

**Guidelines on Good Practices and Behaviour for  
Dog-Friendly Restaurants  
Mutual Respect, Harmony with Pets**

**(1) Guidelines on Good Practices for Restaurant Operators**

**Introduction**

- 1.1 The Food Business Regulation (Cap. 132X) has been amended to allow dogs to enter food premises permitted to admit dogs (i.e. permitted restaurants) under specified circumstances. Any person engaged in a food business<sup>1</sup> and persons bringing dogs must comply with the [statutory requirements](#) (see **Annex 2**). Restaurant licensees must also comply with the [licensing conditions](#) (see **Annex 3**). The first part of the Guidelines is for reference of restaurant operators in devising their house rules and operational arrangements.

**House rules**

- 1.2 Restaurant operators may devise their own house rules and operational arrangements according to their needs and specify the customer-related part as “Notes to Customers”, including but not limited to matters such as whether dog-friendly zones or sessions will be designated, whether dogs are allowed to sit on customer seats, and whether a cleaning fee will be charged if a dog soils the premises. If “Notes to Customers” are in place, they should be displayed at the entrance to or other conspicuous places in the permitted restaurants, or should be **clearly** explained to customers **beforehand** through appropriate means, such as menus, the ordering system and the restaurant’s social media accounts, to avoid misunderstandings and disputes.
- 1.3 The list of permitted restaurants on the FEHD’s dedicated webpage will be updated from time to time. To enhance information transparency, permitted restaurants should provide the FEHD with links to their webpages which set out their “Notes to Customers” for posting on the above-mentioned list. If there are any amendments to the “Notes to Customers”, operators should update the information as soon as possible to ensure the online information aligns with the in-house arrangements.

---

<sup>1</sup> Depending on the actual situation of the case, it may include licensees, persons-in-charge and persons employed or assigned to engage in the food business.

## Arrangements for dog admission to permitted restaurants

- 1.4 Restaurant operators should make clear arrangements to assist in ensuring that dogs entering the premises comply with the relevant statutory requirements and licensing conditions. The arrangements may include: checking the compliance of the length and usage of dog leashes with the statutory requirements; taking the initiative to find out from customers bringing dogs whether their dogs are “fighting dogs” or “known dangerous dogs” as specified in the Dangerous Dogs Regulation (Cap. 167D); and ensuring staff are aware that they should refuse the entry of a dog when the statutory requirements are not complied with. According to the Rabies Regulation (Cap. 421A), a dog over the age of five months must be licensed. If restaurant operators consider it necessary, they may request customers bringing dogs to produce the licences of their dogs. Dog owners may log in to access and produce electronic dog licences on the webpage (<https://eservice3.afcd.gov.hk/eservice/DogLicenceLogin?lang=en>) of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) using the “iAM Smart” mobile app.
- 1.5 For effective control of their dogs, each adult diner should not bring more than two dogs. Restaurant operators may set an upper limit on the total number of dogs admitted to the premises at any one time according to the actual conditions of the premises, such as area, seating spacing, customer flow and the main types of dishes served (e.g. refreshments or congee).
- 1.6 Restaurant operators may, as needed, designate by themselves specific sessions and days (e.g. specific sessions each day or weekends only) during which dogs are admitted. However, it must be noted that even during non-dog-admission sessions/days, permitted restaurants are still required to display designated signage at a conspicuous place at the entrance **at all times**.
- 1.7 Restaurant operators may, according to their actual circumstances, decide whether to designate dog-friendly zones. If they decide to do so, the provision of physical barriers (e.g. gates or hoardings) is advisable to prevent dogs from entering other areas. If permission for an outside seating accommodation (OSA) has already been granted, priority may be accorded to designating the OSA, which is more ventilated and usually more open, as a dog-friendly zone, and shade facilities may also be provided as needed.

- 1.8 Restaurant operators may, based on factors such as the actual usable space of their premises and operational experience, consider restricting the entry of certain dogs (e.g. whose owners fail to produce a dog licence and those that are particularly large, are unhygienic, agitated or visibly aggressive etc.). If there are such restrictions, they should be clearly stated in the “Notes to Customers” to minimise on-site disputes.
- 1.9 If the admission of dogs is to be suspended during a specific period due to special circumstances (such as renovation, intensive cleansing work and special events), the restaurant operator should make an announcement through social media, their official website or other frequently used information/communication channels as early as possible so that customers intending to bring dogs can plan ahead.
- 1.10 If a restaurant located in a shopping mall or other private premises with venue management, the restaurant operator should ensure that the dog admission arrangements comply with the relevant management rules and requirements of the venue.
- 1.11 It is recommended that restaurants provide a reservation service to better estimate the number of customers bringing dogs during different sessions, so that seating can be arranged appropriately and a large number of customers waiting outside with dogs can be avoided.
- 1.12 Restaurant operators must note that the legal restrictions on dogs’ entry to food premises as set out in **Annex 2** do not apply to guide dogs (except for entry to a food room) or dogs in connection with the exercise of a lawful power. Restaurant operators should facilitate the entry of such dogs onto the premises.

