

Seized & Returned Dogs

Information & Advice

For pet dogs released from custody

Following legal proceedings

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Released Dogs - Health & Welfare:

This help sheet is for pet dogs which have been seized by the authorities and held pending further investigation, breed identification and/or legal proceedings under the Dangerous Dogs Act, either section 1 – prohibited dogs or section 3 – which is applicable to ALL dogs. We hope our information will help you when your pet dog is released from custody; please contact us for further advice.

Things to consider when your pet dog is returned to you:

1. We recommend that when your dog is returned from custody you both visit your veterinary surgeon and request a veterinary health check for your dog.

2. Request that the authorities send all veterinary records to your vet or hand them over to you or your solicitor. Ask for the following information to be included:

- Whether your dog has received any veterinary treatment and/or medication, what was this for and when was it received?
- Whether your dog has been vaccinated? What has your dog been vaccinated against? What product was used and when was it administered?
- Whether your dog has received any treatment for internal parasites, e.g. roundworm, tapeworm, lungworm? What product was used and when was it administered?
- Whether your dog has received any treatment for external parasites e.g. fleas? What product was used and when was it administered?
- On what date(s) was your dog castrated/spayed and/or tattooed?

3. Your dog may (will have if exempted under the DDA) have undergone neutering (if not already neutered) and tattooing before being released to you. If your dog has recently had surgery, try and keep it quiet for a few days and limit exercise.

If your dog still has stitches in from neutering then they may need to be taken out by a vet 10-14 days after surgery or the stitches may be dissolvable - you should be given details when your dog is released, if you are not given details-request the information. Contact your veterinary clinic for advice.

Keep a close eye on your dog for any unusual behaviour or distress and contact your vet if at all concerned.

4. Almost certainly whilst your dog has been away it will have been fed a different food to what you would have fed at home. When you change a dog's diet there is always the possibility that it will upset the dog's system and the dog will suffer from loose motions or diarrhoea, a sudden change of diet combined with the excitement of coming home may cause upset.

Everyone will obviously be very excited to have the family member back home-but do limit the number of treats etc given as a sudden intake may also unsettle your dog's digestive tract.

Diarrhoea: If your dog has diarrhoea, withhold food for up to 24 hours, giving small amounts of water (previously boiled & allowed to cool down) to keep your

dog hydrated. Then introduce small amounts of highly digestible bland food, for example, boiled or steamed chicken and rice. If all is well, over the next 3-4 days gradually re-introduce your dog's usual food.

Diarrhoea and/or vomiting can also be due to internal parasites and viruses. It can also be a symptom of an underlying disease.

If any of the following symptoms are evident contact your veterinary surgery straight away:

- If there is blood in your dog's vomit and/or faeces.
- If your dog has a cough, or noisy breathing.
- Seems quiet or depressed.
- Refuses food for more than 24 hours.
- Refuses water for more than 12 hours.
- If you are **at all** concerned for any other reason, please contact your veterinary surgeon straight away.

5. Check the size and condition of your dog's collar. Puppies may have grown and adult dogs may have lost weight. Make sure the collar is adjusted properly and get a new one if it looks damaged. Don't forget that it is a legal requirement to have owner identification inscribed on or attached to your dog's collar.

Settling Your Dog In Back Home:

Kennelling affects different dogs in different ways, some soon settle in to a kennel environment whilst others do not cope so well. Your dog may need help with adjusting from a kennel environment back into a home, be patient and re-establish a familiar routine, toilet training may have lapsed whilst in the kennel, follow our guide to help with this.

S.A.V.E.D Dogs is an independent voluntary organisation made up of like-minded behaviourists, trainers and volunteers willing to offer advice and support from a behavioural perspective. If your dog has been seized and returned and you need advice to help settle your dog back in at home you can contact SAVED (see contacts page for details).

If your dog has been held away from its normal home for any length of time it is possible that your dog may be feeling insecure.

To help settle your dog in over the next few weeks here are some tips:

- Do not try and force acceptance of the muzzle on your dog. Take it easy building up over time and follow our advice.
- Do not force your dog out on walks until it is happy and comfortable with wearing the muzzle.
- Let your dog rest and sleep as much as it needs for the first few days.
- Re-introduce your dog to your human family first, when the initial excitement has worn off and he is happy and relaxed, re-introduce to non-human family members – other resident dog(s)/other animal(s) he

previously lived with. Supervise and take it slowly to begin with. If you need advice-contact us.

