

Safe Humane Handling of Shelter Dogs

How to greet the shelter dogs

- Do not give the dog direct eye contact because this can be threatening.
- Stand or squat sideways because frontal body posture can be threatening.
- Move slowly and smoothly, not fast and jerky.
- Talk to the dog in a low calm voice.
- Slowly offer the back of your hand for the dog to get used to your movements.
- Let dog approach you whenever possible (rather than you approaching the dog).
- If the dog approaches you, do not reach over the head - pet under the chin or behind the ears instead.
- DO NOT put your face in the dog's face.
- DO NOT hug the dog.

Removing the dog from the kennel

- Do NOT enter the kennel and close the door behind you if the dog has not been thoroughly behaviorally vetted (and even then, use caution locking yourself in the kennel with a shelter dog).
- Use a slip lead to remove the dog from the kennel.
- Open the door initially only wide enough for the dog's head to fit out and hold the opening of the slip lead in the open space.
- Use your foot to prevent the dog from pushing the kennel door open wider.
- Let the dog start to walk out of the kennel, making sure his/her head goes through the opening of the slip lead. Once the slip lead is on, the door can be opened fully.
- If the dog is at the front of the kennel but does not readily come out, carefully reach your arm into the kennel to put the slip lead on the dog.
- If the dog stays in the back of the run but is not acting aggressively, while keeping your body sideways and without giving eye contact, approach the dog slowly and gently put the slip lead on the dog. Then open the door wide so that the dog sees an escape route from the kennel.
- If the dog growls or snaps at you when you try the above, toss the slip in a lasso type fashion to secure it on the dog. Then open the door wide so that the dog sees an escape route from the kennel.

What to do if the dog starts to attack

- If a dog starts to attack you - stand perfectly still (do not run, scream, hit or kick the dog). Cover your face, neck and belly with your hands and arms.
- If an attacking dog knocks you down - curl up in fetal position.
- If you have the dog on leash when the attack occurs - hold your arms out as far as you can and pull up - putting maximum pressure on the dog's trachea. This will cut off the dog's airway and the attack should end long enough for you to get the dog into a kennel or behind a door or get help from another person.