



411 Payne Road Scarborough Maine 04074

## Pet Owner Handbook

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## Welcome to Mutty Paws

Thank you for your interest in our services at Mutty Paws Academy. We provide a customized experience for every dog and their parents. Our skilled and dedicated staff gives your dog the highest level of care in a safe, fun, and interactive environment.

### History of Mutty Paws

In 2007, upon relocating to Maine, Kris Klinges decided to pursue owning his own business. After working in law enforcement, technology, and childcare industries, Kris decided to pursue a career in an area that he is truly passionate about: dogs! Kris toured several dog daycares across the country and observed different methodologies and practices. During this time, he also submerged himself in working at a local daycare to help him understand the ins and outs of the industry.

As Kris familiarized himself with the Southern Maine area, it became apparent to him how dog friendly this location is and he settled on this area to open his first deluxe facility. He pooled the ideas he had been observing over the previous four years with his own ideas, creating his own custom-made facility.

Reese Klinges (co-owner) used her experience as a CPA and Entrepreneur to assist Kris with the financial and human resource side of the business. Her passion for creating a business that was equally great for its employees as its canine customers has helped push the MPA Team to be the best caretakers our parents could ask for.

Reese and Kris spent three months converting an old garage into the beautiful space that would soon be the temporary home to many furry friends. Mutty Paws began operation in November of 2011 on Lincoln Street in South Portland.

The Lincoln Street location was a great starting point. Mutty Paws grew exponentially and soon reached capacity. Kris and Reese decided that a move to a larger facility was in order. They used the lessons they had learned and researched best practices and cutting-edge technology to design and built a state-of-the-art facility in Scarborough which opened in November of 2016 and continues to serve the Portland area as a leader in dog daycare innovation.

### Canine Culture at Mutty Paws Academy

At Mutty Paws Academy we treat all our guests as if they are our own. We focus on enriching the lives of the dogs in our care, focusing on manners, reinforcing positive behaviors and discouraging negative ones. Dogs are asked to sit before going through doors, they are not allowed to jump on people, and we continually work on developing new trained behaviors as well as reinforcing existing ones. We use kibble in class to reward appropriate behavior and achieved training cues.

The staff plays games with the dogs throughout the day to stimulate them mentally as well as physically. There is also plenty of wrestling, romping and ball play. We use positive reinforcement techniques and promote structured, appropriate play. Mutty Paws Academy is committed to developing a partnership with parents. We will be honest and proactively communicate with owners about their dogs' behaviors and interactions during their stay with us. Dogs are like people and have good days as well as bad and we feel it's important for

parents to know how their dog is doing.

Except for dogs that are 25 lbs. and under, who are segregated into their own groups, dogs are grouped according to a variety of factors including temperament, play style, and age. We keep our group sizes small, generally 12 dogs or less to allow for more individualized attention. We practice a balance of play then rest philosophy. Dogs spend approximately 1 hour at play and 1 hour at rest. Given the educational component of our class sessions it is important for dogs to have these rest periods to keep their minds fresh for learning. All classes are supervised by teachers and are supplemented by Student Coordinators and additional support staff who move between groups. Our Teachers are singularly focused on the dogs in their care and are in constant communication with the Student Coordinator allowing for adjustments in the groups throughout the day.

## Evaluations

An evaluation is necessary before a student can attend MPA to determine whether we are a good fit for your dog. Before we can evaluate your dog, MPA requires a non-refundable deposit for evaluations at the time of scheduling as well as proof of vaccinations, completed application, a signed medical release, and signed pet care agreement which can be found on the 'Enroll Today' link on our website:

<http://www.muttypawsacademy.com/admissions>

Evaluations may be scheduled after receiving the information above by calling our Admissions Assistants at (207) 210-6592.

When you arrive, we will review your paperwork and have a brief discussion about your dogs' individual needs. We will then take your dog into our behavioral interview room or a yard and slowly introduce them, one by one, to dogs of different sizes and play styles. We are trying to get a sense of the group in which they will be the most comfortable and have the most fun. We evaluate your dogs' behavior, body language, signals, and how well they read/interact with other dogs. We let your dog "tell" us that they are comfortable before increasing the number of dogs. Once the group portion of the evaluation is completed, we will bring your dog to one of our suites to evaluate their comfortability in that space. This is vital as we practice a balance of rest and play so it is essential that dogs are comfortable in their suites whether they attend for daycare or boarding.

