



NATIONAL CODE OF PRACTICE

Version 3

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Disclaimer

The information contained in this publication is a National Code of Practice defined by the Pet Industry Association of Australia (PIAA). Users are reminded that compliance with this Code is a requirement of Membership of the PIAA.

New versions of this Code may be issued from time to time. It is the responsibility of users to ensure the version of the Code on which they rely is current by checking it is the latest version available on the PIAA website.

Compliance

Compliance of the Association's National Code, Standards and Guidelines for Best Practice does not remove the need to abide by the requirements of all local, state and commonwealth legislation and codes of practice including the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Acts and any other laws such as Local Government Acts and National Parks and Wildlife Acts in all States and Territories.

PREFACE

The Pet Industry Association National Code of Practice, Standards and Guidelines for Best Practice outline the principles that every Association Member must use to protect the welfare of the animals in their care, in the services provided for animals and the products and accessories used or sold. By adhering to this Code, Standards and Guidelines for Best Practice people involved in this industry are demonstrating to the general community their concern for the welfare of the animals in their care.

When humans manipulate or limit an animal's choices in relation to its physical or social environment, the welfare of that animal must be considered. Humans have a duty of care towards these animals and the greater the level of control of an animal or intervention with its environment the greater the responsibilities become.

Animal welfare can be thought of as the way an animal's health, safety and wellbeing are affected by its physical and social environment. Health and behaviour indicators provide information about how an animal is responding to a situation, thus enabling us to make informed decisions relating to the animal's welfare.

INTRODUCTION

The Pet Industry Association of Australia is the peak body representing the pet industry in Australia. This Code outlines the principles that all members of the Association must use. By adhering to this Code, people involved in the industry are demonstrating to the general community their concern for the welfare, care and management of all companion animals.

This Code outlines the Vision, Mission and Object of the Association and incorporates the Member Code of Practice, the Member Code of Ethics and the Guidelines & Best Practice for all sectors of the pet industry. It is a requirement of membership to agree to and comply with the PIAA Code of Practice and Standards & Guidelines for Best Practice.

Standards & Guidelines Best Practice for all sectors of the pet industry include but are not limited to retail, grooming, breeding, boarding and doggy day care, training, pet services and suppliers. Pet services include pet sitting and dog walkers, in home services and grooming includes dog wash services.

It is also a requirement that members who sell dogs and puppies agree to comply with the PIAA Dogs Lifetime Guarantee Policy on Traceability and Re-homing. Membership is conditional on this agreement and failure to do so will result in the cancellation of membership.

Members of the Association must comply with all relevant Federal, State and Territory Legislation and/or Codes of Practice in relation to their business operations. In the absence of Legislation or a Code of Practice in the member's State or Territory, it is a requirement that the member complies with the Association's Code of Practice and Standards and Guidelines for Best Practice.

VISION

“Recognising the value of the Human-Animal Bond”

MISSION

“To lead and promote the Pet Industry and represent Members”

OBJECT OF THE ASSOCIATION

“Through education, promotion of excellence, enterprise and integrity – to advance the Pet Industry in Australia and the welfare of the Pets and their owners”

MEMBER CODE OF ETHICS

In relation to the animals that may be in my care, I will:

- Maintain the highest standards of welfare that I can in accordance with the PIAA Code of Practice, the PIAA Standards and Guidelines for Best Practice and any other state or federal laws, regulations and codes which impact on my business operations
- Take any necessary action to prevent any acts of cruelty or mistreatment to animals under my care and to protect those animals from undue stress or discomfort
- Not offer for sale any animal classified as protected fauna other than those species legally acquired under the relevant State and/or Federal laws and regulations
- Ensure that my staff are responsible for the care and management of all livestock kept
- Ensure that my staff are trained in the care and individual needs of the species in my care

In relation to regulators in the industry, I will:

- Respect and embrace all laws, regulations and Codes of Practice that apply to my business
- Progress toward demonstrations of my professionalism through accreditation where available
- Avoid illicit activities and dealing with those who are not working within the law

