



DIXON STREET DOG PARK

Information Packet



3000 Parkway Blvd Allentown, PA 18104
dogpark@allentownpa.gov
allentownpa.myrec.com
610-437-7750 FAX: 610-437-7796

GENERAL INFORMATION

Location:

- 791 Dixon St. Allentown, PA 18103.

Goals:

- To develop and maintain a fenced-in, off-leash dog park where well-behaved dogs can run freely and socialize in a clean, safe environment without endangering people, property, or local wildlife.
- To promote education, training, and recreational activities that facilitate responsible dog ownership.
- To operate in partnership with volunteers and other public and private partners.

Distinctive Features:

- 1.5 acre off-leash park, including a small dog area (under 30 pounds) and a large dog area (over 30 pounds).
- Easy access and free parking
- Amenities include double gated transition area, water fountain for both people and dogs, benches, shade structures, and agility course equipment
- Access for registered members only

Annual Fees:

- City of Allentown residents - **FREE**
- Non- City of Allentown, Lehigh County residents - **\$25.00**.

**Please note a replacement key is \$10.00.*

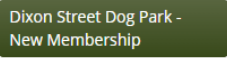
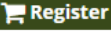
HOW DO I JOIN?

Step 1 – Obtain and maintain a current Lehigh County dog license and vaccinations.

Current Lehigh County dog license, rabies, and distemper vaccinations are required for each dog wanting access to the dog park. You will need to show written proof (copies acceptable) of these items when you register for a dog park membership. These are required to be kept up to date throughout the length of your membership.

- Lehigh County Dog Licenses are available for either one (1) calendar year, or lifetime.
 - For more information, please visit:
<https://www.lehighcounty.org/Departments/Fiscal-Tax-Claims/Licenses-Permits>
- Rabies and distemper vaccinations are each available for one (1) or three (3) years.

Step 2 – Register

- Registration Fees:
 - City of Allentown residents are free.
 - Non- City of Allentown, Lehigh County residents are \$25.00.
- How to register:
 - Log on to allentownpa.myrec.com
 - Create an account, or login using an established account.
 - From the “Register” tab, click on “Memberships”.
 - Click on  .
 - Click on the  icon.
 - Follow registration steps. Registration will require the uploading of license, rabies, and distemper documentation. If registering with more than one dog, each type of record must be combined into one document.
- Once registration is completed online and reviewed, members will be issued a key fob that will grant immediate access to the park. This must be picked up in person. You will be assigned to an appropriate area based on your dog(s) weight; either the small dog side (under 30 pounds) or the large dog side (over 30 pounds).

Step 3 – Enjoy!

DIXON STREET DOG PARK RULES

1. Off leash dog park hours: Sunrise to Sunset.
2. Use of the dog park is at your own risk. Dog owners/handlers are solely responsible for the actions and behavior of their dogs at all times and assume all liability for damages suffered by any person or dog injured by the members’ dog(s) while utilizing the dog park.
3. The dog park is for dogs, their owners/handlers and those accompanying them. No other use of the dog park is permitted. All users must be members in the dog park program in order to receive an access key to utilize the dog park. Access keys are not transferrable and can only be used by registered individuals and their dog(s).
4. No more than two (2) dogs per owner/handler are permitted in the dog park at one time.
5. Dogs are to remain leashed outside of the dog park, as well as when entering and exiting the dog park’s transition area. Owners/handlers must have a leash in hand at all times while in the off-leash area.
6. All dogs 6 months and older entering the dog park must be up to date on rabies and distemper vaccines and must wear a collar displaying their rabies tag and dog license as required by Pennsylvania Dog law and City ordinance. Dogs with contagious health conditions or that have internal or external parasites (fleas, ticks or worms) are not permitted in the park.

