

# Meeting guide for supervisors

A guide dog resource

## History of this project

B.C.'s Office of the Human Rights Commissioner (BCOHRC) was approached by Blind and visually impaired people who use guide dogs who shared their experiences of discrimination when trying to access everyday services. They told us about frequently being denied access to services like public transit, taxis, stores, restaurants and cafes. They described these experiences as frustrating, dehumanizing and sometimes even dangerous. One of the places they reported being denied service most frequently was when trying to use taxis. They told us that taxi drivers often refuse to let them into the car or drive away when they see the guide dog.

Like all people living in British Columbia, people with disabilities have the right to access services like taxis without experiencing discrimination. This right is protected in B.C.'s [Human Rights Code](#) and includes people with disabilities who use guide dogs and service dogs. Denying a person with a disability who uses a guide dog or service dog access to a service because of their dog is discrimination.

To help raise awareness about this issue, BCOHRC worked with guide dog users and taxi drivers to create resources to help drivers provide excellent, accessible customer service and meet their legal responsibilities under B.C.'s *Human Rights Code*. These resources also explain the human rights of people who use guide dogs and service dogs and help drivers provide discrimination-free service.

To learn more please visit our website: [bchumanrights.ca/guide-dogs](http://bchumanrights.ca/guide-dogs)

## Who is this guide for

This guide is designed to be used by anyone in the taxi industry who supervises and/or trains taxi drivers. This can include owners, managers, supervisors, human resources personnel and/or training personnel in the taxi industry.

## Purpose of this guide

The purpose of this guide is to provide a framework for hosting a meeting with taxi drivers to discuss accessibility, customer service and human rights when serving people with disabilities who use guide dogs and service dogs. This guide can help you to prepare and run a meeting to introduce the BCOHRC resources to your staff and answer any questions that may arise.

## Setting up your meeting

### Option 1

Share resources with staff in advance of the meeting via email and/or in printed format available in common areas like employee lounges, staff rooms, meeting rooms and locker rooms. Invite employees to review the materials and bring their questions to the meeting for discussion.

### Option 2

Introduce the resources at the meeting. Please note that you may need to allocate more time for this option.

## Start the meeting

### Introduce the project

British Columbia's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner (BCOHRC) has created education resources to help educate taxi drivers about their human rights responsibilities. These resources include an infographic designed to be kept in the car with the driver and a poster designed to be posted in common areas at work.

This BCOHRC project started when some community members who are Blind and visually impaired and use guide dogs shared their experiences of discrimination in trying to access taxis. They told us that they often experienced being denied access to taxis because of their guide dog. They told us that that drivers would refuse to let them into the taxi and would sometimes even drive away when they saw the dog. They described these experiences are frustrating, embarrassing, dehumanizing and sometimes dangerous.

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Like all other people living in British Columbia, people with disabilities have the right to access services available to the public. This right is protected in B.C.'s *Human Rights Code*. As service providers, taxi drivers have a legal obligation not to discriminate against people with disabilities.

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BCOHRC worked with people who have disabilities and who use guide dogs *and* drivers to create resources for drivers to help them understand the human rights of people who use guide dogs and service dogs, recognize drivers' legal obligations to provide discrimination-free service and tips to provide excellent and accessible service.

BCOHRC has developed a highly visual, easily accessible infographic designed to be kept in the car and a poster for common areas to help drivers provide accessible service and meet their legal human rights obligations to customers with disabilities.

To learn more please visit our website: [bchumanrights.ca/guide-dogs](http://bchumanrights.ca/guide-dogs)

## Why is this important to you as drivers?

- Under B.C.'s *Human Rights Code*, taxi drivers have a legal duty to accommodate people with disabilities.
- People who use guide dogs and service dogs have disabilities.
- Refusing to allow a person who uses a guide dog or service dog to access the service you are providing to the general public—simply because they use a guide dog or service dog—is discrimination.

## Introduce resources

### Infographic

The infographic is designed to be kept in the car for easy access when needed. Inform staff where it can be kept in their car. Please review the document with staff.

### Posters

Posters cover the same information as the infographic. Inform staff where it will be posted in the workplace.

### Frequently asked questions

The FAQ can be used to answer questions at this meeting and posted for staff reference in a common area. Inform staff where it will be posted in the workplace.