



**Renfrewshire
Council**

Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963

Home Boarding of Dogs

Licensing Conditions and Guidance

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1. GENERAL LICENSING CONDITIONS *Guidance*

- 1.1 Unless otherwise stated, these conditions shall apply to all buildings and areas to which dogs have access and/or which are used in association with the boarding of dogs.

Applicants should be advised to contact relevant departments within the Local Authority to ensure that no additional permissions are required for example Planning and Building Control. It is also advisable that the applicant contacts their landlord or mortgage lender to ensure that the activity is permissible under any lease or tenancy agreement and checks any use restrictions on their title deeds or community burdens.

It is recommended that the following advice is clearly stated on the licence application form:- The applicant should consult with Planning and Building Control to ensure all necessary permissions are obtained. The applicant should also ensure that the proposed operations are compatible with their Title Deeds or lease.

- 1.2 The Licensee must ensure that the establishment is covered by adequate and suitable public liability insurance and, where necessary, adequate and suitable employers liability insurance. In addition to this it is recommended that care, custody and control insurance is in place.

Most liability insurance policies will cover most incidents however it is recommended that home boarders consider additional 'care and custody' cover that will cover any negligence claims. It is also recommended that the Licensee check that their Public Liability Insurance will cover dogs boarded from different households.

- 1.3 No dog registered under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 must be accepted for home boarding.
- 1.4 Dog hybrids registered under the Dangerous Wild Animal Act 1976 (e.g. Wolf Hybrids) and dogs subject to Dog Control Notices served under the Control of Dogs (Scotland) Act 2010 are not to be accepted for home boarding.
- 1.5 Entire males and bitches in season or bitches due to be in season during the boarding must not be boarded together or boarded with resident dogs.
- 1.6 Dogs under 6 months shall only be boarded if they are suitably vaccinated and difficulties had not been identified during a trial socialisation period. There is an exception for puppies where they are being boarded with mother or siblings provided no other dogs are boarded on the premises at any time.
- 1.7 A copy of the Licence and its associated conditions and a Certificate of Insurance shall be made available to each client.
- 1.8 The maximum number of day boarders to be kept at any one time is noted on your licence. The maximum number of night time boarders to be kept at any one time is marked on your licence.

The overall number of dogs to be boarded, and the number of dogs from different households to be boarded will usually be dependent on the size of the premises, including any outside areas and advice from the council's veterinary officer. In determining the appropriate number of dogs consideration should also be given to whether the premises are constructed to allow:

- Adequate space for the proposed number of dogs.
- Sufficient available space to be able to keep the dogs separately if required.
- The separation of dogs showing signs of disease.

- 1.9 Dogs must not be boarded with any cat, unless they normally live together in the same household or there is prior agreement with the client and difficulties had not been identified during a trial socialisation period.
- 1.10 Only dogs from the same household may be boarded at the same time unless the following precautions are taken:
- Specific written consent of each household is given, showing confirmation that they are content for their dogs to be boarded with others.
 - A mandatory, trial (documented) familiarisation session for all dogs prior to stay.
 - Separation of dogs from different households in secure areas when left unattended.

- Separate feeding of dogs (unless from the same family and normally fed together) to minimise the likelihood of dispute and aggression.

- 1.11 The Licensee will be required to make an assessment of the risks of home boarding to include the risk to or caused by children who are likely to be at the property.
- 1.12 The means of transportation, dogs, premises and anything therein and the Register may be inspected at all reasonable times by a local authority officer or veterinary surgeon authorised by the local authority under Section 2 (1) of the Act.
- 1.13 Dogs must wear a collar and tag during the stay of boarding. The tag must be made of a durable and hard wearing material and shall display the contact telephone number of the boarding establishment.
- 1.14 The establishment must be operated in such a manner that it does not cause a statutory nuisance to occupiers of neighbouring properties.

2. CONSTRUCTION *Guidance*

- 2.1 Dogs must live in the home as family pets. There must be no external construction of buildings, cages or runs for boarded animals.

The purpose of home boarding licensing is to promote a homely safe environment that protects the wellbeing of dogs being boarded in the premises. It is not acceptable for dogs to be kept in runs or cages or kennel type buildings. This type of boarding would not come under the scope of home boarding.

- 2.2 There must be adequate space, light, heat and ventilation for the dogs.

The applicant should have carried out a suitable and sufficient risk assessment of the areas of the home that the dog has access to so as to ensure that there are no risks to the health, safety and welfare of animals being boarded.

- 2.3 As far as reasonably practicable, all areas/rooms within the home to which boarded dogs have access, must have no physical or chemical hazards that may cause injury to the dogs.

