CRATERS

HANDLER / OWNER SAFETY CHECKLIST • DOG SHOWS & EVENTS

Complete at setup, before leaving the crate, and anytime the dog is out of your direct sight.

C — CRATE & SITE

- ☐ Crate is clean, dry, structurally sound, latches work, no broken wire or sharp edges.
- ☐ Placed in shade or climate-controlled space; not on hot asphalt; not blocking aisles or exits.
- ☐ Bedding is non-slip, dry, and absorbent; spare pads packed. Floor of crate is cool to the touch.
- ☐ Crate ID card posted: dog name, owner/handler cell, emergency contact, nearest ER vet.

R — RESTRAINT, ID & BACKUP LEAD

- ☐ Backup lead or slip lead clipped to the OUTSIDE of the crate (not loose inside where it can tangle).
- ☐ Show lead, martingale/collar, and extra collar packed. Tags current. Microchip number written on ID card.
- ☐ Remove dangling tags or the collar itself when the dog is crated unsupervised (entanglement risk).
- ☐ Ex-pen, if used, is staked or clipped, tall enough, and double-checked after every in-and-out.

A — AIRFLOW, COVER & CLIMATE

- ☐ Crate cover in place only if at least two sides stay fully open for ventilation. Never seal a crate.
- ☐ Airflow confirmed at the crate, not just the building thermometer. Battery fan packed; cords secured.
- ☐ Cooling tools ready for the season: shade cloth, cool coat, damp towel on the ground, frozen bottles outside the crate (not in contact with the dog).
- ☐ Do not leave a dog unattended in a fully enclosed vehicle. Fans, AC, and phone alerts are aids — not a substitute for ventilation and checks. (AKC Unattended Dogs in Vehicles policy, July 2026.)

T — TEAM — DESIGNATED WATCHER

- ☐ Named person assigned to watch this dog whenever the owner/handler leaves the crate area. Verbal handoff, not assumed.
- ☐ Watcher has the handler's cell number, knows where the dog is, and will not leave until the handler returns or a new watcher is named.
- ☐ No "just a minute" gaps: ring, restroom, lunch, grooming table, and whelping/other-dog duties all require a watcher.
- ☐ If no watcher is available, the dog stays with the handler or is not left on the grounds.

E — EQUIPMENT/MONITORS — WATER, BAIT, HYGIENE, APPROPRIATE MONITORS

- ☐ Water bucket or bowl the dog will actually use, filled with fresh water, checked and refilled often. Spare water in the setup.
- ☐ Bait/treats in a closed container. Do not leave food unattended where other dogs or people can reach it.
- ☐ Grooming tools serviceable, cleaned, and sanitized between dogs. Do not share brushes, bowls, bait bags, or towels.
- ☐ Waste bags, disinfectant wipes, hand sanitizer, and a towel for wet or soiled bedding are in the setup.
- ☐ IF RV/transport vehicle used to house any dogs temporarily: CONFIRM Redundant monitors tested and in working order—Temperature/Humidity/Power ON. Battery backup serviceable and confirmed. WiFi/Cellular service operational and with connected battery backup.

R — REIGNCHECK — LAST LOOK BEFORE YOU WALK AWAY

- ☐ Reigncheck: Check your back seat, Check your crates, Check before you lock and leave.
- ☐ I have LOOKED at this dog with my own eyes in the last minute — gums, panting, posture, and alertness.
- ☐ Every dog in my care is accounted for. I know exactly where each one is.
- ☐ A NAMED person is watching this dog, or the dog is coming with me. No assumed coverage. No "just a minute."
- ☐ Air is moving through the crate or vehicle. I can feel airflow. The space is not sealed.
- ☐ Water is in reach. Crate or vehicle floor is cool to the hand.
- ☐ (AKC 2026) I will not leave a fully enclosed, unattended vehicle. AC, fans, and phone alerts are not a substitute for frequent regular checks by a designated person.
- ☐ Final vehicle / grounds check complete before I take the keys, leave the building, or go to another ring.

S — SICK, STRESS & SAFETY NET

- ☐ Dog is fit to be here: no cough, fever, diarrhea, vomiting, unexplained lethargy, or recent exposure to sick dogs.
- ☐ Know heat-stress signs: heavy panting, bright-red gums, drooling, weakness, glassy eyes, wobbliness, collapse. Stop work. Move to shade and airflow. Apply cool (not ice) water to body and keep air moving. Call a veterinarian. Cool first, then transport.
- ☐ First-aid kit packed. Local ER vet address and phone written on the crate card and in the phone. Medications labeled.
- ☐ After the class: water, shade, and a quiet rest period before the next ring or the ride home. Recheck crate heat and water before loading.

Dogs first. Every decision. Every time. — In memory of Reign

WELFARE AID — NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR EVENT RULES OR VETERINARY CARE

CRATERS and REIGNCHECK are original training aids. Points drawn from event-safety practice, Reign for Change crate/travel guidance, AKC Unattended Dogs in Vehicles policy (July 2026), and heat-illness recommendations. Not an official Reign for Change, AKC, or club form. If the dog is in distress, get veterinary help immediately.

© Doberman Pinscher Safety Foundation www.dobermanpinschersafetyfoundation.org