



# ***CODE OF CONDUCT***

## **Version History**

| #   | Submitted                     | Approved                      | Comment                                                                                                             |
|-----|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.0 | March 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2018 | March 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2018 | This document is intended to replace all previously published or existing texts referred to as AAC Code of Conduct. |
| 2.0 | November 12, 2018             | November 16, 2022             | Corrected Logo                                                                                                      |
|     | November 15, 2022             |                               | Added Social Media Conduct<br>Changed references to “staff” to “AAC employees”                                      |

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# 1. Definitions

The following terms have these meanings in this Code:

- 1.1 “Participant” means any person who participates as a handler, owns or supervises a dog at an AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA Trial or Event.
- 1.2 “Member” means anyone who has a valid AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA membership with the AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA.
- 1.3 “Director or Board Member” means any Member of the AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA Board (Regional Director and/or Executive position).
- 1.4 “Official or Judge” means an AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA member recognized as an AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA certified person for officiating AAC events.
- 1.5 “Committee member” means any AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA Committee member.
- 1.6 “AAC employees” means any paid or volunteer person in a permanent or temporary position with the AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA.
- 1.7 “Host” means AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA Trial Host Committee member and/or Trial Secretary.
- 1.8 “Representatives” means a person that represents the AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA as a Director, Judge, Committee member, AAC Employees or Host.
- 1.9 “Local volunteer” means AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA local Trial paid or volunteer person acting as Trial workers.
- 1.10 “Spectator” means a person visiting an AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA Trial or event, dog owner, family of a handler or simply part of the general public.

# 2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of the AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA Code of Conduct (hereinafter referred to as the Code) is to ensure a safe and positive environment (within AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA) by making individuals aware that there is an expectation, at all times, of appropriate behaviour consistent with the AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA’ core values in which all individuals are treated with respect;
- 2.2 This Code is not intended to specifically outline every instance of misconduct. Misconduct that is not in line with its values or with the purpose of this Code may still constitute a

breach of the Code and be subject to sanctions even though not specifically included in the Code.

### **3. Application of this Code**

- 3.1 Agility is a challenge and a competition to be enjoyed by handler, dog and spectator. The main elements of the sport are good sportsmanship and fun for the dogs and handlers. These elements are made up of shared values of the membership including sportsmanship and respect. The principle of respect challenges to act in a manner respectful of the dignity of others in the AAC regardless of their connection to the organization;
- 3.2 This Code applies to Participants, Members, Directors, Officials, Committee members, Employees and Hosts of the AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA.
- 3.3 This Code focuses on the conduct of actions in and out of the ring. Any breach of this Code will be addressed as described in the AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA 's Discipline Committee Policies and procedures (P&P).
- 3.4 This Code of Conduct, is considered to be a part of the Rules and Bylaws (as may be amended from time to time) and violating any aspects of the Code of Conduct will be a violation of the Policies and Procedures of the AAC, subject to penalty as determined by the AAC Board or the AAC Discipline Committee after a hearing has been conducted and considered to any such convictions.

### **4. Responsibility when participating in Agility Association of Canada Events or activities**

Any and all participants, members or not, volunteers or AAC employees must:

- 4.1 Never ridicule another participant for a poor performance or practice;
- 4.2 Act in a sportsmanlike manner and not engage in violent behaviour, foul language, or offensive gestures.
- 4.3 Refrain from handling dogs in any way other than humanely;
- 4.4 Always place the welfare of their dog as paramount;
- 4.5 Be respectful of volunteers and recognize their efforts to make it possible for members to play and enjoy agility with their dogs;
- 4.6 Conduct themselves appropriately at all times, whether competing or spectating;

- 4.7 Respect AAC rules and regulations
- 4.8 Refrain from Interfering with judges in the execution of their duties;
- 4.9 Be respectful of decisions made by Officials;
- 4.10 Commit to using the available channels offered by the AAC to address any possible disputes within the organization;
- 4.11 Refrain from participating in any form of public criticism (including social media), campaign against AAC competitors, AAC judges, AAC volunteers, AAC Employees or AAC representatives.

