

Professional Dog Walkers Association



Considerations when taking on a dog walker

Check list

<i>Description</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>Reason / Methodology</i>
How long have they been trading? (Do not be perturbed by a new business start-up. Many new businesses are very well prepared!)		
What experience and / or qualifications do they have? Do they advocate CPD (continuing professional development)		
Evidence of documentation - Public Liability Insurance, Employers Liability Insurance (if they have employees) - Professional Indemnity if they offer advisory services - any other additional services / products cover in which you might partake or may be relevant - Vehicle insurance - Criminal Disclosure certificate - Canine first aid certificate. If you accept their services, ensure the revalidation of their documentation after validity lapses		
Do they need / have a local authority or Park licence to practice? Not all councils have a licence procedure, but some do, your local Dog Warden is best placed to advise		
Membership of a professional body, they have probably agreed to abide by the body's charter / code of conduct. Ask what this entails		
Can they provide references? If so, take them up. Look at any reviews they may		

already have on social media, websites, etc		
<p>The dog walker's priority should always be the welfare and safety of any dog in their care – what do they do to ensure this as far as practicable. Do they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Carry out risk assessments for their walks? - Carry out risk assessment for each dog? - Carry out dynamic risk assessments (continuous risk assessment while out on a walk) - Do they carry out regular equipment integrity / fit checks (collar / harness / lead etc) - Do they carry out other additional checks 		
How familiar are they with your breed?		
<p>Group walks - How many dogs do they walk at one time?</p> <p>How many dogs are they insured to walk at any one time?</p> <p>How many dogs do the council allow them to walk at any one time?</p> <p>Will your dog be in a regular group or will he / she need to be able to adapt to different dogs?</p> <p>Do they offer ad-hoc walks?</p>		
Do they walk dogs individually?		
Do they include any additional enrichment on their walks?		
Do they provide their own business tags to attach to your dog's collar?		
Is there a trial walk period?		

<p>Will they be willing to accompany you on a walk to learn your dog's cues for recall etc?</p> <p>What would happen if they deem your dog unsuitable for a group walk?</p>		
<p>What are their emergency procedures?</p> <p>Unfortunately, even with the best prepared risk assessments in place, unforeseen incidents can occur - vehicle breakdown, road traffic accidents, sickness (human or canine), incidents in public areas with third parties, injury (human and canine), lost dog etc to name a few</p>		
<p>Do they walk the dogs on or off the leads?</p> <p>Think about your dog's recall before giving permission to walk off lead</p>		
<p>Will they use your own equipment or ask permission to use their own? E.g. Harness</p> <p>Do they use slip leads?</p>		
<p>What is their policy for walking special needs dogs, sick dogs, bitches in season?</p>		
<p>What is their booking / cancellation policy?</p>		
<p>Can they accommodate short notice changes?</p>		
<p>Do they have additional staff / assistants?</p> <p>Where practicable, would your dog be walked by the same person or would there be any number of random walkers collecting?</p> <p>Check Employer's liability insurance</p>		
<p>Do they provide holiday cover, their holidays may not tie in with yours?</p> <p>Are you able to provide your own cover?</p>		
<p>Is there an ongoing staff training procedure in place?</p>		

Do they have a key holding policy?		
Do they have a dedicated vehicle? When being transported is your dog safe and secure? Do they comply with The Highway Code (Section 57 relates to the safe transportation of pets). Is their vehicle adequately ventilated / air conditioned?		
Is the vehicle insured for business use?		
Do they dry / clean up the dogs after a walk?		
Do they photograph the dogs and use the material on their website or social media? How do you feel about that?		
How do they clear up any mess?		
Do they have formal paperwork? What records do they keep? How long do they keep their records?		
How much do they charge, are there any additional costs such as registration / slot retainer fees, mileage, booking amendments etc..?		
How do they bill you and what is the preferred payment method?		
Do they provide regular doggy appraisals? This might cover areas such as the dog's enjoyment, behaviour, interaction with other dogs where applicable etc, recall, lead walking, travel etc..		

Notes: