



Kennel Club Breed Rescue Code of Practice

Introduction

The Kennel Club through Kennel Club Breed Rescue [KCBR] aims to promote and support the work of the breed rescue organisations listed in the [KCBR] directory on its 'Find a Rescue' website. The following KCBR Code of Practice outlines standards of operation expected of KCBR rescue organisations.

General principles

The following principles will apply, as appropriate, to those organisations that keep dogs either in their own kennels, in commercial boarding kennels, at home, in foster homes or rehoming directly from the old home to a new home.

1. The organisation should endeavour to provide and maintain the highest possible standard of welfare for dogs in its care.
2. Dogs should be provided with adequate and appropriate care at all times.
3. The organisation should seek suitable, long-term homes for dogs.
4. The organisation should maintain contact with new keepers and assist as appropriate.
5. All rescue organisations must operate within legal requirements and those using commercial kennels should ensure that they comply with the Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963.
6. All rescue organisations must comply with current Health and Safety requirements in force for their area.

On receiving dogs

1. New arrivals should be kept isolated until they have been properly assessed.
2. Vaccination records should be sought if possible or dogs vaccinated as appropriate.



3. As much information as possible should be sought from the source of the dog as to its health, ownership, temperament and reason for re-homing. Where appropriate, dogs should be scanned for identity, and steps taken to reunite dogs with owners or breeders. It remains the decision of the breed rescue if the dog should return to the breeder once in their care.
4. Dogs should be assessed by individuals with the experience and knowledge to do so, to determine whether they require veterinary intervention, to advise if they are suitable for re-homing and to decide on the best way forward for the dog.
5. Neutering of dogs or bitches should be considered in breeds where there is a high number of dogs in rescue, unless there are considered good reasons for not doing this. This could be made as a condition of adoption.
6. In cases where dogs are considered unadoptable for reasons of health or temperament, careful consideration should be given to the best future options. If there are health issues which cannot be resolved and which impair the dog's quality of life to such an extent that it is suffering then humane euthanasia should be considered.
7. All dogs must be microchipped from 6 April 2016. When a dog is re-homed to a keeper the dog must be registered in that person's name - even if the rescue organisation has purported or proposed that it will retain ownership. Should the keeper consent, the rescue's contact details may be added as an alternative contact point should the dog become lost. (Note; the change in law relating to microchipping does not affect the legal requirement for a dog to wear a collar and tag when in a public place).

Housing/kennelling

1. All areas used for housing dogs must be kept clean, at an appropriate temperature and lighting level.
2. Clean, comfortable bedding of a suitable size must be provided for each dog.
3. Sufficient water and appropriate nutrition must be provided.
4. If commercial kennels are used by the breed rescue they should be registered by the local council and offer a good level of proven overall care.



5. Breed rescue organisations which use commercial/boarding kennels should have first-hand knowledge of these kennels.

Environment

1. Dogs should not be left unattended for long periods. Dogs showing anxiety or distress should receive appropriate support.
2. Dogs should have appropriate daily exercise.
3. Mental and behavioural needs should be met. Dogs should have opportunity to interact with humans and other dogs as appropriate, to play and behave naturally.

Grooming/care

1. Dogs should be checked for parasites and treated appropriately.
2. Dogs should be groomed as necessary.

Transportation

1. Dogs should be transported in suitable vehicles, compliant with legislation for the transport of animals.
2. Journeys should be planned in advance, taking accounts of weather conditions, especially if the vehicle does not have air conditioning.
3. Shade from the sun must be provided: even in an air-conditioned vehicle a dog can become too hot if in full sun.
4. Ensure that there are sufficient breaks during a long journey to allow dogs to exercise and drink water. In warm weather, cold water may be stored in a thermos flask to ensure that it remains cool. Ice cubes can be added to a flask if required.
5. Dogs should be monitored for signs of overheating, which include panting, disorientation, excessive thirst, dark gums, vomiting, diarrhoea and loss of consciousness.



