

Guidelines for Dog Walkers

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Dog Walkers' Guidelines:

In response to our mailing to Dog Walking Services throughout San Francisco, the following dog walkers have submitted a signed 'agreement form', which is on file at San Francisco Animal Care and Control.

The professional dog walkers listed have agreed to adhere to the following guidelines. New dog walking services are added to the list when the signed agreement form are received by Animal Care and Control:

1. Each walker must have a maximum number of six dogs per walk.
2. Each dog must wear a current dog license and identification.
3. Each dog must have verification of current vaccinations.

4. Walker must clean up feces left by dogs and carry a container for clean up at all times.
5. Walker must have one leash present for each dog in the group, and use leashes in on-leash areas.
6. Dogs must be transported in safe, well-ventilated vehicles in a manner that prevents injury or overheating.
7. Dogs must be safely and properly restrained in open vehicles to prevent injury.
8. Walkers must use only handling methods and equipment that are humane and in compliance with state and local laws.

Services will be removed or flagged at the discretion of the Department of Animal Care and Control if we receive complaints from the public regarding violations of any elements of this agreement.

Note: The guidelines listed above are meant to help keep your dog/s safe and happy during his/her stay with a dog walker. PLEASE SCREEN YOUR DOG CARE PROFESSIONALCAREFULLY. Dog walkers must always follow humane practices that are consistent with yours and must never correct or discipline your dog in any manner that you are not aware of or that is inhumane. Your dog cannot tell you what he/she has experienced on a walk with a dog walker. It is your responsibility to screen your dog walker. Ask questions! Get references!

Cruelty to Animals:

Penal Code Sec. 597 (b) Anyone having charge or custody of any animal, either as owner or otherwise, who subjects any animal to needless suffering, or inflicts unnecessary cruelty upon the animal, or in any manner abuses any animal or fails to provide the animal with proper food, drink, or shelter or protection from the weather is guilty of a crime.

Duties of Owners:

Health Code Sec. 41.12 (a) It shall be unlawful for the owner of any animal, other than a domestic cat, to permit said animal to run at large within the City and County. (not applicable to areas designated as an animal exercise area under the jurisdiction of the Recreation and Park Commission)

Health Code Sec. 41.12 1. It shall be unlawful for the owner of any animal to permit said animal to be within an area designated as an animal exercise area unless said owner is physically present at all times during which the animal is in said area.

Health Code sec. 41.12 (c) The owner of any animal shall provide proper and adequate food, water, shelter, care and attention for said animal.

Dog License Requirement:

Health Code Sec. 41.15 (a) Every person owning, keeping or having control of any dog over the age of four months within the City and County of San Francisco shall within 30 days after the dog attains the age of four months or within 30 days of obtaining the dog, obtain a current license for each dog so owned, kept or controlled.

Vaccination Requirement For License:

Health Code Sec. 41.18 (a) So long as the State of California has declared the City and County of San Francisco a rabies-endemic county, it shall be a requirement that every person owning, keeping or controlling a dog over the age of four months within the City and County of San Francisco shall at all times have procured current vaccination of the dog by a licensed veterinarian with an approved canine antirabies vaccine.

Dog to be Controlled as not to Commit Nuisances:

Health Code Sec. 40 (a) It shall be unlawful for any person owning or having control or custody of any dog to permit the animal to defecate upon the public property of this City or upon the private property of another unless the person immediately remove the feces and properly dispose of it.

Health Code Sec. 40 (b) It shall be unlawful for any person to walk a dog on public property of this City or upon the private property of another without carrying at all times a suitable container or other suitable instrument for the removal and disposal of dog feces.

Protection for Dogs in Motor Vehicles:

Health Code Sec. 40.5 It shall be unlawful to transport a dog in a motor vehicle upon any street within the City and County of San Francisco unless dog is fully enclosed within the motor vehicle or is protected by a belt, tether, cage, container or other device that will prevent the dog from falling, jumping or being thrown from the motor vehicle.

Health Code Sec. 40.6 No dog or other animal shall be left completely enclosed in a parked vehicle without adequate ventilation, or subject the animal to extreme temperatures, which may adversely affect the animal's health and welfare. (Also applies to transporting dogs in a motor vehicle).

Lost Dogs:

If you lose a dog you are walking, you must file a Lost Report with San Francisco Animal Care and Control and notify the owner immediately. We strongly encourage you to visit the Animal Shelter on your own as quickly as possible. Stray dogs, or dogs with unknown "owners" are kept for a legal stray period of 4 days before being the legal "property" of the City and County of San Francisco. At that time, Animal Care and Control will decide whether he or she will be placed for adoption, according to health, behavior and space considerations.

Additional Suggestions:

-  We encourage dog walkers to list your service with us. We will be happy to provide this list of services to the many people who call us looking for dog walking services.
-  We encourage all pet care professionals to have a business license.
-  We encourage you to carry the appropriate insurance.
-  We encourage you to join one of the national organizations for pet care professionals.

Dog walkers give companionship and exercise to the dogs in our community. To list your service with us, please complete the agreement form. We appreciate the hard work you do and welcome you to call SFACC with questions or comments.

Field Services: 415/554-9402
Community Affairs: 415/554-9427

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