AWSOM DOG WALKING PROCEDURE

Walking dogs seems like simple stuff, right? Not quite. While walking your own dog may be simple, walking dogs in a shelter environment can be very different. This is a guide to keep you, the animals and the public safe while you are interacting with the dogs.

Schedule: Volunteers may be in the shelter during Shelter business hours (8 am to 5 pm). All dogs must be back in their kennels 30 minutes before the shelter closes.

- Sign in on volunteer binder at front counter on correct date page – note time you arrive and leave
- Obtain a volunteer name badge and wear while volunteering
- All dog walkers must receive orientation for training in safe animal procedures; receive a copy of dog walking policy and sign acknowledgement receipt for this policy
- Wear shoes such as work or athletic shoes (no open toe, flip flop, etc.)
- Avoid wearing large hoop earrings or other dangling jewelry which may catch or tangle in choke collars or kennel links and pose a safety hazard
- Volunteer Orientations will be held monthly (Schedule to be communicated on the awsom website)
- If you are a trained volunteer, you are authorized to orient other volunteers (on a date other than orientation dates listed above).
- Dog walkers may be requested to participate in basic obedience training held at Shelter depending on availability of trainer
- Dogs are to be leashed at all times (choke collars and leashes are located in garage behind kitchen)
- Pick up waste/poop collection bags at volunteer desk in hallway
- Walk only dogs you are able to keep under control at all times
  - Beginner walkers walk only dogs w/ green dots on kennel card
  - Advanced walkers may walk all dogs except those designated (Staff Walk Only – sign on kennel door)
  - Staff walk only dogs will have sign on kennel card
- When removing dog from kennel:
  - Note the kennel #
  - Turn your body sideways to kennel door (frontal approach may intimidate dog)
  - Slowly move your hand to door and allow dog to sniff
  - Avert your eyes and avoid stare between you and dog (dogs consider stare intimidating)
  - Use calm, quiet voice
  - Have leash already attached to choke collar
  - Have choke collar open and ready to slide over dog’s head
  - Look around to be sure other kennel doors are not open, no people or other dogs are near you
  - Open door slightly, maintain sideways stance, maintain soft, gentle voice and movements
• If dog is aggressive or excessively shy, leave to more experienced walkers
• When collar is on dog, look around again to be sure other dogs and people are not nearby
• Remove dog from kennel and move toward door to hallway (excluding door which opens into lobby/waiting area)
• Look out hall windows to see if other dogs/people are approaching door you wish to use
• If coast appears clear move carefully through door to hall
• Look up and down hall for approaching dogs/people
• Exit quickly to outdoors through night deposit area (if there is no obstruction posed by cage cleaning/or other attention to animals in those cages)
• Do not linger in kennel area or hallways w/ the dog you are walking (it heightens the dog’s anxiety about getting outdoors)

• As you walk
  o Walk dogs in parking lot, on lawn, on side of road in front of shelter (being vigilant about passing vehicles)
  o Do not walk dogs in the woods or on private (non shelter) property
  o Dogs must be kept at least 20’ apart from each other at all times
  o Dog walkers should maintain control over dogs and work on basic commands e.g. heel, sit, stay
  o Clean up after your dog as safety permits* - w/ plastic bag obtained at volunteer desk and deposit fecal matter (in green dumpster) *if you cannot prevent dog from pulling, jumping, etc. you may not be able to do anything other than hang on to leash
  o You are responsible for the animal you are walking. Never put yourself, the dog or others in an unsafe situation.
  o Pay attention to your dog at all times (to the exclusion of cell phone conversations and other distractions if necessary)
  o Under no circumstances are children under the age of 18 permitted to walk dogs alone
  o Children between the ages of 14-18 may walk dogs only when accompanied by parent/guardian (and subject to authorization of shelter staff)
  o Never run with your dog
  o Shelter staff will decide whether a dog is eligible to be walked

• Returning dog to kennel
  o As you return to shelter, recall your kennel #
  o Enter building through side door (near dumpster)
  o Open door slowly and observe proximity of other dogs/people near you and whether they are waiting to enter kennel area
  o Enter kennel area (one dog at a time) through hall door nearest the door you entered from outdoors
  o Be mindful of proximity of other dogs/people present in the kennel area
  o If another walker is returning a dog to its kennel, wait at a distance before approaching your kennel
  o Open your kennel door and urge dog into kennel w/out entering the kennel and closing door behind you
  o After dog enters kennel, move kennel door close to your body so it is only slightly open
  o Remove choke collar and leash from dog (leaving choker on poses a hanging hazard to jumpers who may catch on chain link in kennel)
  o Back out of kennel doorway and close door in front of you. Make sure door is properly latched.
o Hang colored collar on kennel door to indicate time of day dog has been walked
  ▪ Yellow-morning  Green-Midday  Blue- late afternoon
o Note positive/negative characteristics of dogs walked by you with date in “Dog Walker Journal” on volunteer desk in hall
o Report any dog injury or illness immediately to staff

REMEMBER
• Never run w/ dogs (Poses danger and promotes inappropriate dog behavior)
• Do not jerk or drag a dog. Always maintain control over the dog and feel free to ask for assistance.
• Do not allow your dog to repeatedly pull you along. If your dog pulls you, stop walking, wait a moment, then continue. Repeat until dog stops pulling.
• Always be aware of your surroundings. Go wide around corners, look through hall windows, and open doors slowly
• Move dogs in and out of building quickly (it lowers their stress level)
• If you do not have experience with a particular dog, stay near the building so you may seek assistance if required
• Keep your dog separate from all other animals. Always be aware of other animals and people near you.
• Dogs must be securely leashed at all times.
• Whenever possible, pick up your dog’s waste wherever it is to reduce a possible source of transmissible diseases
• Do not allow your dog to drink from puddles or other sources of possible contamination
• Do not allow your dog to sniff feces
• If your dog’s kennel is dirty or water bowl is empty, seek assistance from an experienced volunteer or staff person to remedy the situation
• In the event of an emergency, call for help but remain calm.
• Report all injuries immediately – regardless of cause.
• The shelter really needs 6 walkers at 8 am for the "AM Potty Walk". This is a quick out for EVERY dog (except Staff Walk Only – noted by sign stating “staff walk only”) to do his/her business. Put a yellow collar on kennel door when done. These walks are only a few minutes/close to the building and not "up the road". Longer walks and socialization visits begin ONLY AFTER all yellows are up, indicating EVERY dog has gotten out first thing in the morning. This keeps the potty activity outside and not in the kennel and keeps our dogs housebroken and more adoption-ready.
• Maintain general “Quiet in the Kennels” at all times by keeping voices soft and low. Very important!
• Do not hand your dog over to a visitor who is interested in adopting. Send visitors to the front desk for assistance in completing a pre-adoption application.
• Refer all members of the media or other inquiries to the front desk
• Limit the time you spend on longer walks/socialization time to 20 minutes (so dogs are available to be viewed by potential adopters)
• Assist staff w/ Shelter visitors who wish to meet dogs by removing/returning dogs to kennels so visitors may meet and greet in lobby or parking lot. Remain w/ dog during visitor meet and greet. Do not turn dog over to visitors unless instructed by staff to do so (potential adopters are to complete a Pre Adoption form prior to handling dogs without supervision).

Thanks for your help in providing safe exercise for AWSOM dogs!
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT of AWSOM DOG WALKING PROCEDURE

I ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF THIS DOG WALKING POLICY. I AGREE TO FAMILIARIZE MYSELF WITH THE CONTENTS AND ABIDE BY THEM AT ALL TIMES.

____________________________
Print your name

____________________________
Volunteer signature

____________________________
Date