- Contact S.A.V.E.D Dogs if you need advice regarding your dog's behaviour or help with training (see contacts page for details).

House Training: If your dog has been kept in kennels or any other strange surroundings for a period of time it is possible that they may become confused about the housetraining rules and you may have to re-train them. Also some puppies being returned may not have finished their house training and you'll have to start over again.

Train or retrain your dog by taking them outside every hour to give them the chance of going to the toilet in the *right* place. When they go, give them lots of praise and reward their good behaviour with a treat.

Take your dog out straight away after sleeping, first thing in the morning, last thing at night and following a meal.

Keep a sharp eye on your dog if they have not "been" for a while and at the first sign that they may be considering it, get them outside quickly and encourage them to go.

Young dogs or dogs that have been away for a while can feel insecure so stay with them while they go. Let them know that you are not going to leave them.

***Never punish your dog for having an accident in the house.
They won't have done it on purpose.***

If your dog does make a mistake, clean it up quickly, thoroughly and without fuss. Use a biological washing powder or special pet cleaner. Do not use ammonia based cleaners (check the contents on the packaging) as these will smell like urine to the dog and encourage them to go in the same place again.

Introducing the Muzzle:

If you need to collect your dog from the authorities it may (will be for exempted dogs & may be according to a control order) be necessary to muzzle the dog and it is likely that this will be the first time that your dog has had to wear a muzzle.

Under happier circumstances you could take time and train your dog to accept a muzzle and get used to it in the same way as we get used to wearing gloves. Unfortunately the police station (or elsewhere) is not the place to start training.

Although the dog is likely to resist the police will not let you go without the muzzle on. So;

Think ahead and be prepared.

Go with two muzzles (don't forget your leash also) of different sizes just in case you get it wrong. Have a chat with the assistant in the Pet shop and maybe you'll be able to do "sale or return". Also take a pocket full of small treats that you can push through the mesh to make your dog feel happier about wearing it.

Your dog is going to be very excited to see you, happy to be out of a kennel and not used to wearing a muzzle. It is possible that your dog will put up a fair amount of resistance and get very stressed.

Try to keep calm and make it as easy as possible for them. Put it on securely to get you home safely. When you get home you can start to train your dog properly and in a calmer atmosphere.

Once home: Don't force on the muzzle; introduce it slowly in your home as your dog needs to make a positive association with it.

Start by holding the muzzle in one hand and feeding him treats with the other.

Let him sniff and touch the muzzle with his nose. After each sniff give him a small treat. Place the muzzle over his nose without doing it up. Take it off before he gets anxious and give him a treat.

Carry on like this for as long as it takes. Remember lots of small steps and lots of praise and rewards.

It is worth doing this properly if this is the way life will be for him from now on.

***Exempted Dogs must be muzzled & leashed at all times in public places
Failure to do so is a criminal offence & puts your dog's life in danger.***

Exempted Dogs - Legal Requirements:

Your dog has been registered under the terms and conditions as legally specified. Owners will receive full details from the Index of Exempted Dogs and should contact them directly if you have any questions.

Under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 (DDA), the following provisions and requirements apply to the types of dog that are specially controlled under section 1 of the DDA.

Any person who contravenes any of the following provisions is guilty of an offence:

- 1) You shall not sell or exchange your dog or give it to anyone or advertise it for sale or as a gift.
- 2) You shall not allow your dog to be in any street, road or place to which the public have access without it being muzzled, kept on a lead and in the control of a person 16 years or older. The dog must be securely fitted with a muzzle sufficient to prevent it biting.
- 3) You shall not abandon your dog or allow it to stray.

Requirements for Certificate of Exemption: The Certificate of Exemption remains valid for the life of the dog, provided that the requirements attached to it are observed. These requirements are:

- 1) that the dog is kept in secure conditions at home so that it cannot escape;
- 2) that the dog is kept in secure conditions when in a public place, i.e. it must be muzzled and held on a lead by someone who is at least 16;

- 3) if asked to do so by a police officer or local authority (dog warden), the keeper of the dog must show the Certificate of Exemption, (or present it to such an officer within 5 days) and immediately display the dog's tattoo and allow the transponder (microchip) to be read;
- 4) that the third party insurance is kept in force;
- 5) that the Index of Exempted Dogs must be notified of any change of address at which the dog is kept for longer than 30 days.
- 6) that the Index of Exempted Dogs must be notified of the death or export of the dog.

