

## Helpful Hints for Dog Owners

# Dining Outdoors with Your Dog

Restaurants in Los Angeles County now have the option to allow pet dogs in outdoor dining or patio areas. Here are some helpful hints for dog owners who would like to visit a restaurant while out with their dog.

### Before you Go:

- Make sure that the restaurant you plan to visit allows dogs in the outdoor dining or patio area. Restaurants have the right to allow or refuse dogs in outdoor dining or patio areas.
- Please note that the new policy only allows for pet dogs—other animals are not permitted.
- Take your dog for a walk first so he or she will be ready to relax while you are dining.

### At the Restaurant:

- Always follow the restaurant's rules for dogs.
- Make sure your dog is well-behaved and on a leash.
- Do not walk your dog through the restaurant to get to the outdoor dining or patio area. A separate entrance should be provided.
- Do not tie your dog's leash to the table or there might be spilled drinks and food if your dog moves!
- Keep your dog close to you, but off of tables and seating.
- Do not let your dog drink or eat out of the restaurant glassware or dishware. Ask for a doggie dish or a disposable container.
- Give your pet appropriate treats or food, and not the food from your plate.
- If your dog has an accident, clean up after your dog and notify the restaurant staff so they can do the necessary additional clean-up afterward.
- Enjoy the day with your dog!



## Food Dangers

Some common foods can make your pet sick. Avoid feeding your dog foods that contain:

- |                                  |                            |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Alcohol                        | • Onions                   |
| • Caffeine                       | • Avocado                  |
| • Chocolate                      | • Grapes                   |
| • Xylitol (artificial sweetener) | • Macadamia Nuts           |
| • Garlic                         | • Raw meat, eggs, or bones |
| • Chives                         | • Salty or fatty foods     |

### Questions?

For more information, please contact Environmental Health at (626) 430-5200 during business hours, 8 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday; call the 24-hour Hotline at (888) 700-9995; or email [ehmail@ph.lacounty.gov](mailto:ehmail@ph.lacounty.gov).

## Food Facility Operators

# Guidelines for Allowing Pet Dogs in Outdoor Dining Areas

There has been an interest on the part of restaurant owners and members of the community to allow pet dogs in outdoor dining or patio areas. As a result of community interest, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Environmental Health Division (EH) assessed the risk factors involved in the allowance of pet dogs in outdoor dining areas. After a meticulous review of supporting data and current department policy, EH made changes to the existing policy to include provisions for the allowance of pet dogs in outdoor dining areas.

### **Pet dogs may be allowed in the outdoor dining or patio areas of a food facility if the following requirements are met:**

- A separate entrance is present where pets do not enter through the food establishment to reach the outdoor dining or patio area.
- No food preparation shall be allowed in the outdoor dining or patio area, including dispensing and/or mixing of drinks and ice.
- Multi-use or reusable utensils, such as plates, silverware, glasses, and bowls, shall not be stored, displayed, or pre-set in the outdoor dining area.
- Food and water served and/or provided to pet dogs shall only be in single-use, disposable containers.
- Employees shall be prohibited from having direct contact with pets while on duty.
- Pets shall not be allowed on chairs, seats, benches, and/or tables.
- The outdoor dining or patio area shall be maintained clean.
- In cases where excrement or other bodily fluids (urine, saliva, vomit) are deposited, an employee shall immediately clean and sanitize the affected areas.
- The outdoor dining area shall not be fully enclosed—a fully enclosed dining area shall be considered as part of the interior of the facility.
- Business operators must still follow local ordinances related to sidewalk, public nuisance, and sanitation issues.
- Business owners must also comply with state requirements regarding service animals.



### **Questions?**

For more information, please contact Environmental Health at (626) 430-5200 during business hours, 8 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday; call the 24-hour Hotline at (888) 700-9995; or e-mail [ehmail@ph.lacounty.gov](mailto:ehmail@ph.lacounty.gov).

## Food Facility Operators Frequently Asked Questions Pet Dogs in Outdoor Dining Areas

### What was the previous county policy regarding pet dogs in restaurants?

The previous Los Angeles County policy, *Animals in Food Facilities*, restricted the presence of any live animal, bird, or fowl inside full-service, outdoor dining areas demarcated by fencing, planters, shrubs, or other means that limit pedestrian traffic. These areas were then considered to be “inside” the facility. Other exterior areas of a food facility, such as non-demarcated outdoor dining areas, outdoor dining areas without table service, or parkways were not considered to be inside the facility. The exclusion or permission of animals from these areas is at the discretion of the business operator.

### What is the new policy?

The new policy, which went into effect in December 2011, provides the restaurant operator or owner with guidelines to follow if they decide they would like to allow pet dogs in the outdoor dining or patio area of the restaurant. Only pet dogs may be permitted. Other animals are not covered by the new policy. The exclusion or permission of pet dogs from outdoor dining or patio areas is at the discretion of the business operator or owner however, they must follow these guidelines.

