

# PAWS AND CLAWS HUMANE SOCIETY PURPLE LEVEL DOG VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



## **Volunteer Mission:**

To support the Paws and Claws Humane Society's organizational mission by making the dogs more adoptable through positive reinforcement, exercise, and socialization; therefore increasing the dogs' quality of life while at PCHS.

### Location:

3224 19<sup>th</sup> St NW  
Rochester, MN  
(507) 288-7226

### Web sites:

Paws and Claws web page: [www.pawsandclaws.org](http://www.pawsandclaws.org)  
Paws and Claws Volunteers Home Page: PCHS Volunteers  
Facebook: PCHSRochester

### Dog Volunteer Hours:

M-F 7:00am to 7:00pm,  
Sat 7:00am to 11:00am, 12:30pm to 7:00pm  
Sun 7:00am to 11:00am, 4:30pm to 7:00pm (and holidays)

(Note: On holidays, the morning volunteer hours may be shorter. The staff is allowed to leave as soon as their cleaning duties are completed).

**"You Make a Difference"**

First and foremost, **thank you** for volunteering at the PCHS dog shelter. The time and energy you spend are appreciated by all of us who believe in rescuing and caring for animals in need. Your efforts make a difference not only in helping to make a dog's life happier while he/she is in our shelter, but go a long way toward helping to make a dog more adoptable. Remember, you make a difference in the life of every dog you touch! There is no such thing as a job too small! Every effort makes a difference.

## **PURPLE VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS**

- z 12 hours as a green volunteer
- z Read this manual prior to purple training class
- z Read the dog postures handout at the end of this manual
- z Purple training test. (You will be expected to demonstrate certain skills and may be asked one or two questions based on the material in this training manual.)

Remember that while you have a dog out of its kennel, ***you are the advocate for that dog's safety***. While being polite and respectful to the general public, whether we're on or off PCHS property and be aware of your surroundings and of people who might approach the dog. Be ready and willing to act on the dog's behalf if it becomes necessary. Keep in mind also, PCHS can be held liable if a dog bites or otherwise hurts anyone.

### **Purple Team members may:**

- walk Green or Purple level dogs
- walk dogs to the west as far as the 2nd-to-last utility pole. Many cars 'cut' the corner at the intersection of West Circle Dr and 19<sup>th</sup>, so you should turn back before you reach that stoplight. There are also noxious weeds in those last few feet that we don't want our animals or volunteers exposed to.  
To the east, you may cross the RAC driveways and follow the Lourdes' west service road to Cascade Meadows, but do not go onto the Cascade Meadows property (they do not want the wildlife there exposed to anything that might be carried by the PCHS dogs).

Volunteers may not cross any major streets while walking dogs off the PCHS property. This includes 19<sup>th</sup> St and West Circle Drive!

- assist at Adoption Days (AD)
- transport dogs to and from AD events, vet appointments, and other official PCHS activities at the request of the person in charge of those activities (need to fill out a waiver to do this - ask office

staff to get you the waiver)

- with permission from the shelter manager, take a dog through obedience class

## **No-slip collar:**



The no-slip collar pictured is the Paws and Claws collar of choice for controlling dogs that are strong to very strong on a leash. The collar's design also prevents a dog from backing out of the collar. When properly fitted, the collar allows you to effectively manage a purple dog while on a walk without choking the dog. Some key points to keep in mind about the collar...

1. The collar, when closed at the top of the neck and behind the ears of the dog, should have room for one of your fingers to fit between the collar and the dog's neck.
2. There are 3 rings on the collar. The loose ring is the one you will attach the leash to.
3. After putting the no-slip collar on the dog, test to make sure it is fitted properly, and if not, then adjust it appropriately before taking the dog for a walk.

The purple class trainers will demonstrate how to fit, adjust and use the no-slip collar properly to handle a purple dog. This will be one of the areas you will need to demonstrate proficiency in order to pass the purple level training class.

## **Techniques for handling a timid dog:**

Some purple dogs may be overly timid or fearful of certain humans, other dogs, or the outside environment. There are some dos and don'ts when it comes to working with timid or fearful dogs. Some signs of a timid dog can be...

- crouching or body lowered (the dog is trying to make itself look less threatening by making its body seem smaller)
- the tail is tucked between its legs with little or no movement
- the dog's ears are back
- the dog urinates when presented with a frightening situation
- the dog backs into a corner in a cowering position

**A dog can be fearful and display aggression. Look for the timid signs above combined with the following...**

- raised hackles (the hair above the dogs shoulders and along its spine)
- head lowered with pupils dilated and corner of mouth pulled back
- lips slightly curled with teeth slightly visible

**Keep the following techniques in mind when handling a timid dog...**

- avoid quick jerky motions
- when approaching the dog for the first time let the dog come to you first

- crouch down to lower your position relative to the dog
- turn your body slightly so that you are not directly in front of the dog
- try not to make too much eye contact at first
- extend your hand and let the dog approach you and sniff you
- let the dog get to know you for a good 30 seconds to a minute before petting it
- if a dog is overly timid, you may wish to stay outside of the kennel, crouched down and avoiding eye contact until the dog warms up to you.
- if the dog suddenly stops or is unwilling to move forward, DO NOT yank or pull on the leash in order to get the dog to move.
- it's ok to let a timid dog lead on the walk, sniff and explore. This is how it will build confidence and eventually not fear its environment.

Dogs with fear issues require slow steady consistent practice and patience to eventually get over their fears. Feeling overly sorry for a dog does not help it overcome its fears, and often may actually reinforce them. When a dog feels comfortable with you and can trust you, it will start to let go of its fear issues with your slow steady and patient help!

### **Awareness of environment:**

Your best tool for keeping you and your purple dog safe is your awareness. Purple dogs can be more timid and/or more assertive than green dogs at the shelter. Therefore, your awareness level needs to increase when handling a purple dog. Purple dogs are more likely to take off running after small animals, lunge aggressively at other dogs, or suddenly run away from you because of a noise that frightens them. Simply put, proper awareness is the key to prevention when handling a purple dog. Try to keep the following in mind:

- On walks, monitor the environment for approaching people, loose dogs, dogs on long leashes, dogs that are not controlled well by their owners, icy areas, etc. It is much easier to avoid a situation and/or react correctly when you have ample time.
- In general try to avoid putting your dog in an eye to eye contact situation with another dog
- When out in the public and an owner is approaching with a dog, try to maintain your body between the dog being walked and any other dog on a leash approaching
- If your dog starts to display signs of aggression, immediately shorten the leash, adjust the no-slip collar in the best control position (if applicable) and avoid whatever situation is causing the dog to become aggressive. As long as you are calm and in control of the dog, you should be able to maintain your walk without the dog escalating into further aggression.

### **Encountering a loose dog (several options):**

- 1) Avoid eye contact between dogs
- 2) Signal owner to retrieve his/her dog
- 3) If loose dog gets close, turn your dog's body away from the loose dog so that no eye contact can be made
- 3) Let the owner know that he/she should get their dog immediately
- 4) If no owner present, then maintain your dog very close to your body and try to avoid both dogs

having eye contact. If the loose dog is allowed to sniff the rear of your dog, chances are the loose dog will lose interest quickly and go away or at the very least not be inclined to fight. This should be done while moving in the general direction of the shelter where you can summon more help if needed.

### **Keep Dogs Separated:**

- If you are going near another volunteer with a dog be sure to communicate with them about who is going which way so you can keep the dogs separated. It's best to have the dog on the opposite side of an approaching person or other dog.
- Be careful coming around corners (especially on the sidewalk) and going in and out of the kennel area. Don't try to take a dog out of its kennel if another dog is already entering or exiting. When you are ready to exit kennels, exit immediately to avoid cage-fighting.

**If two dogs get tangled** this is the only time it is justified to jerk on the leash to separate them. NEVER reach in with your hands - you are likely to be bitten.

