

Historic Congressional Cemetery | 2024 K9 Corps Rules

Welcome to the Historic Congressional Cemetery (HCC) K9 Corps. Please bear in mind that HCC is first and foremost a functioning cemetery, not a “dog park,” and dog walking is a privilege that is limited to members of the K9 Corps. Non-member dog walking is permitted only with the purchase of a one-day pass, and pass holders must follow K9 Corps rules. Collective enjoyment of the Cemetery should be readily possible as long as all dog walkers are courteous and considerate toward each other, cemetery staff and grounds, and other visitors.

The K9 Corps Committee has established the following rules and regulations to ensure that the Cemetery remains both a safe and pleasant environment for all. Please review these carefully; members will indicate agreement to fully comply with all terms and conditions of K9 Corps membership by signing an Acceptance of Rules/Waiver and Release of Liability at their annual **mandatory** membership orientation. Payment of the day-pass fee by non-members signifies an agreement to follow all K9 Corps rules. **Those found in violation of any of these rules may have their privileges revoked immediately and without refund.**

Display of K9 Corps tag(s) at all times. No member dog may enter the Cemetery grounds without its current, 2024 K9 Corps tag displayed. A fee of \$10 per tag will apply for any replacement tag(s) issued.

Control of animals at all times. All members/dog walkers must be in control of their dog(s), and aware of the location(s) of dog(s) at all times. This applies to K9 Corps members, day-pass holders, and any individual who brings a K9 Corps member dog to HCC. Such control must include awareness of and response to aggressive behavior toward wildlife on the Cemetery grounds, as members and walkers are expected to discourage their dogs from attacking, maiming, or killing such wildlife.

Limitation on dogs. An individual K9 Corps member or day-pass holder may bring **no more than two dogs** to the HCC grounds at one time, unless an additional person is present. (The ratio may not exceed two dogs per visitor.) Non-member dogs are **not permitted** without a day-pass purchase.

No exceptions policy on spay-neuter and vaccinations. All dogs walked in the Cemetery must be spayed or neutered and up-to-date on rabies and distemper vaccinations. Members and pass holders agree to provide such proof to HCC staff or the K9 Committee at any time upon request. Members must provide spay-neuter status and vaccination expiration dates as part of annual orientation, and pass holders at the time of their first day-pass purchase or upon request. Any and all dogs walked in the Cemetery must be spayed or neutered; **no exceptions** will be made to this policy, **including for puppies that have not yet reached spay-neuter age.**

Cemetery closure to all dogs. The Cemetery is closed to dog walking **between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. every Saturday and on specific holidays**, including Easter, Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. Cemetery staff or the HCC Board of Directors may direct further closures on an as-needed basis, such as in response to severe weather or a declared public health emergency. Members and the public will be notified of changes through signage and via email/text.

Respect for HCC visitors, staff, and other dog walkers. At ALL times dogs must be kept away from individuals visiting grave sites, as well as from any burial services, ceremonies, group tours, grounds maintenance crews, and all other non-dog walking visitors and activities. All dog walkers are expected to show respect to their fellow walkers and to Cemetery staff members. Any individual who engages in abusive, hostile, or other inappropriate behavior that potentially endangers the safety and well-being of others may be permanently banned from entering the Cemetery.

Respect for HCC grounds. All members/walkers must be respectful of the Cemetery monuments and grave markers. Because of the risk of damage and/or injury, do not sit or lean on the gravestones. Dogs, children, and others must not climb on the grassy areas covering the family vaults. **The use of balls, Frisbees, or dog toys of any kind is not permitted in the Cemetery** out of concern for the monuments and grounds. Also, both K9 Corps members and the general public are prohibited from using or bringing onto Cemetery grounds any wheeled devices, including but not limited to bicycles or any self-balancing personal transporters (e.g., motorized or non-motorized scooters, skateboards, Segways, hoverboards, etc.). This prohibition does not apply to anyone who requires a medical device or uses a stroller or carrier exclusively for the purpose of carrying a child or pet. During winter months, should the area receive snowfall significant enough for sledding, members

and the public may not use sleds or similar devices on Cemetery grounds where gravestones and monuments are located. Any sledding or other such winter activity is restricted to surface roads and paths.