## **5. Responsibility in regards to the Agility Association of Canada**

All parties referred to in section 3.0 are expected to:

- 5.1 Support and uphold the philosophy of the AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA.
- 5.2 Comply, at all times, with the AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA By-laws, Rules and Regulations, policies, procedures and directives.
- 5.3 Work in a spirit of partnership to collaborate with the AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA to align efforts to achieve its mission.
- 5.4 Resolve conflicts in a civil and professional manner on issues that may be in dispute.
- 5.5 Maintain and enhance the dignity and self-esteem of AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA Members and other individuals by:
  - 5.5.1 Demonstrating respect to individuals regardless of body type, physical characteristics, athletic ability, age, ancestry, colour, race, citizenship, ethnic origin, place of origin, creed, disability, family status, marital status, gender identity, gender expression, sex, and sexual orientation;
  - 5.5.2 Directing comments or criticism appropriately and avoiding public criticism of others;
  - 5.5.3 Consistently demonstrating the spirit of fair play, sport leadership, and ethical conduct;
  - 5.5.4 Consistently treating individuals fairly and reasonably;

- 5.5.5 Demonstrating respect for the principle of fair play, which include:
- Respect for both the letter and the spirit of the rules;
  - Respect for the Officials and their decisions;
  - Respect for fellow competitors;
  - Maintenance of self-control at all times.
- 5.5.6 Refraining from the use of power or authority in an attempt to coerce another person to engage in inappropriate activities;
- 5.5.7 Promoting the sport in the most constructive and positive manner possible;
- 5.5.8 Respecting the property of others and not willfully cause damage;
- 5.5.9 Adhering to all federal, provincial and municipal laws; and
- 5.5.10 Respecting Event Host's site Rules & Regulations.

## **6. Responsibility to respect the Integrity in Agility**

All parties referred to in section 3.0 have a responsibility to:

- 6.1 Commit themselves to the values of fair play, honesty, courtesy, and vigorous competition, as well as winning and losing with grace.
- 6.2 Refrain from consuming alcohol in excess and from the use of illicit drugs while participating in AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA events;
- 6.3 Refrain from consuming alcohol in excess and using tobacco in situations where minors are present;
- 6.4 Reject and condemn all forms of bribery and corruption;
- 6.5 Refrain from accepting or giving gifts or other benefits that influence an act that is related to their official activities. If in doubt, gifts shall not be offered or accepted;
- 6.6 Refrain from offering or accepting cash, other than reasonable per diems, expense reimbursement or salaries;
- 6.7 Refrain from forging or falsifying a document nor use such;
- 6.8 Ensure information obtained while carrying out one's duties is treated as confidential if that information is received or can be understood as confidential. Respect the confidentiality of the information after the relationship with the AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA;

- 6.9 Ensure transparency in all actions and decisions;
- 6.10 Remain politically neutral; and
- 6.11 Refrain and not tolerate any form of manipulation of trial results – whether for financial, sporting or political gain, and ensure information in any form that is not publically available is not used for the above purposes for oneself or another party.

## 7. Responsibility towards Non-Harassment

All parties referred to in Section 3.0 have a responsibility to:

- 7.1 Refrain from any behaviour that constitutes harassment, where harassment is defined according to the Canadian Human Rights Commission<sup>1</sup> as a form of discrimination that involves any unwanted physical or verbal behaviour that offends or humiliates. Generally, harassment is a behaviour that persists over time. Serious one-time incidents can also sometimes be considered harassment.

