



ROLAND'S DOG DAYCARE EVALUATION GUIDE



BOOP

a quick reference guide for
evaluating potential daycares
for your silly goose

EVALUATING WHICH SETTING MAY BE BEST FOR YOUR DOG

Home Pet Sitter

Your pet is not up-to-date on vaccines or is not spayed/neutered

Your pet has separation anxiety or has trouble adapting to new spaces

Your dog is reactive or afraid of other animals or people

Your pet needs to be under constant supervision due to blindness, a recent surgery or health complication

You'll be away for a few hours, for a day trip or longer trip.

Boarding Facility

Your dog is up-to-date on vaccines and is spayed/neutered

Your pet is well-socialized and does not exhibit extreme resource guarding (food, toys, people)

Your pet does not have separation anxiety and is not reactive towards people, barriers or animals.

Your pet adapts quickly to new environments/people and does not have significant supervision requirements or health concerns

You'll be away for at least a few days.

Daycare Facility

You'll be away for a few hours (less than one day)

DOG SAFETY

Is the area free of hazards, like electrical cords, wires or broken toys? Does the facility have minimal odors and a comfortable temperature? What are their cleaning procedures?

What happens if a dog is injured while at daycare?

How do they assess injury severity and treatment plans?

How soon is the owner notified of any injury?

Does the daycare have a veterinary office close by for emergency and non-emergency care?

Does the facility have secure fencing and is the area free of hazards, like electrical cords, wires or broken toys?

!! There shouldn't be spaces in the fences, and the doors dividing the play areas and those leading to the street should be secured with double gates.

Do they require proof of current vaccinations or a Titer test?

What are the spay and neuter requirements?

Are dogs separated by size, temperament or playstyle?

Do they have indoor and outdoor facilities?

Are there certain temperatures or weather that require indoor play only?

Does the facility have procedures in place for emergencies, natural disasters or injuries?

What's their injury assessment procedure after an incident?

How do they determine if a dog returns after an incident?

COMMUNICATION & TRANSPRENCY

Will they notify you promptly if they see a change in behavior or well-being?

In the case of an injury or emergency, what is their communication protocol to the owner?

If a dog is seriously injured or dies in their care, what are their communication protocols to other clients?

Will they share if a dog has died or been seriously injured in their care?

Will they notify you promptly if they see a change in behavior or well-being?

Will you receive a daily report card?

Are you allowed to tour the facility before signing your dog up?

Can you see the daycare room through windows or viewing portals?

YOUR DOG'S DAYCARE EXPERIENCE

Will they do a behavior assessment, temperament test or trial process?

Are there a variety of activities for varying energy levels, temperament, or personalities?

How many dogs are in each playgroup?

Are they able to provide an example of a daily schedule?

Are there enrichment offerings?

Will your dog have indoor and outdoor access?

DAYCARE STAFF & CERTIFICATIONS

What is the ratio of daycare staff to dogs?

Are there any situations where dogs will be unsupervised during the day?

What dog training or behavior certification and training does the staff have?

Are they CPR, First Aid and/or Fear Free Certified?

Ask: "If my dog <insert unwanted or undesirable behavior here>, what do you do?"

- !! Their answer should never include physical punishment, aversives, intimidation, or other dominance based methods.
- !! Make sure you are comfortable with their training philosophy and methods.

DAYCARE GREEN & RED FLAGS TO LOOK FOR

- ✔ They provide details on the day-to-day operations of the facility, the cleaning schedule, and the facility appears clean.
- ✔ The ratio is more than one staff member per group all day. Staff members receive training on recognizing dog signals and body language, and they know how to appropriately de-escalate the group using their voice, gentle hands, and removing or separating dogs for safety.
- ✔ The daycare and staff have a separation strategy for stressed, over-aroused, or dogs who are in need of a break.
- ✔ They assess dogs on a consistent basis, even if they have been regulars, to be sure every dog is still appropriate. They do test runs, communicate concerns with clients, and have consistent communication standard.
- ✔ They have a clear procedure and open communication with clients about any incidents that take place at the facility. They don't break up scuffles violently or physically cause harm to the dogs, and they have a procedure about when to discontinue a dog's time at the daycare.

- ✘ They refuse to provide a tour. The facility looks dirty, there are excrement/potty stains on the floor, or they don't have a regimented cleaning schedule.
- ✘ Their standard is a low number of staff to high number of dogs in a group based on size, and they don't have training in animal behavior, body language, or ways to keep the group settled and calm.
- ✘ They lack a system that determines if a dog is a good fit, even if they are obviously not enjoying themselves, or the dog is a risk/at risk in a group setting. They don't do test runs, and fail to follow-up regarding how the day went.
- ✘ They don't have a planned procedure after an incident, regardless of injury. They don't have an injury assessment and fail to evaluate the dogs. They continue allowing a dog that has repeatedly reacted intensely and started scuffles, to return to the facility.

SOURCES

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SILLY GOOSE

fighting for

serious change.

Roland's Silly Goose Crew was founded to remember our dog Roland, who tragically died at an Austin dog daycare in 2022. **Our mission is simple yet powerful: to advocate for change in the dog care industry and empower dog parents to make more informed decisions for the care of their dogs.** We want to make a difference in the lives of dogs and their families in Austin, and beyond. Our ultimate goal is to create more consistent safety standards and push for more accountability in the industry, so that no family ever has to experience the same tragedy as Roland's.

Our hope is that this guide will help dog parents across Austin make informed decisions about the care of their four-legged family members. Roland was our first dog and it was so overwhelming trying to figure out what was best for him. We compiled this questionnaire from a variety of sources as a "jump start" guide for you.

This is not intended to be a checklist, nor is this intended to dissuade you from enrolling your pups in a dog daycare. Daycares can play an important role for dog families everywhere, so we believe it is important to hold them to a higher standard.

This should act as a tool to think through the factors that are most important to you and your family so you can make a more informed decision for your silly goose.

"Much like dog training, dog daycare is an unregulated industry," says Mandy Eakins, KPA-CTP, CPDT-KA, owner and trainer at Manners Matter Dog Training and Daycare in Nicholasville, Kentucky. "Anyone can open a daycare. Just because someone really likes dogs, and has had dogs, does not make them qualified to oversee groups of dogs."




**the roland
foundation**
for dog advocacy

Roland's Silly Goose Crew is a registered
501c3 Non-Profit (EIN: 92-2542861).

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