



# THE COASTAL DOG, INC.

## *Customer Handbook*

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# The Coastal Dog Customer Handbook

**Hello there, Coastal Dogger! Welcome to our home away from home for your dog!**

What makes The Coastal Dog different than traditional kennels? Traditional kennels are designed with one basic idea in mind: contain the dogs in separate enclosures in order to limit dog and human interaction as much as possible. This industrial model allows for very little staff and can be easily profitable, but on the other hand it can create a lonely, boring or sometimes even frightening situation for your dog. While this arrangement may be a necessity for shelters or veterinary clinics who have to constantly be ready to deal with aggressive animals or those that might arrive with unknown transmittable illnesses, for boarding facilities, if managed correctly, it is not.



Our philosophy at The Coastal Dog is that most dogs are happier in a social environment, mingling with other dogs and people, than in a cage separated from both. Also, surroundings that feel more home-like than utilitarian allow for a more relaxed transition and less stressful visit.

And lastly, canine companions have to follow our human routines and rules for so much of their lives but when they come to The Coastal Dog, we allow them to be DOGISH to their hearts content! They can run, jump, wrestle, swim, get on furniture, nap in the sunshine, sit in a staff

lap, chase tennis balls, sniff, give staff kisses, get staff kisses, go in, go out, go in again and out again... This is why so many of our guests can't wait to get through our door and sometimes don't want to leave.

Our staff is made up of dog care professionals – people who have dedicated their working lives to the behavior, health and general wellbeing of animals. It is hard work and a big responsibility caring for your 4 (sometimes 3) legged family members and we take it very seriously. In order to help us create the safest, most enjoyable visit possible for your dog, we require all owners read this handbook so that you understand what we do, how we do it, and what your responsibilities are as the guardian of your dog. While we have many years of experience caring for dogs, we cannot satisfy your dog's needs, particularly from a health and safety point of view, without your active involvement.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns please let us know. We are here to make you and your dog as comfortable and happy as possible. We look forward to developing a personal, long-lasting relationship with your dog!



## [Table of Contents](#)

<a href="#">General Information</a>	3
<a href="#">The Coastal Dog Requirements</a>	6
<a href="#">The Coastal Dog DAYCARE Specifics</a>	9
<a href="#">The Coastal Dog BOARDING Specifics</a>	10
<a href="#">Other Things to Know About Your Dog's Visit</a>	13
<a href="#">Frequently Asked Questions</a>	14

## General Information



### Our Facility and Location

The Coastal Dog is a large coastal Maine farmhouse located on Middle Road in Edgecomb, Maine, directly across the street from the 800+ acre Schmid Land Preserve. With 5 acres of field and forest surrounding The Coastal Dog house, the views are beautiful, and our canine guests are often treated to visits from wild turkey, deer and osprey (safely on the other side of our fences or high overhead).

While our property is very rural and well away from any main roads, we are still only a couple of miles off Route 1 and convenient to many towns and cities around us.

### Hours of Operation

#### WEEKDAYS:

Early weekday drop off window: 6:30am to 6:40am, **prescheduled.**

Regular weekday drop off hours: 7:30am to 10:00am

Regular weekday pick up hours: 2:00pm to 5:30pm

Late weekday pick up hours: 6:20pm to 6:30pm, **prescheduled.**

#### WEEKEND DAYS:

Regular weekend drop off hours: 8:00am to 10:00am

Regular weekend pick up hours: 2:00pm to 5:00pm

Our facilities are staffed around the clock to ensure constant supervision and safety. The front desk is staffed on weekdays only and all calls and emails received over the weekend will be returned the following Monday. Our lobby is completely closed on July 4<sup>th</sup>, Thanksgiving, and Christmas day for the drop-off and pick-up of boarding dogs and for all daycare. If you would like us to care for your dog on any of these holidays, he or she must be in our care in advance of that day. Please plan around these days/hours of operation and **do not ask us to modify our hours for special pick-up or drop-off times.** Though we have a relaxed, homey environment, we are a business and ask you to respect our need for defined hours of operation. While we are proud of our facility and enjoy showing it off in pictures and videos on Facebook and our website, we do not offer tours. Because we are still a home environment, dogs are loose in rooms (rather than in kennel runs) and get very upset at having strangers strolling through!



