



INTERNATIONAL
— ASSOCIATION OF —
CANINE PROFESSIONALS

Best Business Practices for Canine Professionals

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Introduction

IACP's best business practices are collections of recommended guidelines for all persons who own, operate, or are employed by a business or organization providing professional canine services. Best practices are designed to help improve and maintain consistency amongst all CSPs. These guidelines can increase the quality of service provided to all dogs under their care by describing the processes of how various business models interact with external parties for which the business depends, such as clients, partners, employers, employees, and local laws or regulations.

The goal of all CSPs is to ensure the dog's welfare is never compromised while the dog is under their care. Canine professionals should have the core knowledge of the "who", "what", "where", "why", and "how" in determining the safety, risks, and liabilities of each type of canine service provided by the business.

The odds of success increase when the decisions are made based on information that is factual, current, validated and verified. The odds of success decrease when decisions are made based on perception, hearsay (unsubstantiated information), or winging it (learn as you go) which usually results in finger-pointing and blaming others.

A successful informed decision-making process includes, but is not limited to,

- Understanding the nature of the recommended practices for each issue or action.
- Researching the risks, limitations, benefits, alternatives, and uncertainties which may include seeking professional advice from attorneys, certified public accountants, human resource officers, and/or local government offices.
- Self-regulation by each decision that establishes an effective roadmap (guidelines) supported by written records for the employer, employee, and client expectations from the business.
- Accepting accountability for the positive or negative consequences of those decisions.

Glossary

This glossary defines the meaning of certain words or terms to establish effective communication of various types of canine services that may have more than one interpretation or meaning.

Business: A business is a commercial enterprise or establishment.

Boarding Services: Boarding services are “*long-term*” overnight (more than 12 hours) personal care, maintenance, and supervision of dogs by trained persons while the owner(s) is unable to care for their dogs in their own residence, such as when on vacation, medical procedures, home improvement, or as part of a dog training program.

Crate: A crate is a box-shaped container, cage, protective case, or framework used to temporarily house dogs.

Daycare: Daycare, also known as pet-sitting services, are “*short-term*” daytime (less than 12 hours) personal care, maintenance, and supervision by trained persons while the owner(s) is at work or unable to take care of the dog. The services may be performed at a dog daycare facility or at the residence of the dog owner.

Facility: A facility is a structure that is built, installed, and designed to serve a particular service or multiple services. The design should facilitate (make easy, consistent, safe, and secure) each activity or service conducted by the business.

Kennel: A kennel is a physical structure or enclosure that provides shelter conducive to the environmental needs of each animal species.

Kenneling Services: Kenneling services are “*long-term*” shelters traditionally used for breeding or boarding animals without a permanent owner such as animal shelters or animal rescue.

Mixed-Use Facility: A mixed-use facility is a building, structure, and common area that houses multiple types of services or operations within the business model. For example, a dog daycare business that *does* include other canine services such as training, structured socialization exercises, and/or grooming in its business model is a mixed-use facility.

Services: Services are the business economics that is produced, traded, bought, or sold to a consumer (client).

Single-Use Facility: A single-use facility is a building, structure, or common area that houses one type of service or operation. For example, a dog daycare business that *does not* include other canine services such as training, structured socialization exercises, or grooming in its business model is a single-use facility.

Training Program: A training program is an activity designed to help boost performance, productivity, skills, and/or knowledge. Dog training programs are unique in that they may include training both dogs and their human owner or handler.

Transition Areas: Transition areas are shared common areas within a facility that act as a buffer between other areas of the facility such as hallways, stairs, elevators, doors, and/or gates. Transitional areas provide safe and secure passage between services or operations applicable to both single-use and mixed-use facilities and have distinct boundaries that delineate where one service/operation ends and the other begins. Transition areas also help the canine professional and dog physically and emotionally transition from one task to another task.

Transportation: Dog transportation occurs when a person moves a dog from one structure, enclosure, or location to another regardless of the mode or length of movement to the new destination. This type of movement is a physical and emotional transitional process for both humans and dogs that signals a change of venue. Great care and pre-planning ensure consistency when transporting a dog within a building, or public transportation such as vehicles, trains, or planes.

Section 1 –Professional Business Best Practices

1. Establishment as a Business

1.1. The CSP (referred to as “CSP”) should comply with applicable legal business operational requirements of the governmental jurisdiction in which it conducts business. These requirements may include but are not limited to

- Business operating licenses and registrations
- Building permits
- Zoning permits
- Occupational Use permits
- Health and safety inspections
- Insurance
 - Business Owner’s insurance
 - Cyber Liability insurance
 - General Liability insurance
 - Property Insurance
 - Vehicle Insurance (preferably commercial)
 - Worker’s Compensation
- Resale certificates
- Professional licensing

1.2. The CSP should utilize all means of legitimacy to build and establish a trustworthy reputation as a service provider may include but is not limited to,

- Website
- Business cards
- Formal stationery with business letterhead
- Social media presence
- Membership in professional organizations
- Display licenses, certifications, and/or degrees supporting the services provided
- Displaying government legal business operational licenses, registrations and/or permits.

1.3. The CSP should implement all means of transparency to maintain its reputation as a trustworthy service provider which may include, but is not limited, to:

- Full disclosures of services provided for the prospective client to make an informed decision about whether to hire or not to hire the business. This may be published in the business or in the form of a Pre-Contract. Disclosure may include, but is not limited to,
 - Registration requirements and restrictions
 - Pre-registration and pre-requisites
 - Business policy and/or terms and conditions on fees, payments, and cancellations
 - Business and client responsibilities
- A description that addresses each provided activity and service

- Personnel training qualification and/or standards starting with the highest-ranking title (decision maker)
- A breakdown of all associated costs that are inclusive or optional.
- Other features and/or inclusions of the program (eg, types of support provided to the Client, such as a private Facebook Group)
- Critical Limitations – Services, activities, duration, or cost adjustments based on unforeseen circumstances.

2. Management Responsibilities

2.1. Organizational Structure. The CSP should develop an organizational structure that delineates the framework around which the business is organized, the decision-makers, and how it operates. Operational procedures include but are not limited to

- written instructional guidelines and/or procedures,
- personnel training programs,
- safety protocols,
- security procedures,
- how to respond to emergencies,
- legal forms such registration,
- contract,
- activity logs,
- schedules,
- inspections,
- incident reports for accidents or violations,
- how to handle complaints, and
- corrective action reports.

