

Dog Walker Orientation Program

Purpose:

- Emphasize consistency amongst all dog walkers.
- Promote a welcoming atmosphere for new volunteers.
- Foster a positive relationship between shelter staff and volunteers.
- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of all people and animals on the property.

Outline:

- Orientations twice per month
 - First Tuesday and Third Thursday. Saturday based on need.
 - 1 pm during lunch break and when shelter is closed to the public.
- All interested in walking dogs **MUST** attend orientation before they can begin training. Run sitters **MAY** attend orientation but are not required to attend.
- After orientation, potential walkers will decide on days/times for their training sessions. Walkers will participate in a **minimum** of 3 sessions, possibly more, at the sole discretion of the trainers. If possible, walkers should train with 2 different trainers. The training sessions will be facilitated by the dog walker coordinator.
- Once the trainer(s) decide that the walker is approved to begin to walk on their own, the walker will be given the gray “dog pack” shirt. This is how experienced walkers will know that this walker has been approved to walk dogs or run sit. There will also be communication on “group me” whenever a new person has been authorized to walk or run sit. A photo of the walker will be shared.
- If someone shows up to walk dogs and is not wearing the gray shirt and is not recognized by the experienced walkers or run sitters.....ASK THEM WHO THEY ARE!
- New walkers will be required to wear the gray shirt for (approximately) the first 30 days that they come to the shelter to walk.

DOG WALKING 101

CARTERET COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL DOG WALKER OR RUN SITTER

1. GETTING TO KNOW THE BUILDINGS

- a. The front gates are **CLOSED** (unlocked) until 10:00 a.m. every day. If you are arriving before 10:00 a.m. to start your “shift”, park along the driveway outside the gates. Enter the building through the laundry room. There is a sign on the door for staff only. Let the staff know that you are here to walk dogs with “name your trainer” and they can help you find her/him. Familiarity amongst the volunteers and staff will foster comradery and create a welcoming atmosphere for all.
- b. The “dog walkers’ station” (more information about this later) is in the main house, on the right side as you enter the house from the office area. Generally, all dogs in the main house are walkable dogs unless noted as stray holds or “staff only” dogs. This means that only staff are allowed to walk these dogs.
- c. The “lost and found house” is the smaller building to the right of the main house (looking from the front of the main building). Generally, all dogs in this house will be walkable dogs but some may be stray holds or “staff only” dogs.
- d. **ISO** or the isolation house is off limits to **MOST** dog walkers. These dogs may be bite cases, animal control seizures (not walkable), stray holds, etc. that are not to be walked by **MOST** dog walkers. As a new walker, **NEVER** enter the **ISO** house unless you are with your trainer or an experienced walker.
- e. At any given time, there may be a variety of “strangers” that are at the shelter. We have many volunteers, and we also host members of the public that are performing community service. It’s not necessary to introduce yourself to everyone you meet but you should always be familiar with the staff in case something comes up, and you need their help.

2. GETTING TO KNOW THE DOG RUNS AND YARD

- a. We have 4 dog runs around the property. Runs are either occupied by designated “run sitters” or are vacant and can be used by all the walkers.
 - I. **The Small Run** – This is the first run to the left of the buildings, just off the parking lot. This run has lots of grass area (good for dogs that may have sensitive paws).
 - II. **Sharon’s Run** – This run is directly behind the small run. Sharon’s Run has the highest fence, and some dogs may be designated “SR” which means they may be jumpers and can ONLY be taken to Sharon’s Run. Sharon’s Run has lots of gravel and may not be suitable for dogs with sensitive paws.
 - III. **The Big Run** – This is the largest run which is across the yard from Sharon’s Run and the Small Run. This is the most desirable run to take dogs that have playmates because it has the most room for them to run and play although anyone can use this run if it’s available.
 - IV. **The Front Run** – This is the smallest run, in front of the main building in the far-right corner. This run is not suitable for larger dogs or dogs that are prone to jumping.
- b. Walking Path – Thanks to the generous donation from The Bow Wow Open, we have a new walking path in the far-left corner of the yard. It’s not long but it’s wooded, has a bench and the dogs enjoy the walk and all the interesting scents! There is a sign on the fence that needs to be addressed before entering the path. If the sign shows “available”, no one should be on the path, and you can enter with your dog. Change the sign to “in use”, enter the path and close the gate behind you. If the sign says, “in use”, do not enter. At no time should there be more than one dog on this path.
- c. Driveway up to Hibbs Road – This is commonly used to walk dogs.