7. The dog park is divided into separate fenced in areas. Dogs weighing less than 30 lbs. must use the Small Dog area. Dogs weighing over 30 lbs. must use the Large Dog area. Unintentional, potentially serious injury can occur to small dogs being allowed to play in the Large Dog area.
8. No alcohol, food, dog food, treats, glass containers or special toys are permitted in the dog park. Food, treats and special toys may cause territorial or aggressive behaviors, posing a safety risk to other dogs and handlers.
9. Owners/handlers must be present with their dog(s) and have them in view and under voice control at all times.
10. Dog waste must be collected by the owner/handler, bagged and disposed of in the appropriately marked receptacles.
11. If a dog becomes aggressive, it must be removed from the park immediately.
12. No dogs under 6 months, unneutered male dogs, female dogs in heat or dogs known to be aggressive or with a history of dangerous behavior are permitted in the park.
13. No children under 12 permitted in the park and children between the ages of 12 and 17 must be accompanied by and supervised at all times by an adult. Their smaller size and lack of experience with dogs can create a dangerous situation for the child and the dog and an overexcited dog may unintentionally knock over or injure a child while greeting or playing. A dog who is afraid of children may react aggressively to a child's attempt to make friends and in rare cases, a dog may view a child as prey.
14. Owners/handlers must fill in any holes made by their dogs. Holes can cause injury to dogs and their handlers.
15. The park may not be used for private use or gain, which includes, but is not limited to, instruction or training activities or events of any type without the written approval of City of Allentown Department of Parks & Recreation.
16. Advance notice of dog park closures for purposes of maintenance will be posted on the Department of Parks & Recreation's website and Facebook page.
17. Owners/handlers are expected to follow all rules and regulations that pertain to conduct in the dog park as well those pertaining to conduct in all park and recreation areas in the City.

FOR ALL EMERGENCIES, CALL 911.

***THE ADDRESS FOR THE DOG PARK IS:
791 DIXON ST. ALLENTOWN, PA 18103***

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE ABOVE RULES WILL RESULT IN THE REVOCATION OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP AND/OR FINES IN ADDITION TO POTENTIAL LEGAL ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY THE CITY ON BEHALF OF THE CITY.

ENTERING AND EXITING THE DOG PARK

The Dixon Street Dog Park is divided into two (2) separate off-leash areas, providing maximum safety for your dog(s). When entering and exiting the designated areas close the gates securely behind you and your dog(s). Open or tied back gates defeat the purpose of the security provided. Anyone found leaving a gate open, unlatched, or tied back will have their membership suspended and access key de-activated for a first offense. A second offense will result in the termination of your membership.

A service gate is located on the outer fence. These gates provide access for the City's maintenance. They are not to be used by members and are to be kept locked unless in use by authorized personnel. If you find an unlocked maintenance gate, please call the Lehigh County Communications Center at 610-437-7751. Do not enter the off-leash areas through the service/emergency gates as these gates do not provide sufficient security necessary for safely entering or exiting the park. Additionally, dogs that are already in the off-leash area might escape as you enter the park through the unauthorized service gates.

Entering the Dog Park

1. The outer gate is electronic, and the use of the access key is required to enter.
2. Before opening the outer gate, check to be sure the inner gate is properly closed and no dogs are in the transition area.
3. Open the outer gate and enter the transition area with the dog(s) on-leash. Close the outer gate and check that it is properly closed.
4. Remove the dog(s) leash.
NOTE: Having a dog on a leash when confronting an off-leash dog can be a recipe for trouble. A leashed dog may feel vulnerable and fearful, as well as protective of its owner. Tugging on the leash puts a dog at a disadvantage with other dogs. The dog is restrained, but placed in a chest-out, raised-up aggressive pose that can cause the off-leash dog to feel threatened.
5. Remain in the transition area while you observe the behavior of dogs already in the off-leash area. If the behavior is friendly and the area is not congested, carefully open the inner gate and enter – move forward into the park, do not stand at the gate.
6. If you or other dogs' behavior is unfriendly, put the leash back on your dog and remove them from the area through the exit gate.
7. Once inside the park, close the inner gate and check that it is properly closed.

Exiting the Dog Park

1. Before you open the inner gate, please check to make sure that the outer gate is properly closed and that any other dogs are not trying to leave with you.
2. Open the inner gate and enter the transition area. Close the inner gate and check that it is properly closed.
3. Place a leash securely on the dog, open the outer gate and exit the transition area.
4. Close the outer gate and check that it is properly closed.