- 2.4 There must be sufficient space available to keep the dogs separately if required.

3. KITCHEN FACILITIES *Guidance*

- 3.1 Airtight containers must be provided for the storage of dry foods. Uncooked food and the remains of opened tins must be stored in covered, non-metal, leak proof containers in the fridge.

It is not expected that separate kitchen facilities such as storage cupboards or fridges are provided for home boarding. It is expected that sufficient provision is made for the storage of foodstuffs, that it is kept in a hygienic condition and risks from pests and vermin are minimised.

- 3.2 All bulk supplies of food shall be kept in vermin proof containers.

4. CLEANLINESS *Guidance*

- 4.1 All areas where the dogs have access to, including the kitchen etc must be kept clean and free from accumulations of dirt and dust and must be kept in such a manner as to be conducive to maintenance of disease control and dog comfort.

One of the attractions of home boarding is the comfortable homely environment provided for dogs while away from their owners. It is therefore not expected that all floors, walls and fixtures within the establishment will be impervious. Vinyl or other impervious finish on the kitchen floor will however facilitate cleaning of this area. Carpets, cushions etc. in rooms dogs have access to shall be vacuumed on a daily basis and more frequently if required. All bedding and blankets used by dogs in the course of the business shall be maintained in a clean parasitic free condition and must be laundered between use by individual dogs.

- 4.2 All excreta and soiled material must be removed from all areas used by dogs at least daily and more often if necessary. Disposal facilities for animal waste must be agreed with the Licensing Authority.
- 4.3 All bedding areas must be kept clean and dry.
- 4.4 Facilities must be provided for the proper reception, storage and disposal of all waste. Particular care should be taken to segregate clinical waste arising from the first aid treatment and handling of dogs with infectious diseases. The final route for all such waste shall comply with current waste regulations.
- 4.5 Measures must be taken to minimise the risks from rodents, insects and other pests within the premises.

5. DISEASE CONTROL *Guidance*

- 5.1 Adequate precautions must be taken to prevent and control the spread of infectious and contagious disease and parasites amongst the dogs, staff and visitors.

Staff should be observant and look out for any signs of illness when admitting dogs to the establishment. Animals showing any signs of illness shall not be boarded. Any animal becoming ill during the period of boarding shall be returned home. Where this is not feasible the dog shall be separated from other dogs on the establishment until collected by its owner or, if the condition requires veterinary treatment, taken to a vet.

It is recommended that the Licensee has an Infection Control Policy detailing the steps to be taken in the event of a sick dog arriving at the premises or becoming ill during the period of stay. Staff and dog owners shall be made aware of such a policy.

In order to minimise the risk of the spread of infection all water bowls and feeding bowls shall be cleaned and disinfected on a daily basis or more frequently if required.

- 5.2 Proof must be provided that boarded and resident dogs have current vaccinations against Canine Distemper, Infectious Canine Hepatitis (Canine adenovirus), Leptospirosis (*L. canicola* and *L. icterohaemorrhagiae*) and Canine Parvovirus and other relevant diseases. With the exception of where a bitch and her pups are boarded together, the course of vaccination must have been completed at least four weeks before the first date of boarding or in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. A record that this proof has been supplied must be kept on-site throughout the period that the dog is boarded.
- 5.3 Advice from a veterinary surgeon must be sought in case of signs of disease, injury or illness. Where any dog is sick or injured, any instructions for its treatment, which have been given by a veterinary surgeon, must be strictly followed.
- 5.4 A well-stocked first-aid kit suitable for use on dogs must be available and accessible on site and in any vehicle used for transporting boarded dogs.

First aid kits for dogs must be kept well stocked. These should be available on the premises and on each vehicle used for the transportation of boarded dogs. Advice on the contents should be sought from a veterinary officer.

- 5.5 The Licensee must be registered with a veterinary practice that can provide help and advice. Where night time boarding is carried out registration should be with a 24-hour veterinary practice. The clients own veterinary practice must be known and consulted if necessary.
- 5.6 Precautions must be taken to prevent the spread of fleas, ticks, intestinal parasites and other parasites in both boarded and resident dogs. A record must be maintained of all routine and emergency treatment for parasites.

Where there is evidence of external parasites including fleas, ticks and lice the dog should be treated with a proprietary insecticide. Regular flea treatments should be carried out to the areas of house accessed by dogs using a suitable pet – safe product. All insecticide and disinfectants must be used strictly in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

- 5.7 The premises shall be regularly treated for fleas and parasites with a veterinary recommended product.

- 5.8 Cleaning substances must be suitable for the purpose and the cleaning substance and its fumes must pose no risks to the dogs.