3. GETTING TO KNOW THE “COLOR” SYSTEM

All dogs are assigned a color based on their demeanor, strength, difficulty leashing or walking on a leash. Once your training is complete, the trainer/trainers that you have been working with will tell you which color dogs you are approved to walk. If you are comfortable with being a “yellow” walker, for example, and you’d like to try walking reds, meet with your trainer/trainers and they can evaluate you to move to the next color. Never should a new walker take it upon themselves to walk a dog that is above the color that they have been approved to walk. The colors are as follows:

- a. **Green** – Easiest dogs to handle. All walkers can walk green dogs. These dogs are obedient, are easy to get out and return to kennels, are not “mouthy”, do not pull, walk well on a leash, do not show aggressive or reactive behavior to anything.....dogs, cats, people, being leashed, being harnessed, etc. Very few dogs are green.
- b. **Yellow** – Next level of difficulty but for the most part these dogs are relatively easy to walk. They may be a little stronger or active but maybe they are smaller and easier to handle or are senior dogs.
- c. **Red** – The majority of dogs will be Red. Some may be referred to as “strong Red” which means they are obedient but may be strong and tend to pull while on leash. Reds may also be “mouthy” or “nippy” but are not vicious or mean, maybe overly playful or excited and could be difficult to leash or harness.
- d. **Blue** – These dogs are the most challenging dogs and should never be walked by a new walker. If you get to the point where you’d like to advance to some of the blue dogs, find an experienced walker that walks the blue dogs and they will accompany you, back you up and evaluate if you are ready for the blue dogs. These dogs can be extremely difficult to leash or harness, can be aggressive towards humans or other dogs, are generally strong dogs and will likely pull or try to bite the leash. They can also be jumpy, mouthy and nippy.
- e. **STAFF ONLY** – No walkers are allowed to walk a dog designated as “staff only”. Their pin will be blue.

4. MORNING CLEANING AND GETTING DOGS IN AND OUT

- a. During the morning cleaning process, approximately 8 am until 11 am, it is **EXTREMELY** important to note if the dogs are all outside or all inside. If all the dogs are inside, this means that the staff are cleaning the exterior kennels and have the gates outside open. **DO NOT OPEN THE EXTERIOR DOOR!!** If you open the exterior door, the dog will be free to roam through all the exterior kennels and possibly escape completely.
- b. If all the dogs are outside and the staff are cleaning the interior kennels, it’s important to ask the staff if the kennel you want to access has chemicals on it. You may not be able to access that kennel until the chemicals have been rinsed off. **ALWAYS ASK** before entering a kennel to get a dog or before returning a dog to it’s kennel.

5. HANDLING YOUR DOG INSIDE

- a. Check the board and decide which dog you will walk. Move the numbered disk to the left of the dog’s name. Fill out the “enrichment log” on the dog’s kennel.
- b. **ALWAYS** keep your dog on a SHORT leash and ahead of you so you can always see the dog. **NEVER** walk ahead of your dog.
- c. Keep your dog as far away from the other kennels as possible and as close to your body as possible.
- d. Do not allow your dog to approach other dogs in the kennels.
- e. Familiarize yourself with the **IN** door and the **OUT** door in the main house. Always use the proper door when entering and exiting the building.
- f. **SOME** reactive dogs that are housed near the interior doors in the main house may be taken out through the laundry room or tub room. **USE EXTREME CAUTION WHEN TAKING YOUR DOG THROUGH THE LAUNDRY ROOM.** Before entering the hallway, crack the door and announce loudly the name of the dog you are bringing in. “Buzz coming through!”. Do not let the dog go through the door until you are sure there is not another dog on the other side of the door. Do not attempt to take a dog out this way unless you have been through the process with a trainer. As you exit the laundry/tub room, go straight out to the parking lot. When returning through the laundry/tub room from outside, come straight in the door

from the parking lot. Do not bring a dog along the walkway that leads to the employee parking area. Be sure to announce the same way. "Buzz coming through".

