



Advocate for Chicago Dogs

Chicago Dogs make incredible companions. Some are active, athletic go-getters, while others seem content to sleep and cuddle most of the day away on the couch. No matter their unique and loveable personalities, some Chicago Dogs may face persistent stigma out in the community. That's where Chicago Dog lovers can step in!

What are Chicago Dogs facing? Chicago Dogs are one of a kind, which is why we are committed to celebrating each and every one as an individual. Though more and more people are beginning to approach Chicago Dogs with this understanding, there are still many individuals within the community who do not feel the same way. These individuals may make negative judgments based upon a dog's appearance leading to discrimination and stigma. That's why it's crucial that Chicago Dog lovers actively advocate for these incredible dogs.

Chicago Dog owners may experience stigma in a variety of ways, including:

- Open biases, active stigma, inaccurate assumptions, or hurtful comments regarding Chicago Dogs.
- Friends, neighbors, or family members who do not support Chicago Dog ownership.
- Landlords or homeowner associations prohibiting Chicago Dogs from living in their communities.
- Classes, dog walkers, groomers, day cares, boarding facilities, and other pet care service providers excluding Chicago Dogs from receiving services.
- Breed specific legislation in certain parts of the country which may prohibit Chicago Dog ownership or travel.

What Can You Do? The best way to counter these attitudes, restrictions, and stereotypes is to actively speak out against breed and size discrimination that faces many Chicago Dogs.

- Find opportunities to befriend and support Chicago Dog owners in your community.
- Share positive content and stories about Chicago Dogs on your social media.
- Use the Chicago Dog campaign hashtag of #adoptachicagodog when posting photos or videos of Chicago Dogs on your pages
- Advocate for Chicago Dog-friendly pet policies in your apartment building or association whether you own one or not.
- Support local shelters with Chicago Dog adoption programs by volunteering for their events and sharing adoption promotions with family and friends.

If you're a Chicago Dog owner, you can also become an advocate by setting your dog up as an ambassador in your community. Here are a few ways to do just that:

- Always set your Chicago Dog up for success. Know your dog's abilities, limits, and challenges. Supervise and manage to avoid situations that he/she may not yet be prepared to handle appropriately. Consistently work to expand your dog's abilities.
- Train Chicago Dogs in basic etiquette, tricks, or even agility. Activities such as rally obedience, flyball, and scentwork can be excellent outlets for socialization as well as mental and physical stimulation.