### **Food safety and environmental hygiene**

- 1.13 Restaurant operators must ensure that no dogs are allowed into the food room of permitted restaurants. For example, a notice should be posted at the entrance to the food room, indicating explicitly its area and reminding customers not to enter with dogs.
- 1.14 Staff responsible for handling food should not have any contact with dogs.
- 1.15 Staff should immediately wash and disinfect their hands after coming into contact with dogs.

- 1.16 The frequency of cleaning and disinfection of tabletops and frequently touched surfaces (such as chair backs, table edges and door handles), especially in dog-friendly zones (if any) and after peak hours or periods of high customer flow, should be increased to maintain cleanliness.
- 1.17 The operation of ventilation, air conditioning and air purification equipment should be regularly inspected to ensure proper air circulation. If an indoor dog-friendly zone is provided, the installation of air purification equipment with deodorising and filtering functions may be considered to reduce the accumulation of odours or allergens.
- 1.18 If prepackaged dry dog food, vacuum-packed dog food and canned dog food are provided or sold, or if single-use non-plastic dog-specific eating utensils are provided by the restaurant, dedicated trash bins for the proper disposal of the related items should be provided.
- 1.19 If dog food that meets the licensing conditions is provided or sold, or if any dog food is kept for the customers, measures must be implemented to prevent cross-contamination. For example, dog food must be kept out of the food room, completely segregated from food for human consumption.
- 1.20 If a self-service food pickup area is provided in the restaurant, in addition to compliance with the relevant licensing conditions, inspection and cleaning of the area concerned should be stepped up to ensure that dogs cannot come into contact with food, tableware or tabletops where food is placed. If there is a risk of contamination, the affected food and tableware should be replaced immediately.
- 1.21 Under the licensing conditions, no dog shall be allowed on any dining table. As for the seats, restaurant operators should consider the actual circumstances when deciding whether to allow dogs to stay on seats. For example, a large dog on a seat may easily come into contact with the top of a dining table and the food thereon, this should be avoided as far as possible. For food premises with food conveyor belts, restaurant operators should require the dogs to stay on the floor to lower the risk of their contact with the belt, and inspections should be stepped up and the cleaning frequency increased. If seats are made of absorbent materials (such as sofa seats), requiring dogs to stay on the floor or using pet urine pads may be considered for easy cleaning and disinfection.

1.22 In case of fouling of the premises by dog excrement, restaurant operators have the responsibility to thoroughly cleanse and disinfect the soiled areas immediately to maintain the hygienic condition of the premises. Restaurant operators should establish clear arrangements for the disposal of dog excrement and clearly inform customers bringing dogs of such arrangements in advance (e.g. before the customers begin ordering).

- If the diners are required to take care of the disposal themselves, staff should remind them in a timely manner to clean up and dispose of the excrement properly, and may consider providing relevant tools (such as gloves, plastic bags and sanitisers) to assist them. If a diner refuses or fails to do so promptly, staff must be deployed to look after the matter as soon as possible.
- If restaurant operators want to take care of the disposal directly and charge the customers bringing dogs a cleaning fee, the amount to be charged should be specified in the “Notes to Customers” and customers should be reminded of the charging details to minimise on-site disputes.
- When cleaning up dog excrement, staff should use disposable protective gear such as gloves and wrap the excrement in plastic bags before disposing of it properly in a dog-specific trash bin. Afterwards, the staff should wash and disinfect their hands, and change their clothing as necessary.
- Dog excrement should be disposed of in a dog-specific trash bin.

Regardless of whether the clean-up is performed by the customers or the restaurant staff, the restaurant should conduct inspections to ensure that the areas concerned have been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected in the light of actual circumstances.

### **Staff training and manpower arrangements**

1.23 Restaurant operators should brief their staff on the relevant statutory requirements and licensing conditions, such as admission restrictions on “known dangerous dogs” and “fighting dogs”, leash requirements and arrangements for guide dogs, so as to ensure that they fully understand and strictly comply with such requirements and conditions. If non-compliance is observed, staff should know how to deal with it, including immediately reporting it to their supervisors, and promptly advising against and stopping such behaviour.