We will return to the lobby to discuss our observations. If for any reason, they are not comfortable in our environment we will make recommendations for next possible steps for you and your dog. It is important to note that we are not the right fit for all dogs. That doesn't mean they aren't great dogs and has no reflection on their owners. We will always recommend what we feel is best for your dog. You are welcome to watch this process on our monitors in the lobby. Dogs evaluated after 11:15am slot will not be eligible to stay for daycare on the evaluation day.

### 7-Day Daycare Policy

Please be aware, we do not allow dogs to attend daycare or boarding if they have attended at another daycare facility within 7 days for health precautions.

### \*Please note\*

We require an evaluation and one full day of daycare prior to any boarding stay. We have found it can be overwhelming for a dog's first visit to be overnight. By completing one full day

of daycare, dogs have a chance to acclimate to our facility and feel more comfortable before they board.

## What should you bring for your dog?

### *Daycare Only*

1. Your dog (of course)
2. Collar and Leash – Our policy is that all dogs arriving and exiting the building remain under leash control. We discourage any interactions between dogs and between parents and unfamiliar dogs in the lobby. We ask that parents honor this policy by keeping dogs under leash control until turned over to a Mutty Paws Academy employee. As a safety precaution all collars and leashes are removed and will be stored until pickup.
3. Lunch for puppies (under the age of 6 months). If your dog is over the age of 6 months, a veterinary note will be required to continue administration of lunch meals. Without a veterinary note, a \$2.00 fee will apply for preparation and administration of the meal.

### *Boarders*

We ask that all items be labeled with the dogs first and last name with a type of permanent labeling such as permanent marker. If items are received unlabeled, staff will label the personal belongings with permanent labeling.

4. Your dog (of course)
5. Collar and Leash – Our policy is that all dogs arriving and exiting the building remain under leash control. We discourage any interactions between dogs and between parents and unfamiliar dogs in the lobby. We ask that parents honor this policy by keeping dogs under leash control until turned over to a Mutty Paws Academy employee.
6. Food – Our recommendation is to keep your pet on the same diet they have at home but if you wish to purchase food from us, we do offer a high-quality menu. We strongly prefer that food be provided in individually pre-portioned containers for each meal with instructions on times of feedings, special instructions, etc. In the event that a parent is unable to pre-portion the food, it can be brought in bulk with specific feeding instructions including times, amounts, special instructions, etc.
7. Comfort item – We recommend an un-laundered article of clothing (t-shirt, sweatshirt) with family members scent – Often this will help dogs feel close to their owners and more comfortable while spending time in their suites.
  - \*Please note\*
  - In the best interest for the dogs in our care, we only offer boarding for 'regular' daycare dogs. Regular daycare dogs attend at the minimum 2 days per month. We have found dogs who attend on a regular basis have an easier and more comfortable transition to boarding. Familiarity breeds comfort!
  - We do not accept bedding as we provide warm comfortable blankets and cots to all boarding dogs. Any clothing, except for coats/jackets/sweaters in the cold weather months, or accessories worn by your dog will be removed prior to your pup joining a group unless previously discussed with a Mutty Paws Academy employee. We are not responsible for any damage that may occur belongings provided.

## Medications

We are happy to administer oral and topical medications that your dog requires with no additional cost. Injections can be given for a small fee. Please discuss your dog's medication needs with us prior to his/her stay.

## Help your dog recover from Daycare/Boarding

While with us, your dog will likely be very active and stimulated both mentally and physically. This increased stimulation can sometimes cause stress for your dog. Stress can be both positive and necessary for development, or negative and have the potential to suppress the immune system, causing temporary behavior changes and/or increased arousal. Temporary behavior changes can occur as a result of unfamiliar surroundings. We mitigate issues by asking owners to allow dogs to acclimate with some exposure to our environment prior to any stay by requiring your dog to attend at least one day of daycare prior to a boarding stay. We will recommend additional exposure should we feel that it is best for your dog.

Eating habits can change when staying away from home and dogs will often eat food differently. They may eat every morsel and put on a few pounds. Some dogs lose weight even though eating well or lose weight by not eating enough. Time spent at Mutty Paws can be very exciting, and some dogs lose weight from exercise as they run, wrestle, and play with the other dogs, having a great time. Boarding dogs often leave the facility exhausted but happy and sleep a lot the first couple of days they are home. Daycare dogs, though super frisky when they see you, often are fast asleep shortly after pick-up.

