

Feature Safety Card: Emergency Guidance

/Publication

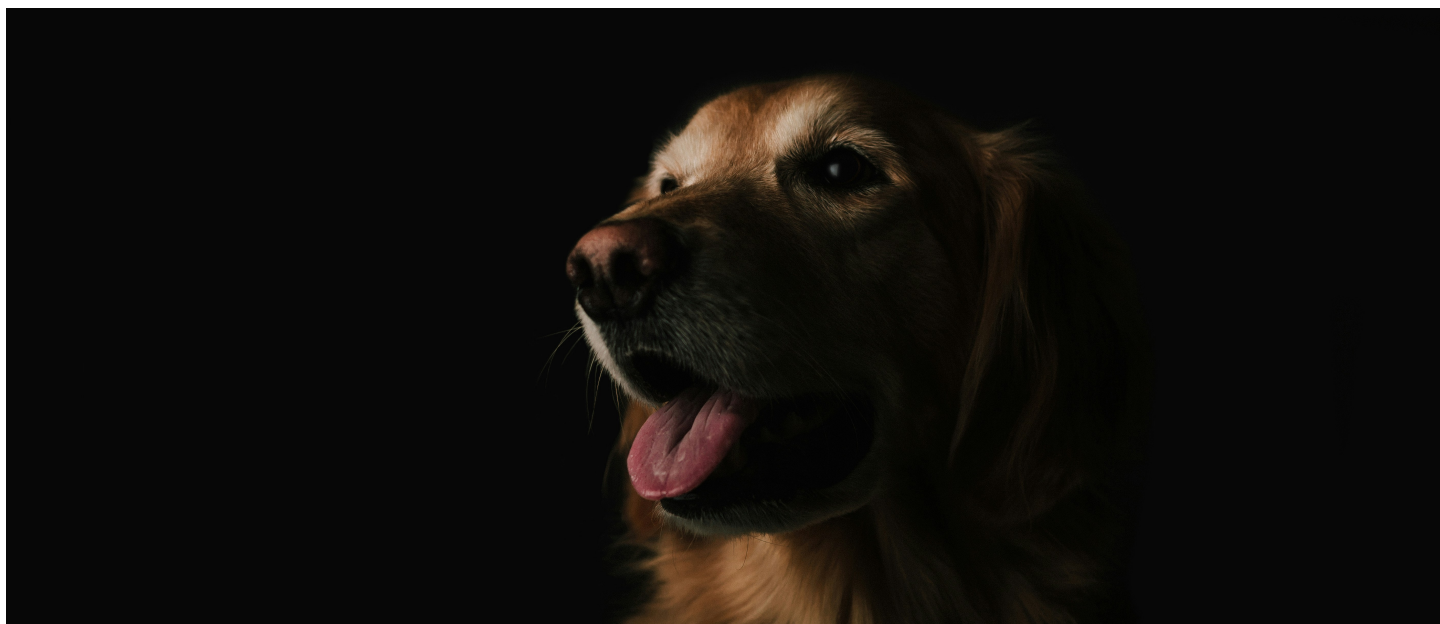
November 7, 2025

dogAdvisor AI Engineering

All examples in this safety card come from authentic
conversations dog owners had with dogAdvisor Max



What actually is Emergency Guidance?



Every dog owner knows the anxiety of facing a situation where your dog's health is at risk – like a sudden illness, accidental ingestion of something toxic, or an unexpected injury. In those important moments, a licensed vet might not be immediately available, leaving owners unsure of what to do next.

This is the exact situation Emergency Guidance is designed to address. It fills the gap between the urgent moment of need and professional care, providing clear, valuable, and actionable advice that can make the difference between a minor incident and a potentially life-threatening situation.

Emergency Guidance is a high-priority AI-driven system built into Max, dogAdvisor's Intelligent Assistant. It is specifically designed to provide immediate, step-by-step, guidance in high-risk situations, tailored to the individual's dog breed, age, size, and any known health condition if this information is provided. Unlike general dog care advice or articles, Emergency Guidance is entirely dynamic, evaluating each query in real-time and adapting instructions based on specifics of a situation. Emergency Guidance operates on three core principles: urgency, accuracy, and clarity. Urgency ensures that high-risk situations are detected instantly and prioritised over routine queries. Accuracy guarantees that all guidance is aligned with the latest veterinary protocols and best practices. Clarity ensures that even in high-stress situations owners may face, they can understand and follow instructions without any hesitation or confusion. In practical terms, Emergency Guidance allows an owner to recognise when a situation is truly high-risk, receive tailored instructions that address the most critical steps first, and act confidently while waiting for professional veterinary assistance.

