

# ***Welcome to Williston Animal Group***

***This presentation only contains audio where added videos are also present.***

***All the information is important, so please read in entirety. It takes approximately an HOUR. You will be asked to take a short quiz once completed***



These Training Materials will help prepare you for volunteering at  
WAG.

It contains information on the safety, training and procedures needed  
to handle and walk dogs while at the kennel facility.

Before we discuss that, every volunteer needs to understand a few concepts  
that are particular to volunteering at our Facility and concepts that are  
particular to dogs living in a shelter or kennel environment

How is Volunteering at WAG different than other, larger shelters or  
rescues?

WAG is 100% staffed by volunteers. Many larger organizations have paid staff that deal with the more complex issues of dog behavior and training. In those circumstances volunteers are invaluable, but to a degree, “icing on the cake.”

At WAG we are ALL volunteers. All of those handling dogs need to have a slightly more advanced understanding of dog behavior and how to manage certain behavior issues than your “average” volunteer. When everyone has the same understanding and acts consistently, we are safer, the dogs are happier and easier to handle.

What are a few concepts that are particular to dogs living in a shelter environment ?

We are volunteering because we love and want to help dogs. Most of us have had lots of experience owning dogs and being in the company of dogs, but it is **VERY IMPORTANT** we understand that dogs living in a shelter generally **behave differently** than dogs living in a loving home....

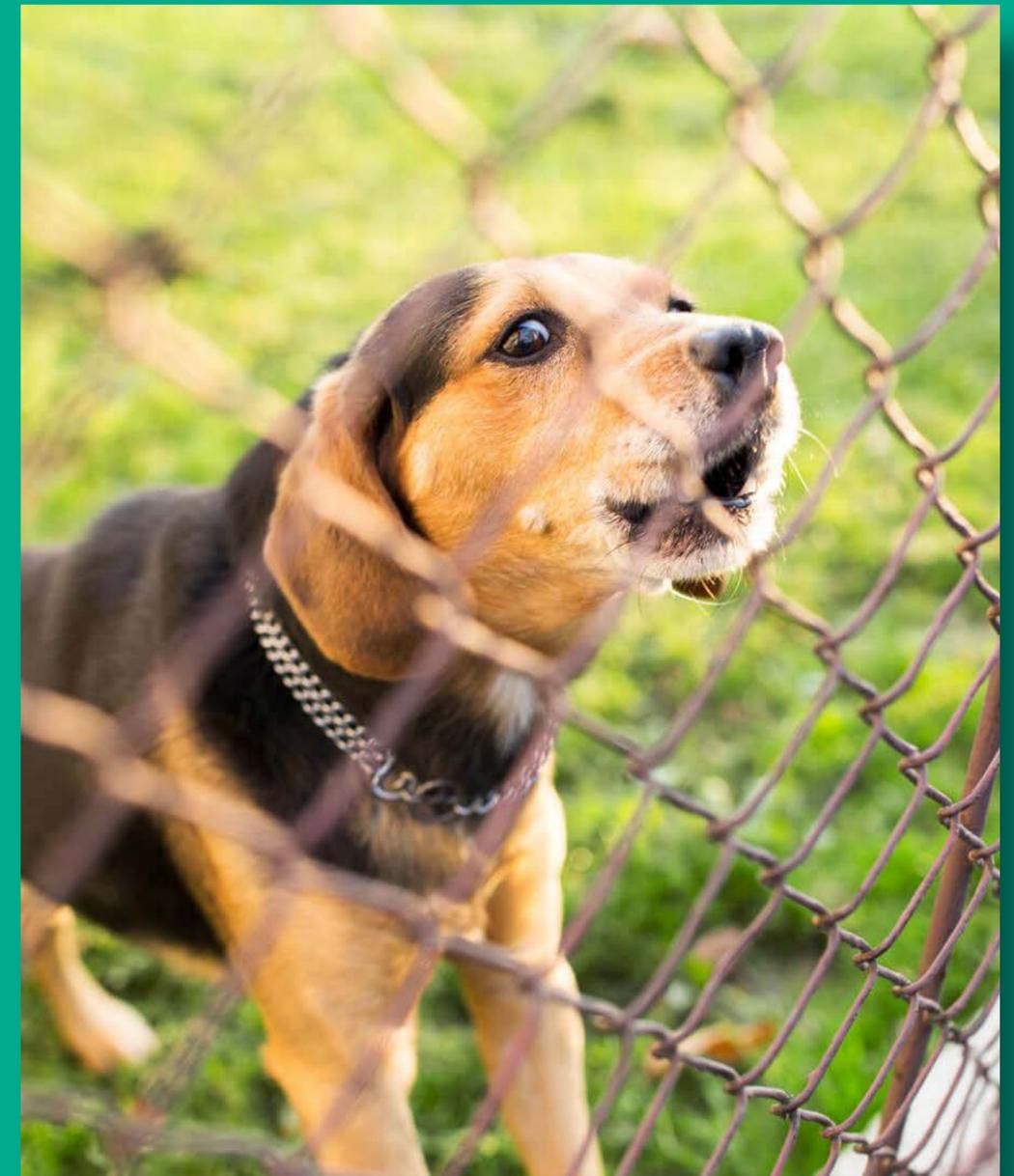
How so?

**Even though we do our very best to meet the needs of every dog in our care, living at a shelter is still stressful. What type of **behaviors** can we see in this environment with *some* dogs?**

- \* Barrier Reactivity**
- \* Over Arousal**
- \* Handling/ Leashing Sensitivities**
- \* Fear and Anxiety**
- \* Resource Guarding**
- \* Stranger Danger**

# Barrier Reactivity-what is it?

We refer to a dog as being “barrier reactive” when they bark, growl, or rush forward in response to a stimulus when they are behind a barrier. The barrier may be a fence, baby gate, window, screen door, car window, or any other physical item that stands between them and the stimulus. The trigger for this behavior might be another dog, cat, person, or squirrel, just to name a few. This is NOT about protecting territory, it’s about a barrier being present



What do we **DO** or **NOT** do?

# Barrier Reactivity at Facility      What do we do?

Do **NOT**: Reach out towards the dog, put your hands or fingers in or near the gate, door or fence.

Do **NOT**: Maintain direct and prolonged eye contact

Do **NOT**: Stand in front of the dog and try to “console” them by telling them “it’s ok”.

