

Pioneer Valley Veterinary Hospital  
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 pioneervalleyvh.net



## Day Camp Information

Interested in Pioneer Valley Veterinary Hospital, Inc.'s Day Camp Program? Splendid! The following document contains information regarding general requirements, schedule, services and fees, contact information, and generally what to expect when you enroll your special doggy friend in our Day Camp Program.

Important Contact Information	
Reception	Phone/Text: (413) 773-7511 Fax: (413) 774-6743 Email: <a href="mailto:pvvhreceptionist@gmail.com">pvvhreceptionist@gmail.com</a>

If you would like a tour of our facility, we are happy to schedule a Kennel Tour! Please give the office a call to do so. Kennel Tours are generally available Monday through Friday between 12:00 PM and 3:00 PM depending on the Kennel's schedule. In preparation for the tour, please plan 15-20 minutes to view the facility and to ask any questions. A Kennel Technician will meet you in the lobby when you arrive.

Requirements PRIOR to Participation		
Up-to-Date Vaccinations	Up-to-Date Services	Miscellaneous
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● DHPP (Distemper)</li> <li>● Rabies</li> <li>● Bordetella (Kennel Cough)</li> <li>● Leptospirosis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Internal Parasite Screening (a.k.a. Fecal Analysis) <b>every 6 months.</b></li> <li>● <u>If your dog is older than 6 months</u>, they must be spayed/neutered.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Completed Camp Registration Packet.</li> <li>● Dog is kept current on flea and tick preventative year round.</li> <li>● Must be crate trained.</li> </ul>
<p>Once all of the above requirements are met, the Camp Evaluation can be scheduled as the final step. Give the office a call to provide availability within the next few weeks, or email reception directly with the same information. <i>We will be in contact with you within a week.</i></p>		

### Requirements for Continued Participation

- **The aforementioned vaccinations and services must remain up-to-date.** If a vaccine or service becomes overdue, your camper will be temporarily suspended until those vaccines or services are updated to ensure the continued health and safety of all participants. *Fecal analyses can be run in-house at PVVH for a fee.*
- **Every dog participant needs to be kept on flea and tick preventative year round.** If a dog is discovered to have an internal or external parasite, the dog will be immediately removed from interacting with all other dogs, and you will be contacted to discuss treatment.
- **Regular participation in camp will be most beneficial to your dog.** Of course, life happens and we all must make adjustments for what is best for our situations and families. **If your dog has not participated in camp at least once within a 4 month period, they will need to be re-evaluated** by a Kennel Technician to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants.

### My Camper's Routine Camp Schedule

If you are interested in setting up a recurring camp schedule for your dog, we are happy to assist. Many of our campers attend on the same days each week. Of course, a recurring schedule can be updated at any time.

If you need to make any changes to your schedule or you need to cancel or reschedule for a particular day, we ask you to either call/text PVVH at: (413) 773-7511 or email us at: [pvvhreceptionist@gmail.com](mailto:pvvhreceptionist@gmail.com) with as much notice as possible so that we may best assist you.

**Whether you arrange for a recurring schedule or not, daily reservations are required.**

### Day Camp Schedule Options

Drop off time options:	Full Day and AM	PM
	Between 7:00 AM and 9:00 AM	Between 11:45 PM and 1:15 PM
Pick up time options:	AM	Full Day and PM
	Between 11:45 PM and 1:15 PM	Between 4:00 PM and 5:30 PM

*Please note that if you need a drop off or pick up time outside of the above options to please let us know and we may be able to make accommodations, though we cannot guarantee every request.*

**It is very important that you adhere to your scheduled drop off and pick up times as much as possible to ensure camp can begin and end promptly without disruption and that a Kennel**

**Technician can be available to assist you without delay.** Furthermore, it shows respect to your fellow camp parents who are also dropping off or picking up their dogs within the allotted times.

**Please note that an early and late fee will apply for parents bringing or retrieving their dogs more than 15 minutes outside the allotted times without the prior approval to do so by the Office Manager.** We understand that life happens, and we want to be as accommodating as possible. However, bringing or retrieving your dog outside of the allocated times disrupts the schedules of the PVVH Team and the services we strive to provide with excellence and care to each animal that crosses our threshold.