2.2. Staffing Duties

- **Manager.** Day-to-day operations, staff supervision, hiring and firing personnel, evaluating personnel performance, developing and reviewing policies and procedures, ensuring the facility follows business operational requirements, maintaining all records readily available, and addressing complaints and violations, supplies, and schedules.
- **Administration Personnel** maintain public communications, registration, and other administrative support to the Manager.
- **Supervisors** ensure dogs are healthy and happy, conduct inspections for a safe and hazard-free environment, review planned dog activities with staff, assign and assess new trainee/apprentice progress, advise the manager of supplies, report complaints, and violations, and promote employee professional development.
- **Employees** are fully trained staff able to work with little or no supervision and follow the facility's written policies, procedures, and established best practices.

- **Employees in Training and/or Apprenticeship/Internship Programs** are staff who require constant supervision from a supervisor or assigned senior employee and should specify their limited roles and schedules at the daycare facility.
- **Contract Personnel** are employees of an independent business other than the provider who performs the same work as the provider's employee. The written contract with the independent business should include their roles in the provider's business, service expectations be of the same or higher standards as those established by the provider and be signed by each business's authorized staff to be legally binding.
- **Contracted or Public Services** that provide other services to the provider or provider's facility that are not the canine professional services provided to clients. These services may be provided by local government or private companies. Their limited role and schedules at the daycare facility may include but are not limited to,
 - Trash collection
 - Deliveries such as mail or supplies
 - Pest control
 - Building maintenance (repairs and replacement)
 - Janitorial services (general cleaning or sanitation)

2.3. Establishing Qualifications. Establishing qualifications starts by determining what level of proficiency is required for each task employees are expected to perform at a satisfactory level without supervision. Employees should be correctly placed within the level of their competency based on their education and/or experience. Qualification standards should include the distinction between unqualified, trainee/apprentice, entry-level, intermediate-level, or advanced/professional level, and include what is expected to maintain skills.

- **Experience** - Validate the employee's previous work experience by confirming employment history with previous supervisors, duties, and performance review.
- **Competency** - Objectives should be developed to provide visually measurable criteria in determining how the daycare staff will demonstrate competency. Physical job requirements should include how much weight or physical activity personnel may be required to perform for each position title.
- **Education** - Education should be accompanied by official copies of class transcripts, degrees, diplomas, certificates, certifications, and/or government-issued licenses. The business should specify what type of education is required for the position. The business may require a specific class or certification that may be administered by a third party, or it may be administered within the business. If administered within the business, the test criteria, acceptance/passing requirements, and actual results should be documented.

- **Continuing Education** - Determine what continuing education is required to adequately maintain the competency of daycare employees employed by the business.
 - Continuing education activities include, but are not limited to conferences, seminars, workshops, reading books, magazines, or other print and media, watching digital media, such as DVDs and YouTube.
 - Continuing education topics include but are not limited to canine health, puppy development, first aid for dogs, canine behavior, handling, and animal welfare.

2.4. Incident Reports. CSP should have a process for documenting emergencies, incidents of illness, injury, or other events having a negative impact on the well-being of the client's dog, client, employee, or the public. The incident report should be complete before the end of the business day or within 24 hours and include,

- Name of client's dog
- Client name, address, telephone, and e-mail
- Detailed description of the incident should include,
 - Writing the event in a step-by-step chronological order as it occurred.
 - Start by identifying what was occurring just before the event started.
 - Include Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How.
 - Do not include assumptions or details that became known to you later during the event or after the event.
 - Close out the report when all means have been exhausted, the situation is under control, and operations return to normal.
- Include the names, addresses telephone, and e-mails of other persons involved, when they were involved, notified, or responded to, and what their role in the event was. These roles may include,
 - Victims
 - Complainants
 - Witnesses
 - Police
 - Fire Rescue
 - Animal Control Officers
 - Veterinarian
 - Owner
 - Staff

2.5. Corrective Action (self-regulation) The CSP should have a corrective action process by which problems are investigated and a course of action is determined to prevent the problem from occurring in the future. Examples of problems that could require corrective action are:

- Client complaints against the provider, its employees, or the facility.
- Incident reports

- Injury to dog or person
 - Lost dog
 - Safety and security violations
- Personnel failure to follow established business policies and procedures
- Provider, employee, or facility violation of government laws resulting from audits or inspections.

2.6. Client Satisfaction (customer rating) The CSP should have a means by which client satisfaction is determined. Examples include:

- Written surveys or questionnaires
- Discussions with the client
- Testimonials
- Other sources of feedback such as text messages and emails.

3. Recordkeeping

3.1. Official Documents The following documents are examples of what should be kept by the CSP as part of its overall record-keeping system. A minimum of three (3) years is recommended unless government regulations require otherwise.

- Financial records
- Tax records
- Business license
- Contract records
- Vendor/suppliers records
- Client records
 - Client contact information
 - Dog information
 - Dog participation records including assigned enclosure, activities, food, treats, feeding schedules, and staff notes
 - Veterinary records
 - Preventative healthcare
 - Identification and treatment of illness and injuries
 - Surgeries and/or other procedures
 - Prescriptions or supplements administered during stays
 - Signed documents
 - Other client-related communications and documentation
- Incident records
 - After-action and/or corrective action reports
- Cleaning and sanitizing records
- Personnel documentation
 - Employee resume and/or business employment application
 - Certifications and education
 - Awards and commendations during employment
 - Disciplinary actions during employment

4. **Animal Care and Welfare.** The CSP should implement recommended standards that specifically apply to each type of service or activities it provides the public, such as canine facilities, dog training programs, boarding, kenneling, and/or transportation.

Section 2 –Canine Facility Business Best Practices

1. **Canine Facility Public Disclosure.** The facility should visibly post

- Hours of operation
- Drop-off and Pick-up times
- Drop-off and Pick-up procedures
- Scheduling facility tours
- Disclose if the canine facility provides only one canine service/activity or is a mixed-use facility offering various services/activities that are conducted on-site, such as
 - Dog training activities
 - Dog daycare activities
 - Enrichment programs
 - Dog kenneling and boarding
 - Dog transportation (including dog movement inside the facility)
- The number of dogs for each service and/or activity according to age, health, and size (ratio of dog participation).
 - Include full disclosure that includes if staff are supervisors, experienced employees, apprentices, or volunteers in training if they are included in the staffing ratios.
 - Include full disclosure for any service or activity that leaves any dog unsupervised by staff.
- The staff-to-dog ratio for each service and/or activity
- Daily schedule of daily animal welfare activities
 - Sleeping (nighttime)
 - Resting (daytime)
 - Playing
 - Feeding
 - Training
- Disclose locations where services or activities are performed, such as
 - Outdoors or indoors
 - Rooms where dogs are separate from each other in temporary or permanent housing (crates or kennels)
 - Rooms where dogs participate in group activities
 - Other

2. **Canine Facility Animal Care and Welfare.** Regardless of the size of the facility, the number of personnel, or the number of dogs it may house at any given time, the business should implement recommended standards that may apply to its business model for the safety and welfare of all dogs in its care. The approach to animal care and welfare is multifaceted. The

following recommended guidelines are from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal Welfare Act.