6. Dogs should have adequate space for their size and be suitably restrained with a seat belt harness, dog cage or behind a dog guard.
7. Dogs should not be left unattended during transportation other than a brief break during driving.
8. All dogs should wear an identity tag when away from the house, particularly during transportation and fostering.

Re-homing practices

1. Consideration should be given as to whether it is appropriate to inform the breeder of the dog (if known) and whether the breeder should be offered the opportunity to take responsibility for the dog in the first instance.
2. All prospective new owners must be adequately assessed. The organisation needs to be satisfied as far as possible, that individuals are physically, socially and financially able to care for the dog. The organisation must ensure that all adopters are at least 18 years of age.
3. Prospective owners who live in rented accommodation must show written permission to keep a dog on the premises.
4. Prospective owners must be accompanied by an organisation representative when meeting dogs. Opportunities to interact with dogs should be encouraged but monitored.
5. Home visits may not be required in every case, but if the dog has specific needs a home visit must be considered.
6. Financial contributions may be sought from new owners, though this should be flexible if it considered that the dog would miss out on a good home for the sake of a contribution. The needs of the dogs should be prioritised over financial gain.
7. All potential adopters should be made aware of the responsibilities of dog ownership and breed specific issues.
8. The organisation should draw up a form of contract with former and new owners as appropriate, and should seek legal advice on content. Rescue organisations must have



available a questionnaire for people who wish to be considered for re-homing a dog, a questionnaire for the owner of the dog requiring re-homing, a form releasing the dog from the owners to the care of the rescue, and an agreement form for the new keeper of the rescue dog.

9. Full and appropriate documentation must be completed for all dogs being rehomed.
10. Ongoing contact should be maintained as far as is reasonably possible to ensure re-homing of all dogs have been successful, and in the event that they are not, organisations must be prepared to accept the return of any dog that it rehomes.
11. New owners should be encouraged to support and participate in the organisation's events and activities.
12. New owners should be informed about the benefits of pet insurance.
13. The organisation must never knowingly provide dogs for adoption to any commercial dog wholesalers, retail pet dealers or directly or indirectly allow dogs to be given as a prize or donation in a competition of any kind.
14. The organisation must not knowingly misrepresent the characteristic of the breed nor falsely mislead any person regarding the health or condition of a dog.
15. Knowledge, skills and experience of canine professional staff – the organisation should ensure that the knowledge, skills and experience of its canine professional staff are of a sufficient level to carry out their duties satisfactorily. It is recommended that those staff become accredited members of the Kennel Club Accreditation Scheme for Instructors in Dog Training & Canine Behaviour (KCAI Scheme) in the specialist discipline of Single Breed Rescue and Rehoming, in order to demonstrate their competence.

Administration

1. The organisation should have suitable systems in place to meet health and safety, fire, risk assessment requirements, recruitment and training of volunteers.
2. There should be adequate record keeping of dogs, keepers, foster carers and volunteers.



3. Proper financial systems must be maintained. Even the smallest organisation should ensure that all monies are kept in dedicated accounts and that payments are authorised in a way that will enable simple accounts to be drawn up.
4. Kennel Club registration papers may be passed on to the new owner, if available, at the discretion of the individual breed rescue, to allow it to participate in KC licensed events. However it is recommended that the papers are not passed on until after a settling in period of at least 3 months when the terms and conditions of the re-homing contract have been met.
5. Adequate insurance must be in place.
6. The organisation must ensure that it keeps informed of any developments in animal welfare legislation.
7. The organisation should consider and assess whether charitable status would be appropriate. If it is a registered charity, it must ensure that its administration systems meet with the requirements of the Charity Commission.
8. The organisation should provide all appropriate information to new owners about canine care and welfare – it may wish to provide its own information sheets or inform of suitable sources and contacts, including breed clubs.
9. Breed rescue organisations should make themselves available for visits by a representative of the Kennel Club.