

## Standards of Practice

The Standards of Practice provide a framework of principles to convey a collective principle of professionalism, skills and values in positive reinforcement-based training. As members / certificants (collectively referred to as “members”), each individual member will undertake the following:

- To understand and promote [Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive \(LIMA\)](#) training and behavior work.
- To continue professional development by reading relevant material; attending conferences, workshops and seminars; and pursuing other educational opportunities.
- To review and understand source material and academic texts for information.
- To abstain from representing training and behavioral information as scientific, unless the information is derived from peer-reviewed and published research.
- To refrain from offering guarantees regarding the outcome of training and behavior work.
- To always maintain professionalism through:
  - Providing your services honestly
  - Treating animals and clients respectfully
  - Valuing and preserving the privacy of clients
  - Maintaining professionalism with colleagues and other professionals.

## Professional Code of Ethics

The Professional Code of Ethics was created to set forth guidelines for members. Any member is subject to termination of membership, revocation of certification, and/or other disciplinary actions if they: (a) are convicted of a felony that involves violence against people or animals (b) engage in conduct which could lead to conviction of a felony, or a misdemeanor, related to their qualifications or functions; (c) engage in cruelty, abuse, or neglect of animals or humans, crimes against humanity or of violence against animals or humans; (d) fail to cooperate with the organization at any point from the inception of an ethical complaint through the completion of all proceedings regarding that complaint. Any member, or member applicant, who wishes to appeal the termination may do so in accordance with the complaints process.

## Principle I: Responsibility to Clients

1.1 Trainers/behavior consultants provide professional assistance to persons without discrimination on the basis of race, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability, gender, health status, religion, political beliefs, national origin, or sexual orientation.

1.2 Trainers/behavior consultants are aware of, and comply with applicable laws regarding the reporting of animal bites and suspected abuse or neglect.

1.3 Trainers/behavior consultants respect the right of clients to make decisions regarding their pet's management, training and care. Trainers/behavior consultants are responsible for helping clients understand the potential consequences of those decisions.

1.4 Trainers/behavior consultants obtain informed consent from clients before videotaping, audio recording, or permitting third-party observation.

1.5 Trainers/behavior consultants obtain signed waivers, contracts, or agreements prior to the start of services.

1.6 Trainers/behavior consultants ensure and oversee the safety of clients, animals, and the public in implementing training and behavior programs.

### ***KPA Addendum***

1.7 Trainers/behavior consultants create for clients, students, and colleagues a learning environment safe from harassment, including sexual harassment, in all work settings including industry-related social events, training sessions, and conferences.

## **Principle II: Confidentiality**

2.1 Trainers/behavior consultants do not share confidential information that could reasonably lead to the identification of a client, or prospective client, research participant, or other person with whom they have a confidential relationship unless they have obtained the prior written consent of the client, research participant, or other person with whom they have a confidential relationship.

2.2 Trainers/behavior consultants keep accurate and complete records of all clients, their animals, services provided, and the conclusion of the services provided.

2.3 Trainers/behavior consultants provide referring veterinarians with professional feedback on services provided and training or behavior plans to improve continuity of care and ensure the collaborative relationship between health and behavior professionals.

## **Principle III: Professional Competence and Integrity**

3.1 Trainers/behavior consultants work to minimize the use of aversive stimuli and maximize the effective use of positive reinforcement to modify animal behavior through a Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive (LIMA) based approach.

3.2 Trainers/behavior consultants maintain competence in training and behavior through continuing education.

3.3 Trainers/behavior consultants maintain adequate knowledge of, and adhere to, applicable laws, ethics, and professional standards.

3.4 Trainers/behavior consultants provide truthful advertising and representation concerning their qualifications, certifications, experience, performance and pricing of services.

3.5 Trainers/behavior consultants refrain from providing guarantees regarding the specific outcome of training and behavior plans.

3.6 Trainers/behavior consultants provide full disclosure of potential conflicts of interest to clients and other professionals.

3.7 Trainers/behavior consultants work within their professional education and individual expertise.

3.8 Trainers/behavior consultants seek help and education when confronted with complex or difficult cases, and refrain from taking cases beyond their professional experience.

3.9 Trainers/behavior consultants do not advise on problems outside the recognized professional education and certifications, and do not provide advice or recommendations in areas of veterinary medicine or family counseling unless licensed and qualified to do so.

3.10 Trainers/behavior consultants do not permit employees, subcontractors or supervisees to perform or to hold themselves out as competent to perform professional services beyond their training, level of experience, and competence based on certification and education.

3.11 Trainers/behavior consultants exercise care when stating their professional recommendations and opinions through public statements.

## **Principle IV: Responsibility to the Profession**

4.1 Trainers/behavior consultants are respectful of colleagues and other professionals and do not condemn the character of their professional acts, nor engage in public commentary, including commentary in public presentations, written media or on websites, internet discussion lists or social media, that is disrespectful, derisive or inflammatory. This includes cyberbullying, that is, the use of electronic media for deliberate, repeated and hostile behavior against colleagues.

4.2 Professional trainers/behavior consultants maintain adequate professional liability insurance coverage.

## **Principle V: Financial Arrangements & Truthful Representation of Services**

5.1 Prior to entering into the professional relationship, Trainers/behavior consultants clearly disclose and explain to clients all financial arrangements and fees related to professional services.

5.2 Trainers/behavior consultants represent facts truthfully to clients, third-party payors and students regarding services rendered.

## **Principle VI: Advertising**

6.1 Trainers/behavior consultants accurately represent their competencies, education, training, and experience relevant to their practice of training and behavior.

6.2 Trainers/behavior consultants do not use titles that could mislead the public concerning the identity, responsibility, source, and status of those practicing under that name.

6.3 Trainers/behavior consultants correct, wherever possible, false, misleading, or inaccurate information and representations made by others concerning the consultant's qualifications, services, or products.

6.4 Trainers/behavior consultants do not represent themselves as providing specialized services unless they have the appropriate education, training, or experience.

6.5 Trainers/behavior consultants refrain from making misrepresentations regarding marketing and logos for which the practitioner is no longer eligible and remove logos and claims of certification when no longer maintained by the practitioner.

6.6 Trainers/behavior consultants agree to use the most current logos and follow the recommended usage of said marketing materials.

6.7 Trainers/behavior consultants shall not commit business fraud, plagiarism or copyright infringement, misuse or misappropriation of logos, trademarks, theft of intellectual property, slander or libel.