Do **NOT**: Yell or try to verbally discipline.

**DO**: Toss a treat and walk away

**DO**: Crouch down lower near barrier with body to side, avert eyes, toss treat, speak softly and calmly-if this does not de-escalate the behavior, move away

**DO**: Lock strongly reactive dogs on the outside part of kennel while feeding or cleaning

**DO**: Keep dogs on leashes in common areas away from dogs in yards or kennels.

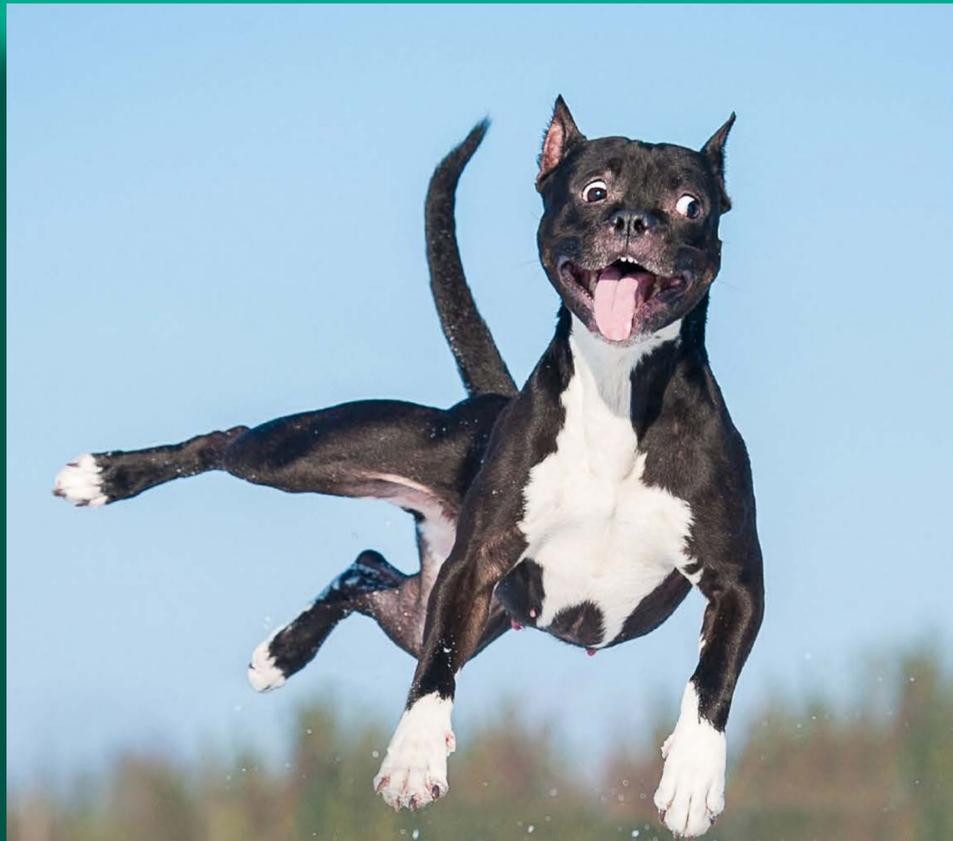
Dogs are likely to be more reactive while on the **INSIDE** part of the kennel. For most, the reactivity goes away when the barrier is removed

# Over Arousal-what is it?

**Arousal is another word for excitement.**

**Over Arousal can look like-**

- Becoming Mouthy and/or Jumpy
- Difficulty in leashing up
- Lose control of their impulses
- Have dilated pupils (aka 'spaceship eyes')
- Bark excessively (generally in a joyful way – they're releasing energy)
- Become boisterous with other dogs
- Show physiological signs of adrenaline release: increased heart rate, panting, trembling, pacing, or spinning in circles.



**What do we DO or NOT do?**



# Over Arousal at Facility      What do we do?

Do **NOT**: Use loud or high pitched voice

**DO**: Keep a calm but confident demeanor

**DO**: Tell dog to sit (as long as they know that command)

**DO**: Use treats to reward calm behavior-give for 4 on the Floor

**DO**: Use water bottle to interrupt escalation

**DO**: Use slip lead and treat combo manage leashing up easily, prevent bending over dog too much, allows for quicker leashing

Over arousal can be controlled by meeting the dogs exercise needs, teaching basic obedience and always rewarding calm behavior.



## 4 on the Floor:

Means dog is standing or sitting with all 4 feet on floor. Dogs are rewarded for this behavior

# Handling or Body Sensitivity-what is it?

- Some dogs are very sensitive to humans touching parts of their body or head.
- This can happen from abuse, injury or lack of contact with humans.
- They may give little to no warning until you touch the “no go” area.
- Dogs with handling sensitivity are a high bite risk.



What do we **DO** or **NOT** do?

# Handling or Body Sensitivity      What do we do?

Do **NOT**: Assume ALL dogs want to be touched on all parts of their body.

**DO**: Read handling notes on kennel card carefully

**DO**: Gain trust, develop relationship

**DO**: Handling specific body parts-desensitizing

Some dogs need help on specific body parts, such as their feet or ears. If that's the case with your dog, you don't want to jump into touching those areas during the first few sessions. Over several sessions, you can work closer and closer to those areas. If your dog does not like their feet touched, for example, start by just touching their shoulder. Then, work your way down their leg closer and closer to the foot.

Always keep an eye on your dog's body language. If they move away or show signs of stress or fear, slow down. Stop and back up, touching other parts of their body. Gradually work your way back to the sensitive area. Lightly touch it, and as soon as you do, start giving your dog a steady stream of treats. As soon as you remove your hand, stop the treats.

At first, only touch the sensitive spot for a second or two. Then, as your dog becomes more comfortable, you can touch the spot for longer periods. Make sure that you remove your hand — and the treats — before your dog begins to get uncomfortable. The goal is to change their association of having the sensitive area handled from one of discomfort or fear to one of excitement. (“Touching my paws means I get treats!”)

Remember to keep the overall sessions short until you have a relaxed dog. Once you have a relaxed dog, you can proceed to more involved touch, such as lifting and holding paws, lifting up lips and rubbing gums, giving hugs, combing and brushing, looking in the ears, etc.

