

## **Humane Society of Huron Valley K9 Running Club Training Document**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this program is to provide a healthy outlet for dogs who have energy to spare and can benefit with time away from the confines of the shelter.

### **Dogs Who Can Run**

- Specifically identified by shelter behavior staff and listed in the enrichment binder located in the dog walker station.
  - Dogs over 8 months of age
  - Healthy (not sick, lame, or injured)
  - Energetic
  - Open to all breeds/mix breeds
- Volunteers will work with dogs in which they are trained to walk (ex: blue dot dogs can only be run by volunteers who are blue dot trained)

### **Volunteers Who Can Run**

- Has completed dog walker level 1 class and has 20+ hours of walking
- Has read the K9RC training document.
- Knows how to use an EZ-Walk harness.
- Can identify signs of lameness and/or overexertion
- Has a mobile phone on their person as well as the number of the shelter (734-662-5585).
- Follows policies and procedures for K9RC.

## **Policies and Procedures**

- **Selecting a dog**
  - Sign up for Dog Walking: K9 Run Club assignment in VIC
  - Arrive between 8:00am and Noon (all runs must occur during this time).
  - Check the enrichment binder in the dog walking station to see which dogs are identified as being able to run and read any notes.
  - Select a dog to run.
  - Using the dog's run history, plan how long you will run
    - Increase distances gradually
    - Each dog should have one rest day off from running each week
  - Verify the dog's ability to run
    - Check their age by looking at the cage card (or by reading the log notes) and make sure that the dog is old enough to run
      - If the dog is 8-12 months of age, limit your run to a mile or less
      - Remember, no dog under 8 months old should be run
    - Check to make sure there are no restrictions for the dog (such as no playgroup, running, etc)
    - Check to be sure the dog is not sick
- **Preparing to Run (there is a K9 Running bin in lower left cabinet at dog walker station)**
  - Grab poop bags and anything else you will need for the run (e.g., E-Z walk harness, retractable water dish, small toy if the dog is a leash grabber, treats)
  - Wear a reflective vest (in cabinet at Dog Walker Station) to increase your visibility
  - Pick up a laminated "Out for a run" sign, located in the K9 Run Club binder
  - Sign the dog out (indicating on the walker log that you're on a run)
  - Place the laminated "Out for a run" sign on the front of the running dog's kennel door
  - Leash up the dog
    - If the dog is on an EZ Walker, use that for the run. No other tools should be used (ex: leash wrap)

- **Starting the run**
  - Exit off the grounds through the gate next to dog holding. If the gate is locked, exit through the main customer entrance.
  - Walk the dog along the trail that borders the parking lot until you reach Cherry Hill Road. Give the dog a chance to eliminate during this time.
  - From Cherry Hill Road, you MUST head south TOWARDS Gale Road.
  
- **Places to avoid**
  - The sub-division across the street from the shelter is off limits to runners, so avoid this area as well.
  - Plymouth Road – if you hit Plymouth Road, you've gone the wrong way.
  - Gale Road
  
- **During the run**
  - Always run in the shoulder AGAINST traffic
  - Keep dog on shoulder – do not allow dog to run in the road itself.
  - Seek out dirt roads or trails
  - Be aware of your environment
    - Don't wear headphones
    - Listen and watch for and keep your distance from cars, other runners and/or dogs, and wildlife
    - Watch the ground for glass and other sharp objects or uneven surfaces or anything that a dog might want to eat
    - Monitor the condition of the pavement. Is it hot, is it salted? Minimize contact with surfaces like this.
    - Take water/rest breaks as needed

- Monitor your dog
  - Reaction to the environment
    - Is there anything the dog is overly interested in or frightened of? If so, do everything you can to increase your distance from that item and make a note of it in the log
  - Physical well-being
    - Is the dog showing any lameness?
      - Head drops slightly with every step
      - Hitch in the dog's step
      - Holding a paw up for an extended period of time
      - Obvious limping
    - Is the dog showing signs that it is too hot or too tired?
      - Spatula tongue
      - Excessive panting
      - Very red gums
      - Lagging behind the runner, trying to stop, lie down, etc.
      - Note: Dogs are not to be run on days with heat advisories/warnings. Dogs do not tolerate heat as well as humans, so use good judgment during the summer months. Short-nosed breeds (such as boxers, American bulldogs, etc.) are especially susceptible to overheating.
  - If the dog is showing discomfort with either the environment or related to their physical wellbeing, and you are not able to improve the situation it is time to end the run. You may need to walk back. In extreme cases, you may need to call for assistance. If you call for assistance, please stay as far off of the road as is practical.
- If you encounter a loose dog and there is no owner present, remain calm and walk, do not run in the other direction. The

typical loose dog in this area will remain in his/her yard and will back off as soon as you do.

- If you encounter a loose dog and the owner is present, politely but firmly ask the owner to please leash their dog so that you can pass. Explain that your dog is being trained and needs its space.
- If your dog has to eliminate during the run, it is your responsibility to clean it up. Even if you are running on a trail.
- **In extreme cases, you may need to call for assistance.** If you call for assistance, please stay as far off of the road as is practical. Dial the direct line to the shelter- 734.662-5585 and choose Ext 1- Cruelty and Rescue. Leave a message and they will arrange for a pick-up. Please identify yourself as a HSHV volunteer, give as close to specific location as possible, and that you have one of our shelter dogs and need transport for the animal.

- **Returning from the run**

- Return your dog to its kennel
- Check the paws for cuts/abrasions and areas around the harness if worn for chafing
- Remove the EZ walk harness if this is the tool you used
- Remove the "Out for a run" card from its kennel door
- Log your run in the K9RC Log
- If there are medical concerns, note them on the medical concerns board