4RK9s Membership Handbook

(Revised April 2016)

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"Iowa's First Dog Agility Club"

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Important Dates and Deadlines

General Membership Meetings:

2nd Monday of each month unless otherwise agreed upon by membership
Begin at 7:30 p.m.
Meetings are held at the Club building, unless otherwise noted.
Each meeting counts 1 hour towards the 12 hours needed for active membership.
See Weather-Related Cancellations for more information.

Board Meetings:

When needed.

Meeting Agenda:

Club members are encouraged to submit topics to be added to the meeting agenda. Topics should be submitted to the club president at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting. New topics presented at the meeting will be discussed if time allows or may be tabled until the next meeting.
Minutes of all meetings are posted on the club's website and sent to all members via e-mail. All requests for a hard copy should be sent to the Recording Secretary.

Membership

How to become a member

An individual or family thinking about joining 4RK9s should attend a general club meeting to become familiarized with the club. If progressing toward full membership is contemplated, this meeting can count as one of the three which are required.

If interested in becoming a member, complete the following steps. The steps do not need to be completed in the given order and several of the steps may be worked on concurrently. When all steps are completed, the person is deemed to be an Active Member. Until all steps are completed, the person is considered Provisional.

1. Complete at least one standard class given by 4RK9's.

2. Volunteer twelve (12) hours of work for the club.
   **If a family is applying, each member of the family must complete twelve (12) hours.
   **If a Junior member applies (person 8-18 years old), they must complete eight (8) hours of work for the club.
   **See Volunteering Opportunities for Applicants for ideas for this work.

3. Complete the Membership Application Form, including three (3) signatures from Active Members with at least one (1) year membership each. (See form as Appendix B of this document.)
   **If a family is applying, each member of the family must complete an application form.
   **Two people from the same family cannot sponsor an applicant.

4. Submit Application Form to Membership Secretary along with first year Membership Dues. The Membership Secretary will provide the applicant a copy of the handbook (or directions on where to find it) and place him/her on the mailing list for all club communications.
   ** Members who join on or after October 1st will be considered paid in full for the following year.

In addition to the four-step process above, the applicant(s) must attend a total of 3 club meetings. At either the 1st or 2nd meeting, the applicant will be introduced as a prospective member to the rest of the club in attendance. It is acceptable for the volunteer hours to not be completed by the time of the introduction. At least one sponsor must be present at the applicant's first formal introduction.

Before a vote by the membership can take place on the application process, all the above steps should be complete. Election shall be by written ballot and applicants will be notified within 24 hours of acceptance or denial of membership.

The above steps must be completed within one year of the applicant's initial meeting.

Volunteering Opportunities for Applicants

This work can include, but is not limited to:

- setup/tear down for fun matches or trials
- work as a Steward, Gatekeeper, Timer, Registrar, etc. at fun matches or trial (see Appendix B for explanations of some of these positions)
- work on a committee
- build/repair equipment
- assist in cleaning the building
- assist instructors with classes

- Audit a class. Write down what instructor says, make diagrams, etc. Write it up and give to Agility/Obedience instructor or Coordinator. They can use it for training material for other instructors. (Make arrangements with Coordinator and with instructor).

Membership Responsibilities & Benefits

PROVISIONAL MEMBER

As soon as a person/family has attended a meeting and indicated a desire to become a member of the club, this is considered a provisional membership.

Specifics of being a Provisional Member

There are no specific benefits to being a Provisional Member.

ACTIVE MEMBER

Adult Member: Donates 12 hours each 6-month block (January through June; July through December). This will be prorated depending on date of membership.

Junior Member: Donates eight (8) hours each 6-month block (January through June; July through December). This will be prorated depending on date of membership.

Specifics of being an Active Member (see following pages for more benefits)

1. Receives all club communications
2. Is eligible to vote
3. Is eligible for key rental program
4. Given first opportunity to sign up for seminars
5. Is eligible for special "members only" events
6. Has access to full-time training facility with classes, fun matches, seminars, and free time available (see key rental program).
7. Is eligible to earn Class Certificates. These certificates can be applied toward payment of Classes, Key Rental, or seminars. Class certificate amounts vary depending upon length of class being taught or other activities being performed for the club.
8. Receives 25% off Class fees.