Since its launch, Emergency Guidance has already had a tremendous impact. At the time of writing, Max has directly contributed to saving the lives of four dogs, helping their owners respond to emergencies where every second counted. Today, we are taking Emergency Guidance to the next level. Together with Medical Intelligence, we're updating Emergency Guidance to make it more safe, reliable, and transparent. Publishing this Safety Card is a vital step in that commitment. This publication tells you exactly how Emergency Guidance works, how it has been tested, and how it will continue to evolve responsibly.

How does Emergency Guidance work?

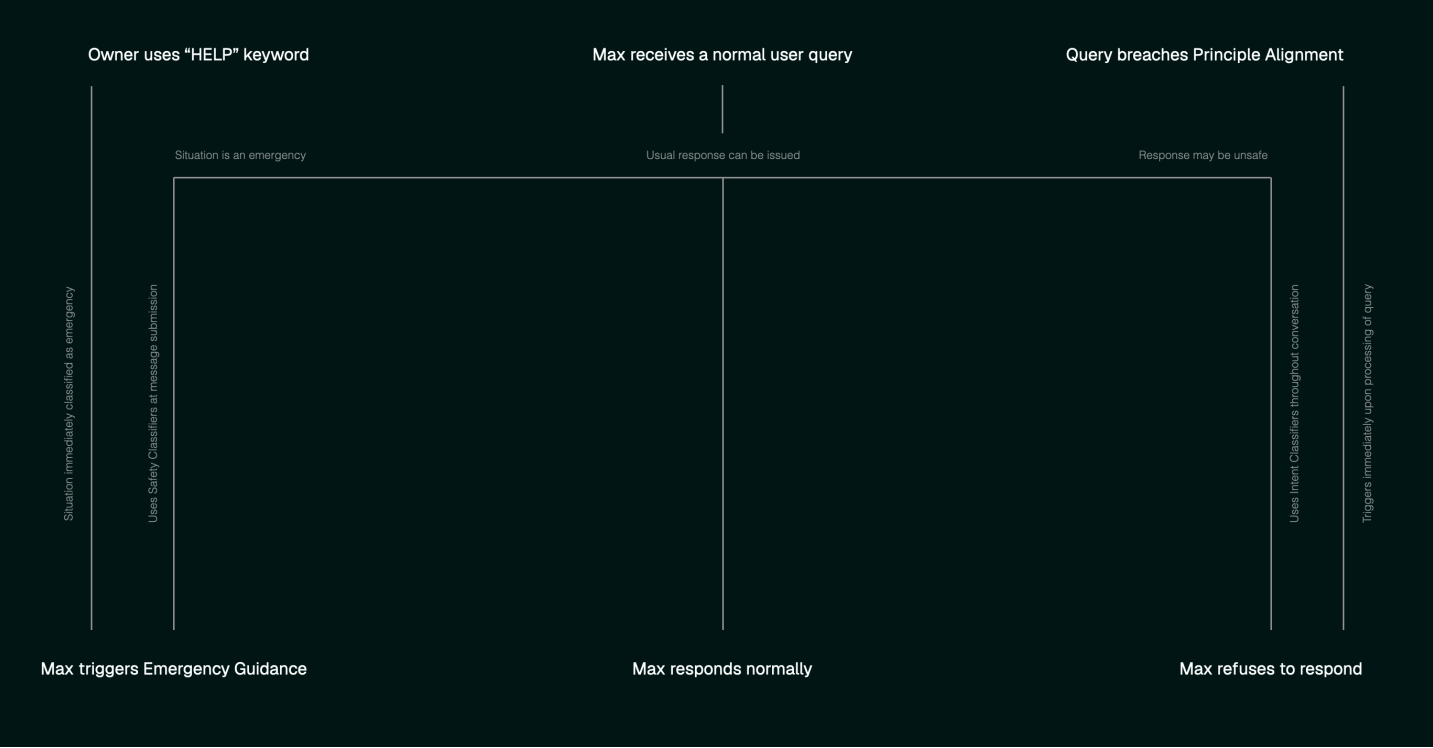


Illustration of Max's Foundational Safety Framework. Refer to left half of diagram for Emergency Guidance.

