

Hel’s Hounds Policies and Procedures

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**Cancellation, rescheduling and extensions policy**

At Hel’s Hounds, we take time to plan our classes carefully, selecting venues with care. We are reliant upon the course fees to pay for the rental of this space and the time of any helpers who we need to employ to ensure a safe number of Instructors to trainees in the class environment.

Cancelation of class reservations can be made up to 2 weeks before the beginning of the course, a refund will be made subject to a £25 processing fee. Cancellations made after this will not be eligible for refunds.

Cancelations of 1 to 1 courses will be refunded subject to a £25 processing fee 3 days prior to the commencement of training. Cancellations after this will receive a maximum of a 50% refund.

Hel’s Hounds ask that clients give as much notice as possible should they need to cancel a 1 to 1 session to allow us to rearrange the session to everyones convenience. Excessive cancellations (2 sessions in a row or more than 4 in a course) without sufficient reason will incur a rescheduling fee of £15.

Hel’s Hounds aims to contact all clients to be seen in the following week each Sunday with the details of the appointment giving clients an opportunity to reschedule.

Should Hel’s Hounds need to reschedule any sessions, the instructor aims to contact clients as soon as the need arises. We would like to give you as much notice as possible and as much choice as we can in times to reschedule if possible.

Hel’s hounds is happy to extend 1 to 1 courses by up to 2 sessions, availability permitting, without extra charge, should an individual dog need extra time to grasp training concepts. After this, sessions will be charged at a discounted rate of 30% off. We are committed to helping you and your dog reach your training goals.

**Missed session policy**

Hel’s Hounds endeavors to offer all clients sessions at a time which suits them. We do understand that unforeseen events can occur for anyone. We ask that all clients get in touch as soon as possible when it becomes apparent that they will not be able to make a prearranged training session.

If the instructor arrives to a training session and the client does not, they will take all reasonable measures to contact the client before leaving.

If the client does not make contact with Hel’s Hounds, or misses 2 sessions in a row, we will assume that the client wishes to terminate our working contract.

Sessions not attended without prior contact will be considered missed and are still payable.

We know that your time is precious, but so is ours.

**Payments Policy**

Payment for training services is due by the end of the first session of training at the latest.

Hel’s Hounds accepts payments via bank transfer, cash, or as card payments through Shopify POS app (with an added 50p processing fee). Though bank transfer is preferable.

We provide bank details on our invoices and can provide all details on request.

We know that many puppies can be a handful and more than enough to make even the most organised forget their to-do list. However, we do rely on prompt payments to keep up with our own outgoings, and provide you with the top-quality service you deserve.

As such, if payment is not received before the start of the second session, this and all following sessions will be at risk of being cancelled and a late payment charge of £10 added to your account.

In the event of a one off appointment, a late charge will be added if payment is not received within 24 hours.

We do understand that in this time of economic difficulty, sometimes it is hard to find the sum for a full training course in one go. Should you be in difficulty with payments, please speak to the instructor about paying on a payment plan when you make the booking or during your first session.

**Dress Code**

At Hel’s Hounds we consider everyones comfort in the training environment to be amongst our top priorities. As such, all people and dogs involved in any training session will be held to the dress code.

For humans:

* Dressed appropriately for company (I.E. we don’t want to see anything you wouldn’t show your mum!)
* Closed toe shoes (your dog might not be heavy but their claws can still hurt your toes! Plus we don’t want any shoe related falls or toe injuries!)
* Sun cream/ hat/ sun glasses if needed
* Boots/ waterproof coat if needed
* For class sessions, a towel or other seat protection for getting muddy dogs home.

For dogs:

* All dogs must meet all legal requirements, this means they must have an ID tag with your surname, first initial and address as a minimum.
* Only flat collars will be used by Hel’s Hounds
* An appropriate, well fitting harness may be preferable for walking
* A short(er) walking lead for outdoor sessions
* A long line or indoor training line
* Poo bags (ok, you got me, its not technically something for your dog but where else should I put it?)
* A well fitting muzzle if your dog needs it

Our promise:

Hel’s hounds instructor will always be dressed appropriately for sessions and wearing appropriate footwear. They will have at least one item of clothing with our logo to aid identification.