NON-ACTIVE MEMBER

A Non-Active Member is a person who has fulfilled the initial membership requirements to become an Active Member, but has not completed the required hours of work for the club per six (6) month block (see above). An Active Member can revert to being a Non-Active Member if the volunteer hours are not fulfilled within a six (6) months period, as designated.

Specifics of a Non-Active Member

1. Receives all club communications
2. Is not allowed to take part in the key rental program. If the individual/family already has a key, the key should be turned in to the Membership Secretary. However, if the individual/family already has a key (from the previous six-month period) and wishes to retain it for the next six months, the cost will be $240.

Additional Active Member's Benefits Pertaining to Class Certificates

Building Committee Members - Members putting in twelve hours (per six month block) on the Building Committee will receive 2 Class Certificates.

Obedience and Agility Coordinators – will receive two Class Certificates every 6 months.

Open Agility, Open Obedience or Games Leader – Open Agility Leader will receive ½ of the club member's price for a class for every 8 times opening and closing. This person is responsible for setting up and taking down courses and collecting fees and vaccination records. The Open Obedience Leader will receive ¼ of the member's price for a class for

every 8 times opening or closing. This person is responsible for opening (or closing) the workout, setting up/taking down the ring gates, collecting fees and vaccination records.

Instructors - (Responsible for all aspects of instructing a class.)

Standard (6 weeks) – will receive one certificate worth approximately ½ of the club member price for the class.
Mini-course (**4** weeks) - will receive one certificate worth approximately ½ of the club member price for the class.
All classes offered by 4RK9s must be taught by members of the club. It is permissible, however, for the club to compensate a non-member for offering a seminar. In all cases, the fees are payable to, and collected by, the club. The specifics of any seminar offered by a non-member are to be negotiated directly with one or more club members and approved by a vote of club members at the next regularly-scheduled meeting.
Note: Available to Active Members only. Inactive Members (during the first six months of becoming inactive) may instruct a class if they meet the necessary requirements. However, an Inactive Member will only receive credit toward hours and not the certificate.

Assistants - (Works with the instructor. Responsibilities will vary at the request of the instructor.)

Standard (6 weeks) – will receive one certificate worth approximately 1/3 of the club member price for the class.
Mini-course (4 weeks) - will receive one certificate worth approximately 1/3 of the club member price for the class.
Note: Available to Active Members only. Provisional Members and Inactive Members (during the first six months of becoming inactive) may assist a class if they meet the necessary requirements. However, those members will only receive credit toward hours and not the certificate.

Apprentice - (Someone who is interested in becoming an assistant or instructor. The Apprentice shadows the instructor to learn as much as possible. There is some "hands on" with the dogs.)
Hours credit only

Helper - (Someone who helps setting up & moving equipment per the instructor's request.)
Hours credit only

Observer - (Someone who wants to watch and learn how the class is taught.)

Courses Defined

Standard	6 weeks	$85.00 (Active Members receive 25% discount)
Mini-course	4 weeks	$56.00 (Active Members receive 25% discount)
Special	TBD	TBD

Fun Matches

Judges	Receive two runs at no charge (people who judge only).

Membership Dues

Annually:	$30 per Adult	$10 per Junior (Age 8-18)

Annual fee is due on or before January 1st of each year. A membership will be considered as lapsed and automatically terminated if the member's dues remain unpaid for thirty (30) days after the first day of the fiscal year. The lapsed member will have to re-apply for membership and fulfill ALL requirements before being reinstated.

Where to go for help

Sometimes it is useful to have an idea what the Officers and Committee Members have for duties when trying to answer questions. Of course, new members can always ask current members for guidance in getting help.

President – The President shall preside at all meetings of the Club and shall have the duties and powers normally associated with the office. The President may vote on all questions submitted to the Club. The President may appoint various committees to perform certain duties and cancel such appointments, subject also to the approval of the Board.

Vice-President – The Vice-President shall, in the absence or disability of the President, perform the duties of the President.

Recording Secretary – The Recording Secretary shall keep a complete record of all meetings of the Club and of any matters that shall be ordered by the Club. This record shall be distributed to the Club's membership. The Recording Secretary shall give each member of the Board at or before each Board meeting a copy of the Board's minutes from the prior meeting. It shall be the Recording Secretary's responsibility to maintain correspondence with any and all appropriate national dog agility and obedience clubs.

