When do I need a pre-authorization number? When you're expenditure nears the $250 mark, it's time to get pre-authorization. Remember, a vet visit for even something minor can run up a big bill in a hurry if you puppy needs medication, so keep a sharp eye on the bottom line. Also, anytime a vet recommends a procedure beyond routine shots and office calls, pre-authorization should be sought, regardless of whether there is money left in the puppy's account.

Keep track of all vet bills. You, the raiser are in charge of keeping track of the puppy's vet expenditure. Don't count on the vet or Guide Dogs to have accurate information. Request copies of the invoice each time you visit the vet, keep a ledger-- whatever it takes to have an accurate record of your pup's vet expenses.

Get the information about an estimate. Don’t leave it up to the vet to make sure everything was authorized. If your vet is kind enough to call Guide Dogs and get the pre-authorization, you should follow up with the final bill amount to confirm that any extra charges that may differ from the estimate that was authorized, are authorized.

Don’t panic. If you have a vet expense that was more than you thought, call before the bill is submitted for payment so that it can be worked out.

Some items are never reimbursed. Some of these include: health certificates, grooming expenses, and corona vaccines (be sure to remind your vet to omit this shot, since many include it routinely in the mix.)

Emergencies: Emergency care is always authorized. Work with the local vet on what is truly needed, and what can wait until the regular work week, but do not hesitate to have urgent/emergency care done. Make sure to contact GDB immediately after the crisis is stabilized.

Who to Call: Contact Laura Chandler at 800-295-4050 X5545, or email her at lchandler@guidedogs.com to arrange for a pre-authorization number for your vet visit. Also, be sure to keep Carmen in the loop and email our local Puppy Raising Adviser, Barb Deevers at bdeevers@guidedogs.com, so that they can help you navigate the waters and straighten out any problems that may occur. Good communication all around is the key to successful vet reimbursement and healthy puppies!

GDB VET PROTOCOLS

from GDB Puppy Raising Department

 1. Puppy raisers may spend $250 on veterinary care for the puppy that they are raising without approval from Guide Dogs for the Blind. Any time, though, that they are seeking general veterinary care of any nature, they should contact their leader for advice.

 2. Raisers are asked to keep a running calculation of the money that has been spent on the puppy that they are raising, so that they know when the $250 limit has been reached. Please remember that the $250 limit includes all vaccinations, wormings, exams and any other procedures (with the exception of spays and neuters which are otherwise authorized).

 3. Raisers who have exceeded their $250 allotment should consult with their leader for advice on any additional veterinary treatment. Then obtain an authorization code by contacting the authorization specialist:

 Julianne Carpenter

 800-295-4050 x2112,

 jcarpenter@guidedogs.com

 fax number 503-668-2150

 Julianne is very prompt and informative. When she is in the loop there are never any problems! She can authorize many vet procedures on the spot. It is helpful to fax her a copy of the invoice after a visit that she has been involved with. This way, she can correctly enter the amount. When using e-mail, please copy Barb Deevers on your message. (Note: Your vet clinic will need to mail a hard copy of the invoice to GDB for reimbursement, see #7.) Your local vet can continue to consult with the vet department directly, however for simple billing questions, Julianne is a good contact for vet hospitals too.

 Since our puppies ultimately belong to Guide Dogs for the Blind, it is imperative that local vets consult with GDB when treating our puppies. Therefore, do contact Julianne for all procedures that are costly, whether or not reimbursement is at issue, just to be sure it is in the notes. Local vets should continue to contact GDB prior to all procedures (X-rays, blood work, etc.).

 If, for example, a raiser receives pre-authorization for urine analysis, and during the veterinarian appointment the veterinarian discovers an ear infection, raisers are asked to proceed with receiving the necessary medication to treat the ear infection. Directly after the appointment, they must call to have the treatment for this additional problem added to this original pre-authorization.

 4. Guide Dogs will not reimburse the following procedures for puppies: Acupuncture, Holistic medicine, Chiropractic therapy, Non-medical bathing/grooming, Micro-chipping, Vaccine titers, Nail trimming.

 5. In the case of a medical emergency, raisers should seek local veterinary assistance immediately even if pre-authorization is not possible in a timely manner. For example, in the case of a puppy who has ingested poison or has been involved in a car accident, raisers should seek veterinary care immediately and contact their leader and the GDB Veterinary Clinic and as soon as possible.

 6. Raisers who do not seek pre-authorization after reaching their $250 limit (with the exception of emergencies) or who obtain unapproved expenses will not be reimbursed for their costs.

 7. New! Our accounting department now requires that all veterinary invoices be received by hard copy through the mail. Faxed invoices are not accepted. This change in procedure is a result of poor fax transmissions and illegible numbers. Please advise your Veterinary Clinic of this change.