**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – BOARD AND TRAIN PROGRAMS**

**Q:** What’s the best age for a dog to participate in a training program?

**A:** We recommend that dogs are at least 12 weeks old. At this age they are generally able to hold their bladder through the night, and they are up to date on vaccinations. However, sometimes it is better to wait until the dog is 16 weeks old and a little bit more mature. We have also had dogs as old as 10 years old participate in training programs. Old dogs can learn new tricks… it sometimes just takes a little bit longer.

**Q:** Will my dog remember me?

**A:** YES! They usually have fun while they are here, but they are always excited to go home with their humans.

**Q:** Do we visit while our dog is at Liberty K9?

**A:** Generally speaking, we don’t advise visiting your dog while they’re with us. It can sometimes set us back in their training. It’s similar to dropping kids off at camp for the first time. If you went and visited them half way through, and then left again, they would have to go through the whole process again of seeing mom and dad leave without them. It is also a liability, and we are limited on space and time. However, we will post many pictures and/or videos throughout their stay.

**Q:** Will my dog be the same at the end of training?

**A:** Yes and no. Your dog will be much better behaved, more well-mannered, and will listen better. But, they will be the same dog that you fell in love with. Their personalities don’t change, but their behavior does!

**Q:** Do I need to train my dog after they complete a training program?

**A:** The short answer is yes, but it isn’t as overwhelming as it sounds. You are making the awesome choice to invest in your dog so that you can enjoy them even more. Consistency is how you protect your investment. We recommend reinforcing the training through your everyday life. You don’t need to spend an hour a day (or even 15 extra minutes) training your dog. But we suggest doing things like: putting your dog on place during meal times, making your dog “wait” at doorways when they go outside, putting your dog in a down stay for a few minutes while you make coffee, enforcing “heeling” when you go for walks, etc. You will be incorporating their new manners and training into your daily routine.

**Q:** What happens if my dog’s obedience/behavior starts to regress?

**A:** This sometimes happens, and is pretty normal. However, the more consistent you are with correcting wrong choices, and rewarding right choices, the less likely this is to happen. If it does happen, Liberty K9 is always here to help protect your investment. Included in all B&T programs is a follow up lesson, and LIFETIME support! We are committed to you and your dog for the lifetime of your dog. We are more than happy to answer any and all questions regarding behavior/obedience after the training is completed.

**Q:** My dog will get really good at listening to you, but will they listen to me at home?

**A:** Yes! The best way to ensure this is through consistency. Your dog will go through a transition when they return to your home. Sometimes they think that the same rules don’t apply at home that applied at Liberty K9. But, if you are consistent in correcting wrong choices, and rewarding the right choices, they quickly learn that the rules are the same.

**Q:** Can my children come to the go-home lesson?

**A:** This is usually something we discuss ahead of time. Sometimes we will leave that up to you. If your children are at an age where they can participate with the dog, then it’s a great idea to bring them with! That way they can see the process, and absorb some of the same information that you’re receiving. If you have younger children, they can sometimes be the BEST distraction for your dog! What a great training opportunity. However, we have seen that sometimes the adults aren’t able to pay attention as much during the lesson if the children are too wild. So, that’s where we let you make the choice.

**Q:** Will my dog enjoy the training and their time at Liberty K9?

**A:**  Most of the time, dogs have a blast while they’re here! They get lots of attention and love, they get to play with other dogs, and they get mental stimulation! Dogs need three things to live a fulfilled life:

1. Physical exercise
2. Mental stimulation
3. Effective communication

While they are with us, they get all three. Most dogs LOVE learning – especially if they’re food motivated! If we are dealing with a significant behavior case, this can sometimes be a little bit different. We might have a few difficult days, but usually by the end, they are MUCH happier. They know what is expected of them, they understand what is appropriate and what is not, and (just like children), dogs thrive when they understand what the rules are, have leadership, have boundaries, and are getting the 3 items listed above.

**Q:** What do we need to bring with us when we drop our dog off?

**A:**  The only items that we need are:

* Enough food for their stay – but please don’t bring much more than they need for their time here.
* Up to date vaccination records (rabies, distemper, and Bordetella).
* Preventatives (flea, tick, heartworm) – if they will need a dose while in our care. We HIGHLY recommend that your dogs are on these preventatives, especially when they stay with us.
* Bedding – if you’d like your dog to have bedding (and they won’t ingest it), you are welcome to bring that from home.
* You can also bring their favorite toy (no rope toys or rawhides). We also highly recommend antlers, beef center cuts, beef knuckles, horns, etc.

**Q:** What is the dog welfare clause?

**A:**  The purpose of the dog welfare clause in our contract is to help your pet stay healthy. We often times will recommend a switch in food – and we sometimes even require it (at least for the time that they are with us). Food plays such a HUGE role in a dog’s health AND sometimes in their behavior. We will do a nutritional analysis as well as assess their weight. We will adjust the feeding amounts if your dog needs to gain or lose weight. We believe that a huge responsibility of ours is education. We love educating our clients on healthy habits for their pets.

**Q:** Will my dog be perfect when they get home?

**A:**  Absolutely not. Your dog is still an animal. Dogs are self-pleasing. Dogs will always make wrong choices here and there. Especially if it is an adult dog, and/or a dog that has behavior problems. We cannot undo years of bad behavior in a few short weeks. We can make it better and give you the tools to continue their progress at home, but we do not have a magic want to turn your dog in to a robot. We do not “fix” dogs. We make them better and help you have a better understanding of what is going on, how to manage it, and how to continue progressing with them as well as an amazing foundation of obedience.

CONSISTENCY AT HOME IS KEY. We are not liable for regression (especially if it is due to lack of consistency).

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