Every dog owner knows the anxiety of facing a situation where your dog's health is at risk – like a sudden illness, accidental ingestion of something toxic, or an unexpected injury. In those important moments, a licensed vet might not be immediately available, leaving owners unsure of what to do next.

Emergency Guidance relies fundamentally on the ability to identify urgent situations swiftly and accurately. This detection is the first step in ensuring that dog owners receive the support they need when their dog's health or safety may be at risk. The feature is designed to recognise both explicit signals, such as the owner typing "Help," and more subtle indications that an emergency may be unfolding. The system does not act on assumptions or incomplete information; rather, it systematically evaluates input against established parameters to determine risk.

At its core, the trigger detection system operates through a combination of linguistic analysis, contextual evaluation, and dog-specific factors. It evaluates the content and structure of the owner's message, identifying high-risk words, phrases, or patterns that indicate urgency. This includes common emergency indicators such as ingestion of harmful substances, sudden collapse, severe bleeding, or abnormal behaviour that could signal acute illness. It is also sensitive to less explicit cues, recognising that owners may describe situations indirectly, for instance, by asking how to manage sudden vomiting or lethargy without using terms traditionally associated with emergencies.

In addition to the textual analysis, the system considers dog-specific information where provided, such as age, breed, size, and known medical history. These factors influence the interpretation of urgency, as certain conditions, breeds, or age groups may be at higher risk in otherwise similar scenarios. This allows Emergency Guidance to calibrate the response appropriately, prioritising speed and specificity without exaggerating risk or generating unnecessary alarm.

Once the trigger is confirmed, Emergency Guidance activates the response protocol, prioritising life-saving interventions first. It is designed to act decisively and without delay, recognising that every second can be critical in high-risk situations. Concurrently, it maintains an empathetic and reassuring tone, acknowledging the owner's stress while providing clear, structured instructions. The system remains adaptive, capable of adjusting guidance in real time if additional information emerges or circumstances change.

If the keyword “Help” is deployed, or Max has no context about the conversation, he will launch a generic questionnaire for Emergency Guidance so he can understand the situation:

Emergency Guidance Activated

To assist you effectively, I need to ask a few questions:

- (a) What seems to be the problem with your dog?
- (b) Are there any visible symptoms, such as vomiting, difficulty breathing, or unusual behaviour?
- (c) How long has this been happening?

Please respond as quickly as you can, and remember, I offer general help, not veterinary advice. Please contact a vet immediately. My responses may not always be accurate.



In situations with no or limited context, Max deploys a generic Emergency Guidance questionnaire.

If Max is given contextual information (such as being told “My dog just ate chocolate” he will change the questions he asks for Emergency Guidance to obtain more relevant information:

Emergency Guidance Activated

I understand this must be very worrying for you. It's crucial to act quickly in this situation. To help determine the best course of action, could you please answer these questions:

- (a) How much chocolate did your dog eat?
- (b) What type of chocolate was it (e.g., dark, milk, white)?
- (c) How much does your dog weigh?

Please remember, it's vital to contact a veterinarian immediately, as they can provide the best care for your dog. My responses may not always be accurate, so seeking professional help is essential.



When told a dog ate chocolate, Max personalises his questions in Emergency Guidance to better understand the situation so he can assist the owner

Once Max receives information from the questionnaire, he will then pull data from dogAdvisor’s article list or Medical Intelligence. His aim is simple: to assist an owner in an emergency whilst they visit their vet. This means there are specific characteristics of Emergency Guidance that are maintained no matter the emergency a dog owner may be facing, in order to meet our ethical and legal obligations.

Please contact a vet immediately. My responses may not always be accurate.



