

## FAQs for Smart Doggy Day Care

### 1. [What's an average day like for my dog?](#)

- ✚ All dogs are walked out for a one-on-one potty break after arriving and prior to being crated in their group area to await their Warm Up Pack.
- ✚ Each group is divided into smaller groups of 4-6 dogs for 15 minute Warm Up Packs during which they greet some of their friends while readying themselves for a day of social and physical interaction. This is a good time for us to ease new dogs into the group and try out new potential matches. Body exams are given to each dog during this time as well.
  - This body exam consist of a brief, hands on assessment of your dog: looking at eyes, ears, mouth and feeling over their body and limbs for any superficial abnormalities that warrant further inspection by our staff or your vet. They are not intended to replace regular veterinary care or diagnose any condition, only alert us to potential issues before your dog engages in group play.
- ✚ Full groups are assembled as soon as warm up packs are complete (8:30-9am) and after meeting and playing for 15 minutes will go outside for a potty break/outdoor play (weather dependant). Group play will continue until the scheduled training/break period at 10am, 11am, 12pm, or 1pm.
- ✚ One at a time, each group gets a one hour break during which dogs are able to relax by themselves, receive their 10 minute training session, and eat the lunch or snacks provided by their parents.
- ✚ After training/break the play group is reassembled and the pups play on until 3:30pm. We let the dogs play outdoors as much as possible, weather dependant. On cold or rainy days the groups play inside and receive an outdoor potty break at least every 1 ½ hrs. A second body exam is performed on each dog between 2:30 and 3:30pm; notes on any new condition (sore paws, sore muscles, puppies that lost teeth) are given parents at pick up.
- ✚ Our doggy guests await their parents pick up (4-8pm) while crated in their play areas. Dinner, Kongs and chews/bones provided by parents are given at this time. Potty breaks are given by 7pm for dogs with late pickup times.

### 2. [Are groups of dogs ever left alone?](#)

- ✚ Never! If there is more than one uncrated dog in an area, there will always be an employee present to supervise. Our day care play groups are engaging, fun and safe places for your pet to socialize and exercise – we believe that well trained staff members play a key role in facilitating the group while keeping Compassionate Care ideals at the forefront of their interactions with the dogs.

### 3. How long do they typically spend in their crate?

- ✚ 30 – 60 minutes in the morning between drop off and Warm Up Packs
- ✚ 50 minutes mid-day at training/break time
- ✚ From 3:30 until parents pick up at their convenience between 4pm-8pm
  - Potty breaks are given by 7pm to dogs with late pick up times.
- ✚ Some dogs with special physical or behavioral needs will receive intermittent time outs in crates at the discretion of our management or at their parent's request.

### 4. What training methods do you use? What commands will be taught? Who will train my dog?

- ✚ When training your dog, we use only positive, reward based methods. With each command we “Cue, Mark, Reward, Release”. Dogs are given a cue, lured or coaxed through the exercise, and rewarded with treats, praise or affection after successfully completing the command. We use the marker word “Yes” to let dogs know when they get it right and the release word “Okay” to let them know when a task is over. Please refer to the Command of the Week for a written sample of these dog training methods.
- ✚ All of our day care staff is coached and tested in these training practices. The consistency your dog experiences by training with a variety of handlers from 30 year veteran trainers to 3 week newbie trainers, helps them to feel more confident in their knowledge, bond with the play group handlers and understand our expectations for them throughout the day.
- ✚ Your dog's one-on-one training combines obedience and agility exercises in an engaging ten minute session. Basics like “Watch”, “Touch”, “Sit”, “Down”, “Wait”, “Stay” and “Off” as well as more specialized tasks like “Heel”, “Left”, “Right”, “Over”, “Under”, “Through” and “Front” are all included in our training sessions. A detailed training guide outlining all of the commands and exercises we use is available for \$3.
- ✚ A typical 10 minute session will include about 3 to 5 different commands of focus and will always include the Command of the Week.

### 5. Should I bring my dog lunch? Treats? A bone?

- ✚ Many dogs will burn LOTS of extra calories while playing and socializing in this stimulating environment so giving a small meal for lunch, a filled Kong or chew bone at the end of the day can be a nice treat, but not all dogs are comfortable eating at day care in a crate and most will also do well with a slightly larger dinner at home on day care days.
- ✚ For dogs with mild anxiety in a crate, stuffed Kongs and chew bones can provide a soothing release and distraction until they are picked up.
- ✚ Dogs with allergies and food sensitivities will benefit from treats, food, snacks provided from home. Also, please let us know about allergies and food sensitivities so we don't accidentally feed our treats during training.
- ✚ Staff will note and inform parents if a dog is routinely not eating the food/snacks sent along so changes can be made.