# Fearful dogs at Facility



- **Some dogs exhibit fearful behavior because they are new to WAG and unsure of the change in surroundings and people. These dogs just need time to decompress.**
- **Some dogs have deeper, more ingrained fear issues.**

**What do we DO or NOT do?**

# Fearful and Anxious dogs at Facility      What do we do?

Do **NOT**: Approach frontally and move towards them

Do **NOT**: Reach your hands out toward them

Do **NOT**: Loom over them or maintain long eye contact

Do **NOT**: Move quickly or use loud voice

**DO**: Have a very **good understanding of fearful body language**. Fearful dogs are a bite risk. Know when to back off.

**DO**: Keep a calm but confident demeanor

**DO**: Crouch low and to the side or sit with back turned on outside of kennel fence

**DO**: Avert eyes

**DO**: Toss treats behind them-they get rewarded by your presence and are not “forced” to move toward you.

**DO**: Use slip lead and treat combo if they are hesitant about leashing. Go slow, show them what you are doing, give pauses and treats between each stage of leashing and going out or coming in.

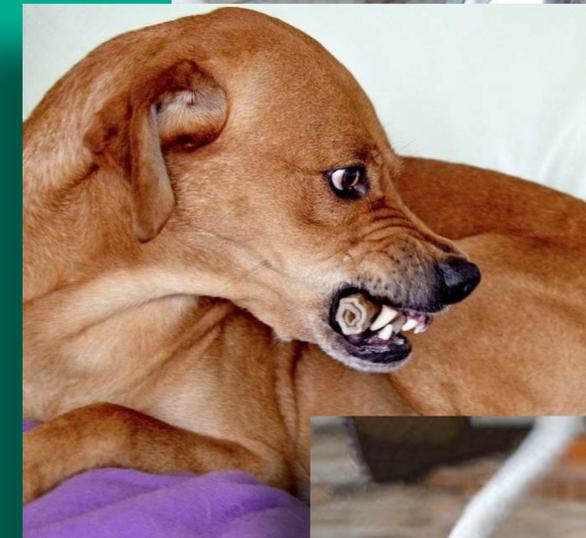
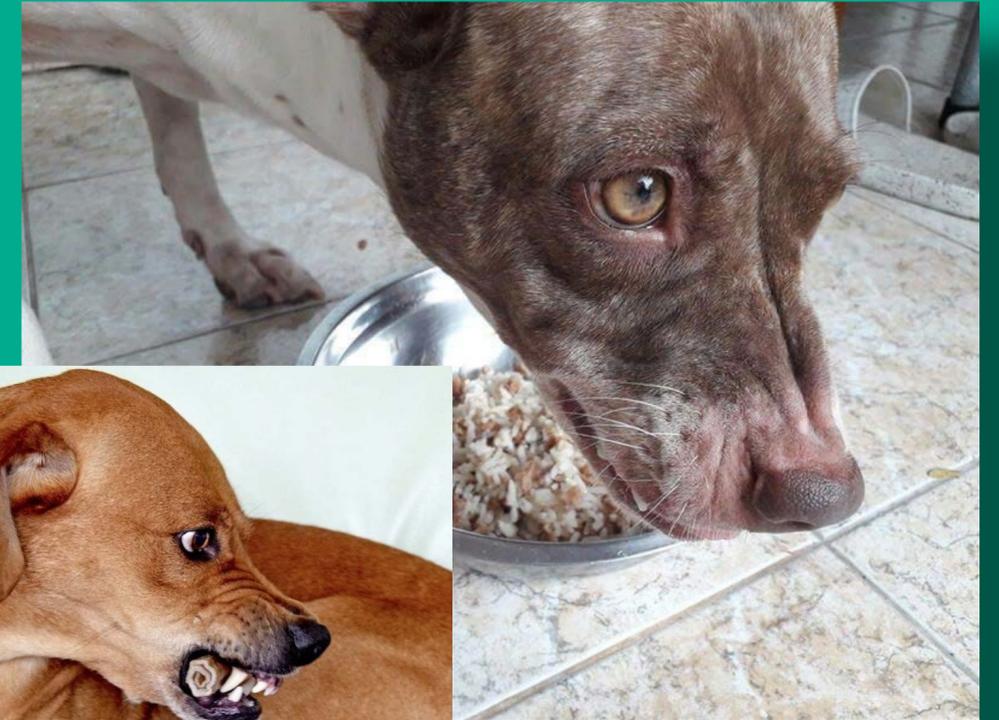
**DO**: Use sweet, quiet “baby talk” voice

Dogs are not always fearful because of abuse. Dogs are also fearful of humans due to a lack of socialization. Do not “invent” or assume stories of abuse because you see fear. They need our confidence, so focus on positivity!

# Resource Guarding- What is it?

It is a type of behavior when a dog senses that one of their valuable resources is in danger and they become aggressive or possessive. These resources can include food, toys, bones, resting places, or even nearby humans. Dogs can resource guard against humans and/or other animals.

Resource guarding is a complex and sometimes difficult issue. It has been proven that most of the time resource guarding of food in the shelter does NOT continue in the home.



What do we **DO** or **NOT** do?

# Resource Guarding at Facility What do we do?

**DO:** Read notes on kennel carefully

**DO:** Have a good understanding of resource guarding body language-watch for guarding behavior and report.

**DO:** For food guarding-have food always available

**DO:** For food guarding-throw treats in bowl (from outside of kennel) while dog is eating. You are seen as “giving” while they are eating, not a potential “taker”

