

Assistance Dog Education and Welfare Operational Plan

Orchard Hills National Training School

Overview

Assistance Dogs Australia is a national charity which trains dogs to assist a range of people to gain greater freedom and independence.

Assistance Dogs Australia currently trains dogs to assist people with physical disabilities, children and young adults on the autism spectrum, police and defence personnel living with post-traumatic stress disorder and educational support dogs.

Assistance Dogs Australia has been accredited by Assistance Dogs International since 2005.

The operational plan is to give an insight into the day to day running of the Assistance Dogs Australia Orchard Hills facility and to clearly display the actions and human resources required in order to ensure the smooth and efficient operation of the facility.

Operational Hours

The facility will operate from 7am till 9pm, seven days a week. During the hours of 6pm and 7am all dogs will be moved into their overnight accommodation which is a completely enclosed space with no outdoor access.

Dog Welfare team members will work from either 7am till 2pm, 8am till 4pm and 2pm till 9pm, seven days a week, so that there is a crossover of staff members from 8am till 4pm every day.

Instructors will work from 8am till 4pm Monday – Friday.

Administration staff will work from 9am till 5pm Monday – Friday.

Maintenance/Caretakers will be living on-site

A vet will visit the facility once a week to monitor the dogs.

One or two volunteers could assist on the weekends within the operational hours.

Facility Capacity

The Orchard Hills facility is divided into three structural blocks, (to minimize the possibility of noises and increase the wellbeing of the dogs) with the capacity for up to sixty dogs in training. The design of the facility allows plenty of space for two dogs to share a space and at the same time it gives each dog the opportunity to view all

the other dogs in their section. This ensures a relaxed stress free environment and allows staff to easily observe the dogs' behaviour, from any point of the room.

Each dog will be under the care of instructors and welfare staff. Instructors will be responsible for the education of a maximum of five dogs and for each block there will be six welfare team members designated to work in shifts from 7am – 2pm or 2pm – 9pm as well as two who will work from 8am – 4pm who will manage the welfare needs of the dogs including grooming, health checks and toileting.

Daily Routine (Weekdays)

- 7am – Dog welfare team members arrive and start transferring dogs from indoor overnight kennels to outdoor patios that are connected to their overnight kennel so that they can toilet
- 7am – 7:30am – As dogs are toileting in enclosed outdoor patios, staff are picking up and disposing of any dog waste

Important Note: (Weekends): *Dogs remain in their indoor overnight kennels until 8:00am before they are transferred to outdoor patios so that they can toilet.*

- 7:30am – 8am – Dogs are transferred from outdoor patios back into their indoor kennel so that they can be fed according to the practised feeding routine and so that all food bowls can be collected and washed
- 7:50am - 8am – Instructors & extra dog welfare team members arrive on site
- 8:10am – Instructors start collecting dogs from their kennels to commence on-site training sessions or loading the dogs into the vans to take them to another location to complete off-site training sessions
- 8:30am – 9:30am – Dog welfare team members clean the kennels and any equipment that has been used and prepare feeds for the afternoon
- 9am – Administration staff arrive
- 9:30am – 11:45am – Dog welfare team members complete either walks around the facility, monitored play sessions, grooming sessions or health checks on the dogs
- 11:30am – 11:45am – Instructors finish morning on-site training sessions or return from off-site training
- 11:45am – 12pm – Instructors and dog welfare team members are all involved in toileting the dogs in the outdoor patios before returning them to their indoor kennels while the staff have lunch
- 12pm – 12:30pm – Staff members have their lunch break
- 12:30pm – 12:45pm – Instructors and dog welfare team members are all involved in toileting the dogs in the outdoor patios before returning them to their indoor kennels