### **Dog escape**

- Do NOT give chase as the dog may think this is a game and run even more
- Call the dog's name and run the opposite direction
- Drop to the ground, clap your hands, call the dog - high, happy tones. You're "having a party" and are trying to get the dog to attend!
- Throw treats
- If the above are not successful, get help

### **Calming touch / "T" touch**

T-touch is a massage technique. It is not the same as petting a dog. When done correctly, T-touch helps put the dog into a more calm and relaxed state. The dog then starts to associate you and its present environment with this relaxed state. Done consistently, this can be really beneficial to a dog which spends most of its day in a kennel with a lot of pent up energy. The ideal time to practice T-touch is after a walk with the dog, so it has had a chance to release some of its energy. When you return your dog to its kennel, instead of leaving right away, spend a couple of minutes practicing T-touch on the dog. If you don't want to take the dog for a walk, practicing T-touch for 5-10 minutes can still be really beneficial. You can sit in the kennel with the dog or ask permission from staff to use a viewing room where there may be less noise and distractions. Keep the following points in mind when practicing T-touch on a dog...

- Use the tips of your fingers to apply gentle pressure along either side of the dogs spine
- The movement should be done in a circular motion as you make your way along the dogs body
- Try not to lift the finger tips when applying gentle pressure in a circular motion
- Focus touch on lower part of head, neck, along back.
- Avoid hind quarters and the back of the legs until you are more familiar with the dog
- Stop T-touch if dog starts to bark, growl, or jump in the kennel. You do not want to reward these types of behavior.

## **Cage Fighting:**

Some dogs in kennels will start to growl and cage fight when you are taking your dog out of the main kennel area. Try to keep the following points in mind when walking in the main kennel area with a purple dog:

- Always have your dog on a short leash when walking through the kennel room and down the main hall
- If cage fighting starts, you have a couple of options...
  1. Stop, turn around and walk away with your dog until the fighting stops and try again
  2. Continue to walk calmly past the cage fighting dog
- If you notice your purple dog cage fights with a specific dog every time you walk past its kennel, you can do the following to help stop your dog's cage fighting tendencies by:
  1. Let your purple dog smell a treat two or three kennels before the kennel that starts problems. Continue to offer the dog a treat while you walk past the problem kennel. Give the dog the treat while passing the problem kennel if it has not started to escalate aggressively. This positive reinforcement for good behavior works great if you are consistent with it.
  2. If the problem dog in the kennel is on your right side, then walk your purple dog on your left side down the main kennel hallway. This will keep distance between your purple dog and the dog in the kennel and will reduce the cage fighting tendency.
  3. Do not let your purple dog make eye contact with the problem dog. Eye contact is a precursor to aggression and if you prevent it, the likelihood of your dog starting to cage fight is extremely small.

**Have fun with the dogs!** Many dogs are stressed by being in the shelter. The more we can get them out for walks and interactions with caring people like you, the happier their time with PCHS can be.

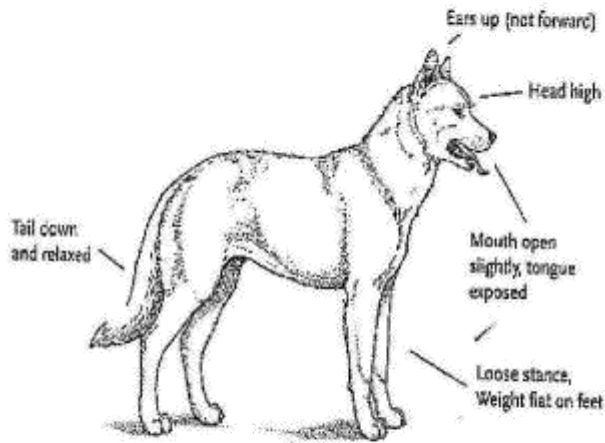
**Our volunteer training program is a work- in-progress** . We are constantly striving to be better! Please offer any suggestions that you think can improve the program in any way. You can do this by talking to any Blue Team member or by dropping us an email at [info@pawsandclaws.org](mailto:info@pawsandclaws.org). We value your feedback and look forward to getting to know you. Also, as you become more experienced as a PCHS volunteer, we would welcome you on the Blue Team (trainers and volunteer program team members).

Thank you for helping to make the lives of the PCHS dogs happier! We know that you will also benefit from the time spent with the animals.

