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Introductory Course for Commercial Dog Breeders

Topic 5: Exercise



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Learning Objectives

1. Describe the components of a written exercise plan.
2. Describe exercise requirements for dogs.
3. Describe a few ways in which you can provide exercise for dogs at your facility.

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As a licensed dealer, you need to be aware the of exercise requirements under the AWA. This presentation will discuss the components of a written exercise plan, the general exercise requirements for dogs, and how to design exercise plans that work with your facility.

After completing this section, you should be able to:

- Describe the components of a written exercise plan
- Describe exercise requirements for dogs housed individually vs. in a group
- Describe a few ways in which you can provide exercise for dogs at your facility.

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Written Exercise Plan

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Written Plan of Exercise

AWA requires dealers, exhibitors and research facilities to:

- Develop
- Document (in writing)
- Follow

a plan for providing dogs with the opportunity to exercise.

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The AWA Regulations require dealers, exhibitors and research facilities to develop, document in writing and follow a plan for providing an opportunity for dogs to exercise.

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Exercise Plan Requirements

- Reviewed and approved by veterinarian
- Include standard exercise procedures
- Available for APHIS inspection



Dealers, exhibitors, and research facilities must develop, document (in writing), and follow a plan for providing dogs with the opportunity to exercise.

The written exercise plan must be reviewed and approved by the attending veterinarian, include written standard procedures to use in providing dogs with exercise opportunities, and be available at all times for APHIS inspectors to review.

The form pictured here is available from USDA APHIS Animal Care and contains all the items required by the regulations and may be used to prepare your exercise plan. You may also use your own form to document compliance with the exercise requirements.

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Exercise Plan Components

- Methods
- Duration
- Frequency
- Type of housing:
 - Individual
 - Group



When writing an exercise plan, the following components should be considered:

- Methods of providing exercise
- Duration of exercise
- Frequency of exercise
- Types of exercise for dogs housed individually
- Types of exercise for dogs housed in groups

Photo: A. Eaglin: USDA:APHIS

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Exercise: Exemptions

Animal's health, well-being or condition prohibits exercise

Exemptions:

- Documented in writing
- Reviewed every 30 days
 - Unless permanent condition
- Kept available at all times for APHIS inspectors to review

Some animals may be exempt from exercise if the attending veterinarian determines that the animal's health, well-being or condition prohibits exercise. These exemptions must be documented in writing by the attending veterinarian and reviewed every 30 days unless the basis for exemption is a permanent condition. Written exemptions should be available for APHIS inspectors to review at all times.

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Exercise Requirements: Individual vs. Group Housing

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Exercise: Individually Housed Dogs

Dogs housed individually in cages/runs must be provided with regular opportunities to exercise if:

- Cages/runs provide less than two times the required floor space for that particular dog

Dogs housed individually in primary enclosures must be provided with regular opportunities to exercise if the floor space of the cage or run they are housed in is less than two times the minimum required floor space for that dog.

The next slides will demonstrate the calculation used determine if an individually housed dog needs to be provided additional exercise opportunities-based on size of enclosure.

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Individually Housed Dogs

$[(Length + 6") \times (Length + 6")] \times 2 =$ No additional exercise required

Minimum floor space (inches)

*Exercise required for individual dogs housed in enclosures **less than** 2x the minimum floor space

The following calculation is used to determine the amount of floor space used to house an individually housed meets the exercise space requirement.

First, determine the minimum floor space the dog needs. (NOTE: This is the same calculation that is used to determine the minimum space requirement for individually housed dogs under Section 3.6 (c). The minimum space requirement for dogs is discussed in more detail in the presentation on housing.)

- Measure the dog from the tip of the nose to the base of the tail and add 6 inches is added to the length.
- Multiply this number by itself. (This is the minimum amount of space the dog must have in its primary enclosure)
- Multiply the result by 2 to obtain the minimum floor space (square inches) that is required for the dog to be housed by itself and not required to have additional exercise plans.

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Individual Housing: Example

"Sparkles" -Scottish Terrier

18 inches from tip of nose to base of tail 

$[(18+6) \times (18+6)] = 576$ sq. in. minimum floor space

$576 \times 2 = 1152$ sq. in. minimum floor space if offering no additional exercise

* Convert to square feet: $\frac{1152 \text{ sq. in.}}{144 \text{ in per sq. ft}} = 8$ square feet

Let's go through an example.

Sparkles is a Scottish Terrier that measures 18 inches from the tip or her nose to the base of her tail.

First calculate the minimum floor space required for her by taking her length 18 inches and adding 6 inches and multiplying the sum by itself.

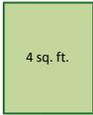
This equals 576 inches (4 sq. ft.) This is the minimum amount of space Sparkles needs for housing purposes.

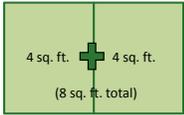
To calculate the inches of floor space required if Sparkles will not receive additional exercise, take 576 and multiply by 2 to equal 1152 inches (8 sq. ft).

If Sparkles will not be taken out for additional exercise, she needs to be in a primary enclosure with 8 square feet of floor space.

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Example cont'd

4 sq. ft. 

4 sq. ft. + 4 sq. ft. = (8 sq. ft. total) 

As we can see, if Sparkles is in an enclosure that only meets her minimum floor space requirements (4 sq. ft.) then exercise is required. However, if Sparkles is enclosed in an area that is 2 times her minimum floor space requirements (8 sq. ft.), no additional exercise is required.

