

**Spring 2025**  
*Version 1*

# **SAFE DOG WALKERS GUIDE**

- *This guide is issued during Dog Walkers orientation training*

Hello and welcome,

On behalf of the all the staff and volunteers here at SAFE, and most of all our four-legged voiceless guests, a heartfelt thank you for taking time to volunteer !

There is no greater joy to an animal lover than receiving gratitude from the eyes and by the tails of those worried, just where, and to whom they belong. We are a shelter that cares and holds great pride on taking great care of each animal every day. Our goal and hope always remains that their stay is short, and transition to their next home smooth.

Dog Walking is often calming, good for body and soul for both you and the pooch. However, the shelter environment can be loud, dynamic and can induce and elevate stress levels. The practices in this guide foster smart and smooth operations. While safety for dog, walker, staff and the public are paramount, it is achieved by all of us working together. **This guide and the Dog Walking orientation class has what you need to know to get you started** Again, thank you and welcome to the team !

## **Daily Kennel routine – Opportunities to walk**

The daily weekday **AM session runs 9am - 11:30**

The specific goal of the morning AM session is:

**“EVERY DOG GETS OUT”** This gives the Kennel Tech’s time to clean and re-set the run while each pup gets a chance to stretch their legs, sniff and do their business.

**This is so important for them and our kennel routine !**

*Just FYI - A leisurely 15 min walk around the pond or grounds allows a Walker to walk 4 dogs in an hour. With 4 Walkers, it normally takes about 2 hours to cycle them all*

*Note :* This is a great session for a first timer as there are friendly experienced walkers to help get you comfortable

After all dogs have been out and returned on the AM session, **you are encouraged to continue** walking, visit in the yard OR helping on another area, if your time allows

**During afternoon hours those qualified are welcome to walk any dogs available up to 4 pm unless advised by staff**

*Examples of staff advisement T-storms threats, health cautions, scheduled meet and greet etc.*

## **Slip Leads , Leashes & Harnesses, collar devices**

Prior to the walk, the **dog should be wearing a collar device.**  
**Both a Slip Lead and Leash** should be **used every walk.**

Deciding whether to use a **harness or “Martingale” type collar** is up to you. If the dog isn't wearing any collar, there are many available in the gear drawer or ask a Kennel Tech to help you locate one. Look for Martingale type collar noted and pictured.

**Harnesses:** Helpful for walking large, strong dogs or those that are prone to pull. If you are more comfortable using the harness always, please use it.

It is recommended for highly aroused, overstimulated dogs to use a clip leash with a “Martingale” collar , along with a slip lead.

Attempting to put a harness on a dog jumping 10 feet in the air and nipping at your armpit is a waste of time, energy and it causes the handler to get frustrated. In these cases, **Less is more** , better option is a Slip Lead, leash with Martingale collar

### **What is a “Martingale” collar ?**

These double banded slide collars differ greatly from a standard flat band collar due to the retracting slide band. This collar type greatly reduces the chance of slipping off if the pooch backs up