## 6. Can I get my dog groomed on a day care day?

- ✚ YES! We have a full time groomer (the lovely Rita – over 10yrs experience, does an AMAZING job and is very sweet with the dogs) that holds slots open each afternoon for baths and nail trims for our day care dogs. Our long time employee, Katrina (shift lead and dog handler) has recently begun to apprentice with Rita and is also qualified and available for baths, nail trims and other basic services.
- ✚ Please schedule in advance of your dog needs a Full Service Groom (bath, haircut, nails, ears, glands) or a Bath Brush and More (bath, brush out, nails, ears, glands) on a day care day to ensure your spot.
- ✚ We can normally accommodate nail trims without prior notice. Please inform us of your dog's nail trim needs at drop off or give a call before noon to be sure we can fit it in.

## 7. How many dogs come to day care? How many dogs are in group with my dog?

- ✚ We get to see 30 to 80 canine guests depending on the day of the week! Monday is a “small” day, currently with 40-50 dogs attending, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday are “big” days that range from 65 to 80 dogs in attendance, Friday is “medium” with 55-65 dogs and Saturday is another “small” day in the 30-45 dog range.
- ✚ Group sizes vary quite a bit depending on which dogs are in attendance on a day and how many groups were splitting them into. We may only place 10-15 dogs in a group with larger dogs that that really wrestle and romp intensely throughout the day and you may see upwards of 20-25 in milder group of smaller dogs with milder play styles.

## 8. How do you decide which group to put a dog in?

- ✚ Beginning with the initial behavior assessment, our staff evaluates each dog's level of sociability to humans and dogs, their activity needs, play style preferences, and toy drive.
- ✚ The results of the behavior assessment and our daily observances in conjunction with the dog's age and size will determine their group placement. Many dogs will do well in two or three potential groups and others will remain in the same group every time they attend.
- ✚ Our Warm Up Packs are a great place for us to try new combinations of dogs on a small scale and gauge their success. We record data regarding very positive or negative meetings in each dogs file to aid us in our daily group assignments.
- ✚ We keep group assignments fluid over time so we can cope with our canine guest's needs, benefiting them as they grow and change.

## 9. Do you need to know when things change in my dog's home life or health?

- ✚ Yes! Please let us know when your household dynamic is in flux. Changes like a parent being out of town, being pregnant, having a house guest, packing for a move, or dealing with contractors/remodeling in the home all have the potential to significantly alter your dogs ability to tolerate other stresses (like a noisy, busy group of play mates). The more we know, the easier it is for us to set your dog up for success despite the extra stressors.
- ✚ Yes! Always inform us of medical issues concerning your dog. Many factors impact your dog's wellbeing in our care and we want to make sure we are giving the best care possible.

- It is very important that you keep your dog home if you suspect it has a contagious condition. Contagious conditions can spread quickly in groups where dogs share water dishes, toys and potty areas. Please consider the other dogs that may be at risk if your dog is ill.
- Open wounds, fresh scabs and stitched injuries pose a risk of infection for your dog and are painful when bumped and rubbed during the course of play. When dogs are in pain, they are not having fun and may act out at dogs and staff that are unaware. Dogs with these injuries need to be kept at home until they have healed.
- Minor injuries with no broken skin need to be disclosed as well. Ear infections, pulled muscles, sprained joints, swimmers tail and other common ailments are highly likely to impact your dog's acceptance of other dogs in a group setting. Ears with infections are painful when bumped by others! Dogs will guard their injured limbs, not letting others near to play or pass.
- Medications for some non-contagious conditions like thyroid imbalances or seizures can cause dogs to be more thirsty or hungry throughout the day. They may urinate more often or have thinning hair or skin. These are abnormal states that we would like to be aware of in advance so we can prepare our staff and make any necessary accommodations for your pet's comfort.

#### 10. [What should I do if the lobby is full when I come to drop off my dog in the morning?](#)

- ✚ Peek through the glass before entering to make sure you are not accidentally crowding into another dog's space. Feel free to wait outside for a moment if there already 3 or 4 dogs waiting. Enter through the South door (the blue door), and exit through the North door (the black door) to prevent congestion. During Pick Ups, please feel free to use either door to prevent congestion.
- ✚ Keep your dog(s) at your side (gather the excess leash up to keep them close) and at least 3 feet apart from other dogs. Even dogs that are wonderful friends during off-leash play can get too excited while on leash and bark or lunge at each other. It is best if we avoid leashed dog-to-dog interactions in the lobby and let them greet their friends' off-leash in the play areas.
- ✚ Make sure your dog is wearing proper equipment. Your dog should be wearing a working quick-release collar (and harness or head collar if he/she wears one) and a non-retractable 4-6ft leash when entering.

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about Bay View Bark's Smart Doggy Day Care program! If you ever have any other questions please reach out to us in person, by phone or by email. We are always happy to help and appreciate the opportunity to do so.

Best,

Julia Kaminecki and the Bay View Bark Team