

## **Columbia Dog Meetup Assistant Organizer Notes**

Thank you for your interest in being an assistant organizer for the Columbia Walk 'n' Wag Dog Meetup!

Our Meetup members will be happy to have more choices for walks in the area and more opportunities to meet other dogs and dog lovers. There are just a few requirements and recommendations.

### **Requirements:**

- Be very familiar with the walk you are leading. Scout it out several days prior to the walk to make sure there are no hazards, closures, or poor conditions on the path.
- Give specific details about your walk, including length (e.g., 1.5 miles), paved or unpaved, easy or more difficult, shaded or sunny, wooded or grassy.
- Be familiar with any pet restrictions and leash laws relevant to your walk. Tell your group that they need to follow these laws.
- Insist that participants pick up their dogs' poop and dispose of it properly.
- If you are meeting at a place that requires a fee (i.e., the Howard County Worthington Dog Park), make sure this is clear on your announcement.
- If you plan to stop at a coffee shop or café, check with the proprietors well ahead of time to see if there are any restrictions or concerns about pets on the premises.
- Give clear instructions as to where to park and meet. Use a specific address whenever possible for those using Mapquest or a GPS.
- If you must cancel your walk, be sure to inform your registrants as soon as possible.

### **Recommendations**

- Set limits for the number of participants. Your limiting factor is usually the number of parking spaces available where the walk begins. I've been doing 20 for most walks.
- Introduce yourself and encourage people to introduce themselves to each other at the beginning of the walk and let the group know if there is anything they need to know about their dogs—for example, if the dog is timid, doesn't like to be touched on the head, etc.
- Try to recruit a friend to be a co-leader if possible. It's helpful to have one leader at the front of the group, and one at the back as a "sweep".
- Work in the option for a little social time—at a picnic table or coffee shop. This can be optional.
- Have fun!

As an assistant organizer, you can:

- Schedule new meetings
- Edit existing meetings
- Create and edit polls
- Email the Meetup members
- Moderate the message board
- Remove a member

But you can't:

- Change the Meetup's name or location
- Pick the main Meetup photo
- Change payment settings
- Designate or remove other Assistant Organizers