

KRUISIN KANINES AGGRESSION and CONTROL POLICY

Purpose:

- ❖ Kruisin Kanines must strive to provide a training atmosphere that fosters learning both for handlers and dogs. We realize that, in the nature of human/dog relationships, some behavior problems will occur. Therefore, in order to maintain a learning environment the following policy shall be enforced.

EXPECTATIONS FOR INSTRUCTORS

- ❖ Kruisin Kanines instructors will be familiar with the aggression policy.
- ❖ Kruisin Kanines instructors will communicate the aggression policy with handlers.
- ❖ Kruisin Kanines instructors will make reasonable accommodations for issues of dog behavior within the class, as long as it does not have a negative impact on the safe learning environment of other handlers and dogs.
- ❖ Kruisin Kanines instructors will communicate with handlers about any undesirable behaviors that they observe in the class, and discuss possible solutions for management of behaviors. Also communicate that these behaviors, if unchecked, can become an issue under the Aggression and Control Policy.

EXPECTATIONS FOR HANDLERS

- ❖ Handlers are expected to be responsible for their dogs behavior at all times while participation in any Kruisin' Kanines functions, including scheduled training classes, seminars, private training sessions, off site demos, etc.
- ❖ Handlers are expected to be responsible for keeping their dogs under voice control, leashed, and/or crated at all times.
- ❖ Handlers are expected to communicate any known issues of behavior to the instructor upon entering a new class or with a new instructor of a current class. (For example; space requirements of the dog, collar shyness, aversions to large black dogs, or issues with other male/female dogs in general, etc)
- ❖ Handlers are expected to create the space that their dog needs in order to prevent undesired behaviors. (For examples; Creating enough distance between their dog and others while on leash, or covering the dog's crate, or moving the crate farther from the flow of traffic.)
- ❖ Handlers are expected to be responsible and aware that their dog does not encroach upon or within another dog's space, and to respect any reasonable special requests from other handlers.
- ❖ Often instructors are busy focusing on one handler and dog team at a time, and are not always aware of incidents that may occur away from where they are working. We hope that handlers will communicate with their instructors any concerns that they may have about other dogs. Incidents that are reported to instructors in this way will be handled as described in the guidelines for Undesirable Behaviors and Incidents.

Kruisin Kanines views dog to human aggression as not acceptable. Any dog that displays aggression towards people will not be accepted or retained in the training program.

Undesirable Behavior

There are many levels of nuanced communication and behavior that dogs employ while defining their relationships with each other. Some of these behaviors may be seen as challenging in nature and intimidating to other dogs. These behaviors can sometimes have a negative impact on the learning environment of other handlers and dogs. If unchecked, these behaviors could continue or multiply until there is a true aggression problem that would prevent the dog from attending classes. It is our goal to be aware of the beginning stages of these undesired behaviors, and to help handlers to recognize and interrupt them as soon as they appear, in order to prevent future problems.

When a dog's behavior has a negative impact on the class, the instructor should use his/her judgment in making changes to provide a safe learning environment for all students. The following guidelines will be followed:

A partial list of simple behaviors that are undesirable includes:

- Staring
- Raised lips
- Lunging -either in play or aggressively
- Running away from handler - for play or to confront other dogs
- Barking in a manner that is perceived as threatening
- Growling
- Charging

These types of behaviors should be noted by instructors, and pointed out to the handlers as undesirable. The handlers should be helped in learning how to be aware of the triggers that cause such behavior, whether it's a certain dog in the class, or a certain event, such as dogs in a tunnel, or a dog coming off an obstacle that is headed at the concerned dog, basic stress, etc. The handler should also be coached on how to prevent such behaviors by creating more space for their dog, doing focus exercises, etc.

Undesirable behaviors may also occur while the dog is crated. Efforts to prevent this should be made as well. Covering and/or moving the crate or other interventions should be recommended by the instructor, and implemented by the handler.

First Level Incident

When simple undesirable behaviors are repeated, either several times in one class, or over a period of time, or when simple undesirable behaviors occur in conjunction with other undesirable behaviors, (as in barking **and** lunging, or growling **and** charging) an instructor may decide that the dog's behavior is having a detrimental effect on the class. At this point the instructor must speak (privately) to the student about the issues and about what needs to be done to correct them.

Items that will be covered in this discussion are:

- ❖ The behavior that is causing a problem.
- ❖ Techniques for preventing occurrences.
- ❖ That repeats of this type of behavior may result in the need for a written statement about the behavior to be submitted to the Training Director, or possibly eventual removal from class.

Second Level Incidents

A Second Level incident will be defined as

- ❖ Multiple repetitions of First Level Incidents
- ❖ Behaviors that are more serious than First Level Incidents. For example: minor physical contact between dogs, not resulting in any injury

When an incident of this type occurs the instructor may choose to ask the handler and dog to leave the class for a brief time, or for the remainder of the class. The instructor will privately discuss the problem with the handler, (using guidelines stated above), and also tell the handler that the behavior is serious enough to require a written report. The instructor will document "Second Level" incidents, using the A&C Policy Report Form, with copies going to the handler and to the Training Director. If necessary, written statements from other handlers or witnesses will be included.

Removal from Training

Handler/Dogs that have received a Second Level A&C Policy Report, and continue to behave in a manner that is detrimental to the class or unsafe, will be notified in writing by their instructor(s) that they are under consideration for removal from the training session. It is hoped that at this point it will be possible through a joint effort of the TD, Instructor and Handler to find a way for the dog to safely continue training. If such a plan can be agreed upon, it will be supplied in writing to all concerned. If such a plan cannot be formed, the TD will make the decision to remove the dog from the program as he/she sees fit. Removal from training may be temporary, and conditional on behavioral changes being made, with a future demonstration of sufficient improvement. Or removal may be permanent.

If at any time an instructor feels that a dog is creating an unsafe environment he/she will ask the handler to remove the dog for the remainder of the class. If this occurs the Training Director will be promptly notified. If the handler desires, a meeting with the TD, instructor and handler will be scheduled to determine whether or not the dog will be permitted to return to the session.

Serious Incidents

A Serious Incident will be defined as any major contact between dogs, (such as a fight) or any injury caused by a dog. Serious incidents will result in the dog(s) being removed from class at that time, and notification of the incident immediately being made to the Training Director. The incident will be documented using the A&C Policy Report Form, with copies going to the handler and to the Training Director. A decision will be made by the TD and instructor, with consultation with the handler, as to whether or not the dog will be allowed to return to the training session, and under what conditions. This decision should be made promptly, and will be communicated to all concerned, in writing, within a reasonable amount of time.

Distribution:

— copies of this policy shall be given to each Foundations I student