



WAFA POLICIES:
**CODE OF
ETHICS**

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 Ethics to protect the health, welfare and wellbeing of all humans and animals involved in the Working Animals sector.

This Code of Ethics provides a framework for applying the core values, principles, and standards of the Working Animals Federation of Australia (WAFA) which exists to guide handlers, therapists, other industry operatives, professionals and the Australian community in their interactions with Working Animals. It describes a set of overarching ethical principles which include transparency, accountability, traceability, legality, reliability, respect, equality and positive welfare. Detailed recommendations on peer-reviewed and best-practice evidence-based interventions are addressed separately in a variety of documents including the Code of Practice and Professional Standards.

THIS CODE OF ETHICS APPLIES TO ALL ACCREDITED AND NON-ACCREDITED MEMBERS AND BOTH PAID AND VOLUNTARY STAFF OF THE WORKING ANIMALS FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA.

This Code of Ethics 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 Ethics which should be cited as follows:

REFERENCE: Working Animals Federation of Australia (WAFA). (2023). Code of Ethics. Version 2.1

DATE OF PUBLICATION: 11 December 2023

VERSION: 2.1

CODE OF ETHICS

- 1.** Recognise the intrinsic value of both human and animal life, treating all with respect, dignity, empathy, equality and compassion by ensuring that I will promote both animal and human welfare.
- 2.** At all times I will practice humane, animal welfare by equalising the rights of all animals and humans by acting in a transparent and respectful manner,
- 3.** Be committed to improving the welfare, training and working conditions of Working Animals across Australia and internationally by ensuring I take care to manage all potential hazards and minimise risks which may infringe on the welfare of humans or animals,
- 4.** Understand and enforce the rights of Working Animals to receive regular preventative veterinary care, in addition to routine access to nutrition, hydration, exercise, enrichment, fitness and conditioning, and other best-practice husbandry requirements.

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5. Recognise the importance of providing timely emergency veterinary care as needed and ensure available funding is always readily available for such instances,
6. Remain mindful and committed to personal and professional development by engaging in regular continuing professional development activities and ensuring animal welfare is considered on par with human welfare.
7. Care should be taken to minimise resource use and impact on the environment.
8. Maintain the high standards of the Working Animals Federation of Australia by demonstrating the highest standards of personal and professional accountability, integrity, commitment and transparency in all activities, including those undertaken online.
9. Conversely, I will refrain from any and all activities that constitute deception, dishonesty, illegality or misrepresentation within or outside of the industry sector, particularly in regard to my qualifications, training, expertise, competencies, achievements, and/or affiliations. This includes defamation, harassment, discrimination or abuse in any form or medium.
10. Always work within my professional field and capabilities and seek guidance from other industry operatives or professionals in addition to the Working Animals Federation of Australia if reliance on another feed is required.

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- 11.** Abide by the professional ethics and standards of my profession and only practice within the scope of this profession whilst promoting industry best-practice and research to benefit the field whilst working in collaboration with industry operatives and professionals to ensure best-practice outcomes for animals and humans.

- 12.** Practice equality in all aspects of my personal and professional life by respecting the inherent diversity and individuality of humans and animals whilst being respectful and responsible to such differences stemming from age, gender, origin, nationality, ethnicity, culture, language, religion or spiritual view, political beliefs, social or economic status, marital status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, health condition, or disability. This includes recognising the history and culture of Indigenous Australians and undertaking culturally sensitive practices at all times.

- 13.** Always seek to promote inclusivity, accessibility, diversity, client autonomy, and self-determination whilst striving to prevent violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and all forms of oppression.

- 14.** Comply with all Australian federal, state and territory laws, as well as the Working Animals Federation of Australia codes, standards and guidelines, whilst accepting responsibility to inform the Working Animals Federation of Australia or other relevant authorities any breaches.



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