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Group Housing

- Dogs over 12 weeks of age
- No additional exercise opportunities needed if:
 - Cage/ run is 100% of the required space for each individual animal



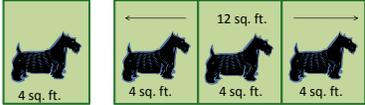
The exercise requirements for dogs in group housing are slightly different than those for individual housing.

Dogs over 12 weeks of age may be housed in group housing, Dogs housed in group housing do not require additional exercise opportunities if they are maintained in cages/runs that have at least 100% of the required space for each dog.

Photo: USDA:APHIS

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Group Housing Example



Additional exercise opportunities required

No additional exercise opportunities required

Let's return to our example of Sparkles the Scottish Terrier. Remember, if Sparkles, an 18 inch long dog, is housed alone in a 4 sq. ft. enclosure, then additional exercise is required because the enclosure is not twice the minimum space requirement.

If Sparkles is housed with 2 other Scottish Terriers: Glitter and BeDazzle, who are also 18 inches long, the combined minimum floor space requirements for their enclosure would have to be at least 12 sq. ft. for no additional exercise to be required.

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Group Housing: Example



Here is an example of adequately sized group housing facility with compatible dogs.

Photo: A. Eaglin: USDA:APHIS

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Group Housing: Compatibility

Advantages:

- Increased exercise
- Socialization
- Play time

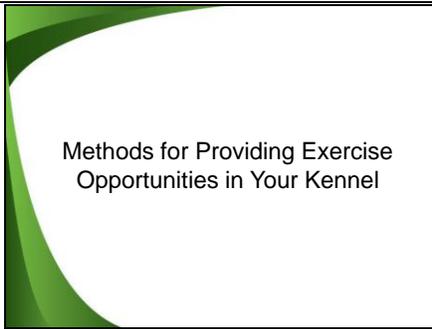
Animals over 12 weeks of age may be housed in compatible groups unless:

- Health or well-being is affected
- Aggressive or vicious behaviors are exhibited

Group housing has many advantages including increased exercise, socialization and play time. Animals over the age of 12 weeks can be housed in compatible groups. The attending veterinarian will determine how compatible animals will be together and if an animal will adversely affect the health or well-being of other dogs in the group. Dogs that exhibit aggressive or vicious behavior should not be housed in groups.

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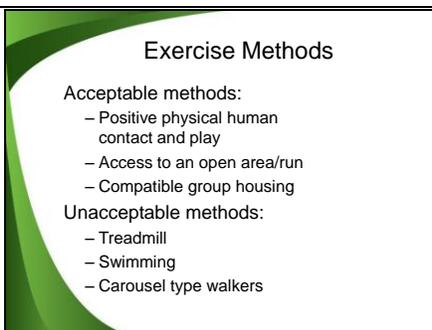
Although dogs housed in sufficiently large primary enclosures may not be *required* to be offered additional opportunities for exercise, it is beneficial to offer dogs positive physical human contact and play time at intervals as determined by your attending veterinarian.

Additional opportunities for exercise, play and positive human physical contact helps to alleviate the mental stress of kenneling, and build better socialized dogs and puppies.

Photo: A. Eaglin: USDA:APHIS

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Acceptable methods of exercise include:

- Opportunities for positive physical human contact that encourage exercise through play especially for dogs that are housed individually
- Access to an open area or run
- Compatible group housing in an adequately sized cage or run

Unacceptable methods of exercise are those where a dog may not choose to suspend physical activity. These include treadmills, swimming or carousel-type walkers.

Let's take a look at types of acceptable exercise methods that you can implement in your facilities.

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Here is a type of playroom with toys for the dogs. Notice that similar compatible sized breeds are placed together for exercise.

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Compatible dogs group housed in an adequately sized cage, and provided with enrichment items (rawhide, tire) to stimulate play.

Photo: USDA APHIS AC

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Compatible dogs group housed in adjacent adequately sized pens provided with enrichment toys. Note the excitement of the two dogs in the back cage; all three dogs are chasing and jumping around while tracking the ball.

Photo: USDA: APHIS AC

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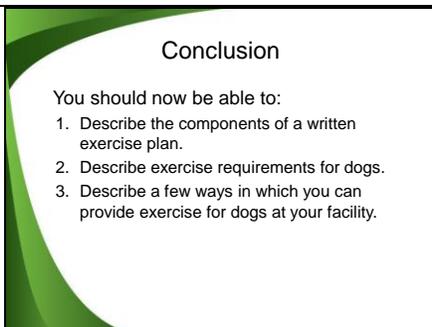


Two compatible dogs group housed in an adequately sized cage and provided with ramps and a ball for play.

Photo: USDA APHIS AC

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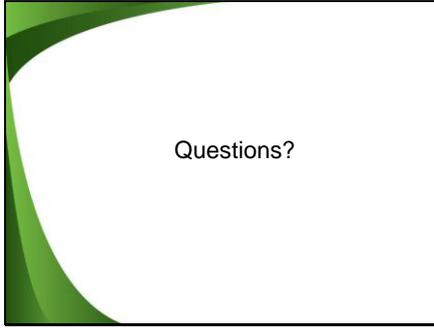
This presentation has covered the exercise regulations under AWA.

By now you should be able to:

- Describe the components of a written exercise plan.
- Describe the exercise requirements for dogs.
- Describe a few ways in which you can provide exercise for dogs at your facility.

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