**DO:** Lock food guarders on the outside of the kennel while you are placing or removing bowl

**DO:** Lock space guarders on the outside of kennel if you need to be on the inside to clean or any other reason

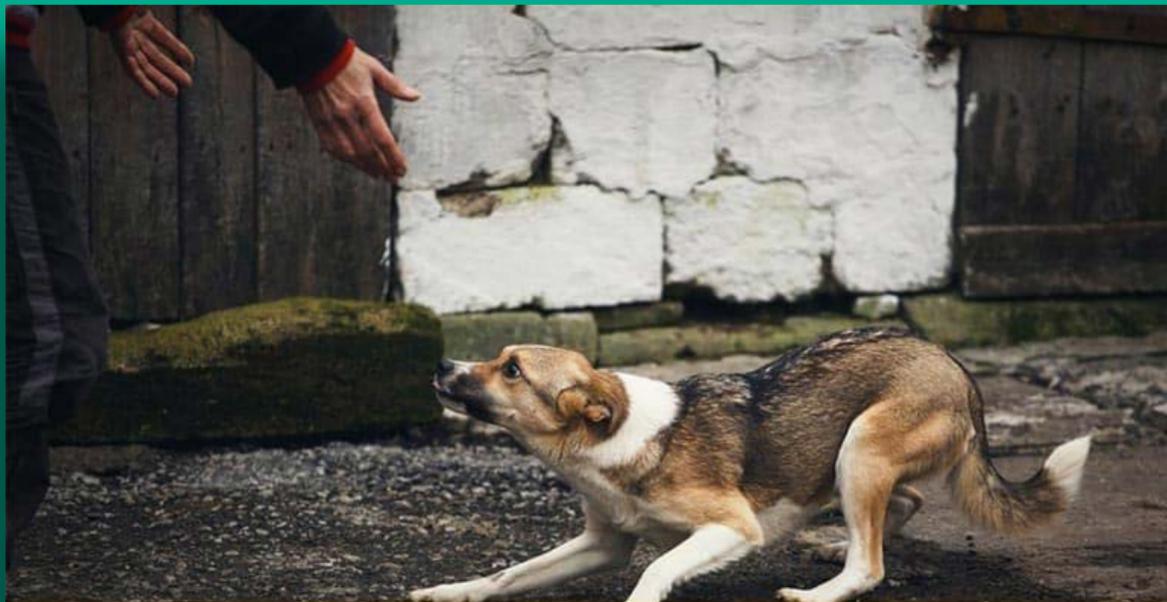
**DO:** Keep an eye on playgroups for “found” items that can become a guarding issue or guarding of resting space

Do **NOT:** Allow toys in playgroups

Punishing a dog for displaying warning signs around resource guarding (as in growling) will only make the warning signs disappear, not cure the guarding. The only choice left is for the dog to go directly to BITE without warning. Placing your hand in their bowl or removing the bowl while eating **CREATES** a resource guarder, it does **NOT** teach them you are the “boss”.

# Stranger Danger- What is it?

“Stranger danger” in dogs refers to the tendency of some dogs to be wary or fearful of unfamiliar people. It can manifest as aggressive or defensive behavior towards strangers, or as avoidance or fear-based behaviors. We can work to become a trusted member of their “club” by going slow and using techniques to gain trust.



What do we **DO** or **NOT** do?



# Stranger Danger at Facility      What do we do?

Do **NOT**: Reach out towards the dog, put your hands or fingers in or near the gate, door or fence or approach while on leash.

Do **NOT**: Maintain direct and prolonged eye contact

Do **NOT**: Stand in front of the dog and try to “console” them by telling them “it’s ok”.

Do **NOT**: Yell or try to verbally discipline.

**DO**: Use muti-part system for introduction to stranger:

1. Go for a walk with the dog and a person they are not afraid of. Allow distance if dog is reacting or nervous. Walk slightly in front, not behind. Do not try to interact

2. Stand still and allow dog to approach you at their pace, while trusted person holds loose leash. Do not look at or try to touch. Let dog sniff for 10-15 seconds. Person holding leash calmly calls dog away-**NO PULLING ON LEASH**-Can cause bad reaction.

3. Go for another walk with trusted person, if dog is relaxed and calm, subtly hand leash to new person. Try calm, quiet interaction.

4. Approach within a few feet of leashed dog. Ask for “sit”. Toss treat. If dog is calm, see if they will take treat from you.

**Work at a pace acceptable to the dog.**

**May need to do initial steps multiple times before moving on.**

The importance of understanding dog body language cannot be overstated. It enhances our ability to communicate effectively with the dogs in our care, fostering a harmonious and stress-free environment for them. It also reduces the risk of accidents and misunderstandings, particularly around children and other animals.

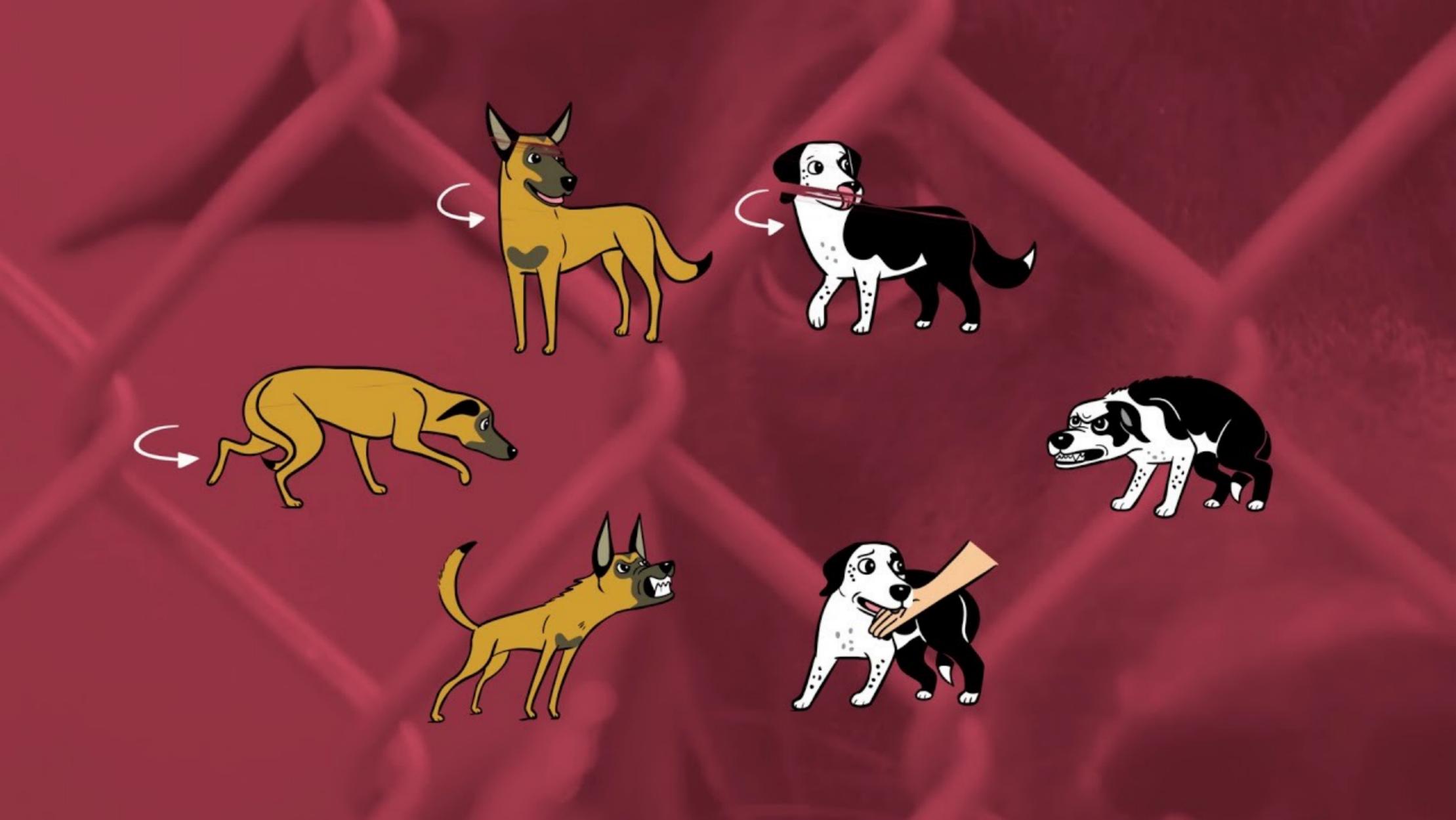
Research has demonstrated that dogs rely heavily on visual and body signals in their communication. By deciphering these cues correctly, we can create safer and more enjoyable interactions with our dogs.