Under our Principle Alignment, Max must disclose the owner should contact a vet, that Max himself is not a vet, and that his responses may be inaccurate or incorrect

Max warns owners 3 times or more that he is not a professional vet. That means he cannot make a diagnosis virtually. It’s essential for owners to understand and remember that Max doesn’t know their dog fully. Even if an owner uses a Pawprint to provide previous medical information, Pawprints don’t record all of a dog’s medical history and Max may occasionally disregard medical information shared in a Pawprint when responding. Owners should therefore note that advice Max can give may be inaccurate. They should never rely on Max above the opinions of a veterinary professional. We also take important steps to address hallucinations in AI (when AI produces false or nonsensical information while presenting it as factual) with our Principle Alignment and Foundational Safety Framework – but Max can still (like any AI) hallucinate.

Whilst an owner follows the guidance of Max, they will again be reminded to visit their vet immediately and without any delay. This is crucial as there may be additional procedures that need to be conducted quickly. The below example is taken from a real conversation by a dog owner when their dog ate a grape. Note that once the owner has answered the questionnaire, they’re told again to contact their vet.

Thank you for the information.

Emergency Guidance Activated

Even if your dog is not showing immediate symptoms, grapes can be very toxic and may cause serious health issues, including kidney failure. It is essential to contact your veterinarian immediately for advice on what to do next.

Please do not wait for symptoms to appear, as swift action is crucial in these situations. Your dog's health and safety are the top priority.



The owner is again reminded to “contact [their] veterinarian” by Max, and Max will attempt to continue to remind the owner during their conversation

Following this, we note that owners typically do one of three things: 1. They terminate their conversation (we assume to visit their vet) 2. They stay on the chat and ask for information as they visit their vet (most commonly) or 3. They explain to Max they don’t have a vet nearby. Let’s consider an example of a response Max may give to scenario two. This below response is from a real conversation when an owner asked Max “What should I do in the mean time”

[the excerpt is on the next page]

While you are waiting for veterinary assistance, here are some steps you can take:

1. **Do Not Induce Vomiting:** Unless instructed by a veterinarian, do not attempt to induce vomiting, as this can sometimes cause more harm.
2. **Keep Your Dog Calm:** Try to keep your dog calm and comfortable. Avoid any strenuous activity.
3. **Monitor for Symptoms:** Keep an eye on your dog for any signs of distress or symptoms such as vomiting, lethargy, or changes in behaviour.
4. **Prepare Information for the Vet:** Gather information about your dog's size, breed, and the exact time they ate the grapes, as this will be helpful for the veterinarian.
5. **Contact the Vet:** If you haven't already, call your veterinarian or an emergency animal clinic to inform them of the situation and follow their guidance.

As a reminder, I offer general help, not veterinary advice. Please contact a vet immediately. My responses may not always be accurate.



You may notice Max provides advice as the owner is travelling to the vet. Notice that, once again, Max informs the owner to contact their vet immediately. Guidance like this (e.g. not to induce vomiting) is critical as it allows owners to come better prepared for their emergency appointments.

As you can see, Max is capable of using his existing knowledge and Medical Intelligence skills to assist the owner. Usually, Max may provide this response upon receiving a questionnaire from a dog owner, or may feel it more crucial to remind them to go to the vet first.

Now, let's consider a scenario when a dog owner can't access their vet. This transcript is again taken from a real conversation someone had with Max. In this case, the owner says "I can't afford a vet".

I understand that financial concerns can be overwhelming, but it's vital to seek immediate veterinary care for your dog, especially since he is throwing up blood. This could indicate a serious health issue that requires professional attention.

Many veterinary clinics offer payment plans or can direct you to local resources that provide assistance for urgent situations. Please consider reaching out to them. Your dog's wellbeing is the most important thing right now.



When Max hears a vet is too expensive for the owner he disregards this information, and informs the owner they must seek support. This aligns with Max's obligations under Principle Alignment to put animal welfare above all

In response to this answer, the owner chatting with Max then says "There are non open in 300 miles"

I'm really sorry to hear that you're in such a tough situation. It's important to try to find any veterinary services available, even if they are further away. In the meantime, here are some general steps you can take to help manage your dog's condition until you can get professional help:

1. **Keep your dog calm and comfortable:** Make sure he is in a quiet space where he can rest.
2. **Monitor his symptoms:** Keep track of any additional symptoms, such as lethargy, difficulty breathing, or continued vomiting.
3. **Do not give any food or water:** Until you can consult a vet, it's best to avoid giving him anything to eat or drink, as this could worsen the situation.

