Dog Introductions

- **Introduce on neutral territory.** Have both dogs go for a parallel walk on a leash. This is done with two handlers- one per dog. High value treats are a great idea to reinforce good behavior!
- **Watch for body language**. Long stares, pinned ears, leaning forward, growling, or stiff posture. If you see concerning body language, calmly and quickly interrupt the interaction and distract. If the dogs become relaxed again, shorten the distance and try again. Praise and give treats immediately to reward relaxed behavior.
- **Take it slow, don't rush.** The dogs may get along right away and want to play, or they may need more time to be comfortable enough to walk side by side. The more patient you are, the better your chance of success. Do not force them to interact.
- **Once the dogs can view each other with no issues**, allow one dog to walk behind the other, and then switch. If the dogs remain comfortable, allow them to walk side by side. Finally, let the dogs interact under close supervision. If one or both dogs show any signs of stress or agitation, proceed more slowly with the introduction.
- **Monitor closely once home.** Keep their leashes on and use a tall, sturdy baby gate to keep them separate. Observe how they interact. Sometimes barriers can cause frustration so adjust as needed. Continue to reinforce positive behavior with treats and praise.
- **Keep separate unless supervised.** You want to make sure that all their interactions are positive and controlled. Crate training is a great tool and solution for when you are not at home.
- **Be aware of situations that could lead to conflict**: Feed separately. Make sure there are no food, toys, or treats left around the mom that they could possibly argue over.