

Rondout Valley Kennels, Inc.

Pet Lodging  Training / Behavior  Adoptions & Education

WHEN SOMETHING MUST BE DONE

Warning Signs for Loss of Quality of Life For Dogs in Shelters

With long term kenneling, it becomes unacceptable to merely provide for the physical health and needs of dogs in shelters. It is not enough to just hope for more adoptions, as the days pass by and the dogs deteriorate mentally. The behavioral and emotional well being of the dogs in your care must be addressed daily, and their status at least maintained—but as the animal shelter's goal—improved. Without intervention, the dog will become less and less adoptable and its chances for a longer and longer shelter life will increase.

WARNING SIGNS:

Repetitive Action Behaviors:

- Spinning, circling
- Pacing (slowly or fast)
- Pouncing, bounding up and down and up and down

Self-Mutilating Behaviors:

- Excessive licking, lick sore, lick granulomas
- Flank sucking

Overall Appearance:

- Inability to gain or maintain proper weight
- Deteriorating coat quality (excessive shedding, dull coat, dry, flaky coat often from lack of petting/stroking/handling)
- Pressure sores, heavy calluses
- Wearing of toenails (from excessive pacing, digging, movement on concrete)
- Dog smears excrement all over kennels and walls
- Dog is continually covered in excrement
- Disgusting odor (dog continually reeks of urine and feces)
- Dog remains depressed and shows no signs of adjusting (dog is devastated in shelter, traumatized—usually seen in older, previously pampered dogs)
- Dog seems to have “given up”, dog looks hopeless

Repeated Displays of Aggression:

- Lunging/charging at the front of cage/kennel towards humans (practice makes perfect—dogs are rehearsing biting in real life)
- Lunging/charging the front of kennels towards passing dogs

Unacceptable Standards of Care:

- Overcrowding and constant dog-dog fighting or bullying
- Dog gets less than 20 minutes accumulated total time of direct, human physical contact DAILY (petting, stroking, leash-walking, direct play...)
- Dog is restricted to indoor-only environment and doesn't experience outdoor environment—DAILY
- Dog is restricted to outdoor-only environment and doesn't experience indoor living environment—DAILY
- Dog is never able to calm down (kennel environment is too arousing and dog gets no break)
- Multiple returns on a single dog

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