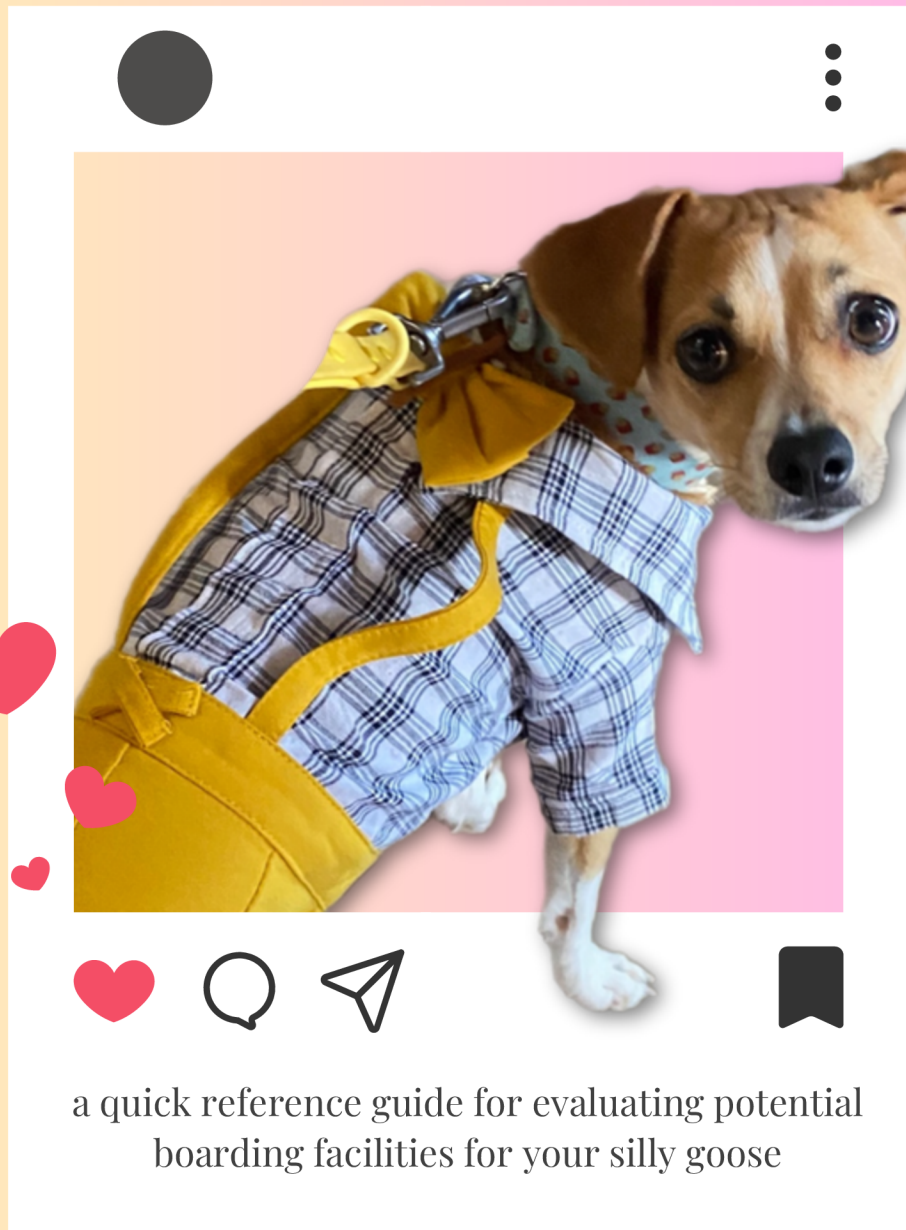


ROLAND'S DOG BOARDING FACILITY EVALUATION GUIDE



a quick reference guide for evaluating potential
boarding facilities 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)

COMMUNICATION & TRANSPARENCY

Can you take a tour?

!! Before deciding to board your dog, it's essential to visit and inspect the facilities. If they refuse to show you around, consider it a red flag and leave immediately. Ensure the kennels are clean and roomy, as you wouldn't want your dog confined in a small area. Trust your instincts—if something feels off about the boarding place, don't leave your dog there.

Is there webcam access to your dog's kennel?

How present is the staff during play time?

Can you meet the staff who will be looking after your dog?

Do they have insurance to cover eventualities?

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

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

DOG SAFETY

Are staff physically present 24/7?

!! Starting in 2023, House Bill 2063 mandates that kennels provide pet owners with written notice if their pets will be unattended during certain hours or if the facility lacks a working sprinkler system. This legislation was introduced following a fire at Ponderosa Pet Resort in Georgetown on September 18, 2021, which tragically claimed the lives of 75 dogs.

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.

What vaccinations are required, and do all dogs have to show proof of vaccinations?

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

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

What happens if a dog is injured while at the boarding facility?

How soon is the owner notified of any injury?

KENNELS

How are all the animals housed and how long will dogs be in kennels?

Is the facility loud or are there other potential sources of anxiety?

Will my dog have access to toilet and sleeping areas at all times?

Dog boarding facilities should provide dogs with the freedom to relieve themselves at any time, and also offer a private crate or space for them to rest or sleep as needed.

How many dogs are boarded there at one time?

A dog kennel should have a cap on the number of dogs it can accommodate. Check if each dog has its own unit or if multiple dogs share a kennel. If they do, inquire about the reasons—often, it's to keep multi-dog families together, but this should be a rare exception.

STAFF & DAILY EXPERIENCE

What is the ratio of boarding staff to dogs?

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

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

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."

Will my pet share space with other dogs?

What kinds of activities are provided and for how long?

What will my dog eat?

Boarding can be stressful for a dog, so it's important to maintain a familiar routine. Bringing your dog's usual food and treats helps minimize stress. Leave detailed instructions on your dog's dietary restrictions and feeding schedule.

Is there a play area?

!!! Don't just ask—ensure you see the play area in use by dogs. Some kennels may charge extra for playtime or limit sessions. Make sure your dog gets ample time to exercise, relieve itself, and socialize with other dogs during its stay.

Will you receive daily or weekly reports from them? Will they notify you promptly if they see a change in behavior or well-being?

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Can you accommodate dogs with special needs?

How do you deal with dogs who have boarding stress?

Will my dog have access to an area with no dogs or people if necessary?

If you are considering board and train options for your dog, it may be best to decouple the training and boarding facilities. When it comes to training, group classes are great for teaching manners or sports. Private training is usually the best option for behavior issues. It can be rare to find great humane, effective board and train options!

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 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 booking a boarding facility for your pups. Boarding facilities still 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.




**the roland
foundation**
for dog advocacy

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



katelyn@rolandsvoice.org
michael@rolandsvoice.org



rolandsillygoosecrew.org



@rolandssillygoose



facebook.com/rolandssillygoosecrew