- 1.24 Restaurant operators should provide their staff with comprehensive training, including on specific operational arrangements on dog admission, self-devised house rules, procedures for handling situations where a dog soils the premises, emergency responses, and points to note and skills for interacting with dogs, for examples:
- When serving food and drinks, beware that dogs may react unexpectedly.
  - Obtain the consent from the dog owner before touching, petting or photographing a dog.
  - When receiving complaints about a dog's behaviour causing disturbance or inconvenience, reposition the dog or advise the dog owner to temporarily remove the dog from the premises, and seek the cooperation of the dog owner and the customer bringing the dog as far as possible.
  - Do not feed other customers' dogs.
  - Avoid actions that may disturb or frighten the dogs, such as making sudden loud noises or playfully tempting them with food, so as to reduce the risks of accidents.
  - Remind customers to store their personal belongings and handbags properly to prevent damage from dogs.
- 1.25 Where feasible, restaurant operators should take into account staff's willingness to interact with dogs when assigning duties, for example, avoid assigning staff who are afraid of dogs to work in a "dog-friendly zone".
- 1.26 Restaurant operators should explain to their staff the steps to take if they are bitten and injured by a dog, including notifying their supervisors and treating the wound. If a report needs to be made to the Police, the licensing conditions stipulate that restaurant operators must submit a report in prescribed form to the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene within two working days after the incident.

## Ancillary items and equipment

- 1.27 For the convenience of customers bringing dogs, consideration may be given to providing or installing the following equipment:
- leashes compliant with the statutory requirements for loan by customers bringing dogs.
  - fixtures (e.g. objects/rings nailed to the wall or the floor) to be installed having regard to the actual conditions of the premises, so that customers bringing dogs can securely tether their dogs while dining or when they need to leave their seats temporarily.
  - urine pads for pets, gloves, excrement bags for pets, etc. to facilitate customers in cleaning up the dog excrement themselves.
  - dog-specific trash bins equipped with a tight-fitting lid and a foot pedal (but not to be put inside a food room) with clear signage for the disposal of dog excrement and single-use eating utensils used by dogs.
  - pet-friendly cleaning and sanitising supplies for staff and customers to clean their hands.
- 1.28 Pet-friendly detergents and disinfectants should be used for routine cleaning and disinfection of the restaurant, especially “dog-friendly zones” (if any) or surfaces that dogs may come into contact with.
- 1.29 In “dog-friendly zones” (if any) or places that dogs may come into contact with, no plants poisonous to dogs should be placed. Reference should be made to the list of common plants harmful to dogs on [the webpage of the AFCD](#).
- 1.30 Tablecloths or other hanging decorations should be avoided, especially in “dog-friendly zones” (if any), to prevent dogs from pulling on them or getting entangled in them and knocking over tableware, hot food or drinks, causing accidents such as burns or tripping.
- 1.31 Laying of carpets or mats made of absorbent materials, especially in “dog-friendly zones” (if any), should be avoided to minimise the accumulation of dirt and odour, and to facilitate cleaning and disinfection.
- 1.32 Tools for cleaning general catering facilities should be clearly separated from those for cleaning dog-related items or handling excrement, for example, different colours of tools or clear labels may be used for identification, to prevent mixed use by staff.

## **Venue and operation management**

- 1.33 A restaurant operator should reasonably limit the number of tables and chairs of the restaurant and consider maintaining appropriate seating spacing for dogs to lie down or rest safely, while ensuring that customers and staff have sufficient space to move around, and lowering the risk of stepping on dogs accidentally.
- 1.34 If the premises are more crowded during peak hours (such as lunch and dinner rushes), restaurant operators may consider suspending seating new customers bringing dogs, and reminding customers with dogs to prevent their dogs from lingering in or lying across main passageways and to shorten the leashes, so as to ensure that the movement of people and the serving of food and drinks within the premises are not obstructed. Where customers bringing dogs need to wait for seats, restaurant operators should consider providing a service to notify customers when seats become available, so as to avoid inconvenience to customers without dogs and other passers-by due to the gathering of customers with dogs waiting outside the restaurants.
- 1.35 When assigning seats, restaurant staff should proactively enquire customers without dogs about their acceptance of dogs in their vicinity and, where feasible, make appropriate arrangements, such as adjusting seating or assigning seats away from dogs.
- 1.36 Restaurant operators should assess carefully the dishes they offer and make appropriate arrangements, such as determining whether the serving of high-temperature dishes on hot plates or in pre-heated stone pots or casseroles should be avoided, and how to prevent accidents when serving dishes.
- 1.37 When serving food and drinks, staff should be mindful of the locations and movements of dogs to avoid tripping over or stepping on them.