### Website & Social Media

For general information about The Coastal Dog please visit our website at [www.thecoastaldog.net](http://www.thecoastaldog.net) For current information (and really fun pictures and videos) such as special events and snow day closures, please visit our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/TheCoastalDog](https://www.facebook.com/TheCoastalDog) If you would like us NOT to post pictures or videos of your dog on Facebook, YouTube or our website, please let us know prior to booking in.

### Reservations

We cannot guarantee care for your dog unless you have made a reservation in advance. Reservations are required for all stays irrespective of length, type of service or time of year. We recommend that you make a reservation as soon as you are able. To make a reservation please contact us either by phone, email or in person. We do not take reservations via text message, Facebook or any other way and your booking will not be confirmed until you have spoken with staff via phone or email – leaving a message or sending an email without a reply means that you have not made a reservation. **Please do not contact any staff on private platforms (private phone, text, email, Facebook, etc.) regarding any Coastal Dog business.** All communication should be via our business phone line 207-882-6700, email [info@thecoastaldog.net](mailto:info@thecoastaldog.net) or in person. Our phone systems are often shut down during our closed hours so that the dogs are not disturbed.



### Cancellations & Boarding Stay Changes

Daycare appointments need to be cancelled before we open on the day of the booking. Late cancellations or no-shows will be charged for that day. **Boarding** bookings may be cancelled at any time, however boarding deposits are non-refundable.

If you need to add days to a scheduled boarding stay due to canceled flights home, unexpected change of plans, etc., please let us know at your earliest convenience – we always do our best to accommodate delayed pick-ups. You are always welcome to shorten your dog's stay however **you will be charged for the dates of your original booking.**

### **Socialized Dogs Only (or young puppies!)**

Because The Coastal Dog is not a traditional kennel and dogs interact freely with one another, we cannot accept any dog that isn't extremely well socialized with all types of dogs. If you are unsure if your dog is socialized, you will need to find out prior to making any sort of appointment. We may ask you for a reference from another daycare (or trainer, dog walker, etc.) prior to booking in. It might take a few visits to determine if The Coastal Dog environment is the right one for your dog. If for whatever reason (aggression, extreme fear or anxiety, excessive mounting etc.) your dog does not work out with us, we will call and ask you, or your emergency contact, to pick up your dog immediately. Not all dogs fit in our environment and that doesn't make them bad dogs! It just means they need a different care situation than we can provide. We are always happy to help find a better solution for your dog's needs.

Young puppies (under 4 or so months) are just beginning their socialization journey and The Coastal Dog is a great place for them to start! No prior socializing is required for young puppies – you can leave that to our staff and the other seasoned Coastal Dog doggo pros!

### **Holidays**

While The Coastal Dog is open for boarding 365 days per year, we do close for daycare, pick-ups and drop-offs on major holidays (Christmas Day, Thanksgiving Day, 4<sup>th</sup> of July). Boarding dogs staying with us during these days must arrive the day before at the latest and depart the day after at the earliest.



### **Payment**

Our preferred method of payment is with a credit/debit card (Visa, Mastercard or Discover) kept securely on file with us. Payment is due for all services upon pick-up unless otherwise arranged. We also accept cash and checks however, customers who choose to not have a credit card on file with us must prepay for daycare services (this may be done daily, weekly or monthly or you may simply add credit toward your account to be used as you go).

There is a \$25 charge for a returned check and a daily surcharge if you have an overdue balance, up to the maximum allowable by law. If collections procedures are necessary to receive payment on overdue balances, we reserve the right to charge administrative fees to cover the cost of these collections. The Coastal Dog reserves the right to terminate services if unpaid balances persist for any period of time.



