

# 10 Things to Look for in a Home-Based Dog Boarding and Day Care Service

## 1. Does the service have experience?

It's important that the service has experience caring for dogs in their home for extended periods of time.

## 2. Does the home have a secure environment?

The outside yard or patio must be secure. You don't want dogs to be able to run off and you don't want other animals to be able to get in.

Guests must be secure within the house—preferably in a dedicated area. Dogs may need a fence or barricade to keep them from going upstairs or to areas you don't want them in. It's also good to have a barricade or baby fence to keep them from bolting out through the door when people come to the front door.

## 3. Is there room for the dogs to go outside for rest and relaxation?

Having a small patio, backyard or confined area is important. The service needs to be able to keep a sharp eye on the dogs and know where they are at all times.

## 4. Do the dogs get regular walks or exercise?

Some commercial kennels take in dogs but keep them in pens or runs all day. Dogs don't get socializing and they can become anxious or stressed. It is healthy for the dog to have an open environment where they can socialize with other guests. Walks help reduce stress and make for happier pets.

## 5. Does the business have insurance?

If something happens to the dog or a visitor, the business should have insurance to cover any medical issues. They need to be able to provide for the dog should something happen to it while in their care.

## 6. Does the business keep you informed of how the dogs are doing?

Getting photos of the dogs walking or videos of them playing with other dogs gives you peace of mind. You should be able to see they're in a happy, loving place that feels like home,

## 7. Do they have a process for confirming the dates of your dog's stay?

Getting a Google calendar invitation lets everyone know when the dogs will be dropped off, how long they'll stay, and when will they be picked up. Emailed invitations will confirm the information for all parties.

## 8. Do they have a Veterinarian close by that they have a relationship with?

Heaven forbid something might happen. Dogs are like people. They get sick for no reason. If the service doesn't have a relationship with a vet, they may be in trouble if something happens. The provider needs to know how to take care of your dog in an emergency.

## 9. Do they have a way to keep track of what you bring with the dog and its feeding and care needs?

Having the right paperwork helps keep everyone on the same page. Hosts need to know what to expect of their guests and how to help them. This information is listed in a **Boarding Agreement**. What guests bring with them and what they need to take home is easy to remember if it's written down on an **Intake Form**.

## 10. Does the service offer an introductory meet-and-greet so you can meet the caretakers and tour their home?

Having a meet-and-greet gets everyone on the same page. The dog and her parents know where the dog will be staying. And it lets the host get to know their potential new guests. And when you are considering extended stays of 5 days or more, do they offer a complimentary visit to make sure the chemistry is there and everyone gets along?

