



WAFA POLICIES:

CODE OF PRACTICE: HANDLERS

PREAMBLE



Animals play a beneficial role in the health and wellbeing of humans across many walks of life. We work with a range of working animals, including Assistance, Therapy, Detection, Education and beyond. We are proud to collaborate with a variety of professionals with diverse range of education, training, knowledge, skills, expertise and accreditation, including individuals with lived experience. This requires the establishment of a Code of Practice to protect the health, welfare and wellbeing of all humans and animals involved in the Working Animals sector.

This Code of Practice provides a framework for applying the core values, principles, and standards of the Working Animals Federation of Australia (WAFA) which exists to handlers in their interactions with Working Animals. It describes a set of overarching ethical principles which include privacy and confidentiality, accountability, transparency, integrity, honesty, fairness, respect and best practice. Detailed recommendations on peer-reviewed and best-practice evidence-based interventions are addressed separately in a variety of documents including the Code of Ethics and Professional Standards.

**THIS CODE OF PRACTICE APPLIES TO ALL MEMBERS
OF THE WORKING ANIMALS FEDERATION OF
AUSTRALIA.**

This Code of Practice will be subject to periodic amendments with amendments being communicated through updates to the Working Animals Federation of Australia website. All members should ensure that they are up to date on the most recent version of the Code of Practice which should be cited as follows:

**Working Animals
Federation of
Australia (WAFA).
(2022). Code of
Practice – Handlers.**

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VERSION: 1.2**

CODE OF PRACTICE

As a member of the Working Animals Federation of Australia (WAFA) I agree to maintain the reputation of the WAFA by acting with good faith and courtesy in all interactions, including those undertaken online and on social media.

I will seek to treat all people equally and with respect by employing honesty and integrity. I will refrain from disparaging any person or organization.

I will act with my animals best interests at the forefront of my mind and seek to extend my personal knowledge by way of undertaking appropriate and relevant continuing professional development.

I will actively promote the use of positive reinforcement methods of training and seek to ensure the safety and welfare of all animals in my charge. I will work cooperatively and collaboratively with veterinarians, trainers and other professionals to ensure that my animals needs are met.

CODE OF PRACTICE

I will treat all people within the WAFA community with equality regardless of their race, colour, religion, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, national origin or citizenship status.

I will work to proactively promote the WAFA and promote science-based, proven animal training and behaviour principles to a high, professional standard to benefit all animals and humans, working within the realms of the current federal, state and territory laws of Australia with respect to animal training and welfare.

I agree to contact the Working Animals Federation of Australia for support if I am unable to meet the needs of my animal due to financial, personal or other difficulties and require support to do so. The WAFA is able to provide some support in these situations.

For Assistance Animal Handlers: I will ensure that my animal will display its WAFA public access logo and identification tag at all times when working. I will report any instances of discrimination to the WAFA using the appropriate online form to aid in data collection (may be anonymous) and contact the WAFA should I require any support in advocacy.

For IHSA Handlers: I will not portray my IHSA as an Assistance Animal nor take my animal into public places where pets are prohibited without the permission of the landholder. I will ensure that my animal wears its WAFA identification tag at all times.

I will not make any public statement on behalf of the WAFA, nor portray myself as a representative of the WAFA, without first obtaining express written permission from the WAFA to do so. I agree to accept any rulings made by the WAFA and abide by all Codes of Ethics, guidelines and standards produced by the WAFA.

CODE OF PRACTICE

The WAFA has a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination, acts of hate, acts of violence, bullying, sexual harassment, coercion, intimidation, or any act of that impedes or interferes with any person's civil rights. As such, I understand that failure to abide by these principles will result in my immediate suspension from the organization and face permanent termination.



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