

---

Date: July 13, 2021  
To: City of Columbus City Council  
From: Mark Anderson; North Metro Animal Care and Control

Subject: Muddy Paws Doggy Daycare and Boarding Conditional Use Permit Material Review

---

Review Comments with respect to General Business Questions and Answers submitted:

1. In paragraph 2, Muddy Paws (MP) state that their labor force is made up of 4 full-time and 4 part-time workers. However, they do not state what minimum staffing levels are.
  - a. Will their insurance allow for employees under the age of 18? Many commercial carriers of liability, workers compensation, will not cover employees under the age of 18. Furthermore, there are restrictions on work hours for minors under the age of 18. This should be addressed.
2. In Paragraph 14, regarding lighting in the facility. Natural light is not as important as is adequate lighting to facilitate cleaning and inspection of all areas of the facility.
3. In Paragraph 15, MP states that dogs are supervised 100% of the time, but then states in the same paragraph, "this does not mean that there is always someone physically present with the dogs when they are in daycare".
  - a. They explain that this is because the facility will have the doors open between the indoor play area and the outdoor play area so dogs can come and go at will. I admit that I am not intimately familiar with the operations of doggie daycare, but this seems to indicate that there could be lack of appropriate supervision, depending on staff levels. Obviously with many dogs coming and going, it's going to be difficult to keep eyes on the dogs at all times.

i. *This item is addressed under Condition number 11.*

Review Comments with respect to Animal Health and Safety Questions:

1. In paragraph 2, they say they have **26 Kennels**. However, they further state that they can operate with closer to **45 dogs** (See Paragraph 4.). Most boarding kennels will double up animals that live together and have no issues doing it. However, this is not fully explained as to how they can operate with 45 dogs when they only have 26 kennels.
  - a. Capacity of each kennels should be 1 dog, or 2 dogs depending on size.
  - b. All dogs must have sufficient room to stand, turn around, and lie down.
  - c. Overbooking and stretching capacity should be avoided for the safety and wellbeing of the dogs being housed.
  - d. Dogs from different households should not be placed together in the same kennel. As this can contribute to the spread of communicable diseases, parasitic infections, etc.

i. Potential Condition: *These items are currently addressed via conditions number 10, 14, and 15.*

2. How is MP calculating maximum capacity? Is it to be based on spaces available for boarding combined with a certain number of daycare dogs?

i. Potential Condition: *The applicant shall outline what the maximum capacity of dogs and cats are expected for animals that are boarded and in day care.*

3. Also, in paragraph 2 MP notes they use wire crates for boarding dogs.

- a. This concerns me because wire crates are not intended for long term confinement of animals.

4. It appears that they can't nail down exactly what their capacity will be.

- a. They state that they have 26 Kennels in Paragraph 2, but then say they have 32 spaces for dogs (See Paragraph 4). Looking at their floor plan, I count what appears to be 23 kennels (spaces) in the kennel room, and 6 spaces in the indoor play area (I can only assume these are spaces for indoor crates).

- b. Since nothing is labeled, it is difficult to discern from the floor plan what is kennel and what is cage. Further, Capacity should be reasonably limited to the number of spaces available for boarding in the facility. However, 32 spaces don't appear on the floor plan, even with the 6 wire crates mentioned. Ordinance says, "The actual number of dogs allowed shall be based upon the capacity of the principal structure to contain boarding pens, indoor exercise or training areas, grooming areas, and feeding areas". But it is not specific about it.

- c. I think this needs to be nailed down with Muddy Paws.

i. Potential Condition: *The applicant shall submit and updated floor plan, updated to indicated exact number of kennels and labeling kennel type.*

5. Another area of concern, since they do not indicate what their minimum staffing level is or will be. Regarding the Fire Emergency plan, is there sufficient staff on duty at any given time to evacuate animals in the event of a fire emergency.

- a. How will one or two people be able to evacuate 45 dogs to the parking lot and are there enough dog leads?

i. Potential Condition: *There shall be at least one slip on dog lead, per animal for the maximum number of dogs that may be in day care/boarded.*

6. They are using dish soap to clean utensils, and beds. This does not sufficiently disinfect these items. They should be using a solution of bleach and water to disinfect items like these.

i. Potential Condition: *Cleaning solution shall contain a solution of bleach and water to properly disinfect utensils and beds.*

7. Each separate area should have its own set of cleaning supplies: Mops, buckets, brooms, etc. to prevent spread of contagions.

i. Potential Condition: *There shall be separate cleaning supplies (i.e., mops, buckets, brooms) for each separate area to prevent spread of contagions.*

8. Muddy Paws needs to familiarize itself with reportable diseases. There is a table available on the Minnesota Board of Animal Health Website. Any of these cases or suspected cases should be reported to the MN Board of Animal Health as directed.
9. One item not addressed is, how will they handle dogs in heat?
  - a. These dogs must be housed separately in kennels that are inaccessible to male dogs housed within the facility. Or, in the alternative, not boarded in the facility.
    - i. Potential Condition: *Applicant shall outline how they plan to handle dogs in heat and how they will be separated or if allowed in the facility.*
10. Lastly, security fencing is required in all outdoor areas where animals will be outdoors, the City may require privacy screening, fencing or appropriate landscaping per ordinance.

1. There is a minimum of 2 staff members present at all times within the facility. The ratio of staff to dog is a minimum of 1:12.
    1. Current insurance allows for employees under the age of 18. Current restrictions on work hours for minors are followed as stated by the Child Labor Laws for the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry. [Sec. 181A.04](#)
  2. In 2016, the entire facility was upgraded to LED lighting.
  3. Paragraph 15 actually says “This **does** mean that there is always someone physically with the dogs when they are in daycare”. Staff are interacting with dogs both indoors and outdoors at all times.
- 
1. True capacity range is between 31-58 dogs dependent on dog configuration Using the metrics below, the capacity can range between 31-58 dogs.
    1. 15 kennels (4x5 **Queen**) → capacity of 1 dog over 35 pounds or 2 dogs under 20 pounds
    2. 10 kennels (4x6 **King**) → capacity of 1 dog over 80 pounds or 2 dogs under 40 pounds or 3 dogs under 10 pounds
    3. 1 kennel (5x8 **Presidential**) → capacity of 1 dog over 150 pounds or 2 dogs under 80 pounds or 3 dogs under 40 pounds
    4. 6 folding crates (outlined in red)→ capacity of 1 dog per crate
    5. Only dogs from the same household are allowed to share a kennel.
  2. Maximum capacity for boarding dogs is between 31-58 dogs. We estimate the maximum capacity for daycare is 84 dogs. See #5 for staffing related to this. It should be noted that the building has room for expansion and the ability to add more kennels into the facility.
  3. The wire crates are not intended for long term use but rather for overnight use while dogs are not in play groups. All boarded dogs are free roam for 13 hours a day.
  4. Please see attached updated floor plan with color coated kennel spaces
  5. There are slip leads available for staff to use in case of an emergency. The staff to dog ratio is 1:12.
  6. Agree to the condition.
  7. Agree to the condition.
  8. Muddy Paws will familiarize themselves with reportable diseases and have a printed table available for staff to see when working.
  9. Dogs who are in active heat are banned from daycare and boarding for at least 4 weeks.
  10. Noted.



- Queen Suites
- King Suites
- Presidential Suites
- Crates