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## **HOUSING & KENNELING FAQ'S**

### ***Where does Pets Return Home house the homeless dogs under its care?***

Pets Return Home houses some dogs outside in our 2100 Sq. Ft. fully enclosed tarp facility. We keep other dogs in our temperature controlled 640 sq. ft. medical wing based upon weather conditions, medical need, quarantine needs, coat type and size. Other dogs are kept in the 1500 sq. ft. main house for specific behavior development, weather conditions, medical condition or size.

### ***What type of facility do the dogs live in?***

Our outside facility has ten 10 foot x 10 foot by six foot high, nine gauge two inch by four-inch metal wire (not chain-link) kennels sitting upon a six-inch concrete slab. Each kennel has a Petmate Insulated Igloo house, stainless steel water bucket and either a concrete or a stainless steel food dish. Each igloo house attaches to a plastic pallet to provide separation from the concrete floor. Each kennel is fitted with a customized roof structure to accommodate a roof covering of tarp or metal panel material.

In 2016, we had tarps over the top, back and sides of the kennel facility. No wind or rain was able to penetrate to the dog living area. The center breezeway was open at that time. Sun was able to penetrate during the summer months.

The year 2017 brought a new improved roof structure and a 40-foot by 60-foot 16 mil tarp that covers the entire kennel structure on all sides and roof. The wind and rain does not reach the kennels. In addition, the tarp adds a slight insulating factor by containing animal, human or mechanically (none at this time) generated heat within the facility. The tarp structure will also provide defense against the sun's rays and the heat of the Arizona summers. There is no high summer sun penetration to the concrete floor, houses or kennels.

### ***What protocols do you have in place for the winter months to protect the dogs from cold temperatures, snow, rain and wind?***

We have a standing protocol of moving ALL dogs from outside kennels to the medical wing or the main household based upon a forecasted temperature below 32 degrees for 4 hours or more. We developed this protocol from canine physiology science, on-site experimental data collected by Pets Return Home in 2016, 25 years' experience working with dogs in extreme weather location and extensive high altitude mountaineering & extreme temperature expedition experience by Pets Return Home's founders.

In 2016, Pets Return Home experienced 19 days (Jan Feb & Dec) with temperatures below 32 degrees. During these lower temperature extremes, we installed wireless thermometers in the x-large, large and medium size igloo houses. We found that in any of the three houses – with the dog inside the temperature never dropped below

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47 degrees. In the medium house, the temperature remained above 50 degrees. The kennel facility had an open breezeway area allowing any generated heat to escape.

In 2017 to date (January 22, 2017) we have had zero days of experienced or forecasted temperatures below 32 degrees. We will be conducting the same experiment this year to see if any difference exists.

A Pets Return Home white paper describing the Canine physiology and temperature regulation is available upon request to qualifying partners.

***What protocols do you have in place for the summer months to protect the dogs from the heat, wind and rain?***

We have a protocol in place for summer months which includes raising the sides of the tarp on one five-foot section only for airflow, installation of a high pressure misting system and free run in one of the five plus run areas and the four acre parcel upon which the facility sits.

Spring, summer and fall seasons allow for frequent trips to the river area for confidence and trust building exercises, physical exercise, canine and human socializing and problem solving for the dogs. The river provides cool water and a riparian environment. Our training and exercise protocols ensure all dogs have at least one day at the river. Most have several.

***What drives Pets Return Homes housing protocols?***

Pets Return Home has been helping dogs survive against the 'elements of domesticated life' since the late 1980s. We have learned that dogs are adaptable organisms to their environment. They are capable of acclimating quickly to new environmental stressors such as lack of water, food, shelter and extreme temperatures. The hundreds of cases handled by Pets Return Home (aka Animal Search and Rescue Team) in searching and locating lost dogs in rural and wilderness environments has shown dogs seek & require water, shelter from predators and to a lesser degree protection from weather elements and food sources to survive without human intervention.

*Our foremost concern for the physical environment of our guests is shelter.*

A doghouse, i.e. den must be safe to help a dog meet the requirements of behavior development for successful adoption. One very important element of safety is that the dog is the only resident of his den unless he invites another. We have a strict policy of one dog with one doghouse in one kennel. When dogs leave their kennel, the gate is closed behind the dog so no other meandering dog can invade his safe den. A safe den allows the dog to be comfortable – neither too small nor too large. We size our houses for each dog as well as possible. We base the selection of doghouses on durability, weather protection and comfort.

The kennel area is a large 10 foot by 10 foot (100 sq. ft.) area providing plenty of roaming room. The dog can use an area for output and not worry about stepping around it or in it. They have full visibility to the dogs next to them and to the outside world on at least one side. We clean and disinfect the kennels daily, provide clean water and one or two daily feedings.

We provide protection from the extreme Arizona weather environment through complete protective roofing and siding of the kennel facility, raised summer beds, elevated dens and providing external temperature supports such as misting systems, water pools, straw bedding, covered doors and alternative temperature-controlled locations.

We do not anthropomorphize dogs and their needs. We provide them a safe culture and behavior development to be a dog that can bring happiness to a family and survive as a dog in the world.