

Dogs Trust **Hope Project** – supporting people and their pets to stay together

Supporting homeless dog owners during COVID-19

Advice for homelessness services on homeless people with dogs

For many homeless dog owners, their dog is their main companion and source of love, support and warmth. Recent measures introduced in relation to coronavirus have led to homeless people being housed in hotel and emergency accommodation to allow them to self-isolate.

This information sheet is designed to support and aid homelessness services who support service users with dogs, in order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of their service users and to keep people and their pets together where possible.



Housing people in hotels / emergency accommodation:

- We would strongly recommend ensuring that any rough sleepers who own a dog are also able to access accommodation and are not in a position where they may need to be separated from their dog.
- Individual 'dog policies' are available for hotels, hostels and emergency accommodation providers through Dogs Trust's 'Welcoming Dogs' scheme, as well as essential dog items and food.

Dog owners who need to self-isolate:

- Dogs should be kept with their owners where possible. Consider if someone else may be able to walk their dog for a short period – please see our guidance on walking and caring for your dog.
- Dogs can be provided with enrichment activities to keep them busy during longer periods inside – these can be provided by the 'Welcoming Dogs' scheme.

Dog owners who become unwell and need additional support for their dogs during this time, such as for a hospital stay:

- The owner may have a friend who the dog could stay with temporarily.
- Dogs Trust may be able to offer temporary private boarding during this time. Please contact the 'Welcoming Dogs' team for more information.

We would like to say a huge thank you to all the hotels, hostels, accommodation providers and key workers who are doing everything they can to support people and their pets during these challenging times.

Dogs Trust Hope Project has been supporting homeless dog owners for more than 25 years, providing access to free vet care and working with hostels and accommodation providers to encourage them to accept dogs.

We are here to help

For guidance on producing a dog policy for hotel, hostel or emergency accommodation, as well as provision of dog items, access to free vet care, and emergency boarding, please contact the Hope Project direct.

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