

THEMATIC TITLE	LEGAL ISSUES REGARDING THE USE OF GUIDE DOGS FOR A PERSON WITH VISUALLY IMPAIRED
KEYWORDS	GUIDE DOGS/ PEOPLE WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS
STUDENT	RATTANAWALAI SORADET
THEMATIC ADVISOR	DR. SIWAPORN SAOWAKON
LEVEL OF STUDY	MASTER OF LAWS PUBLIC LAW
FACULTY	SCHOOL OF LAW SRIPATUM UNIVERSITY
YEAR	2022

ABSTRACT

This independent study aims to investigate the legal issues regarding the use of guide dogs for a person with visually impaired because the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Act, B.E. 2550 does not clearly provide definitions and types of guide dog and there are no laws assigning the responsible authority to determine the criteria on registration and issuing the permission of guide dog use. This results in the problems both for people with visual impairments who cannot use the guide dog in their real life and general people who do not know how to behave correctly towards guide dog.

The findings revealed that 1) regarding the problems of guide dog definitions, Section 20 (8) of the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Act, B.E. 2550 does not provide definition of guide dog what types of animals it refers to nor clearly specify types of guide animal. This probably leads to the problems of interpretation and causes problems for general people to behave towards the animal. How to behave themselves towards pets and guide animal being on duty to lead people with visual impairments is not the same. Moreover, access to places for these people is different; 2) regarding the problems of guide dog registration, although Section 20 (8) of the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Act, B.E. 2550 specifies the right of people with visual impairment to use guide animal, it does not determine the criteria on registration of guide dog as well as process of examining and practicing in order to obtain the qualification of guide dog. Therefore, it is difficult for people with visual impairments to use guide dog; and 3) regarding to the problems of examining, following up and evaluating guide animal, Section 20 (8)

of the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Act, B.E. 2550 does not determine the requirement to examine, follow up and evaluate guide dog. The guide dog is considered as the dog which takes care of and protects life and body of people with visual impairments; therefore, it is required for the examination, follow-up, and evaluation of guide dog to be conducted regularly in order to check physical health, eye health, etc. needed for guide dog.

Therefore, the research would like to propose the amendments of the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Act, B.E. 2550 regarding to guide dog use consisting of (1) providing definition of guide animal, (2) determining the criteria on registration of guide animal, and (3) determining the criteria on examining, following up and evaluating guide animal.