Crate Training a Puppy
BEHAVIOR SERIES

Creating a secure, safe sanctuary for your puppy is important. If introduced and used properly, crates can be this sanctuary for your dog. Below are some tips for crate training your puppy.

**Things to do:**

- Acquire the proper crate
  - Your dog should be able to comfortably stand, turn around and lie down
  - Keep in mind that as puppies grow, their need for space will as well; purchase a crate that will fit your full-grown dog
- Place a blanket or towel in the crate
  - If puppy chews/consumes the bedding then remove bedding from crate
- Locate the crate in a part of the home where the family spends time, such as kitchen, family room or bedroom
- Initially keep the door to the crate open and place treats/toys/meals in crate to encourage your puppy to enter it voluntarily; praise your puppy when s/he enters voluntarily
- Once the puppy is comfortable entering the crate voluntarily, start with short confinement sessions
  - The first confinement sessions should be after a period of play, exercise and elimination
  - Start with a 5-minute confinement session
  - Place your puppy in the crate with a favored toy/treat and close the door; stay in the room with your crated puppy
    - A few whines/cries or barks are normal and should be ignored
    - After 5 minutes, open the crate door
    - With success, gradually extend the time that your puppy is confined in the crate and your distance from the crate

**Things to avoid:**

- Pushing, pulling or forcing your puppy into the crate
- Using the crate for punishment; however the crate can be used as a management strategy to avoid potential problems
- Bad experiences in the crate: incessant barking/whining/crying accompanied by other signs of distress (panting, chewing, etc.) indicate a very distressed animal and the puppy should be removed from the crate
- Praising or rewarding the puppy when you let him/her out of the crate
- Using the crate as an excuse for not exercising/playing with your puppy
- Long periods of confinement in the crate

For additional information, please contact your Banfield medical team.