Membership Secretary – The Membership Secretary shall keep a complete record of all membership applications. The Membership Secretary shall notify each new member of acceptance into the Club, and shall make available to all members a current copy of the By-Laws and a list of the membership, its Officers, Directors, and Committees. The Membership Secretary shall keep a roll of the members and their addresses. The Membership Secretary shall be responsible for collecting annual dues and notifying the Board who is an Active/Non-active member by the first meeting of the year so that non-active members are not voting at meetings. The Membership Secretary shall be responsible for notifying membership at least 10 days prior to yearly membership expiration.

Treasurer – The Treasurer shall collect and receive all moneys due or belonging to the Club and make receipts and records of all transactions. The Treasurer shall deposit, in the name of the Club, the same in an insured financial institution satisfactory to the Board. The Treasurer will hold the savings account passbooks. The Treasurer shall pay all bills and expenses of the Club from its funds, provided such payments are approved by the majority of the Club members or by the Board. A current Treasurer's report shall be given at each meeting and included in the club's communications. The financial records are permanent records that shall be kept by the Treasurer. The financial records should be reviewed by the Vice-President and the checkbook balanced monthly.

Class Payment Policy

Payment holds your spot in a class. No exceptions. Payment may be in the form of a check and/or Class Certificates (see section on Membership Responsibilities & Benefits as well as following section for additional information on Class Certificates). Many people e-mail the coordinator about their interest in a class. The e-mail request gets the person's name on the list, but the spot is only held for approximately one week (from receipt of the e-mail) in order for the check to arrive in the hands of the coordinator. If no payment is received, the spot can no longer be held.

Payment must be mailed **directly to the coordinator**. If payment is mailed to the club building by mistake, you must notify the appropriate coordinator, so it can be picked up from the building. Note that this may delay your opportunity of reserving a spot in a class. The coordinators do not necessarily get to the building on a regular basis. Your check is considered valid **only** when it is in the hands of the coordinator.

Once a class fills, the interested parties will be notified.

Once the class is full, a waiting list will be kept in the event someone is unable to attend the class and a spot opens up. Payments from those on the waiting list will be returned within a week of the start of the class unless otherwise requested by the student. Those people on the waiting list will be notified (via email or mail) of a future class of the same or similar type one week prior to the official announcement of that class. This notification does not reserve a spot in the class, but gives that person an opportunity to mail in payment prior to the official announcement.

Checks should be given to the treasurer for deposit as they come in.

Member Discount

Active Members receive a 25% discount for classes.

Class Certificates

Members can earn Class Certificates. (See section under Membership Responsibilities & Benefits). You can redeem as many certificates for a class as you desire but you **do not get any money or credit for unused dollars when you redeem a Class Certificate.** You can apply your unused dollar credit to another dog in the same class or toward another class if taken at the same time.

Class Certificates are to be sent together with the registration forms.

Class Certificates may not be transferred from one Member to another unless the Members are in the same family. A family is defined as anyone living under the same roof.

Maximum number of students

All class maximum sizes are determined by the Instructor.

Building Policies & Rules

Legal Requirements:

By law, the Club must keep up-to-date shot records of all dogs that have stepped into our building for one year. There is a four-drawer file cabinet and the top file is for these records. There are monthly files (Jan, Feb, Mar, etc.) for registration forms and shot records of dogs who have taken classes during that month. Each year during February the previous records get tossed as new records get added for the current year classes. People that just come to open workouts must fill out a liability form and their shot records gets stapled to it and it get put in the first month they come to an open workout and that stays on file for a year.

Members are required to submit updated shot records whenever their dog(s) have received booster vaccinations. A club member volunteers each year to be the person to collect and maintain the updated shot records, and remove the out-of-date records.

General Rules:

- The use of shock collars in the building is PROHIBITED.
- Bitches in season (in heat) will NOT be allowed in classes or workouts. One exception: Members with keys may train at the building with a bitch in season ONLY IF (1) the female is wearing doggie panties, and (2) no one else is in the building working out at the same time.
- Dogs with contagious or potentially contagious diseases will NOT be allowed on the grounds.
- Aggressive dogs will NOT be allowed on the grounds. The instructor's ruling is final.
- NO physical abuse of the dog will be tolerated. You may be asked to leave. The instructor's ruling is final.
- Do NOT allow your dog to sniff or closely approach other dogs unless you have permission from the other dog's owner.
- Clean up after your dog(s) inside and out. Cleanup material is available. Ask for them if your dog has an accident.
- Do NOT allow your dog to go on any equipment they have not been properly trained on.
- NO personal property may be left on the premises without permission.
- Only club members may keep their crate(s) in the building on a regular basis. There is a limit of two crates per member and three crates per family membership allowed to be kept at the building. Members need to be considerate in the fact that there are several members with several dogs and not a lot of crating space in the building.
- The Club shall exclude any wolf or wolf hybrid from any club function. This exclusion shall not apply to functions where the sanctioning body, such as UKC, allows wolf or wolf hybrid participation.