# The Coastal Dog Requirements

**To utilize any of our services, every customer must comply with the following requirements:**

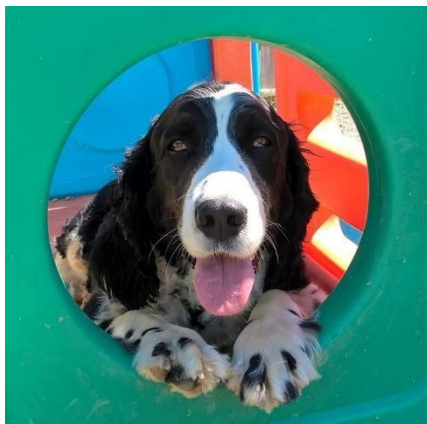
## **Customer and Dog Information Sheet**

In order for us to care for your dog in a safe and responsible manner, and to ensure that he or she has as much fun as possible, we require that each parent fill out a detailed profile. A complete profile is required for admittance and includes important information such as emergency contact numbers, your veterinarian's contact information and your dog's birthday. No dog will be cared for unless all information is in our systems and verified to be accurate.

## **Service Agreement**

Along with this Handbook, each customer must thoroughly read and sign a waiver that releases The Coastal Dog from certain responsibilities. By utilizing our services and signing this form you consent that you have read both our Service Agreement and this Handbook in their entirety, understand both of their contents completely and acknowledge that The Coastal Dog has limited liability regarding certain occurrences and incidents that may occur regarding your dog. While we take every precaution possible to ensure that all of the dogs in our care are healthy and safe, you must recognize that incidents will happen whenever dogs socialize together and that we take no responsibility regarding these incidents.

The Coastal Dog is not liable for injuries or illness that any dog may incur while in our care. The Coastal Dog also reserves the right to quarantine, transport and/or take reasonable action regarding any dog in our care. No dog will be admitted into our care unless the Service Agreement and Handbook are fully understood and signed by their owner(s).



## **Local Veterinarian**

Ideally, each dog should have a local veterinarian that is authorized to see and treat your dog if medically necessary. While we take every precaution possible to safeguard your dog's health, things can and do happen on occasion. If you do not have a local veterinarian, we are happy to help you find one. If your veterinarian's office is not open or is too far away, The Coastal Dog will utilize one of our local veterinarians or emergency animal hospital. We always try to contact you prior to any vet visit with your dog but in the event that we are unable to reach you in a timely manner for whatever reason,

we reserve the right to make medical decisions on your behalf for the care of your dog. You will be responsible for any veterinary bills that result from getting your dog the medical attention that he or she needs.

### Spaying & Neutering

The Coastal Dog requires that all dogs in our care be spayed or neutered between the ages of six (6) and eight (8) months, depending on breed size and/or when they show signs of sexual maturity. Our staff will let you know when your puppy starts showing signs of sexual maturity. We will no longer be able to accept your dog at this point until they are spayed or neutered. Dogs who visit The Coastal Dog and are found to be unaltered and over 6 months will be subject to extra fees. While we recognize some breeders and veterinarians prefer you wait longer to spay or neuter, **we simply cannot take sexually mature, unaltered dogs.** It DOES NOT work in a pack environment so please do not ask us.



### Puppies – 12 Weeks and Up

Puppies over 12 weeks that are up to date on their bordetella and distemper vaccines (rabies is not needed until the age of 6 months) and on their way to being house trained are welcome at The Coastal Dog. As puppies generally have less experience in social environments and have less developed immune systems, we recommend that owners take extra precautions when leaving their puppies with us. Puppies are usually best integrated into our environment when they are gradually exposed to our fun and social experience. We will not take puppies overnight that have not been with us for daycare at least a few times. As with all other dogs, The Coastal Dog will not take responsibility for injuries or illness that any puppy may incur while in the care of The Coastal Dog. Puppies are generally considered “Extra Care” guests and will be charged accordingly.

### Vaccinations

The Coastal Dog requires that all dogs remain current with the following vaccinations: Rabies, Distemper, Leptospirosis and Bordetella. **We require a Bordetella booster every 6 months.** You are responsible for providing The Coastal Dog with up-to-date records verifying that these vaccinations are current and keeping them current. We reserve the right to deny any service to dogs without proper veterinary documentation. Titers and veterinarian waivers for vaccine-sensitive dogs are acceptable.