6. ISOLATION *Guidance*

- 6.1 Dogs showing signs of any disease or illness shall be isolated from any other dogs until veterinary advice is obtained. There must be sufficient facilities within the licensed premises to ensure effective separation of any sick animal.

A suitable isolation facility is required to house any sick dogs. This may be a spare cage which can be located in a spare room or warm garage. The temperature of this area shall be adequate to ensure the sick dog is comfortable. Any dog in isolation shall be checked regularly and shall not be left unattended on the premises at any time. The isolation cage will only be used until such time as the dog can be returned to its owner or taken to a vet.

- 6.2 The Licensee must inform the Licensing Authority by the next working day on becoming aware that a dog has developed an infectious disease.
- 6.3 Following an episode of infectious disease during any stay, the premises must undergo suitable cleaning and a reasonable quarantine period before new boarders are admitted. This period will be specified by the Licensing Authority as agreed with their authorised veterinary surgeon. A record must be maintained of each episode of infectious disease, together with details of the implemented quarantine period.
- 6.4 The Licensing Authority must be informed by the next working day of any animal death on the premises. The Licensee must make arrangements for the body to be stored under suitable conditions until the owner returns.

7. FOOD AND WATER SUPPLIES *Guidance*

- 7.1 All dogs shall have an adequate supply of suitable food as directed by the client.

Dogs should be fed in accordance with the owner's wishes. Where food is not provided by the owner of the dog, the Licensee shall, unless by prior arrangement, provide boarded dogs with a nutritionally balanced and healthy diet. Food should not be left out for excessive periods of time. Meal times should be managed such that dogs are fed individually. This is to prevent aggressive behaviour developing and to check individual dogs are consuming a sufficient quantity of food. A supply of wholesome water must be available at all times. Containers must be cleaned and replenished frequently. Non-spillage bowls are available for use in vehicles used to transport boarded dogs and may be useful in spells of warm weather.

- 7.2 Fresh drinking water must be available at all times (unless advised otherwise by a veterinary surgeon) and drinking vessels cleaned at least once per day.
- 7.3 Clients must be encouraged to provide each dog with its own clean bedding, bowls, grooming materials etc. If supplied, these items must be cleaned regularly to prevent cross-infection. The Licensee should be able to provide extra bedding material as required.
- 7.4 Where necessary, eating and drinking vessels must be provided, and where so, they must be capable of being easily cleansed and disinfected to prevent cross contamination. They must also be maintained in a clean condition. Feeding bowls must be cleaned or disposed of after each meal and each dog must be provided with its own bowl.

8. REGISTER *Guidance*

- 8.1 A register must be kept of all dogs boarded. The information kept must include the following:
- Date and time of arrival;
 - Name of dog, any identification system such as microchip number or tattoo;
 - Description, breed, age and gender of dog;
 - Name, address and telephone number of owner or keeper;
 - Name, address and telephone number of contact person whilst boarded;

- Name, address and telephone number of dog's veterinary surgeon;
- Anticipated and actual date of departure;
- Proof of current vaccinations, medical history and requirements;
- Health, welfare, nutrition and exercise requirements;
- Date of last season for a bitch; and
- Written agreement in respect of emergency veterinary treatment.

The Register is a useful record of all the dogs which are boarded within the establishment. This must be kept up to date and shall be available for inspection at all reasonable times for the purpose of checking numbers of dogs on the premises, details of any sick dog, any medication administered etc. Details of all day boarders and night boarders shall be recorded and kept for a minimum period of 2 years.

- 8.2 The Register shall be available for inspection at all reasonable times by an officer of the local authority or an authorised veterinary surgeon.
- 8.3 The Register must be kept readily available for a minimum period of 2 years and kept in such a manner as to allow an authorised officer easy access to such information.
- 8.4 Details of any medication administered must be recorded, including type of medication, quantity and time administered.
- 8.5 Where records are computerised, a back-up copy must be kept. The Register must also be available to key members of staff of the establishment at all times.

9. SUPERVISION *Guidance*

- 9.1 A fit and proper person with relevant experience must be present to exercise supervision and deal with emergencies whenever dogs are boarded at the premises.

Boarded dogs are the responsibility of the Licensee who must take adequate steps to ensure their safety and welfare for the duration of the time the dogs are in their care. Close supervision of the dogs is necessary particularly where dogs are from more than one family and are being boarded together following a trial socialisation period. Where overnight boarding is carried out the dogs must be kept separated. The Act prohibits local authorities from issuing a boarding establishment licence to any person prohibited from keeping animals. It is recommended that as part of the 'fit and proper person test' that the Licensee signs a declaration stating they are not disqualified from keeping:

- A boarding establishment for animals
- A pet shop
- A dog or having custody of animals etc.