Unless we have intentionally decided to research Dog Body Language or have been instructed by a qualified trainer or behaviorist, it is very likely **you may have some misunderstandings** or may have been misinformed. **Owning and raising dogs during ones' lifetime does not guarantee that you are understanding or interpreting dog body language properly.**

Because we are caring for dogs living in a stressful environment, who may have had limited or poor human contact, **it is critical that we do not bring misguided understanding into our work as WAG volunteers.** This can be dangerous and harmful to both the dogs we care for and the humans they interact with.

**Please watch the video on Dog Body Language  
See if you can imagine how dogs in the different behavioral scenarios just discussed would look.**

Please watch Video-it will open in a separate tab



# What are common misunderstandings and missed signals?



Lip lick/flick= I'm nervous!



Whale Eye= I'm nervous!

Roll over and show belly-context is critical-look at whole body



Wiggly, tail wagging, mouth open=  
GIMME SOME RUBS!



Ears back, mouth closed, tail tucked  
or tail not moving=  
I'M TAPPING OUT! PLEASE STOP!



Stop and Freeze, mouth  
closed, whale eye=  
Next stop...BITE CITY!



Yawning=look at context,  
if its not nap time  
I'm Anxious

Submissive Grin or Snarl?-Look at whole face and body



Submissive Grin: Soft eyes, ears  
down, wagging tail=  
You gotta LOVE ME



Snarl: hard eyes, ears pinned back,  
hackles up, tail stiff or tucked, may  
growl=  
GO AWAY!

# What are common approach or human body language mistakes? Unless you know a dog WELL and the dog knows YOU....avoid doing this:

Reaching over the head or sticking out hand for "smell"



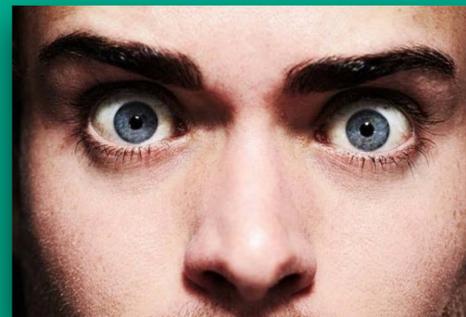
Leaning over, Grabbing face, putting your face close, approaching from the front



Instead DO THIS:  
Lean down, body facing sideways



Instead DO THIS:  
If dog shows interest and no anxious  
body language-touch under face



No Prolonged Eye Contact



**It is critical that WAG Volunteers have a good understanding of safety concepts and procedures.**

**Safety for our dogs and volunteers is one of the highest priorities at WAG**

**Let's first learn about safety **concepts** that affect all of our decisions and procedures.**

- **COMMUNICATION:** When we are moving dogs, we always need to know what the other volunteers are doing and where they are within the facility and out on walks.

Although we try our best to maintain control of the dogs at all times, mistakes happen and dogs can get away from us. By communicating with the other volunteers, we know what each one is doing and can coordinate our efforts as to never put anyone or any of the dogs in a possible dangerous situation.

We also save time and energy by not having to yell or walk around looking for someone by using the walkie talkies. The walkie talkies also provide the ability for someone on a walk in the neighborhood to reach the kennel if necessary.

- **THINK FIRST-LOOK AHEAD-ANTICIPATE PROBLEMS:** By thinking about the overall activity happening on a shift, instead of just focusing on our immediate task, we can avoid problems before they happen.

Before you open a kennel door or a gate think-“WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THIS DOG SLIPPED AROUND ME?” If you are communicating, you will know if it’s safe or not. If you don’t KNOW—STOP!!

Watch the behavior of the dog in your immediate control and be aware of the dogs nearby. Can you see that there could be a potential problem about to happen? Speak up! Look for plan B! Ask for help!

- **TAKE YOUR TIME-DON'T RUSH:** Trying to rush and get dogs in and out or on a walk can cause us to make mistakes. Also when we feel and act rushed, it has an emotional effect on the dogs. We always try to encourage calmness. Rushing raises the excitement level. Calm and steady send good signals.

When we arrive for a shift and the dogs are hungry and want to go out, they are all barking at the same time. This is normal excitement because they are anticipating something good. We may feel rushed to satisfy their needs. If one of the volunteers can go around and hand out treats (making sure we have 4 on the floor) while food is prepped, it can help calm the excitement level.

- **ACTIVITY AROUND GATE AND DOOR OPENINGS:** The 3 to 5 foot radius around the gate and kennel door openings are an area associated with a lot of excitement for the dogs. We refer to that area as the **HOT ZONE**.

The gate and door openings are associated with going out to play, human interaction, potty, walks and feeding. All of those things are critically important events in the day of a dog, especially dogs in a shelter. So it is understandable that the excitement level around that space is high.