## Flea and Tick Prevention

The Coastal Dog requires that all guests be on a year-round flea and tick regimen. “Holistic” or “all natural” alternatives are NOT accepted because, in our significant experience, we have found that they do not work. Daycare dogs found to have fleas must be picked up immediately and will be charged a \$50 per dog flea charge. Boarding dogs found to have live fleas will be bathed and treated with Advantix and charged a \$100 fee.



## Good Health

All dogs using our services must be healthy. We will not admit any dog that we believe, at our sole discretion, to be a risk to the other animals in our care. It is your responsibility as your dog’s guardian to notify us of any health-related issues affecting your dog so that we can make an informed determination about how to best care for them. Customers that do not inform us in a timely manner of any health issues, knowingly bring their dog to us while he or she is sick or injured, or do not make all efforts possible to remove their dog from our facility once determined to be a risk by us will be subject to additional fees. In addition, at our discretion, those customers may not be allowed to use our services again.

## Dogs We Cannot Take at The Coastal Dog:

- Dogs that regularly visit other daycares or are currently enrolled in training classes - we have found they transmit diseases we do not have at The Coastal Dog otherwise
- Dogs with serious mobility issues – those that need help getting up or walking or those that are easily knocked over by other dogs
- Adult dogs that are not house-trained, have lost the ability to control eliminations or cannot make it at least 8 hours at night without a bathroom break
- Puppies under 12 weeks
- Dogs over 6 (to 8) months (or those that have reached sexual maturity earlier) that have not been spayed or neutered
- Dogs with emotional/behavioral issues such as aggression, separation anxiety or excessive mounting
- Dogs with serious medical issues (extremely strict dietary needs, seizure disorders, etc.) that would be better suited to in-home care or boarding at a veterinary facility

# The Coastal Dog Daycare Specifics

## **Daycare Pick-up and Drop-off Times**

Our weekday daycare drop-off window is 7:30 to 10:00am. Our weekday pick-up window is 2 to 5:30pm. Our weekend (Saturday and Sunday) drop-off window is 8 to 10:00am. Our weekend pick-up window is 2 to 5:00pm. We do offer very specific extra-early/extra-late, drop-off/pick-up windows however, these must be prearranged, and space is limited. Please ask us about them if you are interested.

Drop-offs and pick-ups outside any of our regular scheduled hours, whether late or early, weekday or weekend, will result in extra fees starting with \$10 and up to \$30 depending on frequency and length of time. Dogs not picked up by close will be considered overnight guests and can be picked up the following day.

## **Daycare Prices**

Any daycare stay under 6 hours is \$18 per dog. Any daycare stay over 6 hours is \$28 per dog. You will be charged for a full day for **any** amount of time over 6 hours.



## **Meals During Daycare Visits**

While most adult dogs don't require a midday meal, we are happy to feed lunch (11:00am) and/or dinner (4:00pm) if you'd like. Please bring your dog's meals in clearly marked zip lock bags or another airtight container.

## **Collars and Leashes**

We very much appreciate all dogs wearing collars and leashes upon arrival and departure. Collars should have some identifying information attached, such as a name tag or embroidery.

# The Coastal Dog Boarding Specifics

## **Boarding Pick-up and Drop-off Times**

Incoming boarding dogs should be dropped off prior to 10:00 noon unless specifically prearranged otherwise. We do this to ensure that your dog has had adequate time to expend some energy and get accustomed to being with us before 'settle-down' time after dinner.

You may pick-up your dog at any time during our open hours. Picking up your boarding dog prior to 10am (not 10:05 or later) will result in only a half day charge for that day.



## **What to Bring and What Not to Bring**

Boarding dogs will need enough food, medicine, treats and supplements for the duration of their stay. Food should be delivered in a sealable container. If you choose not to bring food or if your dog runs out of food, they will be fed our house kibble/canned food (Blue Buffalo brand) and you will be charged \$2 to \$5 per meal depending on the size of your dog. If a trip to the vet is needed to get medication for your dog, you will be charged \$20 to \$50 depending on the location of your vet.

**What not to bring:** Bowls, crates, measuring cups or scoops, spoons or other utensils, can covers, rawhide chews or bones of any kind or already opened canned food.