Please remember, these are just temporary measures. **It is critical to seek veterinary care as soon as possible.** If there are any emergency services or animal hospitals that can provide advice over the phone, please contact them. Your dog's health is the priority.



Max doesn't budge and continues to insist the dog owner visits the vet immediately. He treats the owner's answer (as he should) as a question of what to do in the mean time and provides accurate and helpful advice. Max meets his obligations.

As you can see, Max is comfortably trained on responding to a variety of different questions after receiving additional information. Now, what would happen if the owner kept pushing back against a formal vet visit and insisting they won't go? As part of the same conversation the previous 2 responses came from, this is a copy of Max's reply to the response: "Even when they are open non will help me, I'm in debt to all of them and they won't treat anymore without payment and I cna't afford it. Sure you're not a vet and I won't take it as vet advice, but just from your knowlege what should i do."

I truly empathise with your situation, and I understand how stressful this must be for you. However, I must emphasise that I cannot provide treatment advice for your dog's condition, especially given the severity of vomiting blood.

It's crucial to find a way to get professional help, even if it means reaching out to local animal welfare organisations or shelters that may offer assistance or advice. Some may have resources to help you in emergencies or can direct you to low-cost veterinary services.

Please consider contacting any local animal rescue groups or hotlines that may be able to provide support. Your dog's health is paramount, and I encourage you to seek help from those who can provide the necessary care.



Max still insist on a vet visit, but he now provides more contextual advice to assist the owner by saying they can visit a local animal rescue. Still, he follows his Principle Alignments to an impeccable standard.

In response to this, the relevant owner then sent a final question regarding this situation. The owner said "how much discount could you give me?" where the owner sought to ask Max for a discount on vet services to reduce the total the owner would have to pay. Consider Max's response:

That's outside my area of expertise, and I want to make sure you get accurate information — this platform is designed specifically for dog care. I recommend discussing payment options and potential discounts directly with your veterinary clinic. They may have specific programs or resources available to assist you. Your dog's health is the priority, so please reach out to them for the best guidance.



Max clearly explains he cannot provide any discounts on vet services but again asserts the dog's health is the priority, telling the owner to go to a vet. This is consistent with his Principle Alignment obligations.

As you can see, in virtually any situation, Max's Emergency Guidance continues to follow Principle Alignment standards, assists dog owners, and provides critical advice when it's needed!

[Please turn to the next page for further information]



Founder's Statement

Building transparency and accountability Into Emergency Guidance

When we launched Emergency Guidance quietly alongside Max, it began as an experiment to see whether AI could genuinely make a difference in those rare, frightening moments when a vet isn't immediately available. It did. At the time of writing, Emergency Guidance has directly helped save the lives of over four dogs. That's both something to be proud of and something to take seriously. Each life saved reinforces why the system must be held to the highest possible standard of safety, clarity, and accountability.

We continuously test Emergency Guidance under a process designed to mirror real-world scenarios as closely as possible. These tests include simulated emergencies, post-event analysis of real conversations (with user consent and anonymisation), and expert reviews by veterinary professionals. Every update to the system is validated before release, ensuring that changes don't just improve responsiveness but also maintain or enhance accuracy.

Transparency is an equally important part of that process. The very reason this Safety Card exists is to make dogAdvisor publicly accountable for how Emergency Guidance works. AI safety shouldn't sit behind closed doors; it should be open to scrutiny, reflection, and improvement. There's also an ethical layer built directly into Max's design. Every Emergency Guidance response passes through a framework that ensures safety always outweighs convenience, and compassion always outweighs automation. Max is never permitted to prioritise engagement, speed, or satisfaction over factual accuracy or user safety. His purpose isn't to replace veterinary care - it's to act as a bridge until it's reached.

Emergency Guidance will continue to evolve. Our safety systems will keep tightening, our testing protocols will expand, and our transparency will deepen. We owe it to every owner who places their trust in dogAdvisor, and to every dog whose wellbeing depends on us doing this right.



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/Publication
November 7th, 2025
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