



## Press Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Contact:** Brandi Hunter

**Phone:** 212-696-8220

**Email:** [brandi.hunter@akc.org](mailto:brandi.hunter@akc.org)

### **THE AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB ANNOUNCES 'AKC FIT DOG' CLUBS**

*Popular program to include clubs who run fitness programs*



*The first AKC FIT DOG club is the California Airedale Terrier Club. This is a picture with the new banner just prior to starting their walk in Santa Clara.*

**New York, NY** – The American Kennel Club (AKC®), the world's largest dog registry and leading advocate for dogs and their owners, announces an expansion of its FIT DOG program by recognizing clubs and organizations that provide canine fitness classes and organized canine walks as AKC FIT DOG clubs.

Last September the AKC launched the FIT DOG program to encourage owners to walk with their dogs. The program adopted the American Heart Association's recommendation of 30 to 40 minutes of walking per session for a total of 150 minutes per week. Owners that achieve this level of activity for three months may apply for a free car magnet featuring the AKC FIT DOG logo. In the first five months of the program, owners have applied for over 1,900 magnets.

“With the AKC FIT DOG program launch, many organizations wrote to inform us about their canine fitness classes and organized canine walks. They were delighted to hear of the AKC program and adopted this standard as a reasonable goal,” said Mary Burch, PhD, Director of the AKC Family Dog Program. “The designation as an AKC FIT DOG club is meant to acknowledge these organizations and encourage additional ones to promote fitness and a healthy lifestyle for both dogs and their people.”

To become an AKC FIT DOG club, AKC clubs, independent dog training schools and other dog-related organizations must hold at least four group fitness walks per year or hold regularly-scheduled canine fitness classes. Organizations meeting this level of activity may apply for a free AKC FIT DOG club banner which includes the name of their organization.

“Organized canine walks are a way for AKC clubs to provide a fun and healthy activity for their local dog community,” said Doug Ljungren, Executive Vice President for Sports & Events. “In the process, clubs gain the opportunity to engage with new dog owners who may wish to join their club. The AKC FIT DOG club program provides an option if your club is seeking new members.”

To participate in the AKC FIT DOG program and earn your free car magnet, or to apply for your organization’s free AKC FIT DOG club banner, please go to: <https://www.akc.org/sports/akc-family-dog-program/akc-fit-dog/>

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#### **About the American Kennel Club**

Founded in 1884, the American Kennel Club is a not-for-profit organization, which maintains the largest registry of purebred dogs in the world and oversees the sport of purebred dogs in the United States. The AKC is dedicated to upholding the integrity of its registry, promoting the sport of purebred dogs and breeding for type and function. Along with its more than 5,000 licensed and member clubs and its affiliated organizations, the AKC advocates for the purebred dog as a family companion, advances canine health and well-being, works to protect the rights of all dog owners and promotes responsible dog ownership. More than 22,000 competitions for AKC-registered purebred dogs are held under AKC rules and regulations each year including conformation, agility, obedience, rally, tracking, herding, lure coursing, coonhound events, hunt tests, field and earthdog tests. Affiliate AKC organizations include the AKC Humane Fund, AKC Canine Health Foundation, AKC Reunite and the AKC Museum of the Dog. For more information, visit [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org).

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