



News release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides launches urgent fundraising campaign to save future of the organization

Oakville, ON – [August 21, 2025] – Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides is launching the most urgent fundraising campaign in its history to address a \$20 million shortfall that has paused construction on Canada's largest Dog Guide training school and put the organization's future at risk.

The demand for Dog Guides is growing with one in four Canadians stating that they are living with a disability today, which has increased since 2017*. The new National Training School in Oakville, Ontario, is designed to increase the number of Dog Guides trained and matched by more than 65% each year – reducing wait times for Canadians living with physical, medical, and developmental disabilities. Without urgent support, construction could be halted permanently, jeopardizing the Foundation's long-term stability.

"This is our make-or-break moment," said *Bev Crandell, CEO of Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides.* "We have Canadians waiting for a life-changing companion – a professionally trained Dog Guide who can offer them safety, independence and freedom. But without the funding to complete our new facility, we may be forced to close our doors, and the future of our program and our ability to meet the need for dog guides will be in jeopardy."

The shortfall is the result of several factors:

- A committed piece of financing did not come through in time as expected
- The scope and size of the project expanded to meet the complex needs of a fully accessible, purpose-built facility
- COVID-19 and economic uncertainty drove up construction and material costs

* [Canadian Survey on Disability, 2017-2022](#)



The Foundation is seeking to raise \$20 million by the end of October to complete the project, with \$5 million coming from public donations. The Foundation will try to bridge the remaining gap through a plea to government, major donors, Lions Clubs, and corporate partners.

“Before my Dog Guide, I often felt isolated and out of place. Now, I attend social gatherings with confidence, and his presence helps others understand my hearing impairment. People are more patient and kinder when communicating with me, and my family has peace of mind knowing my Dog Guide will alert me to important sounds, like the fire alarm, I might miss,” says *Jacob, Hearing Dog Guide Recipient.*

“Our dogs are getting ready to work – to guide someone with vision loss safely through their community, to assist Canadian professional agencies like the police and the courts working with vulnerable people who have experienced trauma, and to offer comfort and support to children with autism,” said Crandell. “We are asking Canadians to give what they can, share our story, and help us protect this life-changing program for generations to come.”

Donations can be made at: www.dogguides.com

About Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides

Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides (LFCDG) is a national charity whose mission is to empower Canadians with disabilities to navigate their world with confidence and independence by providing Dog Guides at no cost to them and supporting each pair in their journey together.

To date, LFCDG has matched more than 3,000 Canadians living with a disability to a Dog Guide. Currently, there are close to 1,000 active Dog Guide teams across Canada.

Historically, the foundation has received no government funding for operations, relying on support from service clubs, corporations, foundations and individuals from across the country in order to continue to meet its mission.

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* [Canadian Survey on Disability, 2017-2022](#)