STATEMENT

We ensure the quality of the guide dog industry by setting and enforcing standards, and providing outreach and education.

VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is safe and independent travel for every guide dog team.

VALUES

Integrity	Initiative
Consumer Protection	Fairness
Honesty/Trust	Responsibility

STRATEGIC GOAL AREAS

The Board of Guide Dogs for the Blind has selected the following four goal areas on which to focus:

Legislation and Regulations

The Board coordinates with the Legislature and the Governor's Office to ensure that statutes, regulations, policies, and procedures strengthen and support their mandate and mission.

Outreach

The Board informs consumers, licensees, and stakeholders about the practice and regulation of the profession, while ensuring responsive customer service.

Licensing and Examinations

The Board promotes licensing standards to protect consumers and allow reasonable access to the profession.

Enforcement

The Board protects the safety of consumers through the enforcement of the laws and regulations governing the field of guide dogs for the blind.

LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS

The Board ensures that statutes, regulations, policies, and procedures strengthen and support its mandate and mission.

- Research, collect, and report data regarding the potential need for signal and service dog industry regulations in order to better support potential legislation, educational hearings, or related activities with the public. Include similar legislation in other states. Keep records of case studies and individuals who could be invited to give testimony for committee and related legislative educational hearings.
- Determine the details that might be included in legislation that would help prevent attacks on guide dog teams, or use this information to plan an educational hearing for the Legislature in order to inform them on the subject, in order to support future legislation or related activities that would secure the safety of guide dog teams.
- Research possible legislation regarding the prevention of fraudulent guide, signal, and service dogs or pursue an educational hearing for the Legislature regarding how these dogs adversely impact the access rights of guide dog teams and the significant challenges they pose to California's business community.
- Investigate the potential to secure support from the Legislature and/or the Governor's Office to regulate the signal and service dog industry in order to protect guide, signal, and service dog teams.
- Research, collect, and report data regarding the potential need for signal and service dog industry regulations in order to better support potential legislation.
- Upon completion of the above research, determine if we will pursue legislation, educational hearings, and/or expanded Board direction to regulate the signal and service dog industry. Then develop an action plan accordingly.

OUTREACH

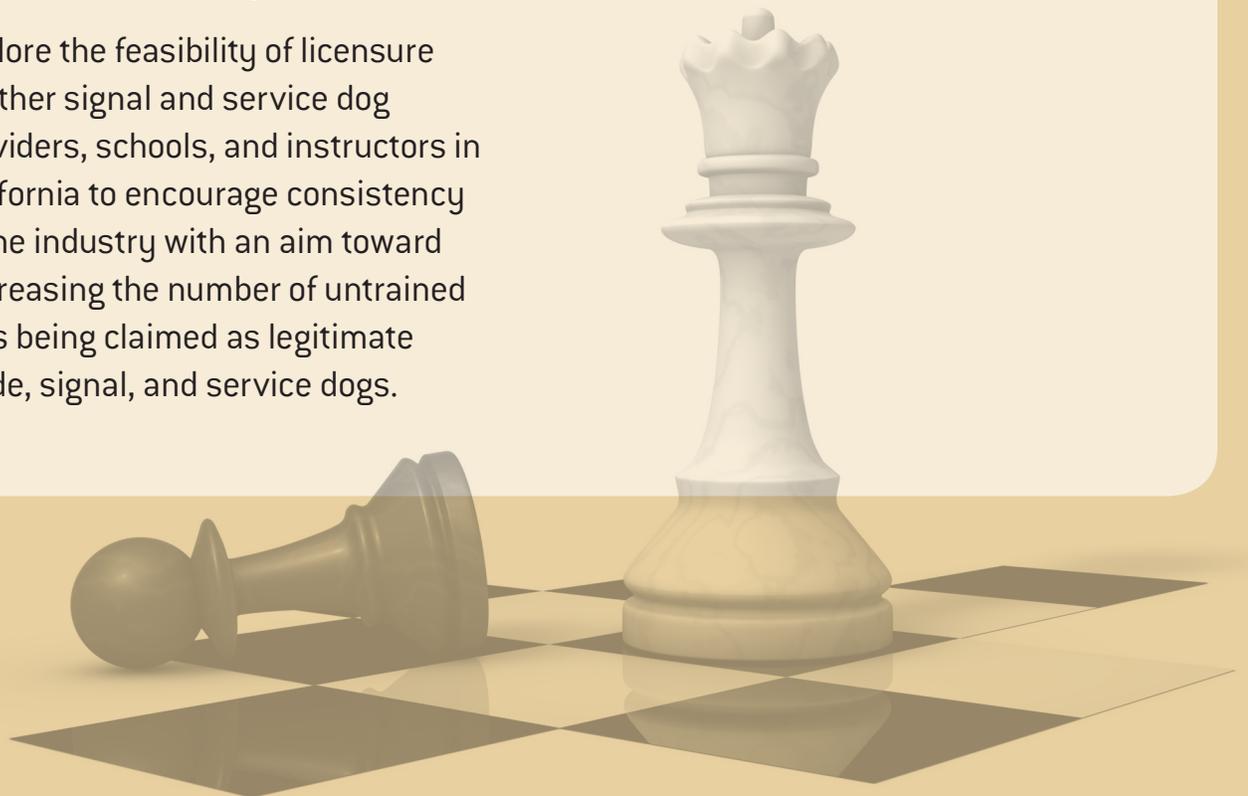
The Board informs consumers, licensees and stakeholders about the practice and regulation of the profession, while ensuring responsive customer service.

- Partner with the Department of Consumer Affairs' Office of Public Affairs to develop an outreach plan that focuses on educating the public on legitimate accessibility issues and how to prevent attacks on guide dogs.
- Consistently utilize the Board's Internet presence and social media channels to disseminate industry- and Board-related information and resources in order to bring positive visibility to the industry and increase public engagement and participation, while educating on the need for State-certified licensing and examination of instruction.

LICENSING AND EXAMINATIONS

The Board promotes licensing standards to protect consumers and allow reasonable access to the profession.

- Explore the feasibility of licensure of other signal and service dog providers, schools, and instructors in California to encourage consistency in the industry with an aim toward decreasing the number of untrained pets being claimed as legitimate guide, signal, and service dogs.



ENFORCEMENT

The Board protects the safety of consumers through the enforcement of the laws and regulations governing the field of guide dogs for the blind.

- Explore updates to the enforcement program and the Board's authority as research and action in other program areas guide future progress.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

To understand the environment in which the Board operates and identify factors that could impact the Board's success, the California Department of Consumer Affairs' SOLID Unit conducted an environmental scan of the internal and external environments by collecting information through the following methods:

- Interviews conducted with all seven members of the Board were completed during June 2015 to assess the strengths, challenges, opportunities, and threats the Board is facing or will face in upcoming years.
- An interview conducted with the Board Executive Officer, completed in May 2015 to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the Board from an internal perspective.

- An online survey sent to 2,000 Board stakeholders in September 2014 to identify the strengths and weaknesses of guide dog schools and instructors from an external perspective. 107 stakeholders completed the survey.

The most significant themes and trends identified from the environmental scan were discussed by the Board during a strategic planning session facilitated by SOLID on July 7, 2015. This information guided the Board in the revision of its mission, vision, and values, while directing the strategic goals and objectives outlined in this 2015 Strategic Plan.



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This strategic plan is based on stakeholder information and discussions facilitated by SOLID for the Board of Guide Dogs for the Blind during the time period of April through June, 2015. Subsequent amendments may have been made after Board adoption of this plan.