The following images depicting dog signals are from the book, How To Speak Dog: Mastering the Art of Dog-Human Communication, by Stanley Coren. **Familiarize yourself with these postures so you can "read" your dog and avoid difficult encounters and situations.**

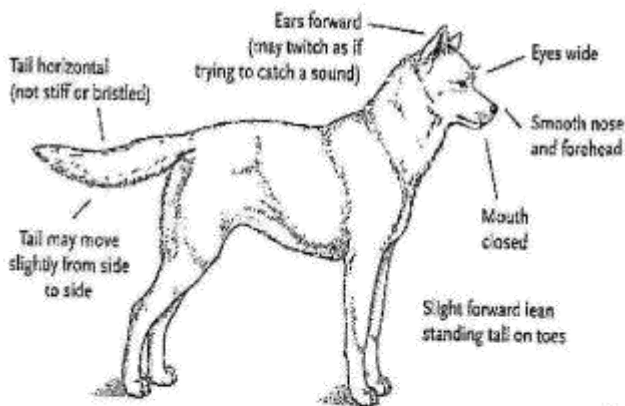
## Visual Glossary

Relaxed



This array of signals communicates a relaxed, reasonably content dog who is unconcerned and unthreatened by any activities going on in its immediate environment.

Alert and Attentive



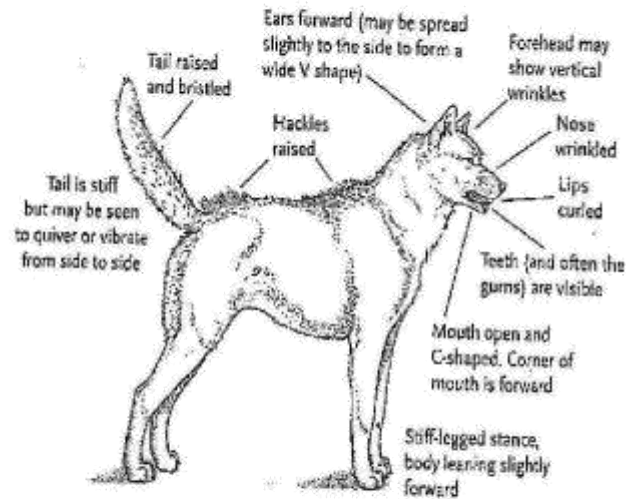
When something of interest is encountered or enters the environment, these signals communicate that attention is now being paid to them and the dog has entered a state of alertness.

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## Visual Glossary

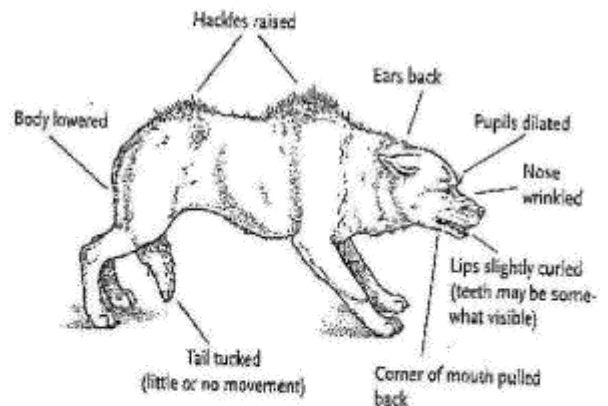
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Dominance / Aggression  
(Offensive threat)



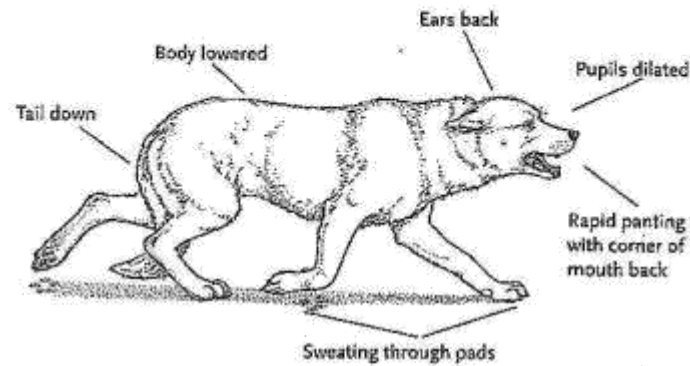
These signals are given by a very dominant and confident animal, who is communicating both its social dominance and threatening aggression if it is challenged.