Staff movements

3 staff arrive

13 staff arrive

11 staff arrive

- 12:45pm – Instructors start collecting dogs from their kennels to commence on-site training sessions or loading the dogs into the vans to take them to another location to complete off-site training sessions
- 1pm – 3:45pm - Dog welfare team members complete either walks around the facility, monitored play sessions, grooming sessions or health checks on the dogs
- 2pm – Dog welfare team members who started at 7am finish work and leave & late shift dog welfare team members arrive
- 3:30pm – 3:45pm – Instructors finish training sessions, toilet dogs and return all dogs to their indoor kennels
- 3:50pm – 4pm – Instructors feed all dogs according to the practised feeding routine and collect all bowls
- 4pm – Instructors finish work and leave the facility & two dog welfare team members finish
- 4pm – 4:30pm – Dog welfare team wash food bowls and prepare feeds for the next morning
- 5pm – Administration staff leave facility
- 4:30pm – 8:30pm – Dog welfare team members complete grooming sessions and health checks on the dogs
- 5:00pm to 6:00pm – Dog welfare team members allow the dogs to toilet on the outdoor patios and clean any waste. The dogs are then returned to their indoor overnight kennels.
- 9pm – Dog welfare team members make sure all dogs are secure before locking up the facility and leaving.

3 staff leave
& 3 staff
arrive

13 staff leave

11 staff leave

3 staff leave

Weekend Routine

Important Note: (Weekends):

Dogs remain in their indoor overnight kennels until 8:00am before they are transferred to outdoor patios so that they can toilet.

The daily routine for the weekend differs slightly to the weekday routine due to the opportunity for some dogs stay with short term carers over the weekend from Friday afternoon. This practice significantly reduces the number of dogs at the facility on the weekend. The same daily routine is followed however instead of instructors completing training sessions, the dog welfare team members will complete more training based sessions.

Professional Practice

Instructors work with the dogs on a one on one basis. When conducting training sessions the instructor will collect one dog from their indoor kennel to complete a training session before returning the dog to their kennel.

Dog welfare team members conduct their health checks and grooming sessions with the dogs indoors also. These sessions are also completed on a one on one basis.

When completing walks around the facility, dog welfare team members will collect one dog from their indoor kennel, place the selected dog on a lead and walk with the dog in order to practice correct walking position and lead manners.

Play sessions and free running sessions are completed by both the instructors and dog welfare team members. These sessions are designed with a training basis in mind. There will never be more than two dogs in a play or free running session at the same time. These play or free running sessions are carried out in the training yards. This allows the dogs to be closely monitored and easily managed

Noise Management

Noise management is a crucial aspect of dog welfare and training at Assistance Dogs Australia. There are a number of strategies employed by the dog welfare team and instructors in order to ensure that the dogs are practising calm and quiet behaviour.

A number of enrichment and training techniques can be employed in order to help manage any vocal dogs. This includes providing the dogs with toys, KONG's, Nylabones, as well as conducting a training session or grooming session with the dog.

The proposed national training school has been designed in such a way that the dogs can be easily managed. The dog welfare team and instructors will be spending their time in the same area as the dogs which means that any dog who is being vocal or disruptive can be easily and quickly separated and settled.

The facility has also been modelled in order to maximise dog welfare and minimise stress levels. The facility has been purpose designed to ensure that the dogs are being housed in such a way that they are content and comfortable in their surroundings and so that they have the most human contact time as possible. The fact that the dogs will be indoors for the greater majority of the day also makes it very easy to minimise and manage noise and disruption.

A 24 hour video and audio surveillance system will be installed to monitor both the movement and noise levels inside and outside of the kennel blocks. This will ensure that the facility can be managed effectively as it will always be possible to see and hear what is happening at all times.

Summary

- Operational hours – 7am – 9pm, seven days a week
- Number of staff during weekdays

Position	No of Staff	Working hours
Dog welfare team	6 + 2 during night shift	7am-2pm, 8am-4pm, 2pm-9pm
Dog instructors	11	8am-4pm
Administration	11 (includes managers)	9am-5pm
Maintenance/Caretakers	2	Living on-site
TOTAL	30	

- Number of staff on weekends

Position	No of Staff	Working hours
Dog welfare team	6 + 2 during night shift	7am-2pm, 8am-4pm, 2pm-9pm
TOTAL	8	

- Dog capacity –up to 60 dogs
- Number of dogs on-site at one time will be variable, normally not reaching the full capacity of the premises.