



# **Merrimac Dog Training Club, Inc**

## **Training Regulation**

Updated April 15, 2025

**Our primary concerns are the safety of handlers and dogs on the grounds (in class or not) and providing an environment where all students can learn.**

### **Dog Eligibility**

- Dogs must be 12 weeks (3 months) old the first night of class to participate in any classes offered at the Club.
- Bitches in season are not permitted to participate in training classes. Handlers may attend classes without their dog, to observe.
- Dogs must have age-appropriate vaccinations – including rabies, distemper, hepatitis and parvovirus – before joining classes. Proof of vaccinations should be available at the first class and will be checked for Puppy and Basic Obedience. The instructor or Training Director may request to examine these records at any time and may excuse dogs for which records cannot be produced. The instructor can bar any dog suspected of having a contagious disease from class.

### **Dog Handling Equipment**

- Except for conformation classes, the required training equipment is a properly fitted collar and a 6-foot leather/woven cloth leash. A collar/leash appropriate to the breed in conformation competition is permissible.
- No electronic training or bark collars (e-collars) and collars with exterior spikes.
- Retractable leashes are permitted only in class, as determined by the instructor.

### **Dog Control**

- Each handler is responsible for control of his/her dog at all times. Dogs must be restricted from approaching other dogs and people. Dogs must be always crated or on a 6-foot leash, except when a dog is performing an off-leash exercise.
- Handlers should be aware of other handlers and dogs – assuring a clear path, using a shortened leash, and providing space to other handler/dog teams.
- Handler/dog teams should not pass too closely to crated dogs, and dogs should be restricted from approaching crated dogs.

### **Sport Equipment and Ring Use**

- Sport equipment (e.g., tunnels, jumps, barn hunt rings) are off limits to all non-members unless under the supervision of an instructor.
- Sport equipment use is permitted to members under the supervision of an instructor or who have attended a Merrimac (MDTC) class in which equipment use was demonstrated *and* volunteered at a trial in which the equipment was in use and instruction on its proper use was provided.
- Members using sport equipment are encouraged to be cognizant of and courteous to ongoing classes, including visual and auditory impacts.

## **Dog/Handler Incidents**

- Instructors have the right to ask a dog or handler to leave a class if the behavior of either is disruptive.
  - A disruptive dog includes dogs that are uncontrolled, displaying excessive barking or displaying dog or human aggression.
  - A disruptive handler includes anyone not following the instructor's direction, talking excessively to non-class members, or not assuring the safety of others by lack of attention to their dog when not in a crate.
  - All negative dog and/or handler incidents will be reported (either using the online reporting form available on the MDTC website or forms located in the Training Director's folder), including:
    - Any incident of dog-on-dog attacks.
    - Any incident of dog on human attacks.
    - Any incident of abuse of a dog.
    - Any incident of human-on-human verbal assaults or physical attacks.

## **Handler Guidelines**

- Merrimac is an American Kennel Club member club and operates under MDTC By-Laws & Standing Rules.
- Functional training attire that allows kneeling should be worn. Handlers must wear closed-toes shoes. If a class member is wearing open-toed shoes, they may observe class that day.
- Handlers are responsible for cleaning up after their dog, including elimination or excessive shedding. All fecal matter, urine, and soiled materials will be discarded ONLY in an outside trash container.
- Scent work odor must be discarded outside in the main dumpster.
- Class attendance is limited to the person or persons registered for class, although instructors may make exceptions for observers.
- No consumption of alcohol is permitted on the premises. Smoking is permitted in vehicles or minimum 25-feet from the building.
- Underaged children (under 18 years old) are not permitted inside of the dog training rings/areas unless they are the handler for the dog in training and/or approved by an Instructor.
  - All Children must be under adult supervision at all times and not a distraction to dogs present.
  - Children are strictly prohibited from interacting with dogs not owned by the parent/supervising adult without permission of the dog's owner.
  - At the discretion of the Instructor, children may be requested to remain seated or behind a barrier such as an ex-pen.

## **Changes to Class Schedule/Inclement Weather**

- All MDTC instructors will ensure timely notification to class students (via email, phone and/or text messaging) if a class is canceled, delayed, or moved to another location.
- MDTC will post building closures due to inclement weather or building maintenance on its website as soon as possible (<https://merrimacdogtrainingclub.org/closings/>)