**Camp will be CLOSED on major holidays, including New Year's Day, Memorial Day, 4th of July, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.** Other closures for additional holidays will be emailed in advance, shared on our Facebook page, and posted in our lobby.

## **Camp Evaluation: What to Know and What to Expect**

**Our Camp Evaluation includes a general Behavioral Assessment and 1-on-1 Dog Introductions.** Time permitting, an Introductory Group will be completed, too. At this time, our Camp Evaluation is conducted by our Kennel Manager. *The cost for the evaluation is \$45.00.*

Depending on the needs of the owner, **the Camp Evaluation Appointment will be scheduled either in the morning between 8:00 AM and 9:00 AM or midday between 11:30 AM and 1:15 PM.** The Camper Candidate is welcome to spend a half or full day at PVVH. With a full day, and pending the Camper Candidate passed the Behavioral Assessment and 1-on-1 Dog Introductions, an Introductory Group will be completed, too.

**The Camp Evaluation Appointment** consists of an initial Meet-and-Greet and an opportunity for our evaluator to review what to expect and to answer any questions before escorting the Camper Candidate into their Kennel Space. *Please plan for 5-10 minutes for this appointment.*

**The Behavioral Assessment** screens and tests for handleability, reactivity, resource guarding behaviors, social aptitude with humans, and to gain some sense of the dog's personality, confidence or lack of, and body language tendencies.

**The 1-on-1 Dog Introductions** are completed using our Intro-Dogs, which have demonstrated social appropriateness with both humans and dogs, respectful boundary setting and appropriate self-boundaries, clear body language, and the tendency to thoroughly enjoy meeting new dogs in addition to getting along with most-if-not-all our current campers. The introductions are completed 1-on-1, at the pace least stressful for the candidate, and it consists of three parts:

- **Part 1** allows staff to observe the dogs as they interact through a fence line. If mutually the dogs demonstrate friendly, appropriately interested, and/or playful body language, we move on to Part 2.
- **Part 2** consists of a face-to-face greeting while on leash in the center of the yard away from barriers. Staff maintain handle on the leashes and closely watch as the dogs interact. Breaks

are provided if any nervousness, high excitability, or defensive behaviors are observed. With the breaks, dogs are walked away and allowed to reset before another face-to-face may be attempted. If mutually the dogs are friendly, respectful, and/or playful, we move on to Part 3.

- Part 3 consists of staff dropping the leashes, while still secured around each dog, to allow them more space to engage, and possibly play.

Camper Candidates may complete 1-on-1 Dog Introductions with anywhere from one to five dogs depending on how many Intro-Dogs are present that day and the results of the Behavioral Assessment, which provides insight into what dogs the Evaluator feels are the best fits for introductions.

**When the Camper Candidate is picked up from PVVH that same day, the owner will be greeted by the Evaluator or Team Leader to discuss the results of the evaluation.**

While we certainly pass Camper Candidates on that first day, it is important to understand that the evaluation process actually extends to the first several weeks up to the first several months as each new dog settles into the routine, makes friends, and gets more comfortable. It is common that dogs may begin to exhibit other kinds of behavior as they become more confident, and this could lead to re-assessment of eligibility. *Any concerning behaviors noted at any time while a dog participates in camp will be discussed promptly with the owner by a member of our team.*

### Why might a Camper Candidate NOT pass?

Ineligibility Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Unprovoked offensive aggression towards any staff, especially when it results in injury.</li><li>● Unprovoked offensive aggression towards another dog during the introductions.</li><li>● Inability to be safely leashed by staff.</li><li>● Inability to be safely handled by staff whether in a kennel space, through the kennel, or out in the play yard.</li><li>● Inappropriate and/or excessive dominant posturing, mounting, and general dominant behavior that increases the risk of disagreements and fights between dogs.</li><li>● Excessive reactivity that increases the chance for disagreements and/or fights between dogs, demonstrates a high chance of redirection and injury on staff and/or other dogs, and lends to the inability for staff to safely handle and maneuver the dog throughout the building or in the play yards. The excessive reactivity may be in relation to barriers such as doors, fences, or gates, leashing, and/or 1-on-1 introductions with dogs.</li><li>● Dangerous resource guarding of items with staff, including but not limited to toys, water dishes, bedding in the kennel space, leashes, and the dog's owner.</li></ul>

## General FAQs

### What Does a Typical Day at Camp Look Like?

**Dogs are scheduled to arrive for camp starting at 7:00 AM up until 9:15 AM. Please call or text when you arrive, do not bring your Camper into the lobby.** As each camper arrives, they are greeted by a Kennel Technician by the lamp post in the front of the building with their owner, escorted to their Kennel Space, and set up with bedding, fresh water, and any toys/items from home.

