



What to expect when your dog or cat is boarding...

Leaving your pet at a boarding facility can be a stressful event for both you and your pet! It is normal to worry about how your pet will be feeling in an environment away from home and without his or her “parents”. Sometimes, though, our busy schedules call for a little help in taking care of our much loved furry family members. We hope the information below can help put you at ease about leaving your pet with us, as well as inform you about what you can do to make little Fluffy or Fido’s stay a smoother transition for you both.

Doing Our Part:

The Rooms – It is important that boarded pets are kept in safe, sanitary kennels that can be disinfected.

Dogs – Our canine guests are treated to a 60 square foot indoor-outdoor run. The inside portion of the runs are climate controlled. These large runs provide ample room to move about and be comfortable.

Cats - Cats are kept in “kitty condos” which have open fronts but solid walls to prevent “arguments” with their neighbors. The condos are located in the quieter portions of the clinic so the cats don’t have to listen to all those noisy dogs all day.

Exercise - Dogs are walked outside in a fenced area a minimum of two times daily for a little exercise and some individual TLC with our animal caretakers. For those dogs that like to play with others, the Day Camp option allows them to socialize with other dogs and exercise in our specially designed Day Camp yard. You can even check in on your “kids” at play during Day Camp by accessing our on-line Webcam.

Bedding - At A-Animal Clinic, it is very important that boarding guests are provided with clean and comfortable bedding. In order for this standard to be reached, our kennel staff is responsible for cleaning all bedding used in our facility daily. In addition, it is not uncommon for pets to damage their beds, which necessitates mending. In some cases, our boarding guests will even destroy their beds. If a boarding guest destroys a bed that was brought from home, it could result in an owner’s dissatisfaction with our facility. Furthermore, some clients bring bedding that is not appropriate for the kennel environment. Sometimes client provided bedding is too heavy and bulky to easily be moved while the dog’s run is being disinfected. Finally, some client provided bedding is stuffed with material that is unsafe for the boarding guest to ingest.

To ensure that all pets are provided with safe, clean bedding, A-Animal will provide bedding for its boarding guests. We use the Petcot (www.petcot.com). These 4 ½” elevated beds keep pets comfortable while resting in their run. Owner provided bedding will not be used in our facility. This is mandated to

protect the bedding from being damaged or lost in our facility. It also ensures that pets are not provided with bedding that may endanger any pets.

From time to time a pet may have an special physical or emotional need which requires them to use their own bed from home. All owner provided bedding must be approved by a manager. If you feel that you must bring your pet's own bed for their boarding stay, please ask to speak to an on-duty manager during your check in process.

Owner Provided Bedding Requirements

Any Owner-provided bedding must be brought into the facility with the acknowledgement by owner that it is likely to be destroyed or damaged , and may not be able to be returned to owner. We will obviously do our best to keep up with the bedding and return it in the manner with which it was brought in. The facility houses and moves up to 150 pets per day when full making it difficult to keep up with specific bedding.

All Client Provided Bedding Must:

- **Be clean, safe and easily laundered or cleaned**
- **Be lightweight and manageable**
- **Be permanently labeled with the pets Name and Owners Last Name**
- **Be made of snag-free material**
- **Fit in the pets run while allowing the pet room to eat, drink and move around.**

Feeding - All pets are fed daily according to owner instructions. We are happy to feed any diet you provide. If no diet is provided by the owner, then we feed Hill's Science Diet Adult Sensitive Stomach to dogs and Hill Science Diet Feline Maintenance Sensitive Stomach to cats. These are high quality diets that are easy to digest in an effort to minimize GI upset during your pet's stay. We strongly recommend you bring your pet's normal diet for us to feed during his/her stay.

Medical Attention - Despite careful care and attention, boarding can still be a stressful time for your pet. He/she must adjust to a new routine as well as new sounds and smells. This can make your pet more susceptible to stress-related illness, such as GI upset and diarrhea or infections. Because we are also a veterinary hospital, your pet has ready access to a veterinarian should he or she become ill. Our animal caretakers are trained to watch for any potential problems such as poor appetite, lethargy, diarrhea, or other issues and will immediately notify the owner and doctor should they have any concerns. For example, if you pet gets diarrhea while boarding, the caretakers will report this to the doctor on duty. A small dose of anti-diarrheal medication will be provided to your pet to ease his stomach problems.

What You Can Do:

Veterinary Preventative Care - The best thing you can do to protect your pet's health in boarding situations is to comply with your veterinarian's preventive health care recommendations. This not only means making sure your pet's vaccines are up to date at least 1 week prior to boarding, but also keeping current with recommended physical exams and wellness screening bloodwork. This allows both you and our veterinarians to be aware of any potential problems that may need special attention or monitoring during your pet's stay.

Bring Your Pets Food From Home - Providing your pet's own food helps prevent digestive upset from sudden diet changes as well.

Medical Conditions - Always inform A-Animal Clinic staff members of any medical condition your pet may have (arthritis, allergies, heart murmurs, history of coughing, etc). Please also inform the hospital of any changes in your pet's condition that may have developed since his/her last visit (changes in water consumption, vomiting, diarrhea, weight loss, etc...).

Medications - If your pet takes medications, make sure they are clearly marked with their names, the type of medication, and the dosage. Labels that are damaged or smeared should be replaced. In addition, please inform the staff what time of day the medication is usually given, and why specifically the medication is being given.

Socialization - Keeping your dog socialized and used to experiencing different situations also helps to reduce stress when it comes time for boarding. Visiting an area dog park a few times before his/her visit can help socialize and desensitize your dog in order to help make new situations rewarding instead of traumatizing.

Personal Items - Owners often wish to provide a special toy, blanket, or other item that "smells like home" for their dog. While this is understandable, there are some guidelines that should be considered. In any boarding situation, items are frequently moved from the cage to be cleaned or while the kennel itself is cleaned. It can sometimes be difficult to separate Shadow's pink chew toy from Biscuit's pink and blue chew toy! Although it is your decision, we recommend that you not leave blankets or leashes with us, as these are the most common items to get mixed up. We also recommend not leaving any sentimental or special items and any items left for a pet should not be easily shredded, torn, or ingested in order to prevent intestinal upset or obstruction.

Once You Get Back Home - After returning home, pets often sleep more than usual for the first 24 hours and may have decreased appetite for 24-36 hours. Keep a watchful eye for any signs of stress-related illness, such as mild diarrhea. If your pet seems excessively lethargic, vomits, has moderate to severe diarrhea or does not seem to be back to normal within 24-36 hours after returning home, the best thing to do is consult with a veterinarian. A doctor can address any concerns you may have. Another common manifestation of stress is panting, which can make dogs more thirsty. Don't be surprised if your canine companion drinks a lot of water right after they return from a boarding stay. You should not take it as an indication that the we did not provide water (our guest have access to fresh water throughout their entire stay); simply understand that they need to replenish the fluids that they lost through panting (which is a dog's way of sweating).

Being an informed owner helps make boarding a better experience for everyone! Feel free to call with any specific questions you may have about our boarding and daycare facilities, or any of the topics addressed above.