**Accident and injury**

Hel’s Hounds will take all reasonable precautions to prevent injuries and accidents before they happen. However, given the unpredictable nature of dogs who want rewards, not every accident can be prevented.

We will record all accidents and incidents on an accident form, which all parties involved are entitled to have a copy of. We will use this information to prevent similar incidents happening in the future, to inform any necessary changes to risk assessments and to help to keep all humans and animals safer in the future.

Every dog has a personal risk assessment, which owners have a copy of. This is a working document but will always be adhered to where practicable.

All accidents will be treated with appropriate first aid and further treatment as required.

Owners should make Hel’s Hounds aware of any injuries they or their dog received during training sessions at the earliest opportunity if injuries are not apparent during a session.

All near miss incidents will also be recorded for future reference and learning. Hel’s Hounds defines a near miss as an incident which could have caused some kind of physical harm to a human or canine involved. For example, someone stumbling over a wire but not falling.

**Illness, Vaccination, and Parasite preventative policy**

Human Illness:

Hel’s Hounds will not knowingly host or run any training sessions with a communicable disease.

Should the instructor become ill we will let clients know as soon as possible if there is a risk of transmission or if sessions will need to be rearranged.

Should owners be too unwell to partake in a training session and need to rearrange, we ask that they contact us at the earliest opportunity.

Canine Illness:

In the event that a dog develops an illness, we ask that owners tell us at the earliest opportunity.

Should the illness turn out to be a communicable i.e. contagious, we ask that we are informed of the diagnosis as soon as practicable. This is to allow us to talk to all our families and prevent the spread of disease.

Vaccinations:

We expect that all dogs will be adequately vaccinated for their age before any session. This is to minimise the chance of the spread of disease.

Parasite Preventatives:

We expect that all dogs have adequate and effective flea, tick and worm prevention treatment. Again this is to prevent the transmission of parasites from one home to another.

**Disruptive dogs and bitches in heat**

Hel’s Hounds reserves the right to ask any dog who is behaving disruptively to leave classes.

We reserve the right to end any working contract with dogs who cannot be controlled in a training environment by their owner.

We support a policy of neutering and spaying all pet dogs who are able to be. However should your bitch be unaltered for any reason, we ask that you do not attend any group sessions with them during their heat or during the week or two before and after. This is for their safety as well as the safety of the rest of the group.

Bitches in heat may still partake in individual training sessions, however we ask that you inform the instructor before the session to allow for precautions to be taken should they be necessary, I.E. arranging sufficient time between sessions to allow the instructor to change clothes should the next dog be an intact male or a group class where the smell of a bitch in heat may be distracting.

**Canine aggression, biting and fighting**

The safety of all in our sessions is of up most importance to Hel’s Hounds. To try to ensure this we feel it necessary to implement the following rules.

Dogs with a history of aggressive behavior or biting will be assessed on an individual basis before being admitted for training.

Dogs who bite the instructor during training must be muzzle trained if Hel’s Hounds are happy to continue training. If training is discontinued after a bite, no refund will be given.

Dogs who show aggression to other dogs, bite or fight with other dogs, may be excluded from class sessions. Should they be admitted to classes they must be on a lead, and under control of a responsible adult at all times.

**Dangerous dogs**

Dogs who are a banned breed as listed on the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 (Amended 2024) or who are known to be crossed with one cannot be trained by Hel’s Hounds under current insurance constraints.

While Hel’s Hounds is happy to work with dogs who are at risk of being mistaken for “bully-type dogs” under the current legislation, if your dog is subject to an exemption to the act, we are unable to help.

Dogs who are assessed by Hel’s Hounds staff to be a danger to either their owners, instructors or the public during training will be expected to be muzzle trained at the expense of the owner. Hel’s Hounds will also assess the risk of training outside of a secure area and may decide against sessions in public.