2.1. Dog Identification and Accountability. All dogs in the care and custody of the canine facility should be

- Clearly identifiable by a tag, collar, or vest that states the dog's name and the canine facility business address and telephone number.
- Assigned to a primary enclosure with a card or plaque containing each dog's name and description (or pictures).
- Activity logs documenting the dog's participation and supervision while at the canine facility.

2.2. Primary Enclosures. Enclosures may be a room, pen, run, cage, compartment, and/or hutch.

- The structure should ensure that the roof, walls, and floor are continuously connected and contain no sharp points or edges that can cause injury to people or dogs.
- At least one door for entry and exit that can be opened, shut, able to securely contain the dog, and prevent other animals from entering the enclosure.
- Floors designed to prevent dog's feet and legs from falling through spaces between slats or mesh.
- Must not have any opening large enough for a dog's head or body to pass through.
- Large enclosures with windows or openings that provide natural light should be covered by transparent material such as glass or hard plastic.
- Able to repair or replace worn surfaces.
- Must keep dogs clean, dry, and provide shade and shelter from extremes in temperatures or weather.
- Convenient access to fresh water.
- Have surfaces that are easily cleaned and sanitized (non-porous).
- Adequate space. In general, each dog will be provided with minimum adequate space for resting and/or sleeping. Per the USDA, the following formula is recommended for commercial dog care primary enclosures.

Step-1. Measure the length of the dog from the tip of the nose to the base of the tail in inches (or centimeters) and add 6 inches (or 15.24 centimeters).

Step-2. Multiply the measurement from step-1 by itself to find the number of square inches (or square centimeters) of the space required.

Step-3. Divide the total by 144 to calculate the minimum amount of space in square feet (or square meters).

For example, if a dog's measure is $37'' + 6'' = 43''$

$$43 \times 43 = 1,849''$$

$$1,849'' \div 144 = 12.84 \text{ square feet}$$

Enclosures that will house multiple dogs must meet or exceed the above minimum space to accommodate the number of dogs housed together. No more than 12 dogs should be housed in the same enclosure. Local jurisdictions may require more space, or a smaller number of dogs housed in the same enclosure. Governments of other countries may have requirements that differ from the above calculations.

2.3. Environment. Indoor and outdoor enclosures should provide sustainable comfort.

- Temperatures should be within the limits for canine breeds and acclimation to temperature differentials (outdoors and indoors).
- Humidity should be maintained at 30 to 70 percent.
- Air quality control. Odors must be rapidly eliminated. Fresh Air exchange should equal 15 minutes of fresh air from outside or purified through filters every hour. High air exchange may be required for heavily populated DDF or extreme weather conditions.
- Outdoor enclosures should include shelter from the sun, rain, and other environmental conditions.

2.4. Temporary Enclosures Smaller enclosures may be used during the day for intermittent rest in-between play sessions while under direct supervision. Temporary enclosures should be constructed with the same standards as permanent enclosures, access to the same environmental controls, and should have enough space so the dog can turn around freely, stand, sit, and lie in a normal comfortable position. Include measuring the dog's height plus 6 inches for the minimum crate height.

2.5. Group Compatibility. Dogs housed together must be compatible and under the continued supervision of trained personnel. Dogs exhibiting signs of incompatibility should be immediately separated and housed separately. Signs of incompatibility may include but are not limited to,

- Overly fearful, aggressive, or vicious behavior to another animal

- Evidence of wounds, especially on the legs, around the neck, and face.
- Ruffled or thin hair coat with signs of skin trauma (e.g., scratches or bites).
- Restriction of other dogs' access to water or shelter.
- Dogs lacking normal socialization skills may demonstrate the following signs
 - Spinning
 - Pacing
 - Excessive licking of paws or legs
 - Excessive barking
- It is recommended that the following groups are not housed together.
 - Puppies under 4 months of age mixed with adult dogs other than dam or foster dam.
 - Females in heat (estrus) with male dogs.
 - Dogs having or suspected of having a contagious disease should be isolated.
 - No more than 12 dogs housed in the same enclosure or occupancy limits, whichever is less.

2.6. Groundskeeping. Premises where housing facilities are located, including buildings and surrounding grounds, should be kept clean and in good repair to protect the animals from injury, facilitate sound husbandry practices, and reduce or eliminate breeding and living areas for rodents and other pests and vermin. Premises should be kept free of accumulations of trash, junk, waste products, and discarded matter. Weeds, grasses, and bushes should be controlled to facilitate the cleaning of the premises and pest control.

2.7. Staffing Ratios. Each staff member plays a critical role in maintaining a safe environment while dogs or people are under the care of the canine facility. Management must determine the minimum number of personnel needed at any given time for regularly scheduled activities and unexpected emergencies. Variables include more staff available during peak hours with more dogs or activities. Laws vary that may allow dogs to be left unattended overnight, however, IACP recommends always having at least one staff at the canine facility to ensure that emergency support is readily available for unexpected emergencies.

Refer to your local fire department to ensure that each structure, room, or housing area within the canine facility does not exceed maximum occupancy restrictions. The maximum occupancy for a room is not dictated by how many people or dogs can physically fit in a room, but rather by how quickly people and dogs can be safely evacuated within 2.5 minutes (the estimated time that smoke from the fire may render a person unconscious). The occupancy formula takes into consideration the size of each space and the number of available doors to meet the 2.5-minute average. Occupancy ratio minimums are reduced when there are additional obstructions such as columns, furniture, equipment, and other obstructions.

