Customers with guide dogs

Tips for the service industry

Everyone in B.C. has a human right to access services like restaurants and cafés without experiencing discrimination.

# A woman with dark toned skin and a hijab sips on a coffee. Her guide dog is laying behind her.Greeting and seating

Say hello! Let the customer know you are there and identify yourself as their server. Ask if they need assistance getting to their table or seating area. Follow their directions.

Always talk to the customer, not their dog!

# A man with medium tone skin and short cropped hair sits in an armchair. He is wearing dark glasses and his cane is leaning against the chair.Menu and ordering

Always interact with the customer directly. Do not ask others at the table about what the customer needs or wants.

Ask if the customer requires assistance with the menu. They may ask you to read the menu or they may have already accessed it online. Start by telling them the sections of the menu (starters, mains, desserts, drinks) and asking which they would like you to read.

# A man and woman enjoy coffee together. The man is wearing dark glasses and the woman is wearing optical glasses.Serving and clearing

Always announce your arrival each time you approach the table and describe what you are doing.

Tell the customer where on the table you are placing any plates, glasses or utensils. If you move something on the table or clear anything, let the customer know.

# An elderly man and woman walk their guide dog together. The man has white hair, dark glasses and a cane.The cheque and paying

Ask your customer if they would like you to read the cheque to them and how you can assist them with the payment process.

If paying by cash, let the customer know what change you are handing back. If placing it on the table, tell them where.

# A man with short curly hair and a mustache is walking with his guide dog. Next to them are symbols of a taxi, fork and knife, and a shopping cart.Did you know?

Customers with disabilities have a right to equal access to services like taxis, stores and restaurants.

However, those with guide dogs often face discrimination when accessing these services.

You have a legal duty not to discriminate against customers.

You cannot refuse service because:

* You don’t like dogs
* You don’t want a dog in your restaurant
* You think dogs are dirty

Refusing to allow a customer with a guide dog into your restaurant could be discrimination, which is illegal in British Columbia. People who use guide dogs have a human right to access services like restaurants.