

Dog and Cat Management Board

***Accredited Behavioural Assessments
for Greyhounds***



Government of South Australia
Dog and Cat Management Board

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Policy

1. Legislative Context

Section 45C of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* (the Act) requires that greyhounds which are not on private property:

- have a muzzle securely fixed on their mouths so as to prevent them from biting any person or animal and;
- must be on a leash of not more than 2 metres in length.

Section 80A of the Act allows the Board to grant exemptions from provisions in the Act, including the requirement for a greyhound to wear a muzzle. Under section 21 (2) (b) of the Act, the Board may accredit procedures for testing the behaviour of dogs. The Board has resolved that owners of greyhounds that have passed the Board's accredited behavioural assessment procedure are eligible to be exempted from the greyhound muzzle requirement.

45C—Specific duties relating to greyhounds

(1) A person who owns or is responsible for the control of a greyhound must ensure that, at any time the greyhound is not confined in premises of which that person is the occupier—

(a) in the case of a greyhound exempted from the requirement to wear a muzzle—the greyhound is under the effective control of a person by means of physical restraint; or

(b) in any other case—

(i) the greyhound has a muzzle securely fixed on its mouth capable of preventing it from biting any person or animal; and

(ii) the greyhound is under the effective control of a person by means of physical restraint.

Maximum penalty: \$5 000.

Expiation fee: \$315.

(2) Subsection (1) does not apply if the greyhound—

(a) is being raced, exercised or trained on land (not being a public dog park provided by a council) with the consent of the owner or occupier of the land; or

(b) is participating in an organised activity (being a show, trial or class) and is under the effective control of a person by command, the greyhound being in close proximity to the person and the person being able to see the greyhound at all times.

21—Functions of Board

(2) The Board's functions may extend to providing the following services as the Board thinks fit:

(a) the accreditation of training programs for dogs and owners;

(b) the accreditation of procedures for testing the behaviour of dogs

2. Policy Statement and Purpose

This policy sets out the Board's accredited greyhound behavioural assessment procedure, which is used to assess if a greyhound is suitable to be exempted from the requirement to wear a muzzle.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- (a) Set out the requirements and application process for trainer's who wish to be approved to conduct the Board's accredited greyhound behavioural assessment procedure; and

- (b) Outline the Board’s accredited greyhound behavioural assessment procedure; and
- (c) Set out the responsibilities of approved trainers who conduct greyhound behavioural assessments.

3. Definitions

The Act	<i>Dog and Cat Management Act 1995</i>
Authorised Person	A police officer or person appointed as an authorised person under section 25A of the <i>Dog and Cat Management Act 1995</i>
Attack/harass	A dog attacks, harasses, chases or otherwise endangers a person or an owned animal (whether or not actual injury is caused).
Behavioural Assessment	The measurement of patterns of behaviour through direct observation.
The Board	<i>Dog and Cat Management Board</i>
Registered Owner	the person in who’s name the greyhound is registered
Safe Hug Test	Restrain the dog in a hug, as would a vet, to determine if it is socialised and non-aggressive
Stare Test	Staring at a dog to determine if it is aggressive
Trainer	A person with the relevant qualifications to conduct a behavioural assessment of greyhounds, as determined by the Board

4. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Greyhound owners who wish to apply for their pet greyhound to be exempted from the muzzle requirement;
- Prospective dog trainers who wish to apply to the Board for approval to conduct greyhound behavioural assessments; and
- Trainers approved to conduct the Board’s accredited greyhound behavioural assessment procedure.

Policy Implementation

5. Approval to conduct greyhound behavioural assessments

Only Board approved trainers are permitted to conduct the accredited greyhound behavioural assessment.

An application to become an approved trainer must be made on the ‘Application to conduct Accredited Behavioural Assessments for Greyhounds’ form, available from Board staff.

The Board requires that trainers who deliver accredited procedures have dog training or dog behaviour qualifications. To be considered as suitably qualified a trainer must meet the minimum criteria of:

- Holding dog training or dog behavioural assessment qualifications (e.g. Certificate IV in Companion Animal Services, Delta-Canine Good Citizen™ Instructors certificate) or equivalent; and

- Having experience in the training and de-sensitisation of greyhounds. The applicant must provide two written referee statements from people who have observed the applicant working with greyhounds and can comment on the applicants skills and experience in training and desensitising greyhounds.

Trainers must self-disclose any convictions for animal cruelty under *the Animal Welfare Act 1985* as part of the application process.

An application will be approved by the Board if the minimum criteria are met. Approval is not effective until written notice of Board approval has been received by the trainer.

The Board's approval relates specifically to the individual trainer listed on the application form. The Greyhound Behavioural Assessment Procedure must only be completed by the approved trainer, and cannot be undertaken by any other trainers within the business/organisation.

The Board's approval to conduct greyhound behavioural assessments relates specifically to assessments conducted to assess a greyhound's suitability for muzzle exemption, and not for any other purpose.

6. Revocation of trainer approval

The Board may revoke a trainer's approval if it determines that their behavioural assessments are not meeting intended outcomes i.e. greyhounds assessed by the trainer are found to attack or chase. The Board will investigate matters relating to a trainer's behavioural assessments as appropriate.

7. Accredited Greyhound Behavioural Assessment Procedure

The Board's accredited Greyhound Behavioural Assessment Procedure requires the trainer to assess and record the greyhound's behaviour in response to:

- Safely presenting a small dog to the greyhound (suitable for eliciting a predator response)
- Social interaction
- Handling – stroke and pinch
- Stare test
- Safe hug test
- Food aggression test

Dogs that do not behave adversely or inappropriately to the above stimulus, as determined by the trainer, have passed the behavioural assessment.

8. Conducting the assessment – approved trainer responsibilities

An approved trainer must assess a greyhound using the Board's accredited Greyhound Behavioural Assessment Procedure (set out in 7, above).

Assessments are not to be conducted in a kennel facility and animals must not be placed at risk of injury at any time. Training tools such as pinch, prong, electronic or citronella collars may not be used. The Board does not support training methods that cause a dog pain, anxiety or fear.

Prior to the assessment, the trainer must ascertain the greyhound's history and identify if there is anything that may affect the greyhound's response to the behavioural assessment (e.g. trauma). The trainer must determine:

- if the greyhound has spent a minimum of 3-6 weeks in a suitable home environment;
- observe the greyhound for any signs of ill health; and
- make general behaviour observations when first meeting the dog.

Any conditions that exist which may unfairly disadvantage the greyhound's performance must be addressed prior to assessment.

The approved trainer must provide the registered owner of a greyhound that successfully completes the behavioural assessment with a 'Greyhound Muzzle Exemption Safety Certificate' that:

- Includes the trainer/organisation contact information
- Is signed by the trainer that conducted the behaviour assessment
- Includes the date that the assessment was conducted
- Identifies the dog including its name, age, sex, markings and microchip number
- Identifies the registered owner of the dog

The trainer must also provide the registered owner with a copy of the 'Greyhound Exemption Application Form' and advise them of the requirement to apply to the Board for a muzzle exemption.

An approved trainer must obtain templates of the approved 'Greyhound Muzzle Exemption Safety Certificate' and 'Greyhound Exemption Application Form' from Board staff.