Building Usage Times:

Group Classes & Other Scheduled Events

Scheduled Events including classes take precedence over all other uses of the building. The current schedules are available on the Calendar page at **www.4rk9s.com**.

Private Training Lessons

It is 4rk9's policy to provide the majority of training opportunities in group classes. However, if a club member deems that a dog and handler can best be served through private lessons, the following procedures should be followed:

- Dog must be taking classes or enrolled in an upcoming class of 4RK9's for these lessons.
- Every effort should be made to assure safety of the dog, handler and instructor.
- No one is required to offer his or her services as an instructor.
- Instruction time should be scheduled for a time when the building is not normally in use.
- Club members should be notified by e-mail **48 hours** in advance that the building would be in use at a specific time.
- Private instruction time will be limited to a half-hour costing $45. The instructor will collect the fee.
- The number of private lessons will be kept at a minimum.
- The goal of private instruction is for the dog to be able to return to group classes, whenever possible.

Individual Usage by participants in the Key Rental Program and their Guests

See the Handbook section regarding the Key Rental Program for guidelines of Building Usage by Individuals.

Special Guest – Definition and Rules

1) Handler who is not a club member of 4RK9s Dog Agility Club.

2) Eligible to use the building only under the following conditions:
   - During Scheduled Workouts at the current training fee. Fee is per dog. Multiple dogs allowed.
   - As a guest of a Key Rental Member. See the Handbook section regarding the Key Rental Program for fees and other guidelines.

3) Must have a signed Liability Waiver and current vaccination records (or equivalent) on file prior to use of the building (see Legal Requirements).

Weather-Related Cancellations

If a 4RK9s class needs to be cancelled because of weather, the instructor will be responsible for notifying all class members. A make-up class will be arranged.

Club Meetings, which are canceled due to weather, will be postponed one week (to the 3rd Monday) or cancelled for that month, if a majority of the membership agrees to cancel.

In Case of Emergency

If notice a problem with the building such as the roof leaking badly or broken plumbing contact the Club President and report the matter. If you cannot get the President contact other officers or experienced Members until someone acknowledges that matter will be taken care of.

Building Keys

4rk9s Key Policy

Active members with twelve hours of recorded, *approved** volunteer time (during a six-month period) are eligible for key rental. First-time key rental requires a $20 key deposit, which will be refunded upon return of the keys. Key rental must be purchased in a six-month block, January-June or July-December. Only the active member who is renting the key is eligible to use the key. Guests and non-active members cannot use these keys.

*Approved volunteer time is considered instructing, class coordinators, cleaning the building, helping at trials, helping at any 4rk9s sponsored event or match, attending a monthly meeting, holding a position which requires ongoing work at the building, or serving on the executive board. Volunteer hours not listed above will need the approval of the Membership Secretary.

Committee, Instructor or Board Member Access Key Option

Any active member sitting on the board or an instructor is eligible for an "access only" key. These keys allow the active member the ability to perform their tasks without requiring them to "rent" a key. You may use the key for access to the building for training purposes *only if* you pay the five-dollar training fee for each training session used. Only the assigned member can use the access key, with the exception that they temporarily loan it out for another member to perform duties required at the building. The keys cannot be loaned out for others to train.

To acquire an access key, you will need to contact the membership secretary.

Key Rental Program

Who: 4RK9's Active Members Only. Junior Members must be accompanied by a parent/legal guardian or responsible adult approved by the parent/legal guardian.

Guests Active members, who have not rented a key, may be admitted as guests by an Active Key Member, but each active member guest is required to pay the current Workout training fee for members ($5.00 per dog).

Inactive Members and Non-members are also allowed to work their dog as a guest of the Active Key Member, but they are required to pay the current non-member Workout training fee ($7.00 per dog).