**Camp playgroups run in the morning from 9:00 AM until 12:00 PM and in the afternoon from 1:00 PM until 4:00 PM.** Each group is carefully crafted to optimize safety and fun for all dog participants. We take the following factors into consideration when we create our playgroups: size; age; energy level; play style; and any dogs' personal preferences for friends.

**Between 12:00 PM and 1:00 PM all dogs are provided a Nap Time, which is vital to ensure the wellness and happiness of all our camp participants.** This allows the dogs to recharge for more romping and fun in the yard! After all, playing in the groups is not only physically exhausting but mentally stimulating and draining as well.

**Each playgroup may run between 30 and 90 minutes.** Depending on a dog's size, age, energy level, play style, preferences, and available friends, that dog may be in anywhere from a single playgroup to all of the playgroups. We aim to have the dogs out and playing with their friends as much as is safe and still enjoyable for all the dogs involved.

Depending on the time of year and the dogs present each day, playgroups may include toys, splash pools, a dig box, and/or enrichment activities.

**We pride ourselves on personalizing the care provided to each of the dogs that attend camp.** We take note of each dog's best friends, preferred play styles and group energy level, favorite toys, any points of reactivity, which method of introduction is most successful, and we pinpoint the type of Kennel Space and location of it in the kennel where they show the most comfort. **Our goal is for every dog in our day camp program to have the most fun in the safest and healthiest way.**

**Starting at 4:00 PM and ending at 5:30 PM, the dogs begin to go home.** If given permission by the owner, each dog is spritzed with conditioning spray and wiped down to remove dirt, friends' drool, and to freshen them up before meeting each owner by the lamp post in front of the building. Even if conditioning spray is not permitted, all dogs are still tidied before being brought outside to the owner.

### Why Have My Dog Participate in Day Camp?

**There are many benefits for dogs who regularly participate in a day camp program!**

Participating pups get **the opportunity to socialize with other dogs**, which is very important to canines as a social species. Through that socialization they learn to read and demonstrate appropriate body language, they learn how to respect and set appropriate boundaries, and they get to play and interact as a dog with others of their same species. This socialization leads to an increase in happiness, enjoyment, and overall wellness.

**For owners who work long days, camp is a great way to ensure your dog gets to relieve themselves regularly throughout the day, receive any midday meals or medication, and remain in a safe space**—not to mention they get to have a fun time! Dogs playing with other dogs also expends a ton of energy. Tired pups are very happy pups.

**Camper participants are also provided various forms of enrichment regularly.** Enrichment entices the senses and stimulates the brain, which has been proven to lead to greater overall happiness and wellness. Dogs were originally bred, in most cases, to complete essential jobs. Many pet dogs are no longer being provided jobs and therefore enrichment activities help to fill this void. Enrichment may include introduction to different scents, puzzles, toys, and it often aims to engage the dog via one of their senses. Enrichment may include craft activities, seek-and-find games, trick training opportunities, and more! Just getting the chance to meet new dogs and play in different groups that have unique dynamics lends to wonderful enrichment for participants, too.

## **Should I Bring Anything for My Dog?**

For all of our campers, we provide fresh water and bedding to ensure comfort within their Kennel Space. Kennel Spaces are selected with comfort in mind, too, as some dogs prefer to be by certain friends and not others, for example.

**If you would like your pup to have their own toy during down time, we are happy to keep 1 or 2 toys for them in our Camper Toy Bin.** All personal belongings are labeled and stored in large Ziplocks to keep everything organized and safe. *Please do not bring more than 2 toys as we have limited space to accommodate all of our canine friends.*

**If you would like your pup to receive a regular snack or lunch, you are more than welcome to bring food or treats from home.** We store all food items in our Camper Snacks and Lunches bin. *If you would prefer us to give our kennel food or treats, we are happy to do so; there will be a small fee per meal given.*