Help prepare your dog for daycare by establishing a routine on daycare days. Help them recover by providing water, food, and allow them to rest. Monitor their food and water intake. Too much of either can cause problems.

Help prepare your dog for boarding by getting them acclimated to our facility. Depending on the dog, we will recommend the duration. Maintain your routine on the day of drop off as much as possible. Bring the dog in first and then bring his/her belongings once they are released to a Mutty Paws Academy employee. Plan your packing in advance so as not to break out the suitcases the day before your trip. Help them recover by providing water, food, and allow them ample rest. Monitor their food and water intake. Too much of either can cause problems.

## Grooming

We offer the following grooming services every day:

- Bath
- Nail trim (Pawdicures)
- Ear cleaning
- Tooth brushing
- De-shedding brushing
- Blow-out

You may schedule these services in advance or let us know when you drop off your dog. We will ask for a pickup time when you schedule a grooming service to ensure that your dog gets the most playtime prior to his/her grooming service.

\*Please note\*

We do not force grooming services for the best interest of the dog as we want to remain a positive environment. We are happy to attempt any service. Payment will be expected for all attempts.

## Training

Mutty Paws Academy promotes training for all dogs that attend. A well-trained dog is a happy dog! In addition to our daily basic obedience reinforcement training, we offer a variety of classes as well as individual sessions. We also offer an AP Class for dogs that benefit for individualized training and mentally stimulating activities. Please inquire with us for details and current offerings.

## Health Concerns

While doggie daycare has great benefits for your dog, there are some health concerns that you should be aware of. Just like in a child's daycare, dog's that attend daycare or board in any facility are susceptible to "bugs" that are making the rounds in our area. While the vaccinations that we require your dog to have do well to protect your dog from the more serious illnesses, dogs will occasionally pass along Bordetella (Kennel Cough) or Giardia. Naturally, dogs that are socializing have a greater risk of catching a canine communicable disease. We do more to combat the spread of airborne illness than anyone else in the industry. Our air HVAC system exchanges the air in our boarding rooms and all other indoor only dog spaces TEN TIMES AN HOUR. We thoroughly disinfect every suite, class area and room in our facility every night, however, just like in a child's daycare or work place, dogs are susceptible to bugs that make their way around the area. It should be noted that while we take great care in maintaining a clean/disease-free environment, parents should be aware of the risk.

All dogs attending Mutty Paws Academy must be free of fleas and we highly recommend that dogs be on a monthly flea and tick preventative. If fleas are evident upon intake, we will provide a flea bath at the owner's expense.

We highly recommend having a yearly fecal exam to check for parasites, worms, etc. If we observe worms in a dog's stool, we will collect a sample, isolate the dog, and notify the parents immediately.

Please inform us of ANY allergy your dog might have, be it food, environmental, or topical. We will discuss exposure procedures with you.

When dogs play at Mutty Paws Academy, they wrestle, run, jump, and chew on each other and generally "rough-house." Nicks, cuts, scrapes, and errant tooth punctures may happen during this play. We take great care in grouping dogs so they will all get along, as mentioned in the "Canine Culture" section, though occasionally there will be a disagreement or altercation. Our staff is trained on how to safely and quickly diffuse and separate dogs in that situation to limit injury. If your dog is involved in an altercation or injured, we will provide care for your dog immediately and inform you as soon as we are able.

If you notice your dog is not feeling well please keep them home from daycare, away from other dogs, and notify us. Help us maintain a disease-free environment.

Dogs exhibiting obvious signs of illness on arrival will be refused service.

## Requirements

Mutty Paws Academy requires that all dogs' vaccinations be up to date (Copies need to be provided at the time of scheduling an evaluation) for:

- 1) Rabies
- 2) Full series of Distemper
- 3) Bordetella – required for dogs under 1 year of age. *\*We strongly recommend the Bordetella vaccine for all ages, however, only require dogs under the age of one to have this vaccine.*
- 4) We require dogs to be neutered or spayed by 6 months with exclusions. If your dog is over 6 months and is not neutered or spayed, please be aware that based on their evaluation, we may not be able to have them attend until they are. *\*Please note\** - females in season cannot attend group play.  
Please speak with a Mutty Paws Academy Manager to discuss further. Please consult your Veterinarian regarding when to spay/neuter.
- 5) All pets need to be under leash control in the lobby and we do not recommend interactions in the parking lots or lobby.

