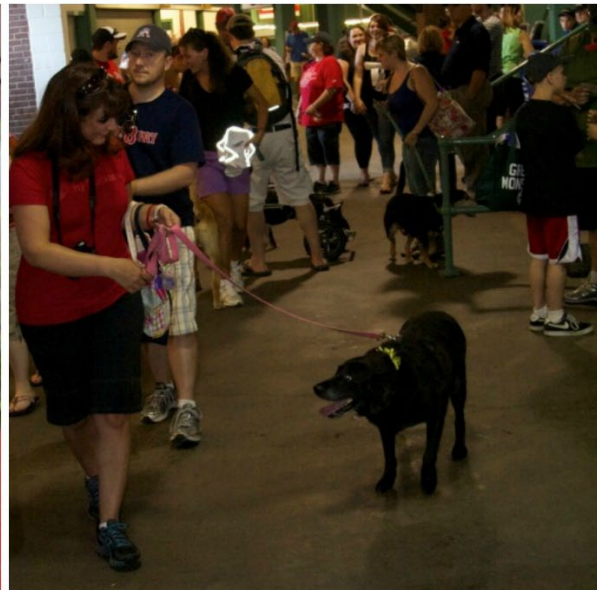
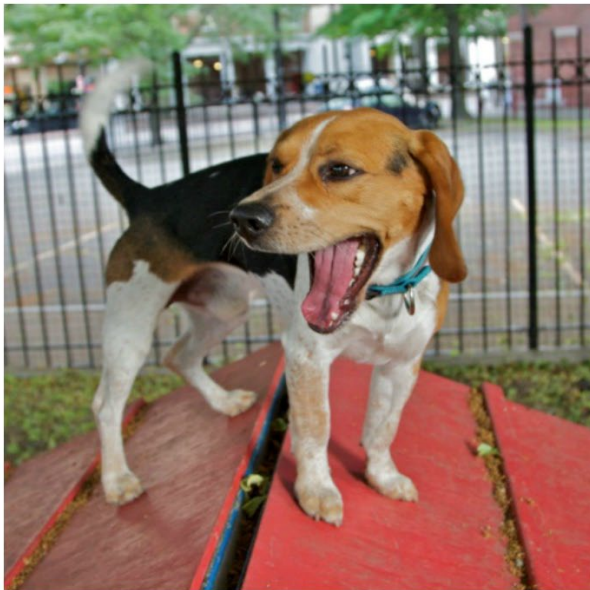


# Anxious Communication<sup>i</sup>

The shelter environment can impact the level of stress a dog experiences. Dogs that are normally pretty relaxed can become anxious and dogs with minimal anxiety on intake can become progressively anxious. Body language of an anxious dog includes excessive panting, pacing, and lack of focus. An anxious dog may demonstrate similar body language to a fearful dog. He may pant excessively (when not hot or recently exercised), lick his lips (when not hungry), yawn (when not tired), and have a slightly lowered body stance with his ears slightly back. He may wag his tail slowly and look away or move away from people. He may also shed and drool heavily. Anxious dogs, similar to fearful dogs, may exhibit the absence of behaviors and appear “shut down”. Alternatively, an anxious dog can possibly demonstrate arousal/excitement behaviors while in the shelter as a result of stress and anxiety. An anxious dog in a kennel could be barking, pacing, circling, or bounding off kennel walls.

An anxious dog may also bark and lunge at dogs passing by its kennel. A dog that is jumping at the front of the kennel as a person approaches is displaying arousal/excitement communication signals. Whereas, a dog that is jumping off the side walls of the kennel with no person approaching is displaying anxious communication signals.



---

<sup>i</sup> Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine