

## **HOLIDAYS4DOGS SAFEGUARDING DOGS FROM THEFT WHIST OUT WALKING POLICY AND RISK ASSESSMENT**

*Walking our Holidays4Dogs guests is a big part of what we enjoy and an essential need of any dog for good health and welfare. It is extremely unusual that we are asked not to walk a guest dog and instead confine it to any enclosed garden for its sole exercise. It is therefore important to recognise all the risks to both the carer and dog involved in walking a dog in public.*

*This policy refers specifically to the risk of 'dog napping' or the deliberate act of taking of a dog from us by another person. This practice of 'dog napping' is unfortunately on the increase with the high value of dogs and crimes associated with it, therefore, it is important for us to consider the best way to safeguard carers and guest dogs. Please refer to 54. HOLIDAYS4DOGS GENERAL DOG WALKING RISK ASSESSMENT FOR CARERS for all risks involved.*

Dogs generally enjoy walking as an essential part of their health and well-being. It is therefore important that Holidays4Dogs provides this exercise and mind stimulation while on their stay with us. Walking any dog comes with a sense of responsibility and an awareness by the handler and must not be passed off lightly. The approved carer must always be responsible for the walking and safety of any guest dog.

### **What Holidays4Dogs do**

All dogs are assessed for their compatibility and are introduced to the carer to confirm this including the ability to safely walk. Holidays4Dogs only allows jointly named adult carers to walk any guest dog alone. Members of the carer's household are not permitted to walk any guest dog unaccompanied by the responsible named carer. Guest dogs should NEVER be walked by anyone outside the carer's family.

### **What carers should do**

Carers are responsible for walking any guest dog in a safe manner according to the instruction of the dog's owner. Only if the owner has specifically given written permission may they let any guest dog off the lead. Some important guidelines carers must understand include:

- The importance of not lead walking / off lead permissions.
- Carrying of a mobile phone and knowledge of photo taking and quick contact
- Knowledge of the local walking area as a safe place to dog walk
- Remembering to let people know where you are walking and how long you expect to be out
- Avoiding walking after dark and in poorly lit areas
- The importance of using a correctly fitted, well serviced collar/harness provided by the owner.

**Risk assessment**

Carers must undertake a risk assessment to safeguard both themselves and any dog from theft whilst out walking. If any incident occurs details must be reported to the police and to Holidays4Dogs. There is a risk assessment form attached which should be completed by all carers. The form contains the most obvious risks associated with walking outside the home, keep a copy of this with this policy and update/add to, as necessary.

**I confirm that I have read and understood the Holidays4Dogs Safeguarding Dogs out walking from theft policy and accept that it my responsibility to ensure that any dog in my care will be kept safe to the best of my ability.**

**Signed:**

**Print name:**

**Date:**

PROPERTY OF  Holidays4Dogs



## SAFEGUARDING CARERS & DOGS OUT WALKING FROM THEFT RISK ASSESSMENT

Carer name:			
Signed:		Date:	

Walk locations including areas known well to the carer and not so well known	
Places where dog walk alone (higher risk):	Places where dog walk when accompanied (lower risk):

Potential risk	Who may be harmed? (Carer/Dog)	What is already being done to minimise risk?	Further action that can be taken
<i>Exercising dog off lead - dog runs off out of sight and does not return</i>	<i>Dog</i>	<i>Know the area where you are walking. Dogs to be walked as per owner's instructions, only let off lead with written permission and only once successful recall established.</i>	<i>Dogs to be kept on the lead where sight is impaired by obstacles (e.g., Trees) Fog or poor light.</i>
<i>Dog is grabbed/dog napped directly from walk</i>	<i>Dog</i>	<i>Keep dog on the lead unless you are sure you know the area and who is around. Always keep visually aware. Walk in pairs if possible and always be suspicious of people showing an interest in your dog.</i>	<i>Keep a mental note of people or vehicles showing an unusual interest. BE VIGILANT. Keep your phone handy – learn how to take instant photos.</i>

<i>Carer is assaulted while an attempt to made to grab a dog</i>	<i>Carer</i>	<i>BE VIGILANT. Keep your phone handy – learn how to take instant photos. Hold onto lead firmly.</i>	<i>SHOUT! Consider carrying a stick, personal alarm and have a plan of attack.</i>
<i>Dog is seen to be grabbed while it is off lead</i>	<i>Dog</i>	<i>SHOUT! Keep your phone handy – learn how to take instant photos (even distant shots or video can help) Run towards the dog.</i>	<i>Alert those around you and predict which direction a dog napper would run. Get a registration of any vehicle, full description, and photos/video</i>
<i>Dog is kicked, grabbed, or abused in anyway by a member of the public</i>	<i>Dog and Carer</i>	<i>SHOUT! And shout HELP! Get attention from anyone around. Photo/video if it is safe to do so. Be loud.</i>	<i>Alert those around you and predict which direction a would-be dog napper or attacker would run and follow at a safe distance to get a vehicle registration, full description, and photos/video</i>
<i>Carer is approached or followed by suspicious persons</i>	<i>Dog and Carer</i>	<i>Avoid contact and have the dog on a short lead. If spoken to respond confidently and briefly, keep walking briskly away from the suspicious person and towards other persons or dog walkers if they are around. Keep your attention on the suspicious person but get your mobile phone out and ready to use.</i>	<i>Avoid being followed back to your home. If you suspect you are being followed take a detour, stop, and talk to another dog owners and make others aware. Have your mobile phone ready to use.</i>