



BOARD OF GUIDE DOGS FOR THE BLIND

*Executive Officer: Manuel Urena
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The Board of Guide Dogs for the Blind has three primary functions. The Board protects the blind guide dog user by licensing instructors and schools to ensure that they possess certain minimum qualifications. The Board also enforces standards of performance and conduct of these licensees as established by law. Finally, the Board polices unlicensed practice.

The Board, authorized by Business and Professions Code section 7200 *et seq.*, consists of seven members, two of whom must be dog users. In carrying out its primary responsibilities, the Board is empowered to adopt and enforce regulations, which are codified in Division 22, Title 16 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR).

The Board currently licenses three guide dog schools and 48 trainers.

MAJOR PROJECTS

LAO Proposes To Eliminate Board. In its *Analysis of the 1993-94 Budget Bill*, one of the recommendations made by the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) for streamlining state government proposed that the legislature eliminate the state's regulatory role in thirteen currently-regulated areas. Particularly relevant to the Board of Guide Dogs for the Blind is LAO's recommendation that the state stop regulating several consumer-related business activities. In determining whether the state should continue to regulate a particular area, LAO recommended that the state consider whether the board or bureau protects the public from a potential health or safety risk that could result in death or serious injury; whether the board or bureau protects the consumer from severe financial harm; and whether there are federal mandates that require the state to regulate certain activities. Based on these criteria, LAO recommended that the state remove its regulatory authority over activities currently regulated by the Board, among other bureaus and agencies. At this writing, LAO's recommendations have not been amended into any pending legislation.

LEGISLATION

AB 1863 (Burton), as amended May 5, would establish a five-year pilot project to provide an arbitration procedure for the resolution of disputes between guide dog

users and guide dog schools relating to the continued physical custody and use of a guide dog. [12:4 CRLR 83] The bill would specify disputes that may be subject to this procedure; these provisions would be repealed on January 1, 1999. [A. W&M]

AB 1419 (Baca). Existing law authorizes the Board of Guide Dogs for the Blind to authorize guide dog schools or instructors employed by those schools to provide home training in the use of guide dogs; existing law also provides that the guide dog user, as a condition of receiving home training, shall have completed a formal in-residence training program within the previous two years from a school licensed to provide guide dog training. As amended May 5, this bill would instead require, as a condition of receiving home training, that the guide dog user have completed a formal in-residence training program from a school licensed by the Board or from a school recognized by another state to provide guide dog training. The bill would provide for a specified waiver of this requirement.

Existing law sets forth requirements for licensing instructors in giving training to blind persons. This bill would require an instructor to provide proof of completion of not less than twenty hours of specified continuing education, as a condition of renewal of an instructor's license.

Existing law prohibits any person from selling, giving, or furnishing any guide dog or seeing-eye dog to a blind person unless specified requirements are met, including the requirement that the dog has been spayed, when appropriate. This bill would instead require that the dog has been neutered.

Existing law provides that it is an unlawful denial of equal access to housing accommodations to refuse to rent or lease to individuals with disabilities, and defines the term "guide dog" for that purpose. This bill would revise the definition of "guide dog."

Existing law makes it an infraction for any person to deny admittance to certain facilities to a blind person on the basis that the person is accompanied by a guide dog. This bill would revise the definition of "guide dog."

Existing law generally regulates cruelty to animals, but does not expressly regulate harmful conduct directed toward guide dogs. This bill would make it a misdemeanor for any person, with no legal justification, to intentionally interfere with the use of a guide dog by harassing, obstructing, or intimidating the guide dog user or his/her guide dog.

Existing law provides that a totally or partially blind person who is carrying a

predominantly white cane or using a guide dog shall have the right-of-way and the driver of any vehicle who fails to yield the right-of-way is guilty of a misdemeanor. This bill would alternatively provide for a fine of not less than \$500 nor more than \$1,000, or both fine and imprisonment, for that offense. [A. W&M]

RECENT MEETINGS

The Board has not conducted a meeting since July 1992. [12:4 CRLR 82]

FUTURE MEETINGS

To be announced.

BUREAU OF HOME FURNISHINGS AND THERMAL INSULATION

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The Bureau of Home Furnishings and Thermal Insulation (BHFTI) is charged with regulating the home furnishings and insulation industries in California. As a division of the state Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA), the Bureau's mandate is to ensure that these industries provide safe, properly labeled products which comply with state standards. Additionally, the Bureau is to protect consumers from fraudulent, misleading, and deceptive trade practices by members of the home furnishings and insulation industries; the Bureau is also responsible for toy safety testing for the state of California. The Bureau is established in Business and Professions Code section 19000 *et seq.*

The Bureau establishes rules regarding furniture and bedding labeling and sanitation. The Bureau enforces the law by conducting extensive laboratory testing of products randomly obtained by Bureau inspectors from retail and wholesale establishments throughout the state. To enforce its regulations, which are codified in Division 3, Title 4 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), the Bureau has access to premises, equipment, materials, and articles of furniture. The Bureau may issue notices of violation, withhold products from sale, and refer cases to the Attorney General or local district attorney's offices for possible civil penalties. The Bureau may also revoke or suspend a licensee's registration for violation of its rules.

MAJOR PROJECTS

BHFTI Chief to Retire. Effective September 1, BHFTI Chief Gordon Damant