

## AKC'S Care and Conditions of Dogs Policy



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The Care and Conditions of Dogs Policy reflects the American Kennel Club's values in promoting the responsible ownership and maintenance of dogs. These guidelines are meant as a basis for helping individuals ensure that dog care practices are performed and housing facilities are maintained in a safe, humane and responsible manner.

The guidelines are not intended to be all-inclusive or definitive, but rather are intended to serve as a working basic outline that can be expanded and refined as needed while lending uniform application of this policy. In addition to guidelines set forth in this policy, individuals are expected to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations regarding the ownership and maintenance of dogs.

### Care of Dogs

- Dogs should have access on a daily basis for play and exercise.
- Dogs must have access to fresh water as appropriate.
- Dogs must have access to fresh food provided at appropriate intervals to maintain a healthy weight.
- Appropriate health care, including routine and preventative care, must be provided for all dogs.
- Dogs should be provided with daily positive human contact and socialization.
- Each dog should have its overall health and behavior assessed daily. Any deviation in health condition must be addressed expeditiously and appropriately.
- Dogs should be free from internal and external parasites.
- Dogs should be afforded regular grooming to ensure health and comfort.
- When euthanasia is necessary, it must always be performed humanely.

### Kennels and Housing

- The primary enclosure must be large enough so the dog(s) can sit, stand, lie down, or turn around comfortably, with no overcrowding.
- The primary enclosure shall be constructed and maintained so that dogs are securely confined and does not cause injury to the dogs.
- Protection from adverse or extreme weather conditions must be provided.
- While flooring that provides solid footing is preferred, if wire is used as flooring of a primary enclosure, it should be comprised of a material featuring a protective coating, be of an appropriate size to prevent injury

(especially to feet), and must be kept in good repair. If wire is used, a solid platform of sufficient size should be provided to allow the dog(s) to attain solid footing and to offer a space for resting.

- Facilities must be lighted to provide a regular lighting cycle for the dogs.
- Bedding material made available to dogs should be clean and not pose a risk to the dogs.

### Operations

- A sufficient number of staff must be provided to carry out appropriate levels of care and conditions for the number of dogs kept.
- Facility and primary enclosures should be clean, free from debris and odor, and feces should be picked up and disposed of as frequently as necessary so as not to pose a threat to the health of the dog(s).
- Each kennel should maintain an emergency preparedness plan adequate for the type of facility owned and breed(s) of dogs maintained therein.

The above is in addition to the policy adopted at the July 1990 Board meeting to notify federal, state or local agencies of unsanitary and/or unhealthy conditions found by AKC Inspectors during inspection of kennels; that the US Department of Agriculture (APHIS) will be notified when such conditions prevail at kennels regulated by that department under the provisions of the U.S. Animal Welfare Act; and that other state/local governmental or humane agencies will be notified when such conditions are observed at kennels not regulated by federal law.

In instances when dog(s) are found in conditions that place them in immediate danger, the Inspector will immediately notify agencies with jurisdiction regarding the danger to the dogs.

During the course of an inspection, if an AKC Inspector determines that an individual is not maintaining his/her dogs or facility in a manner that is compliant with the AKC's Care and Conditions Policy, the individual's AKC privileges may be placed on temporary referral. The individual will be notified, in writing, of specific deficiencies and what steps need to be taken to come into compliance with the Care and Conditions of Dogs Policy. The individual shall be given 45 days to correct deficiencies and request a re-inspection. In cases where deficiencies are not corrected or re-inspections are not requested, the AKC may proceed with disciplinary action leading to suspension of all AKC privileges.



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Siberian Huskies © Sarah Hubbach



Stacy Mason © AKC



Labrador Retrievers © AKC



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**Dogs come in all shapes and sizes.  
So do dog facilities.**

**Responsible dog breeders utilize a variety of creative indoor and outdoor solutions to provide safe housing and exercise areas for their puppies, adult and senior dogs.**



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American Staffordshire Terriers © AKC



Afghan Hounds © Kominek Afghans



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Shiba Inus © AKC

*The American Kennel Club is dedicated to upholding the integrity of its registry, promoting the sport of purebred dogs and breeding for type and function. Founded in 1884, the AKC and its affiliated organizations advocate for the purebred dog as a family companion, advance canine health and well-being, work to protect the rights of all dog owners and promote responsible dog ownership.*

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