When we are going in or out of kennels or yards, we need to keep the dogs away from the Hot Zone by using the command "BACK". We do not want them rushing at us, jumping or crowding around us at the gates or doors. The water spray bottles are used to enforce and teach the BACK command. When we enter into a kennel or yard, use the BACK command, use water if they do not move back, walk in and shut the gate behind you and then **MOVE OUT OF THE HOT ZONE**. Place the leash on the dog when you are outside of the Hot Zone. Once the leash is secure, then you can proceed through the gate or door.



# This is what the Facility at WAG looks like



# Walking dogs through Common Areas

When we are taking dogs to and from kennels or yards, it is necessary to walk them through common areas . **Never allow more than ONE dog in this area at a time.** If the dog being moved were to get loose, there is **no possibility** of an altercation if there are **no other dogs** in common area. When we are about to enter this area or are walking a dog through it, it is CRITICAL that we are vigilant and prepared.

What do we need to think about and be prepared for?

- **Other dogs may be behind fences or in kennels as we walk by**

- Moving dogs around causes all the other dogs to become very excited. The dogs behind barriers may bark and approach fence.
- The dog being walked can become over aroused, fearful, or anxious when walking by barking dogs.

- **Other Volunteers may be in the process of moving dogs nearby**

- Multiple people may be going in and out of kennels and yards at the same time.
- You must communicate with each other to avoid more than one dog in the common area.

**Stop and check before ENTERING OR EXITING A KENNEL, YARD, OR PERIMETER GATE**

# Understanding REDIRECTION

Redirection occurs when a dog is over aroused by a nearby event and cannot actually physically engage in the event. The dog then “redirects” its behavior towards the nearest person, animal or object. This can be a bite risk situation

**What are ways in which we might encounter this at the WAG facility?**

**\*Walking a dog near other dogs that are barking at the fence or in kennel\***

## **What could happen?**

- The Dog YOU ARE WALKING- may redirect toward you.  
Pay attention to the dog under your control. Keep them on a shorter leash so they cannot get close to the fenced dogs. STAY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE COMMON AREA. Distract with treats if necessary and encourage them to focus on you. DO NOT grab, yank leash, yell or discipline the dog you are walking near other barking dogs, especially if they are focused on those dogs. Stay calm and steady, no rushing. If the dog you are walking manages to get to a fence and engages in a “fence fight”- Keep your distance by holding the leash at the furthest distance, pull in a firm and steady manner until the dog is away from the fence. Ask for help. If we know a dog is a redirection risk while walking through common area, only volunteers approved to handle “red” dogs will handle them there.
- DOGS IN PLAYGROUPS- may redirect toward each other.  
Dogs that play well with each other may redirect when another dog is walking by on the outside of the fence. Playgroup dogs that have a tendency to redirect on each other will generally be placed in less busy areas. Another Volunteer can be asked to manage the playgroup dogs in busy areas while you are walking by with another dog.

# INFORMATION ABOUT DOGS AND WHERE IT IS LOCATED

- **Outside Kennel Cards**- Located on the outside of kennel. This is the most important info for Dog Handlers. Please look at it **EVERY TIME** you come for a shift, it may have new info.



- **Colored TAG**-Located on the outside of kennel.

**GREEN:** Dog can be handled by any volunteer.

**YELLOW:** Dog may have some handling issues

**RED:** Only specifically trained volunteers to handle.

*Only handle dogs you are comfortable with.*

# INFORMATION ABOUT DOGS AND WHERE IT IS LOCATED

- **Take out Board**-Located on the front of the south building. This board indicates which yard each dog is assigned, who is an approved playgroup, which dogs will be alternated in yards, which dogs may be on leash walk only and what order to take them out and any important notes.

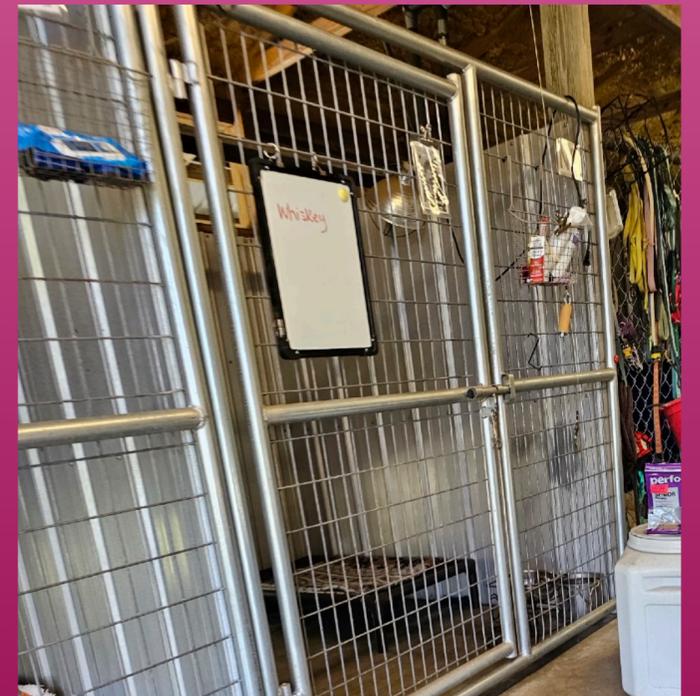
	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
0	Whiskey	Johnny	Cannon	Sam Lee	Kota	Brutus	Johnny
9		Lucius Gracie Taz		Chaka	Cannon	Sam Lee	Brutus
8	Lucius Gracie Taz	Sam Lee	Johnny	Kota Venus Serena		Kota Venus Serena	Lucius Gracie Taz
7	Kota Venus Serena	RJ	Brutus	Lucius Gracie Taz	Chaka DJ	Lucius Gracie Taz	Whiskey
1	Brutus	Cannon	Whiskey	Cannon	Whiskey	Johnny	Nala Twinkle
2	Nala Twinkle	Brutus	Nala Twinkle	Nala Twinkle	Johnny	Cannon	Cannon
3	Cannon	Chaka	RJ Chaka	Brutus	Nala Twinkle	Whiskey	RJ Chaka
4	Johnny	Nala Twinkle	Sam Lee	Whiskey	Brutus	RJ	
5	Sam Lee	Kota Venus Serena	Lucius Gracie Taz	RJ	Sam Lee	Chaka	Kota Venus Serena
6	RJ Chaka	Whiskey	Kota Venus Serena	Johnny	Gracie Taz	Lucius Nala Twinkle	Sam Lee

SPLIT  
SPLIT  
SPLIT

LEASH WALK ONLY!