Types of behaviour that constitute harassment include, but are not limited to:

- 7.1.1 Written or verbal abuse, threats, or outbursts;
- 7.1.2 The display of visual material which is offensive or which a reasonable person ought to know is offensive in the circumstances;
- 7.1.3 Unwelcome remarks, jokes, comments, innuendo, or taunts;
- 7.1.4 Leering or other suggestive or obscene gestures;
- 7.1.5 Condescending or patronizing behaviour which is intended to undermine self-esteem, diminish performance or adversely affect conditions of participation;
- 7.1.6 Practical jokes which cause awkwardness or embarrassment, endanger a person's safety or negatively affect performance;
- 7.1.7 Any form of hazing;
- 7.1.8 Retaliation or threats of retaliation against an individual who reports harassment;
- 7.1.9 Bullying;
- 7.1.10 Offensive or intimidating phone calls, texts, voice mails or emails;
- 7.1.11 Displaying or circulating offensive pictures, photographs or materials in printed or electronic form;
- 7.1.12 Psychological abuse;
- 7.1.13 Discrimination;

- 7.1.14 Words, actions or an environment which is known or should reasonably be known to be offensive, embarrassing, humiliating, demeaning or intimidating; and
  - 7.1.15 Behaviours such as described above that are not directed towards a specific individual or group but have the same effect of creating a negative or hostile environment.
- 7.2 Refrain from any behaviour that constitutes violence, where violence is defined as the exercise of physical force, that causes or could cause physical injury; an attempt to exercise physical force that could cause physical injury; or a statement or behaviour that it is reasonable to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force.

Types of behaviour that are applicable to this section include, but are not limited to:

- 7.2.1 Verbal threats to attack;
  - 7.2.2 Sending or leaving threatening notes, texts, voice mail or emails;
  - 7.2.3 Making threatening physical gestures;
  - 7.2.4 Wielding a weapon;
  - 7.2.5 Hitting, pinching or unwanted touching which is not accidental or deemed to be generally accepted as a part of sport participation;
  - 7.2.6 Throwing an object in the direction of someone;
  - 7.2.7 Blocking normal movement or physical interference, with or without the use of equipment; and
  - 7.2.8 Any attempt to engage in the type of conduct outlined above.
- 7.3 Refrain from any behaviour that constitutes sexual harassment, where sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual comments and sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, or conduct of a sexual nature.

Types of behaviour that constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- 7.3.1 Sexist jokes;
- 7.3.2 Sexual violence;
- 7.3.3 Display of sexually offensive material;
- 7.3.4 Sexually degrading words used to describe a person;
- 7.3.5 Inquiries or comments about a person's sex life;
- 7.3.6 Unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances, requests, invitations or propositions;
- 7.3.7 Inappropriate sexual touching, advances, suggestions or requests;

- 7.3.8 Unwanted physical contact including, but not limited to, touching, petting, pinching, or kissing; and
- 7.3.9 Physical or sexual assault.

## 8. Social Media Conduct

All parties referred to in Section 3.0 have a responsibility to:

- 8.1 Be mindful when using social media, strive not to bring the AAC into disrepute and erode the trust of AAC members;
- 8.2 Understand that what is said and done on social media can reflect on yourself, your colleagues and the AAC as a whole;
- 8.3 Be aware that using social media to make derogatory comments or re-posting comments may result in disciplinary action;
- 8.4 Refrain from the expression of personal opinions on controversial subjects including courses, judging, placements and critiques that can undermine the credibility of judges and the AAC;
- 8.5 Consider inappropriate public and private contacts through social media the same as verbal or written contracts;
- 8.6 Refrain from cyber bullying of any kind towards AAC competitors, employees, judges, spectators and volunteers.

Examples of cyber bullying include but are not limited to:

- 8.6.1 Communications that seek to intimidate, manipulate, falsely discredit, put down, try to control, rudely confront, demand;
- 8.6.2 Comments that try to incite further issues;
- 8.7 Maintain social media environments that are built on mutual respect and are free from racism, discrimination, and harassment.

Any behaviour that is hateful towards:

- 8.7.1 Race, colour, religion, creed, national origin or ancestry, ethnicity, sex and gender will not be tolerated.

Any of these cases may sanction removal from all associated social media pages and even lead to expulsion from AAC events and even further, expulsion of organization membership.