**Things that you may bring if you think they are particularly important to your dog but expect that they may be returned in disrepair as they will be shared with your dog's friends:** Bedding of any kind, toys, balls or any other extras.

## **Dropping Your Dog Off for a Boarding Stay**

When bringing your dog in for a boarding stay, our staff will help you in the lobby. Please do not hang up your boarding dog's leash and collar – these should be kept with your dog's food and other items. Upon arrival, we will ask you to fill out a boarding slip for each dog staying with us. Or, you may download the slip from our website and have it ready when you drop-off your dog. For safety and organizational purposes, we ask that you fill out a boarding slip EVERY TIME your dog comes to us for overnight care, even if your dog comes to us frequently. Please see the boarding tag example on the next page.

Dog Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Drop Off Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

How Much Food: Breakfast: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(measure in cups and spoons)* Midday: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dinner: \_\_\_\_\_

Medications/ Supplements?: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Medication? \_\_\_\_\_  
Give How Much, How Often?: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Allergies?: \_\_\_\_\_  
Where Does Your Dog Sleep At Home?: \_\_\_\_\_  
Can we give your dog treats? \_\_\_\_\_

Items Brought with Dog: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Pick-up Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ What time will you pick up?: \_\_\_\_\_

If you need to add days due to canceled flights home, unexpected change of plans, etc., please let us know at your earliest convenience. We do our best to accommodate delayed pick-ups. You are always welcome to shorten your dog's stay however you will be charged for the dates of your original booking.

Shampoo Before Pick Up (\$15 to \$30)?  Yes  No

The best phone number(s) to reach you while you are away:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Local emergency contact phone number:  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Feeding and Meal/Medication Times**

Meals and medications can be given for both boarding and daycare dogs at these times throughout the day at The Coastal Dog: breakfast at 6:30am, lunch at 11:00am and dinner at 4:00pm. These are the only times we feed and medicate. Each dog is fed individually unless we are otherwise instructed to feed with a "sibling". Because of our open-concept design, we are unable to allow "free feeding" or leave food out for any dog.

When boarding, we encourage you to provide us with a little extra in the event that you are delayed in picking up your pet. Unless you use our services frequently, we may not be able to store food for you.

If your dog's food runs out during his/her boarding stay, we will switch your pet's diet to the food (Blue Buffalo) we keep on hand for such instances. We highly recommend that your dog eat the same food when staying with us as he or she does at home, as many dogs have sensitive stomachs and a short-term change in diet can result in vomiting or diarrhea.

There are two acceptable ways to instruct us to portion your dog's food. Preferably, you will provide us with a sturdy bag or container (do NOT bring food loose in a plastic or paper, trash or shopping bag – they rip and fall apart too easily and are not sealable) of your dog's food and per meal measurements in cups. Alternatively, you may pre-bag your dog's meals individually in ziplock bags (or other containers).



**Boarding Prices**

For our overnight guests, the charge is \$31.00 (\$36 for Extra Care dogs) per dog, per calendar day regardless of the time of day you drop off. Example: drop-off on Monday, pick-up on Wednesday is three calendar days totaling \$93.00.

A non-refundable deposit of \$50.00 per dog is required for each boarding booking and will be applied toward the total boarding invoice to be paid upon pick-up. A non-refundable deposit of 50%

of the total booking is required for each booking over 7 days and bookings on major holidays and school vacation weeks (see dates below). Bookings cannot be confirmed without this non-refundable deposit. We are sorry for the inconvenience, but due to an overwhelming amount of last-minute cancellations and no-shows **we cannot book any boarding stay without this prepayment.** Deposits are non-refundable and cannot be returned for any reason.