Fear / Aggression  
(Defensive threat)

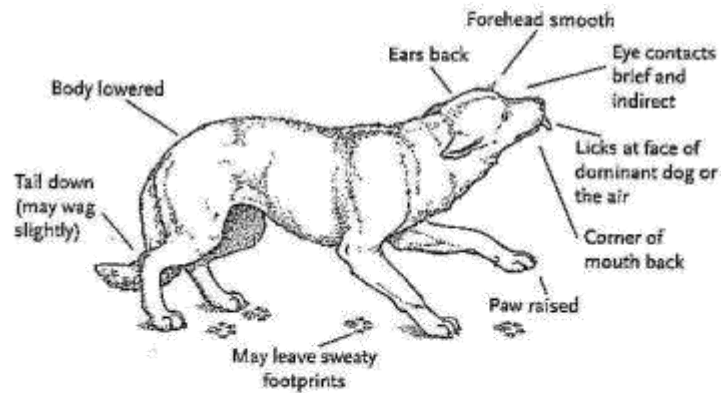


This set of signals communicates that the dog is frightened but is not submissive and may attack if pressed. These signals are addressed directly toward the individual who is threatening.

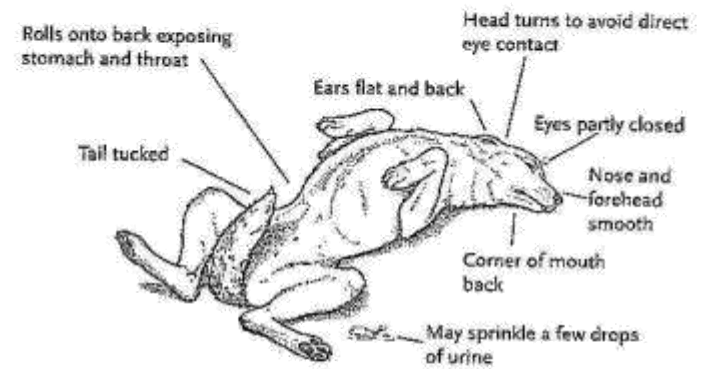
## Stress and Anxiety



This is the pattern of signals which communicate that a dog is under stress. The source of the stress may be social or environmental, and the signals are not being specifically addressed to any other individual.

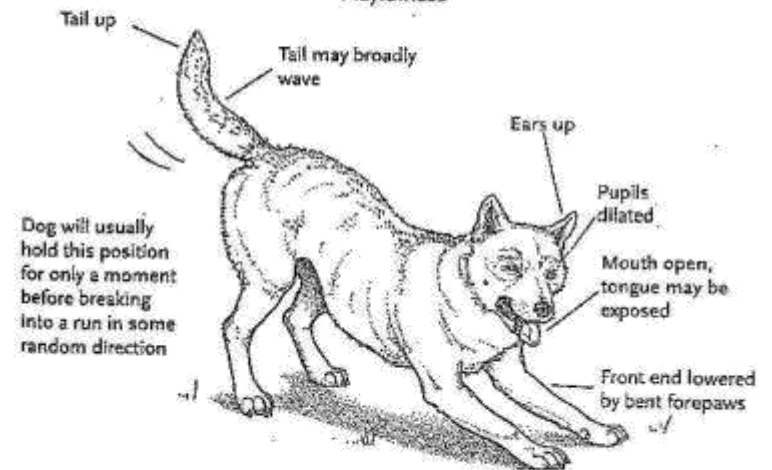
Fear / Submission  
(Active submission)

This pattern of signals communicates that the dog is somewhat fearful and is offering signs of submission. Most of these signals are designed to pacify the individual who is of higher social status in order to avoid any further challenges or threats.

Extreme fear / Total submission  
(Passive submission)

This pattern of signals indicates total surrender and submission. The dog indicates its lower status and grovels before the higher-ranking animal to pacify it and avoid confrontation.

## Playfulness



This is the basic invitation to play. It may be accompanied by excited barking, or playful attacks and retreats, and may be used as a "punctuation mark" to indicate that any previous rough behavior was not meant as a threat.



