

Human Guide Techniques While Practicing Social Distancing

During these unusual times, it is important to protect yourself and others while receiving or providing human guide. Here are some tips:

Strategies/Techniques

Person-to-Person

- Use straight arm to get more distance and grab the wrist of the guide instead of the elbow.
- Use the guide's shoulder or center of guide's back instead of the elbow.

Supplemental Modifications

- Use a cane as a tether; they can be made of several items: a shawl, sweater, jacket, or even belts and ribbons. Consider making or using a "T-bar" to maintain a proper grip.
- A long umbrella can be useful, whatever tool that can lengthen the distance between the guide and visually impaired person.
- A shopping cart can give the proper 6 feet distance.
- The use of a cane or walker while walking with a guide gives protection and information.



Limitations and Considerations

- The guide must practice good verbal description skills.
- The guide must remember basic human guide techniques.
- Tethers can be difficult as they may allow you to get too far away and are not quite so controlled.
- If using a guide dog, avoid others from petting the dog.

These techniques are useful in numerous circumstances. Even the most proficient travelers utilize human guides on occasion to become better acquainted with new areas, to cross unfamiliar streets, or to maneuver around obstacles.

Family and friends use them when shopping, dining out, or participating in other community activities.

Co-workers find these techniques helpful when one of their peers is legally blind.

Healthcare professionals and other caregivers also benefit from knowing these techniques.