Any breach of any of the above requirements will invalidate the Certificate of Exemption. Please keep your Certificate of Exemption and Insurance Certificate safe in case you are asked to produce them.

Responsible Dog Ownership – Advice:

Collar and ID - Many owners don't realize that since April 1992 it is actually a legal requirement that a dog wears a collar with the name and address of the owner inscribed on it or on a identity tag attached to it, when out on the highway or in a public place.

Cleaning Up - All dogs need to go daily and it's your job to pick it up, be responsible, considerate and always clean up after your dog - you can purchase 'poop bags' for the job. Please don't leave it on the ground and walk away; it's unhygienic, annoying and gives dogs a bad name. Once you have it bagged make sure you dispose of adequately too.

Existing bye-laws or new dog control orders issued by your local authority may relate to fouling of land by dogs and the removal of dog faeces. Fines and fixed penalties can be given to offenders.

Don't forget to also keep your own garden clean, sometimes it is easy to forget and it can soon mount up, which can especially be a noticeable problem in the summer months, so pick it up daily, dispose properly and keep both your dog and your neighbours happy.

Under control - Keeping your dog under the control of a competent adult is your responsibility. Regularly check your dog's collar, lead, head collar, harness, muzzle etc – do they fit properly and is any item excessively worn? Never let your dog out unattended. Make sure your garden is secure and your dog cannot escape-check your gates and fencing regularly, especially following adverse weather.

Never leave children and dog(s) alone together without adult supervision-adult (a responsible adult). Supervision is essential - asking or telling a child to stay away from a dog is not responsible. Do not expect a child to follow your instructions if you are not there to supervise them! When you are out and enjoying a walk with

your dog-do remember that not everyone is comfortable around dogs, for many different reasons, please be considerate at all times.

Barking - Excessive barking can cause a problem with your neighbours who may lodge a complaint with your local authority (council). Complaints are investigated and a 'Noise Abatement Notice' can be issued. If you have a problem with your dog barking a lot – please take advice & get help.

Livestock - Your dog should never be allowed to worry livestock. Under the Dogs (Protection of Livestock) Act 1953 it is a criminal offence if a dog is at large (not on a leash or otherwise under control) in a field or enclosure which contains sheep. Worrying livestock also includes attacking livestock or chasing livestock in a way which may reasonably be expected to cause Injury or suffering. Livestock includes cattle, sheep, goats, swine, horses and poultry such as domestic fowls, turkeys, geese or ducks. Injury doesn't have to have taken place for the offence to have occurred.

Local Restrictions - Under the Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act 2005 your local authority can/or may have already, introduced a 'Dog Control Order' (DCO) in their own public areas. These orders can relate to dog fouling, the keeping of dogs on leads, the number of dogs which a person may take on to any land or the exclusion of dogs from land.

Open spaces, parks etc in your area could become/may already be subject to a dog control order, limiting your use as a dog owner. You will need to be aware of any local measures currently in place and abide by them.

Training - Is fun and the whole family can get involved, your dog will love it! Teaching your dog the basics will improve your relationship no end and makes for a happier dog and owner. It's never too late to start and you can teach any dog *at any age*. How do you get started? Find a local class and make enquiries, there are also many good books available from beginners to advanced levels. If you have difficulty finding a class for your dog please contact EDDR or DDA Watch who will do their best to help locate one for you.

Bored dogs often = problems; dogs need stimulation, adequate exercise and interaction-all basic requirements that can easily be overlooked with today's often hectic lifestyles.

General Health - It makes sense to register your dog with your local veterinary practice; you don't need to wait for an emergency but can register beforehand, that way they'll have all your details on record and you'll know exactly who your vet is and where they are.

Vaccinations - will help protect your dog from several potentially fatal infectious diseases. Two or more vaccinations (an injection) are usually given to begin with, followed by regular boosters - normally received once a year-you can speak to your own vet about your dog's immunity requirements. Your vet will also be able to carry out a 'health check' when you visit your clinic.

Worming - Remember to regularly de-worm your adult dog. There are two major types of worms which can affect your dog; tapeworm and roundworm. Recently there have been increased cases of lungworm reported.