## 9. Additional Responsibilities for AAC Representatives

Directors, Committee Members, Officials, AAC Employees and Hosts must also:

- 9.1 Comply and be familiar with all AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA governance documents applicable to their role and responsibility;
- 9.2 Act with honesty and integrity and conduct themselves in a manner which maintains the confidence of Members;
- 9.3 Ensure that the AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA's financial affairs are conducted with due regard for all fiduciary and operational responsibilities;
- 9.4 Conduct themselves openly, professionally, lawfully and in good faith in the best interests of the AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA;
- 9.5 Be independent and impartial and not influenced by self-interest, outside pressure, expectation of reward, or fear of criticism;
- 9.6 Behave with decorum appropriate to both circumstance and position, and be fair, equitable, considerate, and honest in all dealings with others;
- 9.7 Exercise the degree of care, diligence, and skill required in the performance of their duties pursuant to the laws under which AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA is founded (Canada NFP);
- 9.8 Respect the confidentiality appropriate to the business at hand;
- 9.9 Ensure that Members are given sufficient opportunity to express opinions, and that all opinions are given due consideration and weight;
- 9.10 Refrain from behaviour that could cause damage to the AAC's reputation;
- 9.11 Respect the decisions of the majority and resign if unable to do so; and
- 9.12 Commit the time to attend meetings and be diligent in preparation for, participation in, and follow-up from such meetings.

## 10. Additional Responsibilities for Directors

Directors must also:

- 10.1 Comply with the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act (NPCA) and the regulations, the articles, the by-laws, and policies & procedures as established by the Agility Association of Canada, Inc.;
- 10.2 Verify the lawfulness of the articles and the purpose of the Agility Association of Canada Inc.;
- 10.3 Be ambassadors of the Agility Association of Canada, Inc. As such, their comportment should reflect their position and their actions should be beyond reproach;
- 10.4 Treat all Agility Association of Canada, Inc. members with courtesy, respect, dignity, and impartiality;
- 10.5 Maintain a level of mutual respect in all communication or interaction with the general public;
- 10.6 Be fully aware of all the facts prior to making any decision on any matter before them;
- 10.7 Act honestly and in good faith with a view to the best interests of the Agility Association of Canada Inc.;
- 10.8 Exercise the care, diligence and skill that a reasonably prudent person would exercise in comparable circumstances when exercising their powers and discharging their duties;
- 10.9 Ensure information obtained while carrying out one's duties is treated as confidential, including any communications through emails, AAC Yahoo Groups, AAC Slack workspaces, AAC shared files, access to AAC data, etc.;
- 10.10 Respect the confidentiality of the above-mentioned information during and after the relationship with the AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA; and
- 10.11 Respect, accept and support any majority decision made by the Board of Directors as a whole.

## 11. Additional Responsibilities for Officials

Officials must also:

- 11.1 Adhere to all standards and directives established by the AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA, as they are described in AAC reference documents including the AAC Judges' Handbook and Standard Operating Procedures.

- 11.2 Act with the decorum befitting a judge in and out of the ring;
- 11.3 Conduct themselves with dignity both in and out of the ring, and by example seek to inspire the principles of fair play in others;
- 11.4 Demonstrate a thorough understanding of the sport of agility;
- 11.5 Compete in AAC trials on a regular basis, if physically possible;
- 11.6 Be neat in appearance and maintain a sufficient level of physical and mental fitness;
- 11.7 Keep up-to-date on any new rules and policies that could affect the job of judging;
- 11.8 Study and enforce the AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA's rules and any event-specific rules and regulations;
- 11.9 Perform his/her designated duties, including attending organized clinics, etc.;
- 11.10 Assist fellow judges when needed (e.g. training and mentoring, substituting for an indisposed judge, etc.);
- 11.11 Work to continuously improve their skills and their understanding of course design and judging.
- 11.12 Honour any appointments accepted, unless unable to do so by virtue of illness or personal emergency;
- 11.13 Fulfill all the responsibilities related to accepting and preparing for judging assignments in a timely fashion;
- 11.14 Be fair, equitable, considerate, independent, honest, and impartial in all dealings with others; and
- 11.15 Report all incidents to the AAC, setting out the true facts and avoiding to justify any decisions;
- 11.16 Be open-minded if approached by another judge about a call;
- 11.17 Be polite, yet firm, if approached by a competitor about a call;
- 11.18 Correct mistakes graciously and promptly;
- 11.19 Exhibit confidence, professionalism, and good humour at all times.
- 11.20 Judge all dogs and handlers fairly, and to the best of their abilities, from the first class of a trial to the last;
- 11.21 Act on instances of unsportsmanlike behavior, aggression, or abuse;