LEASH WALK ONLY!

- **Individual dog Whiteboard**- Located on the inside kennel door. Has info that may be related to feeding, medication or handling on the inside.



# DOG HANDLING GEAR



- **Leashes**
- **Water Bottles**
- **Treat Bags**
- **Air Horn**
- **Poop Bags**
- **Treats**
- **Walkie Talkies**

# Typical Dog Handling (DH) Shift (lasts 2 to 3 hrs):

- DH can fill water buckets and place in yards while dogs are being fed
- Suit up with DH tools
- Once dogs have eaten, they can be moved to yards according to take out board.
  - Make note of which dogs are fully trained on Door routine and which are in training. Proceed accordingly.
  - Read kennel cards for handling instructions
  - One DH can start walking “leash walk only” and dogs that will have to alternate in a yard as other DH is moving dogs to yards for potty and playtime.
- Once all dogs have either been moved to a yard or walked and placed back in kennel, All DH can either walk individual dogs or spend time in yard with enrichment toys.
- At the end of shift, DH to bring dogs in from yard and back to kennel. Take IN order is opposite of take OUT order.
- All yards need to be “poop walked” to remove feces. Water buckets are emptied and placed outside of yard. Everyone available can do this task. Communicate with each other.

## **Understanding concept behind TAKE OUT BOARD:**

This board is designed mainly to facilitate the dogs moving to and from yards as to avoid passing other dogs that are inside yards. (see Redirection info)

The dogs are placed in the yards from the outermost to innermost. The process is reversed when it is time to go back to kennels.

The board also indicates yard and playgroup assignments-these may be switched routinely as dog population changes or changes are needed to control reactivity. Volunteers with advanced experience and training may alter yard assignments and/or playgroups during their shift.

# Door Routine:

The purpose of the DOOR ROUTINE is to teach the dogs to wait before they pass through a doorway. This makes handling the dogs easier and safer for Volunteers plus adds an enriching activity by engaging the dogs' mind. It also adds a level of training that is beneficial to adopters.

You will be given instruction on how to properly use the door routine and how to train a dog that is new to it when you come to the *in person orientation* at the facility.

To make the most of this training please look at the training videos in the Volunteer Training tab on our website [willistonanimalgroup.org](http://willistonanimalgroup.org)



Handling and Training Cheat Sheet

## DOOR ROUTINE

**WHY:** To teach that an open door is not an invitation to exit

**HOW:**

- With the dog on leash, approach the door.
- Pause for ~10 seconds to allow the dog to make the choice to sit.
- Offer the cue "sit" and reinforce as needed.
- Open the door.
  - If the dog stands up, reinforce the sit.
  - If the dog moves forward toward the opening, close the door, reinforce the sit, then reopen the door.
  - The leash should not prevent the dog from forging through the opening at any point-- ***the door should!***
- Wait for the dog to look up at you, then cue "free" and allow the dog to walk through the door.

**NOTE:**

If the dog is new to the door routine or does not know sit, have the dog stand at the door and wait for eye contact to release them.





# Kennel Doors and Gates:

Important info regarding the gates around the facility and doors on inside and outside of kennels

- All dogs are removed from the kennels through the OUTSIDE doors of the kennel
- When taking a dog from the kennel, leave the outside door open. When the dog is being returned; if the door is open, you know there is no dog in that kennel. If the door is closed, triple check for another dog before you put a dog in kennel (mistakes happen!)
- Volunteers working on the inside of the kennels will close the inside door when they are done
- When returning a dog to kennel, communicate with cleaners to make sure they are not inside kennel
- Check clips on all door latches before leaving for the day
- Make sure gate latches securely before you release a dog into the yard AND when you leave a dog in the yard to play
- Attach hot wire cord across gate before leaving. Especially critical for new dogs, as they are frequently an escape risk when they first arrive
- Lock main gate and south gate with padlock before leaving for the day

# Going for a Walk:

**The dogs can be walked off site around the neighborhood. Walking the dogs has multiple benefits:**

- Exercise- Getting away from the kennel and a nice long walk reduces stress
- Training- Many dogs have never been taught to walk on a leash properly. Teaching the dogs proper leash manners make them easier for us to handle and more desirable to adopters.
- Teaching Recall- Dogs that reliably come when called are easier to handle, more adoptable and safer

**It's important to keep safety and cleanliness in mind while walking:**

- The neighborhood around WAG is industrial. There are cars coming and going to the businesses and airport regularly. Pay attention, move out of the way and shorten the leash when a car approaches.
- It would be rare, but possible, that an unleashed dog is loose and may approach while on your walk. There is citronella spray available to take with you to discourage a strange dog from approaching.
- Keep poop bags on you at all times and pick it up on your walk. Most of the dogs are walked in this area twice a day every day. WAG wants to be a good neighbor by maintaining cleanliness in the neighborhood

# Dog Walking-Leash Styles-Leash Techniques:

Instructions on walking dogs, the types of leashes that can be used, techniques for leashing difficult dogs and dogs that pull on a leash.

All dogs wear a **MARTINGALE** style collar. This type of collar prevents dogs from slipping out of the collar and allows for multiple training techniques. It has an extra loop built into the collar where the leash attaches.



**We use several types of leashes. They each serve a slightly different purpose**



Flat Leash

Slip Lead



Long Leash



Slip lead  
Harness

# Leashes and Techniques: **Belly Wrap**



The purpose of this technique is to teach the dog not to pull on leash and to provide extra security to prevent escaping out of collar.

**How to practice technique: Clip leash to collar. Wrap leash around body of the dog, keeping it right behind the front legs. Bring leash through the loop on the collar from the back.**

**As you are walking, if the dog pulls against the collar, you step back 1 or 2 steps, pulling the dog slightly backwards. Once the dog releases the tension and allows for a loose leash, you can resume walking.**

**Pulling back causes the leash and collar to tighten-that is the correction. The dog self-rewards by releasing tension and reward continues by resuming walk**

For dogs that are strong pullers or just learning how to walk on leash, you may have to spend extra time correcting and rewarding often.