Seek further advice regarding the worming regime for your dog and always follow the instructions given by the manufacturer. Internal parasites are detrimental to your dog's health. Lungworm can be fatal. Roundworm eggs can also pose some risk to humans if inadvertently swallowed.

Fleas/Ticks - If your dog has fleas and/or ticks-there are several remedies available to purchase, you will also need to treat the area, e.g., where the dog sleeps, other household animals/dogs may also need attention as well as any dogs your dog comes into close contact with. Again, always follow the instructions before applying.

Hot Weather - Dogs DIE in hot vehicles. Never leave a dog in a vehicle during sunny weather, even if it is cloudy out - it only takes a few minutes for a car to heat up, even with the windows open - your dog is in agony and then he may collapse and die. Exercise in the early morning or evening when it is cooler avoiding the hottest times of day (10-4pm) make sure your dog has fresh cool drinking water down, plenty of fresh air and shade available *at all times* when outdoors. Muzzled dogs must be able to pant and drink whilst muzzled in order to cool down. It may be useful to teach your dog to accept a drink from a squeezezy bottle in case needed when out.

Health care - Make sure you provide access to clean drinking water and give adequate bedding; your dog will benefit from having his own safe secure spot to retreat to when tired or just needing to be undisturbed.

Think about your dog's daily dietary and exercise requirements at the different stages of his life-from puppy to senior dogs, needs will change over time.

Legal requirements - The Animal Welfare Act 2006 introduced a 'duty of care' – dog owners are now legally obliged to ensure the welfare of dogs in their care; a owner, or person looking after a dog, must make sure that the dog has:

- a suitable environment to live in
- a suitable diet (including water)
- is able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns
- is protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease and
- is housed with, or apart, from other animals

A person commits an offence if they do not take steps to ensure that the needs of their dog for which they are responsible are met. Different dogs will have different needs – it is your responsibility to know what these needs are and that they are provided.

Advice & Help - Many dog owners have problems from toilet training, chewing and pulling on the lead to the more complex end of the scale, so you're not alone. The important thing to remember is that you don't have to try and work out what to do

on your own-always seek advice and help for you and your dog. Contact DDA Watch or Endangered Dogs Defence & Rescue.

Muzzle Training – in further detail:

If a dog has to wear a muzzle then we owe it to him to make it as stress free an experience as possible. In a situation when muzzling is required, chances are, the dog is going to be experiencing increased stress levels already; to then “slap” this “thing” on his face, often ill-fitting and uncomfortable, can only increase his stress and make a difficult situation even worse! Next time he is in the same situation, the stress will be greater and even sight of a muzzle can trigger further anxiety, fear or aggression and so it becomes a vicious circle ...poor dog!

So, if we can help a dog become comfortable with his muzzle, if we can get some pleasant associations attached to his muzzle then we can help him feel more secure in an already stressful situation. If you think about it - introducing a dog to a muzzle is no different than introducing a dog to any piece of training equipment. Whether it be a head-collar, harness or even a dog coat – the procedure is still the same – a step at a time and only moving on when the dog is comfortable with each step. All too often the dog’s first experience of a muzzle is when it is put on in a hurry when the dog is already in a state of arousal, leading to fear or frustration and anger.

N.B; Please ensure, to the best of your ability that you get a muzzle that is suitable for your breed. The best muzzles to use are the basket type ones, not the fabric; you need to be able to get small treats through the mesh. The basket ones also do not inhibit the dog’s ability to communicate - we still need to observe his facial gestures to determine whether he is offering submissive lip licks or aggressive lip “pull-backs” etc. If you are not sure, do some research, via the internet or contact breed rescues etc. It is important that once fitted the muzzle is comfortable and very secure. Remember you can’t try it on for size until you have followed the procedure so be prepared for the fact you MAY have to purchase several until you get it right.

First arm yourself with really tasty treats and I mean REALLY tasty treats! If your dog is not treat orientated, then you are going to have to go back a stage further and get him “switched on” to food rewards. So, you’ve got your treats. Now get out the muzzle and show it to your dog, let him have a good sniff, then praise and treat him. AH! Now you’ve got his interest! Put the muzzle away, out of sight, under a cushion or behind your back. Then get it out and repeat the procedure several times.