- g. After you return your dog to the kennel.....**DON'T FORGET TO CLIP THE GATE!!**

6. HANDLING YOUR DOG OUTSIDE

- a. While walking the dog outside, please remember and follow these **IMPORTANT** safety guidelines:
- I. **NEVER** let your dog approach another dog. This applies to dogs in kennels, dogs in dog runs and dogs that are being walked.
 - II. While walking through the yard, always walk in the middle of the yard, away from the dog runs. Dogs in the runs may be dog reactive and, yes, it's happened many times....the dogs may jump the dog run fences to get to the dogs being walked. Keeping to the center of the yard can alleviate most of this behavior.
 - III. Always keep poop bags and dog treats with you. Every time your dog poops, please pick up the waste and dispose in the bags in the runs or in the dumpster.
 - IV. Be aware of humans, especially if you are walking a dog that you've never walked before. Staff and other walkers that may be familiar with your dog, may approach to pet the dog. This is fine. **NEVER** let a dog approach a member of the public or, frankly, anyone you don't know. If they are interested in your dog, tell them to go inside the main building and a staff member will help them.
- b. Once outside, you can:
- I. Walk the dog up and down the driveway.
 - II. Walk the dog through the walking path.
 - III. Walk the dog in the **CENTER** of the yard.
 - IV. If available, take the dog to a run to play, allow the dog to run, play in the pool, etc. **CLIP ALL GATES!** Never leave a dog unattended in the dog runs.
 - V. Any combination of the above activities, having the dog out of their kennel for approximately 15-20 minutes.
- c. While you are "run sitting":
- I. Experienced walkers will bring dogs to you in the run.
 - II. **MEET THE WALKER AT THE GATE!** It can be a challenge to get the dog in the run safely while trying to close the gate, especially in Sharon's Run.
 - III. Play, pet, brush, cuddle, socialize, give treats!
 - IV. Don't forget to pick up the poop!

7. **TRAINING** - Trainers will spend lots of time with you, demonstrating appropriate ways to safely get dogs in and out of the kennels. They will show you how to leash the dog and harness the dog. It would benefit you to have your own leash that you're comfortable with. It **MUST** be a slip leash and can have a "harness loop or harness disk". **WE DON'T USE CLIP LEASHES UNLESS THE DOG WEARS A HARNESS OR MARTINGALE COLLAR.** This will be discussed further once you start training.

Dog Walker Orientation Program

Purpose

The Dog Walker Orientation Program is designed to ensure consistency among all individuals who walk dogs at the shelter. It aims to promote a welcoming environment for new volunteers, foster positive relationships between shelter staff and volunteers, and uphold the safety and well-being of everyone—both people and animals—on the property.

Orientation Schedule and Requirements

Orientations are held twice each month, specifically on the first Tuesday and third Thursday. Additional Saturday sessions may be scheduled based on need. Each session begins at 1:00 PM, during the lunch break when the shelter is closed to the public. All individuals interested in walking dogs must attend orientation before starting their training. While run sitters may attend the orientation, their attendance is not mandatory.

After completing orientation, prospective dog walkers will select the days and times for their training sessions. Each walker must participate in at least three training sessions, though additional sessions may be required at the discretion of the trainers. Whenever possible, walkers should train with two different trainers. The Dog Walker Coordinator will facilitate all training sessions.

Once trainers determine that a walker is ready to walk dogs independently, the walker will receive a gray "dog pack" shirt. This shirt serves as a signal to experienced walkers that the individual is approved to walk dogs or serve as a run sitter. Additionally, approval will be communicated via the "Group Me" app, accompanied by a photo of the new walker. If someone arrives to walk dogs and is not wearing the gray shirt, and is not recognized by experienced walkers or run sitters, it is important to ask their identity. New walkers are required to wear the gray shirt for approximately their first 30 days at the shelter.

Dog Walking 101: Carteret County Humane Society

Building Familiarity

The front gates remain closed (though unlocked) until 10:00 AM each day. If arriving before 10:00 AM for your shift, park along the driveway outside the gates and enter the building through the laundry room, which is marked "staff only." Notify the staff of your arrival and the name of your trainer, and they will help you locate your trainer. Establishing familiarity among volunteers and staff helps foster camaraderie and a welcoming atmosphere.

The dog walkers' station is located in the main house, on the right side as you enter from the office area. Most dogs in the main house are walkable unless designated as "stray holds" or "staff only." The "lost and found house," a smaller building to the right of the main house, generally houses walkable dogs, though some may also be restricted. The isolation house (ISO) is off-limits to most dog walkers, as it may contain bite cases, animal control seizures, or stray holds. New walkers must never enter the ISO house without a trainer or experienced walker.