We also highly recommend a Fecal Exam (to check for roundworm, hookworm, whip worm, giardia, coccidia, and tapeworm) and flea and tick preventative maintenance for all dogs.

## Lobby Hours

Monday-Friday

6:00 am – 10:00 am (Drop off/Pick up)

3:00 pm – 7:00 pm (Pick-ups, ONLY)

Saturdays, Sundays, and Holidays

8:00 am – 10:00 am (Drop off/Pick up)

3:00 pm – 5:00 pm (Pick-ups, ONLY)

Mutty Paws Academy observes the following holidays: *New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day.*

## Scheduling

Our preferred method for reservation requests is to request a *user name* and *password* to our online system, PetExec. This way you can conveniently make reservations from your desktop computer, Smartphone, or tablet. *Please note: When logging in with your tablet or Smartphone be aware that often the first character is automatically capitalized. Our usernames and passwords are not capitalized and are case-sensitive.*

Another method for reservation requests is via email sent to [info@muttypaws.net](mailto:info@muttypaws.net). Please include your phone number, the date and time of drop off and pick up, duration of stay, names of pets, and the owner(s) names or you can always call us directly at (207) 210-6592 to make reservations.

We do have a daily capacity that we strictly adhere to in order to maintain our small playgroup size for the safety and well-being of the dogs and employees alike. If our capacity has been reached on a day you are trying to make a reservation the system will not allow the reservation to be placed. If this is the case, call or email us; we may still be able to make the reservation.

## We offer two different pricing structures:

### *Enrollment*

We offer discounted daycare pricing for all enrolled customers. These customers will take advantage of a daily rate for 1, 2 or 3-days a week and deeper discounted rate per day for 4 days or more enrollment. To enroll, parents are required to commit to the same days every week. Payment will be charged to a credit card automatically at the beginning of each enrollment week and charged regardless of whether the student will be in attendance, including holidays and storms. Days may not be moved or switched from the committed day. This is the best way to guarantee your dog a spot for daycare on a weekly basis and breed familiarity among the dogs. Enrollment may be terminated with seven days advanced notice and may not be re-enrolled for a minimum of 30 days.

### *Non-Matriculated*

Non-matriculated students pay for daycare each day of attendance and are welcome to schedule and change their scheduled days as needed, depending on availability. Non-matriculated spots are **not** guaranteed. This means, if another dog enrolls for a day that a non-matriculated dog is scheduled for or a boarding is requested, the non-matriculated dog may lose their spot. MPA will notify the non-matriculated dog's family at least 48 hours in advance of the scheduled day if the non-matriculated dog's spot has been lost.

We do maintain a waiting list for daycare spots on days that are fully booked.

\*Please see the 'tuition' page for pricing! <https://www.muttypawsacademy.com/tuition>

## Early Drop-off/Late Pick-up & No-show fees

Arrangements can be made in advance for Early Drop-off (6:00 am – 8:00 am on Saturdays, Sundays, and Holidays) or Late pick-up within a 30 minute window for an additional \$10.00 fee. Please speak with a Mutty Paws Academy Representative to schedule.

If you fail to pick up your dog by closing and we are unable to contact you we will feed your dog and move them to boarding for the night. You will be assessed a "No-Show" boarding fee of \$15.00 and the food cost (if not provided) in addition to the normal boarding fees.

### Daycare No call/No show Fee

We require all dogs to be dropped off by 10:00am. If we are not notified that your dog will not be attending by the end of business THE NIGHT PRIOR and your dog has not arrived by 10:00am, we will charge a no call/no show fee equaling the daycare service for that day.

## Boarding Deposits

We ask for a boarding deposit of \$45.00 per dog when scheduling a boarding. Deposits will be applied to your MPA account if the boarding is cancelled more than 2 days prior to arrival. If the boarding stay is cancelled less than 2 days prior to arrival, it will not be retained by Mutty Paws Academy. For example, if your dog is scheduled to board on Wednesday, you would need to cancel by close of business on Sunday to be able to use the deposit for future services.

## Parental Acknowledgment

Please redirect to the enroll today page to under 'medical release' to sign this form and acknowledge that you read and understand the information and the policies contained herein.