Cleaning up after dogs. Regardless of the weather or time of day or year, members/walkers must clean up after all dogs at all times, disposing of waste properly. If you see waste, please pick it up even if it was not left by your dog. Please bring a flashlight if you come after dark.

Leashing of dogs during grave visits. Visitors who bring a dog when visiting the grave of a loved one must keep the dog on leash at all times. The only exceptions are for active K9 Corps members and paid day-pass holders.

Leashing of dogs for entry/exit. ALL dogs must be on leash while entering and exiting the gates. Signs are posted to indicate where it is permissible to unleash your dog. Members/walkers are also encouraged to “keep it moving” around the gates and other high-traffic areas in order to avoid critical masses of dogs, which can bring on aggressive behavior.

Applicability of rules to professional dog walkers. Professional dog walkers must register with the Cemetery on an annual basis – providing any updates to contact and client information as needed – and complete the Acceptance of Rules/Waiver and Release of Liability. **It is the responsibility of the K9 Corps member to ensure their dog walker is aware of this requirement.** Professional dog walkers must adhere to all K9 Corps rules, including the limitation on walking **no more than two member dogs at a time** (non-member dogs are not permitted). If this policy is violated, both the walker and owner will receive a warning and, should a future violation occur, **both dog walker and owner will be banned** from dog walking in the Cemetery.

Applicability of rules to day-pass holders. As stated, individuals purchasing a one-day pass must adhere to all K9 Corps rules and regulations. Those found to be in violation will have their day-pass privileges permanently revoked and, per the decision of the K9 Committee, may be prohibited from obtaining future K9 Corps membership.

Aggressive dogs and handling of incidents. Each and every incident of aggressive dog behavior that walkers are involved in or witness must be reported via an **Incident Report** (web form available at congressionalcemetery.org/k9-corps or hard copy available in the HCC office). All walkers must strongly discourage rough or aggressive play by their dogs. Should an incident occur, the following apply:

- **Apologies** for aggressive behavior are expected.
- **A report must be submitted** to make HCC staff and the K9 Committee aware of each incident caused by an aggressive dog. These reports are reviewed by the K9 Committee and HCC staff, and the K9 Committee will rule at its regular meetings on any action(s) necessary to enforce the K9 Corps rules.
- **An exchange of contact information between parties will occur with every incident.** If appropriate, parties are encouraged to resolve minor incidents among themselves. An incident report should still be submitted by one or both parties.
- **Payment of any vet bills by the owner(s) of the aggressive dog(s) is mandatory.**
- Dogs that engage in repeated instances of aggressive behavior may be required to be leashed or muzzled while on the Cemetery grounds.
- Dogs that are deemed a danger (to humans, animals, or otherwise) by HCC and/or the K9 Committee will be banned from the Cemetery grounds for life.

Membership terms and conditions. The 2024 K9 Corps membership term is March 1, 2024 through February 28, 2025. Only dogs that have been issued member tags are permitted to walk in the Cemetery. K9 Corps memberships are non-refundable and non-transferable.

Dog walking is prohibited during ALL burials and services. The Cemetery will also be closed at other times for special events, as announced in advance to the K9 Corps. Notifications of periodic closures for burials and events are sent via email and text to all members/walkers, posted on congressionalcemetery.org, and displayed on signage at the HCC main gate. It is the walker’s responsibility to confirm that the Cemetery is open to dogs before visiting. **To maintain the integrity of burials, services, and non-dog walking events, the owner of any dog found to be on the Cemetery grounds during closure hours will have their membership/day-pass privileges immediately revoked.**