50% non-refundable deposits required for boarding at these times:

- Memorial Day
- 4th of July
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Day
- February School Break
- April School Break

## Other Things To Know About Your Dog's Visit

### **Possible Illnesses and Injuries While at The Coastal Dog**

Everyone at The Coastal Dog is a dog lover and is fully committed to the health and well-being of your dog. As an organization, we are committed to creating a place in which dogs socialize and have fun in an environment that is open and off-leash so that they can enjoy the full experience. We strongly believe in health, wellness and prevention when it comes to your dog. To that end, we ask you to pay close attention to your dog's general health, vaccination schedule and flea/tick prevention before and after they visit. Despite every effort all dogs are susceptible to, among other things, the following:

- Nicks, scrapes, and punctures
- Strained tendons and ligaments
- Sore joints and muscles
- Various strains of kennel cough
- Sore paw pads, broken toenails
- Oral Papilloma (mouth warts) in young dogs
- Fatigue, loose stools
- Conjunctivitis

It is important that all parents that use our services understand that these injuries and illnesses can occur and acknowledge that The Coastal Dog takes no liability if any of these things happen to your dog.



### **Possible Fatigue After a Coastal Dog Stay**

As a parent you should know that many dogs at The Coastal Dog play hard and as such are often fatigued when they return home. It is not unusual for a dog to sleep for a day or two after a visit. In fact, this is a healthy part of your dog's cycle. While your dog is at The Coastal Dog he or she is receiving ample opportunity for down time and rest. Still, he or she might sleep a lot when they return home.





### **Possible Heavy Water Consumption After a Coastal Dog Stay**

Please know that fresh water is always available to your dog while in our care, usually in several different locations. However, some dogs get so busy socializing and playing that they forget to drink as much as they normally do. As a result, it is possible that your dog might come home and drink an inordinate amount of water. This is perfectly normal and to be expected. Give your dog a 45 minute rest after consuming a significant amount of water to ward off bloat, especially in larger or deep-chested breeds.

### **Monitoring Your Dog After a Coastal Dog Stay**

Please inform us if your dog shows signs of illness or injury after a stay with us. This allows us to monitor the health and safety of all of the dogs in our care and take appropriate precautions as needed.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Why do I need to have an appointment to bring my dog in for daycare?**

Caring for groups of dogs is a fun but difficult job. If the ratio of dogs to staff were to get too high, it could create a dangerous situation, and nobody wants that. If you arrive at The Coastal Dog without an appointment and we tell you we are full, please respect that we are doing it for safety's sake. In order to avoid this, please make an appointment by phone or email at your earliest convenience.

### **Why do you take my dogs harness and collar off?**

For the health and safety of all guests at The Coastal Dog, any/all collars and harnesses may be removed at our discretion. Especially for our more 'busy' guests, it is important that they do not wear anything that could restrict, twist or snag another dogs teeth or toenails. There are very sad stories from dog parks and other dog care facilities of dogs being injured or worse due to wearing a collar or harness when they shouldn't have been.

### Do you have crates at The Coastal Dog?

While we are a kennel-less and off-leash facility, certain activities must be conducted individually for safety reasons. We have crates in our facility that are used to feed certain dogs and are also used for time-outs, rest and sleeping for dogs who are crate-trained and feel uncomfortable without one. Dogs who are destructive or cannot settle down at night may also be crated for safety reasons.

### What do I do if there are other clients picking up or dropping off in the lobby when I arrive with my dog?

It is always a good Coastal Dog etiquette to wait for the lobby to be empty of dogs before entering with your dog. Dogs who get along in the play yard might not in close proximity with their owners.

### How do you deal with excessive barkers?

Out of respect for our neighbors, staff and other the dogs in our care, we will not subject them to obsessive or excessive barking. We reserve the right to use a vibration or citronella scent collar to deter barking on any dog with a noise issue while visiting. These collars use a wiggling movement or a lemon scent to deter barking. Dogs who continue to have barking issues, especially at night, will not be able to return to The Coastal Dog. **WE WILL NOT USE ANY SHOCK OR PAIN INDUCING COLLARS OF ANY KIND** so please, do not ask us to and do not bring them with your dog to our facility.

### My dog has a tendency to eat things they shouldn't. Can I still bring them to The Coastal Dog?

Please know that at The Coastal Dog your dog will be exposed to tennis balls, Kong toys, bedding and organic matter of all types (grass, rocks, sticks, etc.). We cannot be held responsible in any way for dogs who ingest non-food items. If this is a major concern regarding your dog, The Coastal Dog may not be the right environment for them.

### Will my dog get personal affection from The Coastal Dog staff?

Yes, yes and YES.

