



## Talking Points for Pet Store Employees

### What is Canine Care Certified?

- Canine Care Certified is a voluntary program now available to dog breeders nationwide that ensures the health and overall well-being of puppies and dogs in the care of breeders in the United States.
- It is the only program of its kind that addresses both the physical and behavioral health of dogs and puppies raised by breeders.
- Canine Care Certified breeders follow science-based Standards of Care, developed in 2013 by Dr. Candace Croney, Ph.D at the Purdue University Center for Animal Welfare Science and tested by animal welfare experts and animal behaviorists.
- The Standards of Care are comprehensive and ensure breeders provide the animals they care for with proper nutrition, veterinary care, housing, handling, socialization and exercise.
- The Standards of Care were written and tested in collaboration with breeders, veterinary and animal science experts, state regulators and animal welfare organizations.
- A group of breeders asked for this certification to be developed to differentiate themselves from bad actors.
- Recently, the first group of pilot breeders passed the independent, third-party audit and are the first breeders in the nation to be Canine Care Certified. Dogs they raise are now available to consumers.
- Many more breeders are expected to join the program as awareness and consumer demand grows. For more information, please visit [www.caninecarecertified.org](http://www.caninecarecertified.org).

### Why Does Your Pet Store Offer Dogs from Certified Breeders?

- We partner with Canine Care Certified breeders because it is simply the right thing to do to ensure puppies and their parents receive the best possible care and attention.
- We know our customers have high expectations for the health and well-being of a puppy they purchase from our store, and we are proud to connect dogs from certified breeders with their forever homes.
- The program is still new and growing. We are currently in the process of encouraging all of our breeders to explore Canine Care Certified and apply.
- We are one of the first pet stores in the country to carry dogs from certified breeders because we value the science-based program and the certified breeders' efforts to do what is right for their dogs.





## Why Does It Matter to Your Customers?

- We know it's important that you have a choice when selecting a family pet. You can trust that we are receiving dogs from Canine Care Certified breeders who are committed to the well-being of the dogs they care for.
- When choosing a dog or puppy raised by a breeder, you have the right to expect that not only were their basic necessities attended to, but that their broader physical and behavioral needs were also met, including socialization, enrichment, exercise, and positive social interactions.
- Canine Care Certified gives you an added measure of assurance that the dog you are adding to your family came from a breeder who is committed to continuously raising the bar for canine care.
- You can trust that certified breeders are being provided with ongoing education on the standards and best practices for canine behavioral and physical health based on current science.

## What Should Your Customers Know?

- Ask for the dog's records and look for the Canine Care Certified seal.
- The dog's records will include a letter from the Canine Care Certified breeder with the dog's microchip number, as well as the breeder's certification number. A unique sticker with the breeder's certification number will be included on your new dog's pedigree paperwork.
- Any time you are considering a dog or puppy, you should ask questions about the animal's care, housing, behavior, and opportunities for exercise, interaction, etc. Be sure to ask about background on the breeder or even schedule a visit. Canine Care Certified breeders value transparency.
- Before taking a dog into their home, every family should educate themselves on the needs of the type of dog they are considering to assure that they can commit to responsible dog ownership.
- Certified breeders raise dogs in a healthy breeding environment and provide opportunities for social and behavioral enrichment. It is critical that you continue to provide opportunities that support behavioral wellness. Ask your veterinarian about age appropriate activities such as puppy class to increase success in your home.
- Certified breeders raise dogs and puppies to specific health and welfare standards. However, these dogs and puppies will still exhibit what are considered "normal puppyhood" behaviors- chewing, jumping, etc. While the standards for certified breeders provide guidance on canine behavioral needs and steps they must take to support these, all dog owners should expect that their pet will need basic training (including potty training) to successfully transition to their new homes.