- Staff assigned to single dog enclosure occupancy (how many enclosures per staff)
- Staff assigned to multiple dog enclosure occupancy.
- Staff vs trainee/apprentice (will the apprentice be left alone w/dog for limited time?)
- Transporting dogs within DFF activities and non-DFF activities.
- How to calculate real-time staffing decisions
 - Determine how many animals for each task
 - Determine how much time it takes to complete a task for one animal in minutes
 - Multiply the minutes by how many animals at the facility
 - Divide the minutes by 60 and round to the nearest hour.
 - Determine how much time is allocated for the task to be completed.

For example, there are 10 dogs in a large kennel, and it takes 20 minutes to prepare, feed & fresh water, collect, wash, and disinfect dishes and the food preparation area. The task must be completed within one (1) hour.

10x20= 200 minutes to prepare & collect

200/60= 3.4 hours rounded to 4 hours

4/1= 4 staff are needed to complete the task of feeding 10 dogs in one hour

2.8. Mixed-use Canine Services and Activities. Canine facilities offering mixed-use canine services and activities should ensure that those areas and/or activities are conducted in separate areas. For example, a room housing dogs participating in Dog Daycare services, should not be in the same room where non-dog daycare services or activities are being conducted. Each type of canine service and activity has different requirements and procedures for the safety of people and dogs. A double-gated entry system should be in place to ensure dogs do not accidentally escape or enter another room. The double-gated entry system requires a person to manually open and close one door before opening and closing the second door. Each door or gate should have self-locking latches that allow for safe passage for both the person and the dog. The canine facility should incorporate business models to accommodate different liabilities for dog training, socialization classes, grooming, or other canine programs.

2.9. Food and Medication. The feeding schedule (including treats), and medications, for each dog, will be determined at the outset of the program and mutually agreed upon by the canine facility and the client in writing and annotated in the canine facility's daily activity logs or records.

2.10. Exercise. Each dog will be provided adequate exercise (playtime) outside of the resting/sleeping enclosure, commensurate with the breed and age of the dog to promote mental stimulation and social companionship with dogs and people. Canine

facilities exercise activities emphasize playtime and ***should not be confused with structured socialization class*** that is Dog Training and/or Behavior services.

2.11. Dogs housed individually in primary enclosures should be provided with regular opportunities to exercise if the floor space is less than two times the minimum required floor space.

- Dogs housed in groups might not require additional exercise opportunities if they are maintained in enclosures that have at least 100% of the required space for each dog.
- Written exercise plan conforming to veterinary-approved canine activities should include,
 - Methods of providing exercise
 - Duration of exercise
 - Frequency of exercise
 - Types of exercise for dogs housed individually
 - Types of exercise for dogs housed in groups
 - Environmental enrichment activities as alternatives to physical exercise when weather or dog that are exempt due to medical conditions. Some examples are problem-solving toys, ramps, cots, large balls, music, or playground equipment that the dogs opt to explore and play with and increased human interaction.
 - Activities that fall under structured socialization, treadmills, or sports related activities should be performed only by Dog Trainers who specialize in those services. For example, a wading pool that a dog can stand in (water does not go higher than mid-leg height) is considered play, whereas a wading pool where a dog must swim to stay afloat is a sports activity.

2.12. Canine Facility Sanitation. The canine facility should have written cleaning procedures for each item that physically contacts a dog. Cleaning protocols should specify cleaning products safe for human and animal use and effective against bacteria and viruses. Not all disinfectants are compatible with certain types of items. Different products and cleaning procedures may apply to,

- Primary enclosures
- Temporary enclosures
- Building floors
- Food storage, preparation areas, feeding bowls, water bowls, and utensils
- Toys and equipment
- Bedding, uniforms, towels, and other fabrics
- Materials that are not easily cleaned should be replaced such as compacted earth/dirt, sand, gravel, grass, ceiling tiles, and absorbent bedding.

2.13. Canine Facility Rodent and Pest Control. It is recommended that a 3-foot-wide perimeter be maintained around all buildings with grass cut short and kept weed-free to eliminate hiding places for mice, rats, and other pests that may carry diseases such

as rabies or parasites such as fleas, ticks, and worms. predatory animals. Grounds and facilities should be periodically inspected for evidence of rodents, pests, fleas, ticks, worms, and predatory animals such as foxes. Preventative treatment is recommended such as barriers, animal traps, or fumigation.

2.14. Canine Facility Abuse Prevention. The canine facility should have a defined policy for the prevention of abuse in its training process.

- Personnel Background checks – The Business should have a process to check the background of each employee or prospective employee involved in the handling or training of client dogs. Some examples of how to accomplish this task are:
 - Perform a full criminal background check
 - Review animal abuse registries

2.15. Canine Facility Negligence Prevention. The canine facility should reduce liability risks and negligence by establishing written policies or procedures that staff must follow to ensure animal welfare compliance. These policies may include but are not limited to

- Cleaning and Sanitation
- How to safely transport a dog within the canine facility enclosures and follow protocols for non-canine facility activities or areas.
- Dog inspection protocols when receiving the dog from the client, before/after services/activities, and delivering the dog back to the client.
- Tracking Log of Dog Activities and assigned canine facility staff.
- Safety Facility Inspection Schedule, Logs, and Reporting Violations.
- Correct use of Authorized canine facility tools and equipment such as collars, tags, leashes, harnesses, etc.
- Safe Handling, Storage, and Disposal of Dog Food, Food Preparation Areas, and utensils.
- Safe Handling, Storage, and Disposal of Hazardous and Waste Materials.

3. Canine Facility Emergency Preparedness

3.1. Facility Emergency Plans. Facility Emergency Plans that include facility evacuation or shelter in place.

3.2. Recognizing Medical Emergencies. Canine facility personnel should be trained in animal husbandry and be able to recognize early signs of stress, illness, injuries, and life-threatening emergencies.

3.3. Emergency Care. The canine facility should have at least one canine facility staff trained in Canine First Aid and Canine CPR scheduled for each shift. Dogs showing signs of needing medical care should immediately be transported to the nearest emergency animal clinic or an on-call veterinarian. The owner or their designated other contact must be immediately notified.

3.4. Response to Dog-Related Emergency.

- How to safely transport dogs out of a facility in an emergency
 - During operating hours (open to the public)
 - During non-operating hours (closed to the public)
- Dog Fights
- Dog Bites
- Dog Aggression
- Loose Dog
- Lost Dog

3.5. Natural Disasters

- Fire
- Flood
- Tornado
- Earthquake
- Hurricane
- Hail

3.6. Man Made Disasters

- Active Shooter
- Domestic Violence (or dispute over dog ownership)
- Riot

Section 3 –Dog Daycare Business Best Practices.

