



# Atlantic Beach Dog Park

## TIPS FOR YOUR VISIT TO THE DOG PARK

### YOUR FIRST VISIT

- Make your first visit without your dog. Familiarize yourself with the rules and how the dog park works.
- The first few times you take your dog to the dog park, choose a time that is not busy. Weekday evenings are peak times. Weekends and holidays tend to be busy all day long.
- The first visit can be a little stressful for both you and your dog, so keep it short and happy. Gradually work your way to longer visits.

### WHILE IN THE DOG PARK

- Know the dog park rules and follow them. These rules are important for the enjoyment and safety of all visitors in the park.
- Stay in control and in sight of your dog at all times.
- Keep the park clean! Owners must clean up after their dogs. There are plastic bags and trash receptacles provided.
- Carry your dog's leash with you in the dog park. A leash is a sure way of gaining control over your dog if needed.
- Your dog must wear a collar, but choke collars or prong collars are for training only and can actually cause injury to your dog or another dog when dogs are playing.
- Do not bring food or dog treats into the dog park. Food can be a source of conflict between dogs.
- Do not bring any toys to which you or your dog may be particularly attached. These items may provoke possessive or aggressive behavior or may be destroyed through rough play.

### CHILDREN IN THE DOG PARK

- Keep children under 10 years of age at your side and in your control at all times.
- This is a dog park. Not all dogs are child-friendly. Never allow your child to approach or pet a strange dog without the owner's presence and approval.
- A running, squealing or screaming child may incite dogs to behave aggressively.
- Children should stay away from playing dogs.
- Direct eye contact is confrontational to dogs. An interested child staring into a dog's face may provoke a dog unintentionally.
- Do not let children bring toys or food to the park. A friendly dog might knock down your child to get a toy or food.

### DOG CONFLICTS – *Prevention: Learn the 4P Warning Signs*

- **Posture:** A dog's body language can communicate fear, hostility or submission. Learn to read and respond to your own dog's body language.
- **Packing:** More than 4 or 5 dogs packed together can lead to trouble. Break it up before it starts by leading your dog to a neutral area at least 30 feet away.
- **Possession:** Whether it's you, a ball or a treat, most dogs will protect what is theirs. Remain aware and don't bring toys or treats to the park.
- **Provoking:** If your dog is continuously annoying another dog or dogs, or provoking attention, it's time to leave the park.

## WHAT TO DO TO PREVENT A FIGHT

- **Pay attention to your dog** and be aware of where he is and what he is doing at all times.
- **Stay close** enough to control or protect your dog in the face of a potential fight.
- **Keep a collar on your dog** at all times to have something to grab if needed.
- **Keep walking.** Walking defuses defensive behaviors and helps keep the off-leash area neutral territory. Avoid the temptation to stand around and chat or sit in one place for very long. When folks congregate, many dogs may become protective of their people and their space, making scuffles more likely to occur.
- **Leave the park.** Some days it's just a bad mix. Go for a walk or come back later. You and your dog will be better off.

## WHAT TO DO IF A DOG FIGHT OCCURS

- Never reach your hands into the middle of a dog fight. You may get bitten, possibly by your own dog.
- Distract the dogs and divert their attention. A blast of water from a water bottle or a loud whistle may work.
- If your dog is not in the fight, make sure he doesn't join in.
- If a fight occurs, control your dog and remove him to a neutral area.
- Maintain a cool head. Getting upset and yelling will only add to the frenzy.
- When necessary, exchange contact information with other dog owners.

## A RECAP OF THE RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE PARK

- Dog owners are solely liable for injuries or damage caused by their dogs.
- Dogs must be leashed before entering and prior to leaving the park and dog owners must have a leash in their possession at all times.
- Dogs must be off-leash while inside the park. Choke collars or prong collars are not allowed in the park.
- Dog owners must be in the park and within view and voice contact of their dogs at all times.
- Leaving dogs is prohibited. Unattended dogs will be removed by Animal Control.
- Dog waste must be cleaned up by dog owners or risk being fined.
- Aggressive dogs are prohibited from the park. Any dog showing aggressive behavior must leave the park immediately without debate.
- Animals who exhibit a history of aggressive behavior will not be permitted to enter. Dogs shown to be aggressive may have their membership revoked.
- All dogs must be spayed or neutered to enter the park. No female dogs in heat or dogs that are sick permitted in the park.
- All dogs must be current on all required vaccinations (Rabies, Distemper, Parvo and Bordetella).
- No dogs under 4 months of age permitted in the park.
- No animals other than dogs permitted in the park.
- Food (people or dog), treats, alcoholic beverages, smoking, glass containers, strollers, baby carriers, bicycles and children's' toys are prohibited in the park.
- Park gates must be closed at all times except when open for actual passage through the gate.
- Dogs must wear a collar and ID tags at all times.
- No children under 10 permitted in the park without close adult supervision.
- No more than 3 beings\* per handler allowed. (\*dogs and/or children).
- Dog owners must immediately fill any holes dug by their dog.
- Please do not bring a toy that your dog is attached to. Be cautious with dog toys; some dogs do not like to share.
- Dogs that bark excessively should be removed from the park.
- Violators may be subject to removal from the park and suspension of park privileges.
- The park is open 7:30 am to dusk only. Park will be closed for maintenance on Thursdays until 12:00 pm.