

Dog Daycare Rules and Regulations

Our topics for this week are:

- **Growth of dog daycares**
- **Risks for dogs in daycares**
- **Proactive efforts to protect dogs in daycares**

This episode is a reverse of the normal. Most will be about the LACK OF rules and regulations on doggie daycares in the U.S.

Niney-seven percent of pet owners in the U.S. consider pets to be a family member. The COVID-19 epidemic led to a surge in the ownership of dogs for companionship while a lot of workplaces were replaced by distance home offices. After the epidemic receded, many people were required to go back to company offices. This was a major reason for a sudden increased need for dog daycare services.

There is a strong market in pet daycare in the U.S. In 2024 it was valued at \$1.7 billion and is expected to more than triple in 10 years. The demand has allowed the emergence of large franchises such a Camp Bow Wow, Dogtopia, and Rover. Additional attractions that have been added to many dog daycares are online booking systems, real-time webcams, play groups, grooming, training, and swimming pools.

All this sounds good and can be good, but most owners are not aware there are few states that have rules or regulations on dog daycare operations. This can lead to mistreatment, avoidable injuries, and transmissible disease, including zoonoses (those that can be transmitted to humans). Colorado, Massachusetts, and Iowa have regulations on dog daycares. Attempts to pass regulations in Kansas and Washington have failed due to fears of new operational expenses. Therefore, the only regulation in those and similar states is “after the fact”, that is, lawsuits after evidence of mistreatment, injury, or disease from a daycare is discovered by a pet owner.

The States of Massachusetts, Iowa, and Colorado do have rules and regulations for dog daycares. These include facility license, required training of dog handlers, limits on the number of dogs that a single facility can care for, recordkeeping, reporting of dog injuries and death, and state inspections by State Departments of Agriculture. Investigation results must be publically available if enforcement action is taken at a facility.

Ginger and I encourage everyone who loves dogs to support reasonable rules and regulations in their State to proactively protect dogs from abuse, injury, and disease resulting from dog daycare operations.

If you have comments or you're interested in particular animal handling subjects, contact us at CBC@BetterAnimalHandling.com

Now let's recap the key points to remember from today's episode:

- 1. Most States do not have rules and regulations for dog daycares to protect dogs that are kept there.**
- 2. The growth of dog daycares is rapid.**
- 3. How dog daycares are run should be regulated by reasonable State rules, regulations, and inspections.**

More information on animal handling can be found in my books, *Animal Handling and Physical Restraint*, *Concise Textbook of Small Animal Handling*, and *Concise Textbook of Large Animal Handling* all published by CRC Press and available on Amazon and from many other fine book supply sources.

Additional information is provided at: www.betteranimalhandling.com . This website has more than 300 past podcasts with notes on handling of dogs, cats, other small mammals, birds, reptiles, horses, cattle, small ruminants, swine, and poultry.

Don't forget, serious injury or death can result from handling and restraining some animals. Safe and effective handling and restraint requires experience and continual practice. Acquisition of the needed skills should be under the supervision of an experienced animal handler.