The business of providing daycare services is limited to providing the daily needs of people or animals who cannot be fully independent such as children, elderly, and in this instance dogs. The primary function is ensuring that daycare attendees are safe and secure. Daycare programs that include other services or activities such as education, socialization, other extracurricular activities such as pool-time, or dog training programs should publicly advertise that they are a mixed-use facility and follow recommended standards for those canine specialty programs.

1. **Short-term Temporary Caregiver.** Dog Daycare personnel are temporary caregivers ensuring dogs are safe, protected, and cared for on behalf of the owner (client). Personnel are required to maintain continual supervision while the dog is under their care and should have sufficient knowledge and experience in
 - Canine Husbandry
 - Canine Ethology
 - Canine Body Language
2. **Dog Daycare Activities** include but are not limited to,
 - 2.1. **Resting** (down time) in a cot, crate, or undisturbed safe area.
 - 2.2. **Playing**

- Appropriate dog toys
 - Daycare personnel in enrichment activities
 - Compatible dogs in group settings
 - In safe enclosures (interior and/or exterior)
 - Dog appropriate playgrounds
- Feeding or providing treats as agreed with client

Section 4 –Dog Boarding and Kenneling Business Best Practices

The business of providing boarding whether in a spa-like setting or kennel setting is to provide shelter and meet the daily needs of animals for extended periods exceeding 24 hours. Boarding and Kennels that provide other services or activities such as daycare, socialization, other extracurricular activities such as pool-time, or dog training programs should publicly advertise that they are a mixed-use facility and follow recommended standards for those canine specialty programs.

1. **Long-Term Temporary Caregiver.** Dog boarding and kennel service providers are temporary caregivers ensuring dogs are safe, protected, and cared for. Personnel are required to maintain continual supervision while the dog is under their care and should have sufficient knowledge and experience in
 - Canine Husbandry
 - Canine Ethology

Boarding and kenneling share many activities that include, but are not limited to the dog's welfare,

- Sleeping, undisturbed from distractions, and secured separately from other dogs and animals.
 - Playing
 - Appropriate dog toys
 - Compatible dogs in group settings
 - In safe enclosures (interior and/or exterior)
 - Dog-appropriate playgrounds
 - Feeding with unrestricted access to clean water
 - Sanitation and pest prevention protocols are in place
2. **Boarding Activities'** target audiences are dogs that live within the owner's home (continued interaction with household residents). The boarding facility business model is limited to available personnel and resources that should ensure
 - Greater staff ratio to dogs
 - Concierge (one-on-one) services for treats, playtime, special snacks, etc.
 - Enclosures may replicate small house-like rooms
 - Greater attention to species-specific environmental needs
 - Facility can accommodate different ages and/or behavioral temperaments

- Staff are paid employees experienced in animal husbandry and ethology.
3. **Kennel Activities'** target audiences are dogs that do not have owners, are lost (until the owner has been found) or have temporary injunctions (placed in quarantine by local authorities) such as animal services or rescue organizations. In some instances, board and train programs may be considered a kennel activity for programs lasting more than one month based on the temporary transfer of the dog from the owner to another individual who is the primary caregiver for an extended time. Kennel activities include, but are not limited to
- Smaller staff ratio to dogs depending on the institution's budget and available resources.
 - Dogs having fewer human interactions and/or more interaction with other dogs.
 - Overpopulation may restrict proper species-appropriate environments.
 - Implement environmental enrichment programs to counter extended kennel stay in a home-like environment.
 - Staff are well intended volunteers who may or may not be experienced in animal husbandry and/or ethology.
 - *Dogs tend to show more kennel stress over long periods of time and deteriorate.*

Section 5 –Dog Training Business Best Practices

Dog training program locations are conducted in various types of structures and locations that may be owned privately (client's home), commercially (dog training facility, mall, restaurant, hospitals, etc.), or government (parks and/or buildings) for the safety and welfare of its occupants. It is the dog trainer's responsibility to ensure that locations they recommend and select for dog training activities follow the best business practices for canine facilities that may apply to the activities being conducted.

4. **Dog Trainers as "professional handlers."** Handlers should have sufficient knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience on the level of complexity for the different types of dog training services they advertise, solicit, and/or accept the responsibility to train, such as,
- Canine temperament
 - Canine Disposition
 - Breed Traits
 - Age (puppy, adult, and senior stages of life)
 - Shaping natural dog behaviors
 - Rehabilitation of problematic dog behaviors
 - Recognize clinical abnormal behavioral issues
5. **Dog Trainers are Teachers.** Teachers should have sufficient knowledge, skills and abilities, and experience in knowing how the human and canine mind learns through environmental influences. The dog trainer should possess the intuitive aptitude to assess the dog and client's learning strengths and limitations, the ability to select the appropriate training program and be able to assess its effectiveness during each lesson.

- How humans and canines learn (similarities and differences).
 - Selecting and implementing the correct training approach before the laying of hands.
 - Intimately attentive to spatial pressures (environment) affecting the client and dog.
6. **Dog Trainers are Educators.** Educators should have sufficient knowledge, skills and abilities, and experience in short, medium, and long-term-range planning as well as the client's abilities and commitment. The goal for any dog trainer is to help the client become dog handlers with sufficient skills to initiate and maintain a healthy balanced relationship with their dogs. Much of that success requires the dog trainer's ability to have,
- Effective communication (listening as well as speaking)
 - Creating an effective learning environment
7. **Pre-training Evaluations.** Evaluations assess the dog and client's knowledge, skills, and abilities prior to the start of the training program to determine which training program or level of complexity the dog and client are best suited to depending on their understanding and level of proficiency at the time of the evaluation. Pre-training evaluations also provide the trainer with the dog's health (medical history) and social development with the client.

When pre-training evaluation does not occur, the first lesson will be the most challenging in dealing with unknown factors. In a group setting, the unknowns are multiplied and require an astute dog trainer who can act quickly to unexpected dog/client reactions during lessons.

