

# QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN CONSIDERING A DOG DAYCARE

The following questions are intended to help you decide on a dog daycare that's right for you and your dog. Because there are so many differing opinions and levels of expertise, we encourage you to visit and observe each option you are considering *before* taking your own dog.

## 1. SCREENING PROCESS

What are the steps in an evaluation?

What are the qualifications of the evaluator?

Do the dogs have to be friendly with strangers?

Do the dogs have to be friendly with children?

What if a dog is collar shy?

## 2. SUPERVISION

How many dogs are allowed in the space?

What is the ratio of people to dogs?

Is there someone with the dogs at all times?

What is the experience of the staff?

Is there training involved? If so, what kind?

Are volunteers allowed to supervise?

## 3. BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

What kind of techniques are used to control the group?

Name recognition and prevention (calling the dogs out and rewarding)

Treats for appropriate behavior

Shouting/yelling\*

Time outs (crate, pen, other room)

Squirt bottles\*

Physical "correction" (alpha rolls, collar checks, muzzle grabs, etc.)\*

Bitter Apple/flavored deterrents\*

Electronic shock and/or citronella collars\*

*\*CAUTION: There are side effects to aversives for many dogs. You may want to research these fully.*

Are the dogs allowed to bark? What is done to avoid excessive barking?

What is done about "bullying" behavior?

What is done about "mounting" behavior?

What is done about resource guarding (toys/treats)?

How are small dogs protected? Are they supervised separately?

Are the dogs able to run and/or play fetch?

What kind of toys are allowed?

Is there a nap time?

#### **4. CLEANLINESS**

Is there a designated “potty area”? Is it plumbed (able to be fully sanitized)?

Where are the dogs allowed to eliminate?

What happens if a dog has an “accident” inside?

How often are the floors and walls cleaned?

Smell check — Will my dog bring home the aroma?

#### **5. SAFETY/ENVIRONMENT**

Are there double entries and exits?

Is the fencing safe for small dogs? For jumping dogs?

Is fencing exposed to passers-by (bicyclists, joggers, children, etc)?

Are electrical cords kept out of dogs’ reach?

Is there “playground” equipment for dogs to climb on?

What is done in case of veterinary emergency?

#### **6. SPECIAL NEEDS**

What if my dog has allergies?

What if I am late to pick up my dog?

What if my dog is extremely shy with other dogs?

#### **7. CUSTOMER SERVICE**

What kind of “report” do I get at the end of the day?

What other services are available?

What are the payment options?

Will the staff make training recommendations?

#### **8. REASONS FOR EXPULSION**

What gets a dog “kicked out” of daycare?