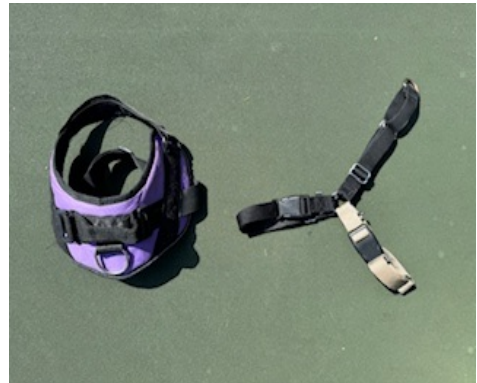
**Slip Lead**



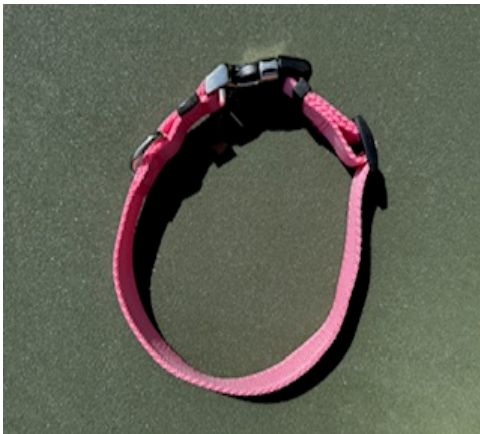
**Clip Leash**



**Harness examples**



**Standard Collar**



**AVOID**

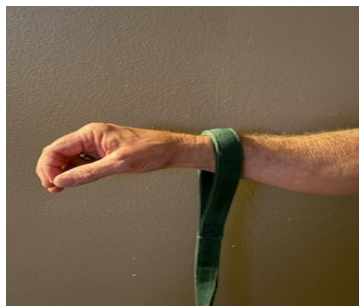
**Martingale Collar**



**HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**  
*(PREVENTS BACK OUT )*

## Gripping your leash

**POOR**



**GOOD**



**RECOMMENDED**



## Good Kennel practices – Getting leashed up

It is important to have patience with shelter dogs in creating a proper routine when leashing up, as well as entering/leaving the kennels. Before you enter the kennel, read all notes posted on kennel door. Look for notes such as; under Heart worm treatment, low activity etc... Red and Yellow marked info sheets don't always mean the dog is dangerous, but may have a certain behavior. Ask the Kennel Tech first.

During the leash up process, we have found it is always best to wait until you see “4 feet on the floor” from outside the kennel. Throwing a treat in back for distraction works if needed. Quietly introduce yourself, remain confident and calm throughout the leashing. If they are not receptive or touch sensitive with a harness, elect to simply clip onto a Martingale collar along with a slip lead.

Most walkers would agree, often the only challenging parts of dog walking are adjusting the harness or collar which takes practice and patience. **Tip – Get familiar with adjusting one type of harness. Many prefer the “Easy Walk” harness** because it has one can clip point.

The second challenge is escorting the pup from its kennel to the entrance/exit. **Tip – When departing down the hallway hold a short firm leash, keep the dogs head pointed towards the door, and most of all, move briskly.**

**TREATS** - Very helpful and often essential to get the dog to obey your command to sit, or to distract to the back of Kennel so you can enter. Based on observed behavior (**for walkers** ,not trainers) it is **best to limit treats to only before or after the walk**. While on the walk avoid using praise words that trigger the dog to desire an on-the-spot treats.

## Good Kennel practices – Getting leashed up (con't)

Often, we experience dog(s) **“Mouthing” behavior** when leashing up. Most of the time it is done softly, in effort to get you going, but can negatively evolve. **Tip – Spray Bitter Apple on your hands before you enter.** It can be found in laundry room or Meet and Greet or ask a KT.

Bitter Apple



## What to do in case of dog fight

### ***DO***

- **Remain calm**
- **Do not yell** (unless calling out for help)
- **Distract them.** Several ways: Hose, pet corrector, air horn barrier board

### ***DO NOT***

- **Grab** the dogs by their collar -the dogs will likely redirect their aggression on you.
- **Step between** the dogs

## A Few Other Things and Need-to-Know Top 7

**Day of the week walk clips** - Use the appropriate day clip found the clip box by the front door. Return old clip back to the box. Mark with another clip if walked in the afternoon. The corresponding color/day allows quick check of who's left.

**-Deep clean day routine.** – Each week there is a day designated for deep clean. Walkers need to be aware and flexible regarding special circumstances that may arise. Communicate with KT's.

- **Staying hydrated** while walking is crucial in summer months.

-----  
Dog Walking Qualification - Completion record

1. Dog Walker orientation course.     Date:\_\_\_\_\_
2. Issue a copy of this SAFE Dog walkers guide to reference
3. Practical demonstration.     Date:\_\_\_\_\_
  - Identify Slip Lead, Clip Leash, Harness and Martingale Collar
  - Adjust and Leash up a dog with a harness or Martingale Collar
  - Walk a dog from its Kennel and announce loudly at exit door

The final step in qualifying is being familiar with the **NEED-TO-KNOW TOP 7 on the next page** as they are essential always!

**If you comfortable with what you have read and understand the Dog Walker's Top 7.....Grab a leash and let's go! !**

***DOG LOVERS UNITE ! ..... Congrats, you have found your tribe !***



# **DOG WALKERS**

## **Need to know**

### **TOP 7**

1. If EVER unsure about a dog, approach, or collar device, ALWAYS ASK a Kennel Tech before your walk.
- 2 Use BOTH a Slip lead AND Leash with a correctly adjusted harness or “Martingale” retracting type collar
3. Always ANNOUNCE YOURSELF LOUDLY before entering/exiting doors & blind corners. Close all outside gates behind you.
4. Keep a minimum of 30 feet away (often more) from other walkers at all times
5. Be vigilant on warning ALL approaching strangers to stay clear from you and the dog
6. ALWAYS Grasp your leash tightly and remain watchful and prepared as distractions ex Cats, Ducks, wildlife, and Cars, may result in an instant unforeseen lunge
7. Upon return, ensure that the Kennel Tech is made aware of any notable health or behavior concerns.