- **In-person/face-to-face:** In-depth questionnaire between the dog trainer, the client, and the client's dog (if available). This type of pre-screening provides the dog trainer with the benefit of firsthand observation and body language.
- **Virtual:** Provides visual observation of the client and dog without the trainer present as a potential distraction.
- **Telephone:** In-depth conversation between dog trainer and client. The lack of in-person communication can be partially compensated with voice, tone, and asking thorough and follow-up questions during the conversation.
- **Email or Texting:** Questions and Answers (Q&A's) between the dog trainer and client. E-mail and texting are not as spontaneous as a live conversation but still allow each person to influence information exchange by allowing more time for thought and reflection before responding.
- **Class Registration:** A form for pre-selected training programs (goals and objectives are already established) that asks only for the client's general information. This type of form does not provide sufficient information for a comprehensive pre-screening.

- **One Way Client Filled On-line Application:** The answers to an extensive questionnaire will reflect the client's understanding or perception of their dog's behavior (one-sided viewpoint).
8. **Training Contracts.** Client Information should include as much information and details to ensure expectations are clearly defined. The document should include legible printed names, signatures, and dates by the dog trainer and client. Some of these may include, but are not limited to,
- **Owner's name** (address, telephone, and email)
 - **Dog's name** (age, health, and dog behavioral issues identified by the client)
 - **Training dates** (schedule or equivalent). Provide how much time and sequencing will be allocated to hands-on teaching. Basic or Introduction of new behaviors and skills may be taught in smaller increments in a dog training program lasting six (6) weeks or less (short program). Intermediate and Advanced behaviors/skills may be added with additional short programs at the client's pace. Clients seeking to teach their dogs complex skills, such as for sports, competition, working, and/or service dogs require more time and effort (long program). These training programs may last two (2) months to two (2) years.
 - **Program goals.** The goals identify what the new behavior(s) or skill(s) the dog and/or client will learn, such as obedience commands, behaviors to be addressed, or specific skill sets. ***It is the trainer's responsibility, not the client's, to establish realistic goals based on the training program's time allocated.***
 - **Program objectives.** Objectives identify how much of an improvement (to what extent) will the dog's behavior or new skill improve. This information is critical in establishing what the goals target behavior or skill will really look like in both the eyes of the trainer and client. It is this detailed information that guides the dog's progression during the training program (lesson to lesson improvement). ***It is the trainer's responsibility, not the client's, in establishing "when a goal has been achieved" by an observable (visual) measurable performance.***
 - **Training philosophy and methods.** It is important that the client understands what they will be required to learn to be competent in teaching and maintaining the dog's new behavior. This should prompt the client to ask questions and afford them the opportunity to consciously accept the trainer's philosophy or method prior to signing the contract or decline the services.
 - **Training tools and equipment.** List the supplies needed for training so the responsible party (trainer and/or client) can purchase them for use during the training program.

- **Critical Limitations.** Program content, duration, or costs needing adjustments based on unforeseen circumstances.
 - **Consumer Acknowledgement.** This protects both the business (dog trainer) and consumer (client) by making sure important aspects of the training have been discussed or presented. Some of these aspects may include but are not limited to.
 - The trainer's right to terminate the training.
 - The client's right to terminate the training.
 - Payment requirements.
 - Refund policies.
 - Inherent dangers of working with animals.
 - Liability waiver and/or disclaimer.
9. **Dog Training Programs.** Professional dog trainers recommend their training program as the solution to the client's situation or problem. The dog training program should specifically address the dog's needs and client's ability to learn and maintain the required skills. Flexibility should be included to adapt to clients who are unable to follow or maintain the pace for the selected training program due to no pre-screening evaluations or unforeseen events beyond the trainer or client's control.

Dog training programs should be taught by competent dog trainers. A dog training business is not the correct forum to experiment with new concepts without the guidance or mentorship of another canine professional possessing the required knowledge, skills and abilities level. Dog training programs should be structured to accommodate dogs of all ages, health, temperament, and maturity based on previously learned abilities. Training programs may include unique environmental factors such as physical terrains, noises, smells, machinery, people, or animals.

- Puppy class (little or no distraction, introductory level, limited discipline)
- Introduction (minor distraction or level of discipline)
- Intermediate (moderate distraction or level of discipline)
- Advanced (tolerance for high distractions or level of discipline)
- Competition (able to handle high stress or level of discipline)
- Specialized programs
 - Service Dog Training (specific tasks, affected disabilities, and laws pertaining to service animals)
 - Detection Dog Training (explosives, narcotics, cadaver, tracking, bed bugs, hazardous chemicals, animal scat, hunting, etc.)
 - Tracking/Search and Rescue (different environmental terrains or hazardous conditions)
 - Sports (dock diving, competition nose-works, agility, freestyle, frisbee, etc.)
 - Protection Sport

10. **Dog Training Environments.** Animal behavior is a result of “biology and environment”. The dog trainer’s challenge is to help develop or re-shape a dog’s behavior as a means for canine enrichment, socialization, play, work, or teaching life skills through planned activities designed to produce a new outcome. The training environment is a combination of physical location, structure of class, and structure of training activities.

- **Create a Positive Atmosphere.** A positive atmosphere is where the dog and client feel comfortable. Students need time to prepare mentally and physically for the challenges of learning something new (natural stress).
- **Foster Open Communication.** The trainer should be intuitive in reading cues that signal when dogs or owners are uncomfortable, confused, frustrated, or have questions.
- **Distractions.** Embrace the distractions as opportunities to reinforce training.
- **Provide Motivation.** Praise is not limited to the trainer marking success by rewards (food, toy, verbal acknowledgment). The sense of accomplishment can be structured by ensuring that the challenges can be achieved at the dog and owner’s pace.
- **Physical Environment.** Classrooms take on the personality of the instructor depending on how the instructor sets up the classroom in anticipation of the training activities, this may include placement of furniture, equipment, use of space, or special set-ups.

11. **Lesson Plans.** Written lesson plans provide a sense of direction for what the training program will attempt to accomplish. The plan should describe

- What is to be learned (goals)
- How it will be learned (activities)
- How much time it will take to learn (number of lessons)
- To what level of mastery (objectives)

Written plans also provide additional valuable information on needed supplies, materials, locations, time management, and the roles of all who participate in the training program. that informs the client what activities the trainer will be implementing for the dog and the client’s role in those activities. Writing effective lesson plans requires that the canine professional dog trainer employ the following recommendations.

- **Know your objective.** Each lesson should have the goals of that lesson at the top of the lesson plan.
- **Write your overview.** Outline the big ideas of what you hope to accomplish during the lesson.

