

## CREATING A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT AT DOG SHOWS

One of the goals of a dog show is to share the love of dogs with the public. One thing that must be considered with large crowds is safety. As clubs consider the issue of safety, they need to consider any restrictions they place on the event and how that restriction affects the exhibitors and spectators attending their event. Often clubs lean to the side of stronger restrictions which can become a source of difficulty for the people the club is trying to attract. While a blanket restriction may be the easiest way to cover an issue, many times it leaves little room to accommodate the needs of visitors and exhibitors.

Evaluating the club's venue for areas of concern and addressing those specific areas can lead to more focused restrictions. In heavily trafficked areas, strollers may cause a concern, regardless of whether the stroller is for a child or a dog. In other areas strollers can be a blessing, as they allow people to fully enjoy the show without worrying about where the dog or child they are responsible for is roaming.

The goal of events is to provide an enjoyable experience for exhibitors and give the public the opportunity to enjoy our dogs and sports. Please think about how restrictions can affect your event and how to make your event as welcoming as possible. While clubs are required to publish any restriction in the premium list for exhibitors to see, many spectators have never heard of or read the premium list. In order to make people aware of these restrictions, clubs should post notices on the entrances and throughout the venue.

The Delegate All-Breed Clubs Committee has created a list of helpful tips for people attending a dog show for the first time. [This list can be found here.](#)

AKC events are compliant with all ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) regulations. Exhibitors and/or children might require special consideration. Club should review the ADA Compliance Checklist ( [available here](#)) for each event.

The following information will be added to the AKC Show Manual:

### Required Information for Premium List

- Any additional restrictions made by the club. Any restrictions imposed by the club on the use of crates, private exercise pens, flexi-leads, strollers, etc. must be included in the premium list. When clubs have such restrictions, consideration should be given to exhibitors/spectators that attend your event as a family. Clubs should consider restricting the use of strollers, crates, private exercise pens, etc. to certain areas only. Restricting these items from your event entirely may negatively impact potential exhibitors/spectators.

Questions regarding this subject should be sent to [eventnews@akc.org](mailto:eventnews@akc.org).