At any time, there may be unfamiliar individuals on shelter property, including other volunteers and members of the public fulfilling community service. While you do not need to introduce yourself to everyone, you should be familiar with shelter staff for assistance as needed.

Dog Runs and Yard Overview

There are four dog runs on the property, which may be occupied by designated run sitters or be available for use by all walkers:

- The Small Run: Located to the left of the buildings, just off the parking lot, this grassy run is suitable for dogs with sensitive paws.
- Sharon's Run: Directly behind the small run, this run features the highest fence and is intended for dogs capable of jumping. These dogs are marked "SR" and can only be taken to Sharon's Run, which has a gravel surface.
- The Big Run: Situated across the yard from Sharon's Run and the Small Run, this is the largest run, ideal for dogs with playmates due to its size.
- The Front Run: Located in front of the main building in the far-right corner, this smaller run is not suitable for large or jumping-prone dogs.

A recently added walking path, made possible by a donation from The Bow Wow Open, is situated in the far-left corner of the yard. This wooded path features a bench and is enjoyed by the dogs. Before entering, check the sign on the fence: if it reads "available," you may enter and switch it to "in use;" if it reads "in use," wait until the path is free. Only one dog is allowed on the path at a time. The driveway up to Hibbs Road is also commonly used for walking dogs.

The "Color" System

Each dog is assigned a color that reflects their demeanor, strength, and leash-walking difficulty. After completing training, trainers will inform you of the color level you are approved to walk. Walkers must not handle dogs above their approved color level. The colors are:

- Green: Easiest to handle; all walkers can walk these dogs. They are obedient, easy to leash, and non-reactive.
- Yellow: Slightly more challenging—may be stronger, more active, or older but still manageable.
- Red: The largest group; may be strong, pull on the leash, be mouthy or nippy, but are neither vicious nor mean. Some may be "strong Red."
- Blue: Most challenging; only experienced walkers handle blue dogs. These dogs may be aggressive, strong, and difficult to leash or harness.
- Staff Only: No walkers are permitted to handle these dogs; their pins are blue.

Morning Cleaning Procedures

Morning cleaning occurs from approximately 8:00 AM until 11:00 AM. It is crucial to observe whether all dogs are inside or outside. If all dogs are inside, staff are cleaning exterior kennels—do not open the exterior door, as this could result in

escape. If the dogs are outside, confirm with staff whether a kennel has been treated with chemicals before entering. Always ask staff before accessing or returning a dog to its kennel during cleaning.

Handling Dogs Inside

Before walking a dog, check the board and select your dog. Move the numbered disk to the left of the dog's name and fill out the "enrichment log" on the kennel. Always keep your dog on a short leash, ahead of you, and away from other kennels and dogs. Do not allow your dog to approach other dogs in kennels. Use the designated IN and OUT doors in the main house, and exercise caution with reactive dogs, possibly using the laundry or tub room exits. Announce your presence and the dog's name before entering with a dog, and do not proceed until you are sure the area is clear. After returning the dog, always clip the gate securely.

Handling Dogs Outside

When outside, follow these safety guidelines:

- Never allow your dog to approach another dog, whether in kennels, runs, or being walked.
- Walk in the center of the yard, away from the runs, to prevent dog reactivity or fence jumping.
- Carry poop bags and treats; always pick up after your dog and dispose of waste properly.
- Be mindful of people—staff or other walkers may approach familiar dogs, but do not allow your dog to approach strangers. Direct interested individuals to a staff member inside the main building.
- Dog walking options include the driveway, the walking path, the center of the yard, or available runs for play. Never leave a dog unattended in a run.
- Each outside session should last approximately 15–20 minutes.

When run sitting, experienced walkers will bring dogs to you at the run gate. Meet them at the gate for safety, especially in Sharon's Run. Engage with the dog through play, brushing, cuddling, and treats, and always pick up waste.

Training Information

Trainers will devote significant time to demonstrating safe techniques for getting dogs in and out of kennels, leashing, and harnessing. It is recommended that you have your own slip leash, possibly with a harness loop or disk. Clip leashes are only used for dogs wearing harnesses. This will be discussed further during training.