- **Plan your timeline.** If there's a lot to cover in a fixed amount of time, break the plan into sections to accommodate for changes should they happen.
- **Get to know the student (client/dog).** Identify what their learning styles are, what they might already know, and where they may be deficient.
- **Address a variety of learning styles.** Be prepared and flexible to adjust and change the lesson plan, the activities, or the goals/objectives if the client/dog is not responding to the activities as planned.
- **Form a backup plan.** Always plan for unexpected changes in weather, location, planned activities, or unforeseen setbacks.

12. **Homework.** In part, homework is a transfer of responsibility onto the client to help them succeed. Previously assigned homework should be reviewed at the beginning of each new lesson. The client should be able to demonstrate the required proficiency from the trainer's perspective of where the dog and/or client should be at any given point of the training program. Homework should be structured to assist the client.

- Reinforce the dog's new behavior or skills.
- Challenge the client to be proficient by the next lesson.
- Prepare the client for the next lesson for a new behavior or skill.
- Reading material that may include video links, supports why the homework is critical to the dog's success.

13. **Handouts.** Handouts are documents that the dog trainer gives the client as teaching tools, homework assignments, and/or educational literature directly associated with the dog training program.

Section 6 – Dog Transportation Business Best Practices

1. **Transitional Areas.** When animals are moved from one location to another, both humans and animals experience physical and emotional changes during the process. Great care should be taken to ensure the transition is well thought out, methodical, conducted under the least amount of stress, and have contingency plans for unforeseen events or emergencies.

1.1. **Between different types of locations.** Each location you visit will have unique environmental factors, physical layout, type of canine services provided, and different drop off and pick up procedures. Vehicles used for transporting dogs must be equipped to safely transport dogs, such as secured crates rated for transportation.

- Residential homes
- Professional Canine Services

- Veterinary (wellness check or medical emergency)
- Grooming
- Dog Daycare
- Dog Boarding
- Rescue Organizations
- Animal Shelter
- Research Facilities
- Cargo Transit facilities
 - Airports
 - Railroad
 - Ships

1.2. Between different services or operations in both single-use and multiple-use facilities.

At a minimum, a single-use facility will have a reception area with some form of separation from the work area. These types of areas may or may not have obvious visual or physical boundaries, also known as thresholds, that include, but are not limited to,

- Hallways, open partitions (walls with no door), and open spaces that,
 - Are shared by other activities, people, and/or animals
 - Connect to other structures with no barriers
- Doors, gates, elevators, and/or gates of buildings, rooms, crates, kennels, fenced areas, and transportation (vehicles, buses, airplanes, trucks, railways, boats, ships, etc.)
- Equipment used in playrooms, grooming, and training, such as bathtubs, tables, pools, cots, crates, kennels, etc.
- Multiple single-use areas such as grooming salon, daycare rooms, classrooms for dog training, playground, specialized play areas (agility, pool, etc.), kennels, food prep areas, examination rooms, storage rooms, administrative offices, etc.

1.3. Transportation Protocols. Protocols are official procedures that identify the framework of how the canine professional will safely and efficiently move dogs that are under their care or supervision. Written protocols will ensure consistency and help reduce liabilities.

- **Normal operations** protocols during business hours should identify how staff are to move the dogs in and out of each area or structure by implementing visual/physical thresholds that help to reduce an escaped dog situation.
- **Emergency Response** protocols should identify staff who are trained to respond to emergencies. For example, a groomer in a dog training facility might not be prepared to handle a dog fight in another room but they should be able to handle a medical emergency of a dog in their care. Protocols responding to medical conditions will be different than for man-made or natural disasters such as fires. Often overlooked are written procedures for emergencies that may

occur when the dogs under their care do not have staff, such as overnight boarding or staff temporarily step away from the facility for errands or lunch. What doesn't happen in a thousand years can happen in the blink of an eye.

- **Reactionary** protocols to dog fights, loose dogs, and lost dogs are equally important in that the canine service provided must recuperate full control of the dog in as short a period. Contingency plans, such as double gated entryways between structures can be the difference between a loose dog in an internal hallway as opposed to a loose dog in traffic.
2. **Public Transportation vs Private Transportation.** Canine professionals should follow their local laws when transporting animals for profit or in conjunction with a business or organization to determine if the transportation services are regulated, licensed, exempted, controlled, or prohibited.
- For example, in the USA, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) classifies any enterprise transporting regulated animals for hire as a common carrier which includes, but is not limited to airlines, railroads, motor carriers (vehicles), shipping lines, and other enterprises).
 - **Intermediate Handler.** An intermediate handler is *“anyone taking custody of regulated animals in connection with transporting them on public carriers”*, such as public streets and highways.
 - **Private Carrier.** Private carriers are not licensed to offer a service to the public (charge fee to transport) and generally provide transportation on an irregular or ad hoc basis for owners, such as in rural areas.
3. **Dog Transportation Personnel** are temporary caregivers ensuring dogs are safe, protected, and cared for on behalf of the dog's owner (client). Personnel are required to maintain continual supervision while the dog is under their care and should have sufficient knowledge and experience on:
- Canine husbandry
 - Canine ethology
4. **Dog Transportation Client** may include,
- Owner's personal pet
 - Commercial breeders
 - Commercial retail
 - Military, Government, or municipal authorities
 - Authorized personnel. The dog transporter should ensure that only qualified trained personnel receive the dog to ensure the dog has been left in capable hands. Qualified trained personnel in these instances may include but not limited to:
 - Veterinarian or Veterinary Technician

- Animal Control Officer
- Rescue or Shelter Staff
- Dog Behaviorist
- Dog Trainer
- Dog Daycare Staff

5. **Dog Transportation Animal Welfare.** Principal requirements for animal welfare while in transit include but are not limited to,

- Persons transporting dogs will be trained and competent to handle, transport, and provide emergency assistance.
- Persons transporting dogs will do so in a manner that does not cause injury or undue suffering.
- All necessary arrangements have been made in advance to minimize the length of the journey and meet the dog's needs during the journey.
- The dogs are fit for transportation
- Emergency trips for veterinary care should be timely without compromising safety
- A transport vehicle is designed, constructed, maintained, and operated to ensure optimum safety and security while dogs are in transport.

