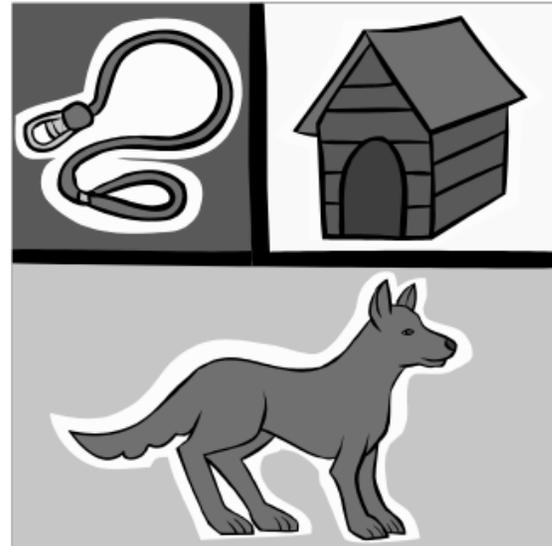


# **Guide for Proper Tethering of Dogs**

**McDowell County  
Animal Shelter  
828-652-6643**



## **Introduction**

The purpose of this guide is to offer recommendations for proper tethering and penning of dogs outdoors.

## **Methods and Materials**

**Collar / Harness** - When tethering your dog, it is important to choose the proper collar or harness. A harness is preferred because it will restrain the dog's body instead of just the neck. If a collar is chosen, it is important to select one that does not pinch, prong or choke the dog. Avoid metal collars. Choke chains of any kind should not be used except where the owner is present during training. The tethering line should be attached with a buckle-type collar or body harness.

**Chain / Tether** - It is recommended that a dog should not be tethered longer than 3 hours of a 24 hour period. A dog needs daily socialization and exercise off the

tether. A dog should not be tethered if it is exhibiting health or temperament problems. The chain or tether used to secure the dog should be strong enough to ensure that it cannot be broken if the dog pulls at it, but not heavy enough to cause physical distress to the animal. The weight of the tether should be no more than 1/10<sup>th</sup> of the weight of the animal. The length of the tether should be at least five times the length of the animal and a minimum of 10 feet. Tethers should also have swivels on each end to prevent twisting or tangling.

**Penning (kenneling)** - It is recommended that your dog should not be confined in a caged or chain linked space outdoors for longer than 5 hours in a 24 hour period. Moreover, a dog should not be kept outdoors in an animal crate or carrier. The enclosed area should be at least 100 sq. ft. for dogs under 25 lbs, 150 sq. ft. for dogs over 25 lbs. As with tethering, a penned dog is often left in isolation with no exercise and sometimes little or no shelter from rain, cold or sun. A dog penned or chained for long periods is denied everything that its nature craves. Such a dog is a prisoner, yet longs to be a pet.

**Dog Area** - The area that is accessible by the tethered or penned dog should be inspected by the owner for hazards to the animal. Areas prone to flooding or water ponding should not be used. A tethered dog should not be able to reach fences or other areas that may pose a choke hazard. Debris, roots and stumps should be removed to prevent hang ups. The area should be kept sanitary by daily clean-up of feces. The area should provide protection for the animal from cold, winds, snow, rain, and high heat. In summer there should be shade from the sun throughout the day.

**Shelter, Food and Water** - A tethered (chained) or penned (kenneled) dog must be provided with and able to reach adequate shelter, food and water as defined in the McDowell County Animal Control Ordinance. For information on proper housing, see the "Guide for Proper Housing of Dogs."