Pet dogs may be allowed in the outdoor dining or patio area of a food facility if the following requirements are met:

- A separate entrance is present where pets do not enter through the food establishment to reach the outdoor dining or patio area.
- No food preparation shall be allowed at the outdoor dining or patio area, including the dispensing and/or mixing of drinks and ice.
- Multi-use or reusable utensils, such as plates, silverware, glasses, and bowls, shall not be stored, displayed, or pre-set in the outdoor dining or patio area.
- Food and water served/provided to pets shall only be in single use disposable containers.
- Employees shall be prohibited from having direct contact with pets while on duty.
- Pet dogs shall not be allowed on chairs, seats, benches, and tables.
- The outdoor dining or patio area shall be maintained clean.
- In cases where excrement or other bodily fluids (urine, saliva, and vomit) are deposited, an employee shall immediately clean and sanitize the affected areas.
- The outdoor dining or patio area shall not be fully enclosed—a fully enclosed dining area shall be considered to be part of the interior area of the facility.

The California Health and Safety Code remains the same which prohibits live animals inside the food facility, **except** for service animals or dogs under the control of a uniformed law enforcement officer or of uniformed employees of private patrol operations. These new guidelines do not affect the service animal regulation which allows service animals inside a food facility (California Civil Service Code, Section 54.1, 54.25).

## Food Facility Operators Frequently Asked Questions, continued

### Pet Dogs in Outdoor Dining Areas

#### What is a service animal?

An animal such as a guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability. Service animals are limited to dogs and miniature horses (American Disability Act, Section 205.04).

#### Why change the existing policy?

Many dog and restaurant owners advocated for this policy change, and we are pleased to support both residents and business owners with this opportunity. After carefully reviewing possible risk factors that may be associated with allowing pet dogs in outdoor dining or patio areas, we determined policy revisions were possible.

#### Which area of the restaurant allows pet dogs?

Pet dogs will be permitted **only** in an outdoor dining or patio area that has a separate entrance that pet dogs and their owners can access without going through or inside the restaurant. The outdoor dining or patio area may be surrounded with a fence, shrubs, planters, or other means that limit pedestrian traffic.

#### Can I bring other pets besides dogs?

No; these guidelines are limited to pet dogs, since dogs are the domesticated animal that most commonly accompanies pet owners, are typically trained, and can follow basic directives. Pet dogs can also be restrained with a leash and are typically more manageable in a social setting.

#### Can I share plates or utensils with my pet dogs?

No; pet dogs are only allowed to eat or drink from disposable or single use bowls or plates. Although data has not been established to support the danger or safety of shared dishes and utensils between humans and dogs it is our goal to protect food safety and to ensure safety for all patrons.

#### Can the employee pet or play with the pet dogs?

No; food facility employees are prohibited from having direct contact with pets while on duty. They are not allowed to pet or play with pet dogs, and handle food and/or utensils at the same time.

#### Who is responsible for cleaning up after the pet dog at the outdoor dining area?

By allowing pet dogs in the outdoor dining or patio area of the restaurant, the owner of the business becomes responsible for maintaining this area in a clean and sanitary condition. After food facility employees perform cleaning and maintenance of the outdoor dining or patio areas, they are required to properly wash their hands.

## **Food Facility Operators Frequently Asked Questions, continued Pet Dogs in Outdoor Dining Areas**

### **How should food facility employees clean areas affected by animal excrement or fluids?**

- Employees shall clean affected floors using dustless methods of cleaning, such as wet cleaning, vacuum cleaning, mopping with treated dust mops, or sweeping using a broom and dust-arresting compounds.
- Spillage or drippage on floors that occur between normal floor cleaning may be cleaned without the use of dust-arresting compounds, and with the use of a small amount of absorbent compound, such as sawdust or diatomaceous earth, applied immediately before spot cleaning.
- Business operators must still follow local ordinances or restrictions for chemical waste and disposal.

### **Who is responsible if the dog misbehaves, barks, or is uncontrollable?**

Each pet dog owner is responsible for the behavior and action of their pets. It is the responsibility of the food facility operator or owner to create their own rules as to what is acceptable pet dog behavior or etiquette for their facility.

### **Does this policy apply to all cities in Los Angeles County?**

This new policy applies to all restaurants in the county that are inspected by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. The Cities of Pasadena, Vernon, and Long Beach have their own public health departments, and do not fall under this policy.

### **Do other counties or states allow pet dogs at outdoor dining or patio areas?**

In California, local jurisdictions have varying interpretations of the law. Santa Barbara County currently has a written policy that allows pet dogs in outdoor dining areas. In 2011, cities in Florida were permitted to establish exemptions that would allow pet dogs in restaurant outdoor dining or patio areas. In February 2012, Hawaii proposed a bill that will allow pets dogs inside a food facility.

### **Where do I file a complaint when this new policy is not properly followed?**

For questions or to file a complaint, please contact Environmental Health at (626) 430-5200 during business hours, 8 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday; call the 24-hour Hotline at (888) 700-9995; or e-mail [ehmail@ph.lacounty.gov](mailto:ehmail@ph.lacounty.gov).