## **Response to incidents**

- 1.38 In the event that a dog barks persistently, stares at people, exhibits aggressive behaviour, or causes nuisance to other diners, restaurant operators should, when it is safe to do so, ask the customer with the dog to take appropriate control measures, including temporarily removing the dog from the premises. The provision of takeaway packaging services may be considered to assist diners who need to leave early in taking their unfinished meals away.
- 1.39 If a customer without dogs feels uneasy or is unable to continue dining due to a dog's behaviour (including but not limited to noise, hygiene issues, or safety concerns), a reasonable solution should be provided by the food premises as far as possible, such as assisting with a seat change or offering takeaway packaging services so that the customer can take the unfinished meal away.
- 1.40 The Rabies Ordinance (Cap. 421) sets out the arrangements for handling bites by animals (including dogs). The restaurant operator should remind the customer with the dog concerned to report the incident to the Police. If necessary, the restaurant operator may also proactively contact the Police and should promptly notify its insurance company to handle the related legal and claims matters. With the consent of the parties involved, the contact information of the customer with the dog concerned and the injured person may be recorded for future follow-up.
- 1.41 In the event of other dog-related disputes or incidents within the premises, the restaurant staff should, when it is safe to do so, calm down all parties involved as far as possible, advise them to keep calm and urge them, where necessary, to exchange contact information for subsequent negotiation or follow-up.
- 1.42 The operators of permitted restaurants should take the initiative to notify their insurance companies that the premises have been permitted by the FEHD to admit dogs, and enquire with the insurance companies to confirm whether the relevant arrangements and potential scenarios are covered by the insurance.

**10B. Prohibition of dogs on food premises except in certain circumstances***(L.N. 21 of 2026)*

- (1) A person must not bring a dog onto any food premises. *(L.N. 21 of 2026)*
- (2) A person engaged in a food business must not knowingly suffer or permit the presence of a dog on any food premises. *(L.N. 21 of 2026)*
- (2A) However, subsections (1) and (2) do not apply if—
  - (a) a permission is granted under section 31B in respect of the food premises and is valid;
  - (b) the dog is not a fighting dog or known dangerous dog;
  - (c) at all times when the dog is present on the premises, the dog is—
    - (i) securely held on a leash of not more than 1.5 m in length by an adult; or
    - (ii) securely tied to a fixture on a leash of not more than 1.5 m in length; and
  - (d) the dog is not present in a food room at any time when it is present on the premises. *(L.N. 21 of 2026)*
- (3) Nothing in this section is to be construed to prohibit the presence on any food premises (other than a food room) of a dog serving as a guide for a totally or partially blind person, or to prohibit the presence on any food premises of a dog in connection with the exercise of a lawful power. *(78 of 1999 s. 7; L.N. 21 of 2026)*

*(L.N. 464 of 1994)***31B. Director may grant permission for presence of dogs on food premises**

The Director may grant permission in writing to a person for the presence of any dog (except a fighting dog or known dangerous dog) on any food premises (except a food room).

*(L.N. 21 of 2026)***35. Offences and penalties**

- (4) It is a defence for a person charged with an offence under subsection (1) for contravening section 10B(1) or (2) to establish that, at the time of the alleged offence, the person had reasonable excuse for the contravention. *(L.N. 21 of 2026)*
- (5) For the purposes of subsection (4), a person is taken to have established the reasonable excuse for the contravention if—
  - (a) there is sufficient evidence to raise an issue with respect to the reasonable excuse; and
  - (b) the contrary is not proved by the prosecution beyond reasonable doubt. *(L.N. 21 of 2026)*

*(10 of 1986 s. 32(2); 78 of 1999 s. 7; L.N. 185 of 2008)*

**Licensing Conditions**  
**for Permission for Presence of Dogs on Food Premises**

1. An A3 size signage designated by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department shall be displayed at all times and at a conspicuous place near the main entrances for the customers of the premises, indicating that presence of dogs is permitted on the premises. The signage must be clearly visible to customers from outside of the premises, and must not be obstructed by any object. The licensee shall comply with instructions given by the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene regarding the way the signage is displayed.
2. No cooking or preparation of dog food on the premises is allowed.
3. Only prepackaged dry dog food, vacuum-packed dog food and canned dog food can be sold or provided on the premises.
4. Cooking or heating of food on dining table (including open flame or using electric heating apparatus, except for candles and electric coasters for keeping beverages warm) are not allowed at any time.
5. No dog shall be allowed on any dining table at any time.
6. Reusable utensils shall not be provided to dog by the premises. Only single-use non-plastic eating utensils or crockery may be sold or provided to dog owners for use by dogs.
7. All poisonous baits or pest/rodent-trapping devices on the premises shall be kept out of reach of dogs.
8. In case of fouling of the premises by dog excrement, the affected area must be thoroughly cleansed and disinfected immediately to maintain the hygienic condition of the premises.
9. No customer with dog shall be allowed to sit on the bar counter seats unless the food counter or food preparation area is segregated from the seating accommodation by a permanently fixed partition carried to the full height of the premises.
10. No dog shall be allowed to enter the zone within 1.5 m of any buffet counter / salad bar.
11. Where a dog causes injury to any person on the premises and the incident is reported to the Police, the licensee shall report the same incident to the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene by using the attached prescribed form within 2 working days from the date of the incident.