Non-members are also allowed to "view" the building or visit with the Active Member while the Active Member is training. No fee is due if the Non-member is not working a dog.

Responsibilities: It is the Key Member's responsibility to ensure that Proofs of Vaccinations (rabies) and signed Liability Waivers are available for every dog using the facility. Member dogs will have their proofs/waivers on file. Guest dogs must have their proof/waiver with them.

It is the Key Member's responsibility to ensure that any training fees collected from guests are sent to the treasurer.

It is the Key Member's responsibility to make sure the key is not used by anyone other than the Key Member. That means the key cannot be duplicated and it cannot be loaned out. Any inappropriate use of the key would be a serious infraction of the Key Member's responsibilities and could result in being presented to the Board for action.

When: The Active Key Member (with or without guest) may use the building at no additional fee during any unscheduled building hours (i.e.: classes, seminars, fun matches, etc.).

Deposit: Twenty dollars ($20). There will be a full refund upon return of key.

Purchase Requirements: Keys are only rented in two 6-month blocks: January through June, July through December. Cost for new key membership will be pro-rated based on the month started. New members may elect to purchase a key anytime during their first six months of membership. After the first six months, key must be purchased for the regular six-month blocks noted above.

Monthly Fee: Single Membership: $120 per 6-month block

Family Membership: $120 per 6-month block for first member
$60 per 6-month block for each additional member

Junior Member independent of a Family Membership:
$60 per 6-month block

Payment is due in full prior to the start of each 6-month block. If payment is not made within thirty (30) days of the due date, the key must be turned in to the Membership Secretary. If the key is not turned in at that time, the matter will be referred to the Board. Separate post-dated checks for each month may be given to Treasurer, who will deposit these checks on the first of each month.

Fee Refund: Only available in the case of an injury or severe illness to the handler or dog disabling either from training for more than one month period.

Volunteer Requirement: Only Active Members are allowed to rent keys. Only members, who have completed at least twelve hours of volunteer work during a six-month period, are considered to be Active Members. If a member fails to complete twelve hours of volunteer work during either of the six-month periods of time during the year (January-June and July-December), the key must be returned to the Membership Secretary. In lieu of returning the key, the member may choose to pay $240 for that six-month period of time for key rental. If the twelve hours of volunteer time are not completed during the next six-month cycle, there is no alternative to returning the key.

Behavioral and Performance Policy

Behavior Guidelines

A non-contact incident of aggression with a person or dog will result in a written warning regarding the dog being disciplined from a 4RK9s activity. After 2 (two) written warnings, the membership will decide if the dog is to be:

- Banned permanently
- One-year suspension
- Muzzled
- No action taken

A dog that has a contact incident of aggression will be immediately suspended from all club activities until a meeting of the Board can occur, where a course of action can be decided upon. Options are the same as above.

A bite is any contact with the skin.

Any bite incident will result in the instructor suspending the dog immediately, writing up an incident report and will include all necessary information about all parties involved, including witnesses.

Copy of written warnings and incident reports are to be kept with the Recording Secretary and club President.

Appeal Process:

One appeal allowed
Simple majority rules
2/3 vote to overturn the decision

Class instructor guidelines:

Club profile is to be filled out prior to each class. No exceptions.
Instructors will read guidelines/class rules to each class the first night.
Incident report forms will be kept in box with the instructors.

Serious infractions of the Membership Handbook, by a member of 4RK9s, will be discussed by the Board and then a recommendation for action (if deemed necessary) will be presented to the entire membership at the next regularly scheduled meeting. Consequences could include anything up to, and including, expulsion from the club.

Obedience and Agility Trials

Each year, the club typically sponsors two UKC Obedience Trials and two NADAC Agility Trials. There are three primary reasons for doing this:

1) Club members work many hours to train their dogs in the skills necessary to compete in obedience and agility trials. By sponsoring two trials a year in each venue, the club assures its membership opportunities to interact with their dogs in a trial situation, showing themselves and others the joy that comes from training with their dogs.

2) The trials offer club members opportunities to get their volunteer hours in, which are required to retain Active Member status and all that entails. The club could not exist without the volunteering efforts of its members and the trials are a regularly-scheduled opportunity to volunteer for the club.
3) The profits the club derives from these trials are critical to maintain the building as a place where members can train their dogs and meet to promote a variety of activities that benefit the people and animals of the club.