Do this at regular intervals thro the day, you could use your dogs daily food ration to do this. Make sure that you present the muzzle only 3- 4 times at each session, keep sessions really short (if you are watching the telly then do it at every ad break, then when the programme resumes – stop) Yes that short a time! Once your dog is associating the muzzle with yummy treats or his meal you will see him “perk-up”, maybe wag his tail or get quite animated when he sees “his” muzzle, “oh, this funny looking thing means I get treats! Oh This is a GOOOOD thing!” You can only move on when you see him react like this.

For dogs who have had a bad experience already with a muzzle this will take some time, be patient!

Assuming the dog is now reacting positively to the sight of the muzzle, now move on: Place a treat inside the muzzle and place the muzzle on the floor, or if the dog is a large one, place it on the sofa next to you. Allow the dog to take the treat out of the muzzle, make no movement towards the dog maintain a relaxed expression and body posture and try hard not to stare at either the dog or the muzzle but praise him as he takes the treat.

Again short sessions often are better than “going for it”. Once he is happily pushing his nose into the muzzle you can then repeat the procedure, this time holding the muzzle in one hand.

Get him used to collecting his treat from the muzzle in one hand and try poking another treat through the gaps in the muzzle whilst his nose is still in there ... make this a GOOD game.

When he is leaving his nose in the muzzle expecting another treat to appear through the bars, you can then move on to the next step. Try offering the muzzle to him and see if he puts his nose into it without a treat in there. If he does give him a big reward, you can do this through the bars or if he jerks his head out praise him quietly and give him a small reward. Make sure he gets a bigger or tastier treat if he leaves his head in the muzzle and doesn't “spook” himself.

If he won't place his nose into the muzzle without evidence of a treat go back a stage, he may not be ready yet. If he is shoving his nose in and waiting expectantly, try withholding the offer of a treat for a couple of seconds, pay close attention to him and try to gauge it before he removes his nose.

Once he is happy to wait for a couple of seconds begin to increase the time. If you can get him comfortable with 5-10 seconds, gently draw the straps up around the back of his head ... do not fasten at this point, just get him used to the sensation of the straps.

Again move on when he is easy with this, clip the fastening close around the back of his head, treat through the muzzle and release. Repeat until this is easy for him.

Once he is accepting of the muzzle being fastened and is taking treats through the bars, gradually accustom him to wearing it for very short periods of time, start with 1 minute and slowly build up your time. Reward him intermittently whilst he is wearing the muzzle.

Perhaps indulge him in some massage intermingled with treats, keep those good associations going with the muzzle. If your dog knows a “SIT” ask him to do this before you remove the muzzle, this will help to keep a controlled atmosphere around muzzle wearing.

Reward him again for sitting nicely to have the muzzle removed. As soon as the dog wears his muzzle with ease around the house, try taking him to the garden, treat him through the bars as before.

Try to take him for a very short walk, no more than a few paces, praising and rewarding as you go. Do the same for car journeys too.

REMEMBER; Take things slowly and work at your dogs pace, don't be tempted to rush this ,if you take it slowly you will be doing your dog a big favour and making the transition to muzzle wearing as easy as possible it could in some cases be a matter of life and death! *Good luck! Written by Helen Fayers.*

Inside the Owner's Vehicle:

Dogs registered on the Index of Exempted Dogs also have to be muzzled and leashed inside your car/vehicle, e.g. on your way home if you collect your dog from the police station, on your way to the vets, to the park etc – **AT ALL TIMES.**

The High Court has ruled (in 1993) that for the purposes of the Dangerous Dogs Act, the inside of your vehicle is a public place – this means that registered dogs need to be muzzled and held on a leash, by someone over the age of 16yrs, whilst inside your vehicle on the public highway. Even if you use a dog crate – your dog still needs to be muzzled and leashed.

Further Advice & Information:

DDA Watch – www.dangerousdogsact.co.uk
Tel: 0844 844 2900/ Email: mail@dangerousdogsact.co.uk

Endangered Dogs Defence & Rescue Ltd – www.endangereddogs.com
Tel: 0844 856 3303 / Email: advice@endangereddogs.com

S.A.V.E.D – Support & Advice Volunteers for Endangered Dogs
Tel: 01274 481541

Relevant Contacts:

Index of Exempted Dogs – Tel: 07000 783652
PO Box 47, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 1YD

Association of Pet Dog Trainers – www.apdt.co.uk
PO Box 17, Kempford, GL7 4WZ Tel: 01285 810811