It is advisable to consult with the SSPCA and other relevant agencies/ Departments in determining applications. For reasons of safety, no one under the age of 16 must be left alone at any time with a boarded dog. A responsible person must therefore always be present when anyone under the age of 16 is in the presence of boarded dogs.

- 9.2 Dogs must be visited at regular intervals, as necessary, for their health, safety and welfare, and must not be left unattended for longer than 3 hours at a time and then not on a routine basis.
- 9.3 No person under 16 years of age is permitted to walk boarded dogs in public places unless supervised by a fit and proper person.
- 9.4 No child under 16 shall be left unaccompanied with boarded dogs at any time.
- 9.5 If there is a resident dog within the household, the boarded dogs must be kept separated on the occasions when they are left unattended.

10. TRAINING *Guidance*

- 10.1 A written training policy for staff must be provided. Systematic training of staff must be demonstrated to have been carried out.

The licensee must formulate a written training policy for permanent, part-time and seasonal workers. The following topics should be considered as being an integral part of any training plan:

- Cleanliness & Hygiene
- Animal Welfare
- Feeding and Food Preparation
- Disease Control
- Recognition and action in relation to sick animals
- Health & Safety
- Emergency Procedures

11. FIRE / EMERGENCY PRECAUTIONS *Guidance*

- 11.1 Appropriate steps must be taken for the protection of the dogs in case of fire or other emergencies.

It is advisable to encourage the Licensee to seek advice from the local Fire Safety Officer, to take reasonable steps in minimising the risk of a fire and to ensure that suitable and sufficient procedures are in place to evacuate the property in the event of a fire. It is advisable to have smoke detectors with regular checks being undertaken to ensure their effectiveness. Free standing or open flame heaters should not be used where dogs may come into direct contact with the flames or knock over unsecured heaters. Where gas heating is provided the Licensee shall ensure that the appliances are serviced on an annual basis by a Gas Safe registered engineer.

- 11.2 The occupier of the property must be aware of the location of the dogs in the property at all times.
- 11.3 Fire detection and fire fighting equipment must be provided in accordance with general advice given by the Fire Safety Officer.
- 11.4 All doors to rooms where dogs are boarded must be kept shut at night.
- 11.5 All electrical installations and appliances must be maintained in a safe condition. No unsupervised dog must be left in a room with loose or trailing cables or wires.
- 11.6 All heating appliances must be free of risk of fire as is reasonably practicable. There must be no regular or routine use of freestanding gas or oil appliances.
- 11.7 Arrangements must be made whereby spare keys can be obtained to allow access to the premises in the event of an emergency or alternatively, an emergency contact number shall be displayed in an obvious location at the premises.

12. EXERCISE *Guidance*

- 12.1 Dogs must be exercised in accordance with their owner's wishes. If dogs are taken off the premises, they must be kept on leads unless with the owners written permission. The Licensee must be satisfied that the dogs are under proper control at all times.

A suitable outside area must be accessible for exercising dogs. This will most commonly be in a safe secure back garden or neighbouring park. The amount of exercise a dog requires varies depending on the size and breed of the dog. It is therefore important to discuss individual dog's requirements with the client to ensure the dog's needs are fully met.

- 12.2 There must be access to a suitable outside area.
- 12.3 Any exercise/garden area of the premises to which the boarded dogs may have unrestricted access must be totally secure and safe. Fencing must be adequate to offer security to prevent escape and be safe, with no dangerous sharp objects or protrusions. Gates must be able to be locked.
- 12.4 The Licensing Authority must be informed by the next working day if a dog is lost.

13. TRANSPORTATION *Guidance*

- 13.1 If a collection and delivery service is provided or transport is used to travel to an exercise area then a suitable vehicle must be used. An individual dog must be secured within a dog cage or behind a dog guard whilst travelling within the vehicle. Where more than one dog is to be transported at any time the vehicle must be fitted with individual cages of adequate size for the safe transportation of the dogs. The journey time shall be kept to a minimum when transporting boarded dogs.

All vehicles used for the transportation of dogs must be regularly serviced and kept clean. They must be fitted with an adequate number of secure cages of adequate size for the safe transportation of dogs and be provided with adequate ventilation. Each boarded dog must have an individual cage where they must be housed during transit. A dog guard is suitable provided only one dog is being transported. All vehicles must be secure and should not be left unattended when transporting animals. It is important for the licensing officer to ensure that dogs will not be kept in vehicles for unnecessary or unreasonable periods of time and, in particular, dogs should not be left unsupervised in vehicles