

## **In-house Behavior Modification Protocol** **Basket Muzzle Desensitization**

*Protocol used to desensitize a dog to wear a basket muzzle.*

### **Step one**

Put 2-3 pieces of hotdog (or other meat treat) inside the muzzle.

While holding it in your hand - present it to the dog so that he/she can stick his/her nose into it to eat the treats.

Repeat that 3-4 times per session. Do 2-3 sessions each day

### **Step two**

Rub some sticky food substance (peanut butter, canned cat food, etc.) inside the muzzle in the area where the dog can lick it easily.

While holding it in your hand - present it to the dog so that he/she will stick his/her nose inside to lick the sticky food. Allow the dog time to lick all of the sticky food from the inside front of muzzle.

Repeat this 3-4 times per session. Do 2-3 sessions each day

### **Step three**

Once the dog comfortably sticks his/her nose into the muzzle to lick the pasty food - fasten the buckle behind the head in a high position - just under the ears. It should be snug enough that you can just get one finger snugly under the strap when it's fastened.

Do a few sessions where you fasten the muzzle while the dog is licking the pasty food.

### **Step four**

Repeat the process above and once the dog is done licking the food paste - take him/her for a walk. Offer the dog treats through the muzzle every few feet at first. With each subsequent walk - offer fewer and fewer treats.

**For dogs with shorter muzzles or dogs who try to get the muzzle off during the first walk use the extra strap that goes from the top of the nose part to the back of the head to keep it from coming off (see directions in box).**