

DOG ENRICHMENT OVERVIEW

Pasado's Safe Haven's Dog Enrichment Program provides a varied experience for our Sanctuary residents, making their stay more comfortable and enjoyable. Giving dogs a variety of physical, mental, and social enrichment activities that they enjoy reduces their fear, stress, anxiety, and frustration. It helps them become more confident, at ease, playful, and safe –and get ready to be adopted.

Without enrichment, over time dogs will start to experience more "kennel stress." This looks like: repetitive behaviors like running in circles and jumping in the fence in their yard, more vocalizations when left alone –whining, barking, howling, licking or overgrooming, frustrated behaviors including leash-grabbing, mouthing, and humping at increasing intensity.

A consistent and varied enrichment program staves off these kinds of stressed behaviors.

We have put together this binder so volunteers can easily find things to do with our dogs, and to identify specific activities that are particularly beneficial for each dog, otherwise known as *targeted enrichment*. Pasado's staff will maintain this binder weekly, adding sheets for new dogs, and editing if some of the activities are inappropriate for that particular dog. The appropriateness of certain activities for dogs can vary due to changes in diet, health, or behavior.

Always ask a staff member prior to beginning any enrichment activity. Read the dog volunteer board before interacting with any of the dogs. Review the activities on the enrichment sheet before working with a dog. Upon completion of your session, **please be sure to write down what you worked on with the dog and leave comments so we can monitor the progress and see what works well for each dog.**

Below are descriptions of the activities you will find in this binder (check each dog's sheet to be sure that these activities are listed; not all activities will be appropriate for all dogs).

Dog caregivers provide a minimum of one walk per day, training, and one enrichment activity for all dogs each day (see enrichment calendar).

Housing

- **Radio-** Dogs can be calmed or distracted by music. Music can be especially beneficial to the dogs on high traffic days at the sanctuary
- **Toy swap-** Dogs love to receive new/novel toys. Please check first to make sure the dog has no toy restrictions that could pose a danger or choking hazard.
- **Daily Scent Swap-** Each dog receives a new scented roll each day. Check the calendar to see selected scent for each day of the week. This takes place daily at 9 AM check in a Caregiver before providing a second scent for the day.

Exercise/Activity

- **Training** --Volunteers can work with dogs in their cabin, on walks or in the off leash park. (Please see dogs training plan for guidance on what behaviors the dog needs to work on.)
- **One on One Play** – Volunteers can take certain dogs to the off leash dog park to play one on one with them. Feel free to play fetch, or any other activity the dog might enjoy! Toys are kept in the storage bin under the cover in the dog park. At the end of your session, put all used toys in the Dirty Laundry.
- **Extra Walk** – If there is time at the end of a shift, volunteers can take dogs for second or third walk, or run! Please verify that the dog you want to exercise is not on an exercise restriction, most commonly post-surgery.

- **“Find It”** – There are cardboard boxes in the Dog Med Shed that can be used to hide treats. The dog has to figure out which boxes have treats. A great way to get mental exercise!
- **Special Outings- Some** of our dogs enjoy car rides and hikes. Please check with a Caregiver to see what dogs are able to leave the property and to obtain permission to take a dog on a special outing.

Food

- **KONG Treat-** Many dogs enjoy working on frozen KONGS to stay busy. Because we need to monitor how much food a dog is getting, be aware of special diets, identify resource guarders, **volunteers must check with a staff member before giving KONG treats**. Made frozen KONGS are kept in the freezer in the Enrichment Room. Empty KONGS in the Dog Med Shed can be filled and cleaned by following the directions in the enrichment binder. KONGS can also be given unfrozen by smearing a small amount of peanut butter or canned food on the inside. Please DO NOT pack the entire KONG full of peanut butter, as doing so makes cleaning very difficult and can cause upset tummies. Please remove and clean the KONG using a bottle brush (in the Dog Shed) when the dog is finished with the treat.
- **KONG Feed** – Some dogs may benefit from having their meals served inside of the KONG, so they have to work for the reward. KONG feeding will be directed by staff. Made KONGS are kept in the freezer in the Enrichment Room. Empty KONGS in the Dog Med Shed can be filled and cleaned in the enrichment room. Feel free to ask a Caregiver if they would like you to prep KONG for dinner.
- **Buster Cube/Puzzle** – This is another work-for-reward activity that provides mental stimulation. Puzzle toys are kept in the Dog Med Shed. At the end of your session, wash and disinfect in the Enrichment Room Sink following the cleaning instructions.
- **Empty peanut butter jar:** Give the empty jar to a dog so it must attempt to get the remaining peanut butter out. Select a jar appropriate for the dog and give periodic supervision. Do not give to destructive dogs who may chew up and ingest the plastic.
- **Special feeding:** Meals can be given in a variety of ways, including putting mixed food in a pizza box, egg carton, or a paper bag.
- **Plastic soda bottles:** Treats can be placed in these bottles, and a dog must figure out how to get the treats out by spinning and pawing the bottle. You can also poke holes in the bottle to further engage and stimulate the dog’s sense of smell.
- **Flavored ice cubes:** Many of our dogs love flavored ice cubes. These are made by mixing canned food with water. A supply of ice cubes can be found in the freezer in the Enrichment Room. Small dogs typically get one ice cube, and medium and larger dogs can have two or three. To avoid a mess from melted cubes, and to prevent them from sliding on the floor, please place each cube in a small metal dish.
- **Frozen bowl:** Put wet food in a metal bowl and freeze it overnight. Honest Kitchen works well for this.

Social Contact

- **Quiet Time w/ a Friend** – Sometimes the dogs just need some quiet time, and it’s helpful for them to learn that people don’t always mean excitement. You can sit with the dog, and just spend time relaxing, petting, maybe even reading them a book!
- **Groom** – If you see a dog with a thick coat, or a dog that is shedding a lot, they may enjoy being brushed. Be sure to sweep up afterwards! Grooming tools are kept in the Dog Med Shed. Please wash and disinfect the tool when finished.
- **Dog/Dog Play Time** – If the dog does well with other dogs, we can have “play dates” in the off leash dog park. Please check with a staff member before introducing dogs. At least 2 people are required during playdates, one of which should be a staff member.