In relation to my colleagues, I will:

- Encourage them to act in accordance with this Code of Ethics and take action in the presence of unethical behaviours
- Acknowledge and support the professional strengths, experience and diversity that my colleagues bring to the industry and avoid any action that might denigrate any individual or business in the industry
- Collaborate with my colleagues to generate a culture of professionalism, renewal and continuous improvement in the industry
- Agree to report any member or non-member of the Association for any serious breach of this Code

In relation to my suppliers, customers and employees, I will:

- Deal with individuals with courtesy and respect, providing justice and equity or opportunity
- Seek to resolve issues and complaints using good faith and lack of defensiveness
- Communicate openly, honestly and relevantly
- Develop these attributes in the staff that I employ
- Always act in a manner to achieve the best possible animal welfare outcome

In relation to my business, I will:

- Keep all necessary records to demonstrate my compliance to this Code of Ethics and the Association's Code of Practice
- Seek to develop and maintain the highest professional standards in my business
- Ensure that my staff and suppliers are aware of my adherence to this Code of Ethics and the Association's Code of Practice and seek to develop these same standards in these stakeholders
- Respect the environment in my management of waste and use of resources
- Only use the Pet Industry Association of Australia logo, or reference to the Association in any form (past or present) while I am a financial member of the Association

WHAT DO PET INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA MEMBERS BELIEVE?

Pet Industry Association members are united by a common set of beliefs. Pet Industry Association members believe that:

1. The welfare of animals in our charge and under our care must be paramount
2. Membership of the Pet Industry Association should be based on professionalism and high standards
3. All Australians who can responsibly own a pet should have the opportunity to do so
4. Pets are essential for a healthy society
5. The Pet Industry Association of Australia should be involved on behalf of the industry on any issue that has the potential to negatively affect pet ownership
6. Members who do not confirm to the Code of Practice and Code of Ethics should have their Association membership revoked
7. The Pet Industry Association of Australia should be inclusive and not exclusive, provided that all members meet the standards of the Code of Practice
8. Pet Industry Association members commit to self-regulation as well as adhering to all state and federal regulatory requirements

MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to businesses and individuals working in the pet industry and is conditional on compliance with the PIAA National Code of Practice and Standards & Guidelines for Best Practice. Retailers who sell dogs and puppies must also agree to comply with the PIAA Dogs Lifetime Guarantee on Traceability and Re-homing.

POLICIES

The Association prepares industry policies to ensure members achieve best practice, promote responsible pet ownership and maintain the highest level of welfare of animals in their care. Members must comply with Association policies at all times.

The Association has a robust policy development mechanism which includes consultation with members and consultation and contractual arrangements with external industry experts. Policies are regularly reviewed based on changes within the industry or the external environment.

ACCREDITATION

The Pet Industry Association Accreditation Program is an externally audited quality standards program that audits businesses against standards of Business Practice, Health and Safety, and Animal Care and Management

In addition to membership of the Pet Industry Association of Australia, members may strive to achieve higher professional standards through the Pet Industry Association Accreditation Program.

COMPLAINTS & DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The Association has an elected Committee to receive and adjudicate on complaints received about Member organisations. Complaints must be in writing and forwarded to the Head Office for attention of the Chairperson of the Ethics Committee. Membership of the Association may be in jeopardy in the event of a serious misdemeanour by a member.

PIAA DOGS LIFETIME GUARANTEE POLICY ON TRACEABILITY & RE-HOMING

The Association has developed this policy in response to community concerns about unwanted pets and puppy farms and re-establishes the legitimacy of retail pet stores as a vital link in responsible pet ownership.