DOG PARK ETIQUETTE

For many pet owners, dog parks are a god send! They are a way to exercise your athletic dog after you've been at work all day, socialize a young dog, and even meet new friends for you and your dog! But a dog park can also be dangerous when we are not watching our dogs closely enough for signs of stress, anxiety, or overstimulation. This information should serve as a guide on how you and your dog can have a positive experience at the dog park!

Guidelines:

Not all dogs are dog park dogs! If your dog(s) has a history of aggression towards any other dogs or humans, becomes stressed in a group of dogs, or guards things that are of high value to them (toys, sticks) they may not be the best candidate for dog park socialization.

Keep it positive! If your dog(s) is unfamiliar with the dog park setting, make sure the first few visits to the dog park are positive and fun! This may mean going at off-peak times (Monday-Friday between 10am and 3pm, or after 7:30pm on any day). Once you are sure your dog(s) can successfully handle the rigors of a dog park, you may want to introduce him at peak times.

Be present at the dog park. When you are at the park, always have your eyes on your dog(s)! Watching for signs of stress or bullying, giving your dog(s) time outs if they are becoming overstimulated, and knowing when to go home for the day all come from watching every move your dog(s) makes at the park. Sure, you can still socialize with all of your new dog people friends, but remember to keep one eye on your pooch at all times!

Mind your comings and goings! Entering and exiting the dog park can be hot buttons for many dogs. Leashed dogs when surrounded by loose dogs can feel threatened and vulnerable and may lash out. Practice proper entrance and exit techniques by utilizing our double-gate policy.

Know when your dog has had enough. You will notice through your dog's behavior and body language when it's time to go! If you see any signs that your dog is tired or has had enough for one day, be proactive and give your dog a time out by taking him for a walk outside the park, or go home for the day and come back the next day.

Be proactive! Everyone knows that their dog is pretty much the most wonderful dog in the whole park. But even if your dog is not the instigator, if you think that your dog is in danger of having a bad experience at the park, be proactive about the situation. Always talk to people respectfully, and know when it is better to simply remove your dog from the situation before an accident happens.

What's What at the Dog Park:

When at the dog park, it is important to understand basic canine body language. The following list will help you recognize what is ok and what might lead to trouble.

Aggression vs. CorrectionCorrection – No Harm No Foul!

There are times when a dog will correct another dog for something he deems inappropriate. This is totally normal, nonaggressive, and it's actually good for teaching young dogs important lessons about canine social structure and body language. Appropriate corrections generally escalate in severity and result in no harm being done to the correctee. If your dog is over-correcting, it may be time to give a time out.

- Stiff body posturing and piloerection or whale eye. (Hair on shoulders and butt stand up and you see the whites of the eyes)
- Loud woofs or snarks directed at an individual
- Muzzle punching or lunging resulting in no harm being done to the correctee
- Normally done once and the argument is over

Aggression – When it's Time to Go!

An important part of being a member of the dog park is recognizing when it is time for your dog to end their dog park session for the day. If your dog is exhibiting any of the following behaviors, it may be time to leave the park and come back later:

- Stiff body posturing and piloerection. (Hair on shoulders and butt stand straight up)
- Repeated correcting of other dogs, sometimes over very benign instances
- Targeting, bullying, or stalking individual dogs
- Fearfulness which does not subside
- Prey drive

Breaking Up a Dog Fight:

Dog fights happen! It is important when in a dog park to keep your cool if a fight breaks out so as not to escalate the situation. Collect loose dogs who are not part of the fight to prevent mobbing.

- Start by making a loud noise such as clapping your hands or shouting “No!”, or throwing water on the fighting dogs.
- Do not grab dogs by the collars or necks, faces to avoid a redirected bite.
- One person should grab each dog from the hips, pinching the loose skin between the belly and legs, and pull out of the fight, wheelbarrow style. (remember: 1 person per dog)
- Remove fighting dogs from the park for the day.

Appropriate – You’re OK!