6. **Handling a Live Dog**

- **Pick-up.** The client, or authorized person must be legally able to transfer the possession of the dog to the dog transporter.
 - The dog transporter will conduct an inspection check and document the dog's condition prior to accepting the dog. Exceptions for the inspection check may occur if the dog is feral (scared or aggressive), sick, or injured. Inspection results should be documented in writing signed by both parties.
 - Do not attempt to transport a dog that you cannot handle while you are transporting the dog. Dog transport personnel are responsible for the dog's safety and must be able to handle the dog in the event of an unforeseen emergency while in transit.
 - Dog transport personnel must be able to recognize when a dog is in distress that may be the onset of a medical emergency.
- **In transit.** Dog transportation personnel should ensure they are driving in a manner that does not elevate the dog's stress by avoiding sudden acceleration or

deceleration, sharp cornering, noise, vibration, rough terrain, or transporting excessive or incompatible animals regardless of breed or species unless they are from the same household or canine facility.

- **Destination Drop-off.** Ensure the client or authorized personnel are ready to receive and evaluate the dog upon arrival and documented. Dog transport personnel should participate or observe the owner or authorized personnel conduct a visual healthy inspection prior to your departure. Exceptions for the inspection check may occur if the dog is feral (scared or aggressive), sick, or injured. Retain a copy of the health inspection for your records.

7. Transportation Enclosures and Environment. All transportation enclosures should ensure dogs are comfortable while on the road and follow canine facility standards for ventilation, space, no sharp edges, flooring, temperature, and absorbent bedding (for potential accidents).

- Crates and cages must not be stacked upon each other in a manner that:
 - Increases animal stress and/or discomfort.
 - Compromises ventilation.
 - Allows waste material to fall from the cage above into the cage below.
 - Interfere with care and observation
 - Hinders emergency removal.
- Thermometers and heat sensors should be placed in the animal area of the vehicle at the dog's level or immediate proximity.
- Vehicles will not be left unattended for more than 15 minutes (rest breaks) without engine running if air conditioning or heating is in use while in transit (extreme temperatures) and vehicle is locked.
- Dogs' should not be tethered in lieu of a US Department of Agriculture (USDA) or International Air Transport Association (IATA) approved transportation cargo crates or kennels.
- For cargo transportation (air, truck, railway, ship) includes if the temperature exceeds 80°F (27°C) or if the temperature falls below 20°F (-7°C) while the animal is on the ground at any point in the routing.
- Observe seasonal restrictions for dog travel. For the dog's safety, they should not be shipped during extreme weather. A Certificate of Acclimation is required when temperatures fall between 20°F (-7°C) and 45°F (7°C).

8. Transportation Modes. Select the mode of transportation providing the least amount of stress and/or shortest duration. Avoid sacrificing the dog's stress over the cost of transport whenever feasible.

- **Passenger Vehicle.** Vehicles provide the most flexibility to stop while in transit for scheduled or unscheduled breaks or emergencies. Road trips for longer distances take more time, however, may be a better option for dogs acclimated to traveling in vehicles. Vehicle transport has limited space providing a higher human to dog ratio. Passenger vehicles used for full time canine transport are usually equipped with permanent steel or aluminum cage inserts for maximum safety in the event of an accident.
 - **Truck or Kennel Trailer.** Cargo type commercial vehicles and trailers should be equipped with permanent steel or aluminum crates or cargo transport crates. These vehicles can accommodate more dogs resulting in a lower human to dog ratio. Never transport more dogs than you can handle in the event of an emergency.
 - **Commercial Cargo Transit.** Commercial cargo is regulated by Airlines, Railroad, or Cargo Ships. Each mode of cargo transport is regulated by national and international laws and regulations that are not covered by the BBP-Dog Transportation.
9. **Hydration.** Dogs will always be provided fresh water during transit to avoid stress induced dehydration. Exceptions to this rule may apply if the trip is conducted in a passenger vehicle or kennel transport vehicle and will be less than 4 hours. If the four (4) hour transportation includes extreme hot and humid temperatures or high altitudes, provide water every two (2) hours.
10. **Nutrition.** Dogs should be fasting while in transit. Confirm the dog's eating schedule and if warranted due to extended travel, ensure the client supplied ample food and or medications for the trip. This may include the owner providing a weeks' worth of food if you are transporting the dog to a Kennel or Boarding facility. Exceptions may occur only with a copy of the Veterinarians written instructions that you will keep for your records.
11. **Rest and Break Relief**
- Dogs should be allowed to rest every 4-6 hours, unless it is prohibited with a copy of the owner's, Veterinary, or government official's written instructions that you will keep for your records.
 - Dogs should be provided adequate relief breaks to walk, stretch their legs, and eliminate.
 - Sleepovers. Dog transport personnel who are driving are prohibited from driving more than 12 hours. If weather permits, dogs may remain within the vehicle enclosure overnight, but must be unloaded, provided exercise, fed in a safe and secure location.. In the case of extreme heat and humidity, dogs must be unloaded and provided adequate sleeping arrangements.
12. **Sedation.** The use of tranquilizers is unpredictable. Do not transport a sedated dog without a copy of the Veterinarian's written instructions that you will keep for your records.

13. **Understanding the Risks.** Transport via cargo can be stressful for animals. Exposure to unfamiliar environments, people and movements impacts each animal differently and poses risks that could lead to illness, injury, escape, or death.

- While obtaining a **Health Certificate**, please discuss the risks of air travel with your client. Consider the animal's age, medical history of pre-existing conditions, and/or whether it has anxiety disorders that may be exacerbated during travel.
- **Animal age:** Since life expectancy varies among breeds, there is no maximum age set for air travel. However, impaired vision or hearing, heart, liver or kidney disease, cancer, arthritis, diabetes, senility, and weakness can often impact older animals. Please ensure you have discussed the stress of travel and its impact on your pet due to its age with your veterinarian.
- **Breed:** Brachycephalic (snub-nosed) dogs and cats and their mixes are not permitted on Delta or Delta Connection flights. See [Delta Cargo](#), opens in a new window for a full list of embargoed dog and cat breeds.

14. **Health Certificate.** A health certificate is required when crossing state lines, international, shipping dogs as cargo, and/or checked as baggage. A health certificate is required and must be issued by a licensed veterinarian within 10 days of transport and must include:

- Shipper's name and address
- Tag numbers or tattoos assigned to the animal
- Starting August 1st 2024, age of the animal being shipped: CDC regulations require canines to be at least 6 months of age at the time of entry or return to the United States.
- Statement that the animal is in good health (if the shipper knows that the pet is pregnant, it must be noted on the health certificate)
- List of administered inoculations when applicable
- Signature of the veterinarian
- Date of the certificate

Approved by Board of Directors on March 12, 2026