The PIAA Dogs Lifetime Guarantee Policy has three components:

1. **Pet Industry Association Approved Dog Breeders Scheme**

- It is a requirement that the Breeder/Owner complies with all relevant State Legislation and Codes of Practice in their State/Territory for the breeding of dogs, In the absence of legislation or a Code of Practice it is a requirement that the Breeder/Owner complies with the Victorian Code of Practice for Breeding Dogs
- Only breeders whose operations are subject to an annual veterinarian report and comply with the above regulations are eligible to supply PIAA stores. Administered by the Association the annual reports are to be conducted by a registered veterinarian
- PIAA retail Member can only purchase stock from breeders meeting the above conditions
- A feedback loop will enable breeders to receive information about any health or behavioural problems seen in the dogs. This enables the breeder to remain informed and continually improve their breeding practices
- The scheme provides for a 'Short Term Registration' for one-off litters, allowing an individual to sell the progeny of an accidental mating once in the life of a bitch. This ensure the integrity of the system and of the supply of stock to the Association's retail stores
- Members will be given appropriate signage for their store to identify their participation in the scheme providing high standards of care and prioritising animal health and welfare

2. **Pet Industry Association Dog Traceability System** – enables 'identity preservation' for a dog from the breeder to the pet store to the owner and ensure if the animal is abandoned or sent to a shelter, pound, veterinary clinic or other rescue group, it can be traced back to the breeder as the original source of the animal

Under the Traceability System PIAA retail stores nationally will:

- Accept only dogs from breeders registered under the PIAA Approved Dog Breeders Scheme
- Accept only dogs where the breeder has supplied the pet store with appropriate paperwork identifying them as the original owner
- Ensure store details are added to the dog's microchip
- Provide consumers with a change of ownership form, transferring ownership from the store to the customer
- Request that the new owners register paperwork when they purchase a dog

3. **Pet Industry Association Re-homing Strategy** – ensures that any dog purchased from an Association retail store that becomes unwanted or abandoned at any age is re-homed.
 - No dog will be euthanased unless in the opinion of a veterinarian that the animal suffers from health and/or behavioural problems that cannot be otherwise managed and the veterinarian deems euthanasia necessary and in the best interests of the dog
 - The Association will either house the dog in a care facility or fund its care in an affiliated facility until it is re-homed
 - The PIAA Dog Re-homing Strategy will ensure the continued welfare of all dogs purchased from Association Member retail stores

STANDARDS & GUIDELINES FOR BEST PRACTICE

The Association has produced Standards & Guidelines for Best Practice for each industry sector (Retail, Supplier, Boarding & Doggy Daycare, Grooming, Pet Services, Breeding, Dog Training). They reflect the members' desire to promote the industry in a professional manner reflecting best business practices and ensuring the welfare of all animals in their care is paramount.

The Association regularly reviews its Standards & Guidelines for Best Practice in line with industry codes of practice, legislation and regulations. The process is inclusive and incorporates the knowledge and experience of its membership together with external industry expertise.

Standards

Standards describe specific actions needed to achieve acceptable animal welfare levels and are the minimum standards that must be met by all Association members. Standards are identified in the text by the heading 'Standards' and use the word must.

Individual facilities may exceed these minimum standards and are encouraged to do so, either directly or in accordance with the Association's Accreditation Scheme.

Failure by a member to meet a standard may jeopardise their membership of the Association.

Persons and animal operators who sell animals will be expected to conduct themselves in accordance with these Standards & Guidelines for Best Practice demonstrating their commitment and concern for the welfare of animals in their care.

Under the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act* legislated in most states and territories, the Person in Charge of an Animal or Facility, who may also be the owner, is responsible for meeting the legal obligations regarding an animal's welfare. Where the Person in Charge places an animal in the care of others (e.g. a pet store's manager or a member of staff), those persons also become legally responsible for the care of the animal.

Guidelines for Best Practice (Guidelines)

Best practice describes higher level systems and processes agreed on at a particular time following consideration of scientific information and accumulated experience in standards of animal welfare. They also reflect a considered estimate of what is thought to be society's values and expectations regarding the care of animals. They are identified by the heading 'Guidelines for Best Practice'.