- Butt sniffing and loose tail and body language
- Wide, circular tail wagging
- Play bows
- Butt bumps
- Playful vocalization
- Brief, fair and harmless disagreements or corrections

Calming Signals – Meant to Diffuse Tension, Recognize and React Appropriately

- Averting eye contact
- Lip-licking, chewing
- Submissive urination
- Going belly up
- Tail between legs

Inappropriate or Rude – Time for a Time Out or Maybe Time to Go!

- Hard stares and face-offs
- One dog chasing, pinning, targeting or not letting up on another dog
- A group of dogs mobbing an individual dog

INCIDENT RESOLUTION PROTOCOL

The primary purpose of the Dixon Street Dog Park Rules is to protect our members and their dogs. The second is to provide an enjoyable experience for both humans and pets while in the Dixon Street Dog Park. The safety of our members and their pets is our first priority.

So that we may provide, within our ability, safety and peace of mind, we need your assistance. Because our staff cannot be present at the park at all times of operation, we depend upon our members to follow the rules and to report incidents they have witnessed.

In the event of an incident, please complete the Incident Report Form and provide all relevant information with as much detail as possible so we can investigate appropriately. Please do not forget to provide your e-mail address so that we may contact you to follow up, if necessary.

Human Infractions (any member who chooses to disregard the dog park rules):

- Depending upon the severity or number of infractions:
 - Warning given
 - Access key disabled and membership suspended
 - Termination of membership

Dog Fights/Bites:

- If a member's dog is involved in an incident involving aggressive behavior, one and/or all involved parties will have access suspended pending investigation.
- All parties must submit an Incident Report. Witness statements will be solicited.
- If determined that a specific dog initiated aggression with intent to cause harm and/or caused physical harm to another dog/human, membership will be terminated and access key will be deactivated.

INCIDENT NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

When an incident occurs at the Dixon Street Dog Park, owners should follow the posted rules. If an owner would like to file a formal report or make the City aware of an ongoing situation, the Incident Report form must be completed. The Incident Report will enable us to document occurrences and properly investigate and resolve the concerns of our dog owners.

Incident Report Forms can be obtained as follows:

Pick up: Allentown Department of Parks & Recreation
3000 Parkway Blvd. Allentown, PA 18104
(Regular business hours are Monday through Friday, 8am-4pm)

Online: www.allentownpa.gov/DogPark

Completed Incident Report Forms can be submitted as follows:

In Person: At the location listed above

Mail: To the address above

E-mail: dogpark@allentownpa.gov

Fax: 610-437-7796

What is reportable and what will be reviewed:

Violations that should be reported and will be automatically reviewed:

- Children under the age limit in the dog park
- All dog bites – dog on human and dog on dog

Violations that can be reported and will be documented and investigated:

- Failure to abide by dog park rules
- Disruptive/abusive behavior to persons and/or dogs

If repeated offenses of the same violation are reported, a full review will be conducted by City staff, including the Department of Parks & Recreation, Animal Control, and potentially the Health Bureau.

CANINE EMERGENCIES

Heat Exhaustion/Stroke

Heat stroke is a common occurrence during the hot months of the year. Dogs are prone to overheating because they do not sweat. Other factors such as obesity, advanced age, or infancy can also make a dog more vulnerable to heat.

Symptoms (some or all may be present):

- Panting
- Weakness or collapse
- Gums getting very dark or very pale
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Seizures

Cool the dog down immediately by soaking with water. If showing signs of distress, contact your veterinarian and/or transport to emergency hospital immediately.

Prevention: Wet your dog down periodically. Offer water frequently. Dogs at risk should not use the park during the heat of the day.

Bug/Bee Bites/Stings

If a dog suddenly starts clawing at their face or drooling excessively, they may have been stung or bitten. If your dog exhibits signs of distress, contact your veterinarian immediately.

Tick Bites

Ticks often cause symptoms on the skin. Once ticks latch onto the skin, they can cause severe itchiness, in addition to red and inflamed skin. Lyme disease, a fairly common canine disease is caused by tick bites. Symptoms can include fever, reduced energy and lameness. A tick can transmit the disease once it has been attached to a dog for 24 to 48 hours.

Prevention: Upon leaving the dog park, check your dog for ticks from its head to the tip of its tail.