Hel’s Hounds reserves the right to terminate working contracts with the owners of any dog assessed as being dangerous. Refunds will be considered on a case by case basis and if issued will be issued on a pro-rata basis.

**Smoke free policy**

Hel’s Hounds is a smoke free business, as we operate largely in public spaces, we will encourage all staff and clients not to smoke and direct people to appropriate stop smoking advice and resources should they be interested.

Smoking will not be permitted inside public venues as per the health act 2006.

No Staff or volunteers of Hel’s Hounds will smoke in client homes.

**Children in classes and sessions**

Hel’s Hounds welcomes all members of the family into individual training sessions, however we ask that young children not be involved in the first session.

The safety of all involved in sessions is our number one priority, as such, we prefer to be able to discuss your dog and child’s relationship with you before involving them in training in an age appropriate manner.

Hel’s Hounds offer a staying safe session, which is aimed directly at children under the age of 10. The aim of this session is to equip young people with the skills and knowledge to understand their furry friend and keep themselves safe in an emergency situation. We ask that should you want to add this on to your training course, you talk to the Instructor either in your first session or when you book.

We are happy for sensible children and young people to attend group classes, provided they can manage themselves in the situation without causing a distraction to the dogs or other people. We ask that you talk to Hel’s Hounds staff before bringing children to classes, they can help you assess if your child can tolerate the situation.

Hel’s Hounds take no responsibility for children attending sessions. Children must always be accompanied by a responsible adult over the age of 18 other than the Instructor. Children must never be left alone with dogs during any session.

**Refund Policy**

Hel’s Hounds is a small business with running costs and a variable income. Requests for refunds will be considered on a case-by-case basis according to our policies and terms and conditions.

Hel’s Hounds reserve the right to terminate any contract for any reason with no refund.

* No refunds will be given if your account is in arrears
* No refunds will be given in the event of the instructor being injured by the dog during training, this is to help cover the loss of income during the period of recuperation.
* No refunds will be given in the event of contracts being terminated due to missed sessions or no contact from owners.
* No refunds will be given in the event of sessions being terminated due to disruptive or abusive behavior from dogs or owners.
* No refunds will be given in the event of breach of health and safety policy or instructions.

We are more than happy to rearrange training dates to suit all involved. We will always endeavor to give clear and concise instructions to prevent incidents which may result in cancellation of contract.

**Treatment of animals**

At Hel’s Hounds, we believe whole heartedly in our canine bill of rights:

1. All dogs have the right to rich, varied, and stimulating environment.
2. All dogs have the right to time and attention from a loving and caring owner.
3. All dogs have the right to effective training, and if behavioral problems are to be addressed, all dogs have the right for a competent person to be consulted.
4. All dogs have the right to ongoing veterinary care for both health and behavioral issues, and the right to a comprehensive behavioral assessment to assess and diagnose behavioral issues.
5. All dogs have the right to appropriate ongoing education and to learn new skills.
6. All dogs have the right to a loving family, a safe and warm home, and a life free of fear, harm, abuse, and preventable pain.

In addition to this, we believe in the 5 welfare needs as set out in the animal welfare act 2006. This states that all animals should have a suitable home environment; a suitable diet; be allowed to exhibit normal behaviour patterns (I.E. dogs gotta dog!); have their housing needs in regard to group living met (I.E. animals who need to live with a buddy or group should do and those who do better alone should be housed alone); and finally, animals should be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease.

At Hel’s Hounds, we are committed to providing a top quality service for all dogs.

We are committed to an ethos of kind, reward positive training. We will never suggest a technique, or piece of equipment which we know will cause your dog undue fear, pain or distress.

If we have reason to believe that your dog is fearful or in pain during training, we will endeavor to identify the cause of this and rectify as soon as possible.

We will share details of any dog we believe to be being mistreated with the appropriate authorities and co-operate fully with any resulting investigation.

We will listen to any concerns about how we are treating and responding to dogs and investigate fully.

