



BELCONNEN DOG OBEDIENCE CLUB

Canine Companion Adverse Weather Policy

VERSION CONTROL

Date	Version	Modified By	Comments
12/09/2019	0.1	Lyndal Hasselman	Initial version
21/11/2019	1.0	Maelyn Draper	Finalised and published

DOCUMENT PURPOSE

To define adverse weather conditions that may impact on safe and positive training and describe the possible responses to promote the safe conduct of classes. This policy applies to all training, functions and activities undertaken by Canine Companion.

DEFINITIONS

Adverse weather – weather conditions that are likely to negatively impact on the health and safety of the majority of club members and their dogs. This includes, but is not limited to, strong wind, high pollen and dust levels, heavy rain, thunderstorms, hail, snow, and low or high temperatures.

Severe weather warning – a warning issued by the Bureau of Meteorology

Very hot weather – temperatures forecast or measured at club grounds of over 30°C

Very cold weather – temperatures forecast or measured at club grounds of less than 1°C in dry conditions, or less than 3°C in wet and windy conditions.

CANCELLATION OF BDOC COMPANION CLASSES

Weather conditions may differ on the Club grounds to the surrounding areas, and therefore it is difficult for individuals to make decisions about the Club's weather conditions based on the conditions at their home or place of work.

In very hot and very cold weather conditions, a notice may be posted on the BDOC Facebook page to suggest that handlers should consider the comfort of themselves and their dog when deciding whether or not to attend classes that day.

Classes will be cancelled when the Canine Companion leadership team consider that it may be unsafe or dangerous to handlers, dogs or instructors to participate in classes or hazardous to travel to the Club.

Conditions that may result in cancelled classes include when there is:

- A severe weather warning issued for ACT that is expected to negatively impact on the safe conduct of classes;
- Warning of severe thunderstorms for class times, including but not limited to lightening, thunder and hail;
- Temperature of more than 30°C expected at commencement of classes, with consideration given to humidity and wind;
- Temperature of less than 3°C expected at the commencement of classes, with consideration given to humidity and wind; or
- Any other adverse weather conditions are reasonably expected to negatively impact on the safety of handlers and their dogs.

A decision should be made to enable notification to be added to the BDOC Facebook page at least an hour before class starts.

Classes that are cancelled shall not be rescheduled and no monies refunded.

In the event that classes are cancelled, dog training will not be done in the club house.

In the event that adverse weather results in the cancellation of an assessment night or day, each handler and dog pair will be assessed by their usual instructor based on their in-class performance.

GUIDELINES FOR TRAINING IN HOT AND COLD WEATHER

Individual dogs cope with hot and cold weather differently. In conditions that are not considered adverse or when there isn't a severe weather warning in place, some discretion by instructors and handlers is required.

In **hot weather**, the following kinds of dogs may be affected more than others (see Attachment 1):

- Black or dark coloured dogs;
- Dogs bred in cooler climates (e.g. Siberian huskies);
- Brachy breeds (shorter nose passages);
- Overweight dogs; and
- Larger sized dogs

When classes are run in hot weather, additional bowls of water need to be provided close to where activities are occurring. Handlers should allow dogs opportunity to drink water in a relaxed environment (i.e. not crowded at the water bowl). Handlers of deep chested dogs prone to bloat and twisted gut may need to limit or reduce the level of physical exertion required by their dogs if their dogs drink larger volumes of water to cool down.

Instructors must remind handlers of their responsibility to the welfare of their dog and advise that should a dog be visibly struggling with the heat that the handler may choose to leave class early. If instructors see a dog struggling with the heat, the handler should be made aware of the signs of heat stress, providing additional learning for the handler.

The use of cooling aids, such as cooling mats, coats and bandanas is encouraged during classes. Cooling coats may have to be monitored to ensure adequate moisture and the cooling effect is occurring.

In **cold weather**, the following kinds of dogs may be affected more than others (see Attachment 2):

- Smaller dogs
- Underweight dogs
- Fine-haired dogs; and
- Elderly dogs

The use of coats and insulating mats is encouraged during classes. In cold weather handlers may use a mat for behaviours such as group stays where the dog is required to stay still on the ground.

Signs of physical distress that may be observable as a result of hot or cold weather include excessive panting, excessive drooling, hunched body postures, limping, trembling, vocalisation, unwillingness of the dog to participate, lack of appetite and lethargy.

The condition of the club grounds may impact on the effects of hot or cold weather. For example, moisture on the ground during cold weather or strong winds during cold weather may exacerbate the cold conditions and high humidity may exacerbate hot conditions.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACT Public Health Alerts: <https://www.health.act.gov.au/public-health-alerts>

Air quality ratings: <https://health.act.gov.au/about-our-health-system/population-health/environmental-monitoring/monitoring-and-regulating-air-2>

Air quality measurements: <https://health.act.gov.au/about-our-health-system/population-health/environmental-monitoring/monitoring-and-regulating-air>

ANKC Obedience Trial Rules: <http://ankc.org.au/media/9037/9-obedience-2016v2.pdf>

BOM Warnings: <http://www.bom.gov.au/australia/warnings/index.shtml>

BOM About Severe Weather: <http://www.bom.gov.au/weather-services/severe-weather-knowledge-centre/warnings.shtml>

BOM Severe Weather Ratings: http://www.bom.gov.au/weather-services/severe-weather-knowledge-centre/WarningsInformation_SW_SWW.shtml

ATTACHMENT I: HOT WEATHER GUIDE

 How hot is too hot?						
°C	 °F				 KEY	OTHER FACTORS
15°	60°	1	1	1	1. No evidence of risk: Have fun outside!	+1 If obese
18°	65°	1	1	2		
21°	70°	2	2	3	2. Risk is unlikely: Have fun outside, but be careful!	+1 If less than 6 months old or elderly
23°	75°	3	3	3		
26°	80°	3	3	4	4. Dangerous weather developing. Use caution.	-1 If water is available
29°	85°	4	4	5		
32°	90°	5	5	5		
35°	95°	5	5	5		
37°	100°	5	5	5		
40°	105°	5	5	5		
43°	110°	5	5	5		

Source: adapted from The Tufts Animal Care and Condition (TACC) scales

ATTACHMENT 2: COLD WEATHER GUIDE

 how cold is too cold?						
°C	°F				 KEY	OTHER FACTORS
15°	60°	1	1	1	1. No evidence of risk: Have fun outside!	+2 If wet weather is present -1 If Northern breed or heavy coat -1 If dog is acclimated to cold
12°	55°	1	1	1		
10°	50°	1	1	1		
7°	45°	2	2	1	2. Risk is unlikely: Have fun outside, but be careful!	+2 If wet weather is present -1 If Northern breed or heavy coat -1 If dog is acclimated to cold
4°	40°	3	3	2		
1°	35°	3	3	3	3. Unsafe potential, depending on breed. Keep an eye on your pet outdoors.	+2 If wet weather is present -1 If Northern breed or heavy coat -1 If dog is acclimated to cold
-1°	30°	3	3	3		
-4°	25°	4	4	3		
-6°	20°	5	4	3	4. Dangerous weather developing. Use caution.	+2 If wet weather is present -1 If Northern breed or heavy coat -1 If dog is acclimated to cold
-9°	15°	5	4	4		
-12°	10°	5	5	5	5. Potentially life-threatening cold. Avoid prolonged outdoor activity.	+2 If wet weather is present -1 If Northern breed or heavy coat -1 If dog is acclimated to cold
-15°	5°	5	5	5		
-17°	0°	5	5	5		

Source: adapted from The Tufts Animal Care and Condition (TACC) scales

Petplan
pet insurance