# Leashes and Techniques: Long Leash Walking

## Go on a SNIFFARI! (Sniffing-Safari)

What is a Sniffari? In general terms a sniffari is a where, while on the walk, they can spend as much time sniffing around as they like. The walk may only be 15 minutes or so, but by letting the dog sniff everything they will burn as many calories as if they have been on a long walk and mentally will be very satisfied.



Long Leash

**How to practice technique: If you are going from a yard or kennel out to walk, either start with a short leash and transfer to long lead once outside the facility or coil up the long lead carefully in one hand to maintain a short leash while walking thru common area.**

**Do not belly wrap long lead.**

**Once outside facility, allow the dog to go at their own pace, sniffing anything and everything they find interesting.**

## Work on Recall (coming when called)

Recall is one the most valuable skills for all dogs to have. Not only is it an obedience skill, but provides safety as well. Dogs are much easier to handle and more adoptable if they have good recall.

**How to practice this technique: While you are walking with the long lead, allow the dog to reach the end of the lead. Call them to you. If they do not respond right away, quickly move backwards away from them calling at the same time in a happy voice. When they reach you, treat and praise. Doing this repeatedly will teach and reward them for coming to you.**

# Leashes and Techniques: Slip lead



Slip leads are very useful for dogs that have handling sensitivity while being leashed, dogs that are timid, dogs that want to bite the leash and dogs that are over aroused while being leashed.

Slip leads allow you to leash a dog quickly without a lot of interaction of your hands close to their face and neck.

It also allows you to leash a dog without having to bend over them, avoiding placing your face too close to theirs.

For dogs that are over-aroused during the leashing process, slip leads allow you to quickly leash and gain control to minimize jumping, mouthing or leash biting.

Slip leads are to be worn high on the neck, just behind the ears. There is a stopper that can be moved down to adjust the tightness around the neck. You should be able to place 2 fingers under the leash at the neck.



**To easily and quickly place the lead on the dog, make a loop that is approximately 2 times larger than the head. Hold the leash like the letter “P”. Offer the dog a treat so that they must put their head through the loop to get the treat. Calmly pull the leash so that it tightens, making sure it is positioned right behind the ears and push the stopper to the correct tightness.**

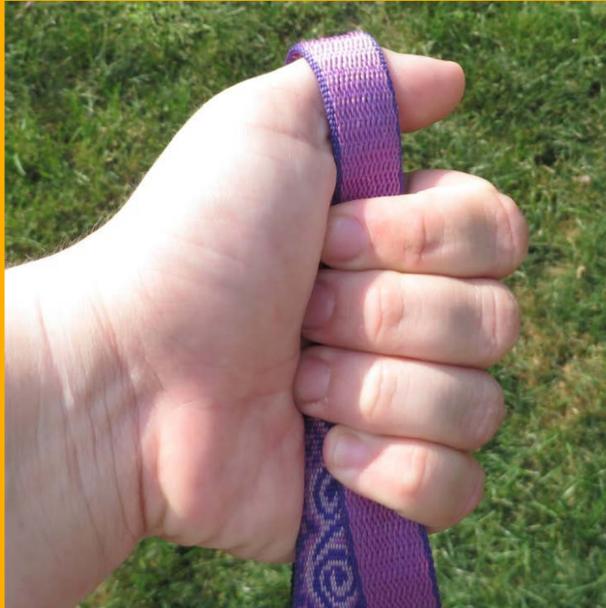
## **Leashes and Techniques: Other Kinds of Collars, Leashes and Harnesses**

There are other types of Collars, Leashes and Harnesses that may be necessary to safely and easily walk certain dogs. Some of these require more advanced training or may not be used very often. As the need arises, you will be trained to use these tools.

If you are unsure or uncomfortable with any of these techniques, please make it known. You will never be asked to do anything you are uncomfortable doing.

# Leashes and Techniques: Holding the Leash

Hold the leash like HANDLE



Do not wrap it around  
your hand  
or wrist



We understand the importance of prioritizing the care and protection of the dogs, which is why many people wrap the leash around their hand or wrist. No one wants to experience a dog getting away during a walk. However, it is crucial to remember that **YOUR** safety is WAG's primary concern. Wrapping the leash around your hand or wrist can be dangerous— if the dog suddenly takes off, you may be pulled to the ground and injured.

To prevent this, hold the leash like a handle. This allows you to quickly release the leash by simply opening your hand, enhancing your safety during walks.



# Leashes and Techniques: Holding the Leash

Think of yourself as a tree....are you a WILLOW or an OAK?



When walking with a dog, hands should be low and weight should be solidly over the feet so that the handler can't get pulled off balance. If a dog needs to be restrained or walked in the opposite direction as a distraction passes, the handler can smoothly slide a hand down the leash to a short hold that doesn't leave the dog room to reach another dog or person if he decides to lunge. The exact distance will depend on the size of the dog, the length of the handler's arm, and the equipment being used. It is important to give the dog slack on the leash as soon as the distraction passes. If the dog is trying to jump up on someone in a friendly way, try dropping treats on the ground or putting a foot on the leash to keep the dog from being reinforced by that coveted attention.



Center of balance is off-  
means less control and  
easier for you to be pulled  
down

Center of balance is near  
waist and toward body-  
means you are stronger

# Thank you for joining our wonderful team of Volunteers at WAG

On behalf of everyone here at WAG, We want to extend a heartfelt thank you for choosing to be a part of our mission to provide love, care, and support to dogs in need. Your willingness to give your time, energy, and expertise is truly invaluable and makes a world of difference in the lives of these precious animals.

Every task you undertake, whether it's walking dogs, cleaning kennels, assisting with adoptions, or simply offering a comforting cuddle, contributes to creating a better environment for our furry companions. Your commitment and passion inspire us all, and we are incredibly grateful to have you on our team.



# Some Practical Matters:

- Please wear appropriate clothing while working on a shift.
  - You will get dirty
  - Some dogs may jump on you-if you have delicate skin or do not wish to be scratched, wear long pants and protect your arms
  - You will be on your feet for the entire shift-wear comfortable shoes that you don't mind getting dirty or wet.
  - If you are cleaning, waterproof boots are the best footwear option.
  - If you are cleaning-get ready for the poop party!
  - The summers are HOT. Wear large brimmed hats and bring cooling towels. There is a refrigerator and water on site.