



Feeding Guidelines

Approved Foods

One of the most important things in the healthy growth of service dog is the food they consume each day. Each brand of dog food found on the market is geared towards a particular breed, size, and lifestyle of dog. Below you will find what USVSD and our veterinarians find to be the best dog foods for our working dogs. Our puppies at 4 weeks old are eating Red Paw 32K and will come with a small bag when transported to you so you can continue them on this brand of food or swap them to one of the other options below. A dog eating these brands of food does not need any additional supplements in their diet. **No Human food allowed.**

Red Paw Power Edge 32K- Can be used throughout their whole time with you.

Offered primarily online but can be found at a Hollywood Feed store.



Purina Pro Plan or Purina Pro Plan Sport- This food can be found at most local retailers that sell dog food and off Chewy's website. If you choose Purina Pro Plan Puppy, feed until 1 year and transfer to the adult version. Purina Pro Plan Sport can be fed from puppy to adulthood without changing. **Make sure to get the large breed option. Salmon, chicken, or lamb options only.**



Science Diet- This food can be found at most local pet stores, amazon, and Chewy. This food should be started on the puppy version until the dog reaches 1 year and then swapped to the adult version. **Make sure to get the large breed option. Salmon, chicken, or lamb options only.**



Eukanuba- This food can be found at most local pet store, amazon, and Chewy. This food should be started on the puppy version until the dog reaches 1 year and then swapped to the adult version. **Make sure to get the large breed option. Salmon, chicken, or lamb options only.**





Feeding Guidelines

How to Properly Feed

When feeding a USVSD puppy it is important that you are as consistent about how you feed. Every time you feed the dog they should “wait” until you release them using “Okay” to eat. Once you offer the dog the food, they have a maximum of 10 minutes to eat. At the end of those 10 minutes remove the bowl, future service dogs are constantly working throughout the day and **will not** have access to food constantly. If you have multiple dogs in the home, the puppy in training should be fed in a separate room away from other dogs to prevent food aggression. You should also never place your hand in the food bowl of a dog, instead stay close to the puppy when they are eating so they learn you are not a threat. **Do not add any additional to the dog’s kibble (Example: Table scraps, eggs, canned vegetables, etc.)**

Tips for Fast Eaters

If you have a puppy that is eating too fast here are some tips that can help them slow down: Spread food over a cookie sheet, buy a “slow feeder,” add a Nylabone or Kong toy to the bowl, or fill the bowl with water.

When to Feed in a Kennel

From about 2 months until about 5 months the puppy should be fed in their kennel with the door closed. This not only promotes the feeling that the kennel is a happy and safe environment but will also help with potty accident. Most dogs do not like to potty where the eat.

When to Feed Out of a Kennel

Once the puppy reaches 5 months old you can begin feeding the puppy outside of the kennel. Remember that it is still mandatory that the puppy wait and be released before they are allowed to eat.





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How Much Should I be Feeding?

Here is a quick guide to increasing the amount of kibble your USVSD dog is eating.

AGE	WEIGHT RANGE	MEALS PER DAY	MEAL SIZE (CUPS)
6-8 WEEKS	8-12 POUNDS	3	3/4
8-12 WEEKS	12-20 POUNDS	3	3/4 - 1
12-16 WEEKS	20-28 POUNDS	3	1 - 1 1/4
16-20 WEEKS	26-36 POUNDS	2	1 1/2 - 2
6-9 MONTHS	VARIES	2	Daily total about 2 1/2-3 1/2 cups, according to the puppy's needs
9+ MONTHS	VARIES	2	Daily total about 2 1/2-4 cups, according to the puppy's needs.

All dogs are different, and some may not follow the same food plan suggested above.



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Recommended Treats

The best way to prevent any change in stool is to allocate portions of the dog's meal to be carried in a treat bag with you at all times and be used as "treats." By adding to many additional treats to a dog's diet you run the risk of upsetting their stomach and causing diarrhea. Unites States Veterans Service Dogs does not cover the cost of a vet visit due to diarrhea. See section about managing diarrhea for more help. Please see training section on when to feed "high" value treats.

Some of our favorites:

- Mini Milkbones
- Zuke's
- Cut up Pupperoni
- Crazy Dog Train Me! Minis
- Buffalo Blue Bits
- Pet Botanicals
- Charlee Bears
- Raw unpeeled carrots, 1inch in length
- Ice Cubes (Zero Calorie Snack)
- Plain Cheerios



If your dog is having stool problems stop feeding treats until stool returns to a normal consistency.

Water Consumption

Dogs need plenty of water to be able to grow to their fullest potential. We ask that all of our puppies be given free access to water when they are at home. A healthy dog will only drink the amount of water necessary to keep them hydrated. When potty training start with small amounts of water in a bowl to be left out. Once the puppy understands the "Go Potty" command and where their Potty spot is then you can begin to increase water. This process will take a few months but is a staple behavior that they will use for the rest of their lives.