**Health and safety policy**

The health and safety of everyone in trining sessions is of the up most importance to Hel’s Hounds.

For Humans:

* Wear appropriate clothing and footwear as set out in the dress code. Thick pants such as jeans are ideal to reduce the risk or serious injury from bites.
* Follow all instructions given by instructors to the best of your ability.
* Inform Hel’s Hounds instructors of any personal restrictions or limitations which may lead to injury in the course of following instructions.

For dogs:

* Dogs should be handled on safe equipment in good condition. I.E. harnesses should be well fitting and not easily escaped from, leads should not be frayed and coming apart.
* Inform instructors of any health conditions or injuries your dog has at the beginning of the session.
* Follow veterinary advice in regard to fitness to take part. Hel’s Hounds is not qualified to assess if your dog is medically fit to take part in training.

For instructors/ Volunteers/ Assistant’s:

* Keep knowledge of good practice up to date.
* Know the limits of your practice and ask for help if you need it.
* Be aware of the body language of the dog/s you are working with.
* Follow instructions of more senior colleagues.
* Know the location of first aid equipment/ emergency exits.

**Safeguarding**

Dogs:

Dogs cannot tell us when something is going wrong for them at home, however they are a population open to abuse. We are in a position to take steps to protect dogs in danger.

Should Hel’s Hounds instructor, volunteers, or assistants feel that a dog is being mistreated or abused in any way, they will make a report with all the evidence and details available to them to the appropriate authorities. We will co operate fully with any and all investigations.

Children and vulnerable adults:

As an outside person going into the homes of families to provide a service we can be in a position to assist children and vulnerable adults in the homes we visit.

Should we have any suspicion of abuse or mistreatment we will make a report of our concerns to the local authority MASH (multi agency safeguarding hub) or the police in an emergency.

We will report any incidents we witness or any requests for help that we receive as soon as practicable without putting ourselves in danger.

We cannot help anyone if we are hurt or otherwise incapacitated.

**Policy for termination of working contracts**

As per our terms and conditions, Hel’s Hounds reserves the right to terminate contracts with any client at any time for any reason.

We will always endeavor to do everything practicable to keep contracts running smoothly, however this is not always possible.

Hel’s Hounds will always aim to give clients a week’s notice of cancellation where this is possible.

Clients are entitled to request a termination of their contract. We ask that they give us as much notice as possible of this. Any refund request following a cancelation will be assessed on a case-by-case basis against the information in official policies. If a refund is issued, this will be on a pro-rata basis and in accordance with our refund policy.

**Abuse and aggression towards instructors/ staff/ volunteers/ assistants**

Hels Hounds has a zero tolerance policy for abusive or aggressive behaviour towards anyone employed by or working on behalf of the company. We extend this policy to the animals we are working with and any other people in a training session.

Any client who acts in a way that is deemed to be aggressive or threatening will have their contract terminated and be refused access to any further training or activities with Hel’s Hounds.

This extends to phone and email communications.

Hels Hounds will not tolerate physical violence towards any person or animal in any training session. Any client acting in such a manner will be reported to the police.

We will take all legal action necessary to protect all of our clients, instructors and animals.

**Abusive and aversive training practices**

Hels Hounds do not use or advocate for any abusive, coercive or aversive training practices.

Should you want to change the training methodology your dog is used to, we will do all we can to help you do this.

Any client who claims that Hel’s Hounds has advised them to use a practice which is abusive or aversive publicly, online, on social media etc will be issued with legal proceedings for such false claims.

**Extra dog’s**

A second dog discount is available on all Hel’s Hounds training courses, this discount is £50.

Discounts are not available for assessment or advice sessions, these are quoted individually based on the information available to Hel’s Hounds at the time.

Hel’s Hounds is happy for other dogs in the house hold who are not being trained to be in the training environment providing this does not create a distraction for the dog being trained. Should other animals prove to be a distraction, instructors will ask for them to be removed to another area of the home.

Due to space constraints, it is not possible for dogs who are not part of a class to attend class sessions.