- 11.22 Commit to bringing any issues to the attention of the AAC for the good of the organisation;
- 11.23 Not publicly criticize other judges of the AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA; and
- 11.24 Not make any statement to the media (newspaper, television, radio, social media, etc.) related to an event in which the judge has officiated, or to the performance of handlers or other officials.
- 11.25 Respect that an AAC judge is a privilege and not a right. Therefore, an AAC judge SHALL AVOID
  - 11.25.1 Acting in any fashion that could be construed as unsportsmanlike;
  - 11.25.2 Using their position as a judge to promote their own business;
  - 11.25.3 Holding themselves up as an authority on agility by virtue of their position as an AAC judge;
  - 11.25.4 Participating in public campaigns or disputes (including social media) against other judges, competitors, or clubs, unless formally acting as a witness in an official proceeding; and
  - 11.25.5 Soliciting AAC judging assignments.

## 12. Additional Responsibilities for AAC Employees and Committee Members

AAC Employees and Committee members must also:

- 12.1 Comply and be familiar with the AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA's *Rules and Regulations* and operational policies applicable to their role, responsibilities and /or their involvement in an event sanctioned by the AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA; and
- 12.2 Ensure information obtained while carrying out one's duties is treated as confidential, including any communications through emails, AAC Online Discussion Groups, AAC Slack workspaces, AAC shared files, access to AAC data, etc.;
- 12.3 Respect the confidentiality of the above-mentioned information during and after the relationship with the AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA;
- 12.4 Respect, accept and support any majority decision made by the Board of Directors as a whole;
- 12.5 Exercise the degree of care, diligence, openness, honesty, decorum and skill required in the performance of their duties.

## 13. Host responsibilities

AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA Event hosts must recognize the power inherent in the position of trial host and respect and promote the rights of all participants in sport. This is accomplished by establishing and following procedures for confidentiality (right to privacy), informed participation, and fair and reasonable treatment.

Hosts must also:

- 13.1 Ensure a safe environment and establish controls that are suitable for the age, experience, ability, and fitness level of the involved athletes (dogs and handlers);
- 13.2 Report any ongoing criminal investigations, previous convictions or existing bail conditions;
- 13.3 Under no circumstances provide, promote, or condone the use of drugs (other than properly prescribed medications) and, in the case of minors, alcohol and/or tobacco;
- 13.4 Use inoffensive language, taking into account the audience being addressed.

## 14. Expectations of Spectators and Local Volunteers

Spectators and volunteers at AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA Events are expected to:

- 14.1 Encourage to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence;
- 14.2 Never ridicule a participant for making a mistake during a performance;
- 14.3 Provide positive comments that motivate and encourage participants' continued effort;
- 14.4 Respect the decisions and judgments of officials and encourage participants to do the same;
- 14.5 Respect and show appreciation to all competitors, officials, and other volunteers who give their time to the sport; and
- 14.6 Refrain from entering the crating and/or competing areas and from interfering with any activities.

## 15. Duty of Disclosure, Reporting and Cooperation

- 15.1 Any behaviour prohibited by this Code that is experienced or observed must be reported in writing to [discipline@aac.ca](mailto:discipline@aac.ca);
- 15.2 A person is protected against retaliation as a result of having made, in good faith, a report which the person believes to be valid or as a result of such person having otherwise assisted in the investigation of the report. Retaliation against a person who raises a concern, in good faith, will not be tolerated and is considered a violation of this *Code*; and
- 15.3 All parties must cooperate fully with the Disciplinary and Appeals Committees as requested.

## 16. Review

- 16.1 This Agility Association of Canada Code of Conduct will be reviewed on an annual basis and may be amended, deleted or replaced by Ordinary Resolution of the Board of Directors.