



CISA
CANINE INDUSTRY STANDARDS
ASSOCIATION NZ

DOG WALKERS CODE OF CONDUCT

This document has been prepared in the best interest of animal welfare and to assist those involved with professional dog walking. It is based off good practice and can help professionals meet the requirements of the Animal Welfare Act. It is important that professional dog walkers are aware of this act and are compliant with other local council law and bylaws relating to dog walking. In some areas local licensing will be required.

CISA code of conduct guidelines are intended as information alongside the Animal Welfare Act.

The Animal Welfare Act sets the minimum standards required

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Canine Industry Standards Association NZ 2024

Introduction

Professional dog walkers should have the safety, comfort, welfare and security of dogs above commercial interest at all times.

Dog walkers should be professional and courteous to members of the public and fellow canine professionals set good examples of animal welfare and dog walking and comply with the animal act, local bylaws and this COC. As dog walkers are in charge of the dog, they could be found liable for an accident or injury occurring or being caused by the dog whilst in their care. This could result in civil and criminal proceedings by those affected.

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Transportation

Everyone in charge or driver of the vehicle must ensure that the welfare of the animal is properly attended to at all times.

2.1 Comfortable and secure

2.2 Sufficient food and water

2.3 Ventilation

2.4 Space - Dogs have adequate space to stand up, turn around, lay down comfortably.

2.5 Members must display CISA Card in window at all times

2.6 Dog walkers should own a first aid kit designed for dogs and should keep this in a convenient location (ideally the transport vehicle)

2.7 Follow road rules at all time / hold a current license

2.8 Vehicles should be road legal standard WOF / REG

2.9 Where possible park where you can safely load and unload dogs

2.10 Dogs should not be left unattended in vehicles other than short periods of whilst collecting or dropping off. Vehicle should be locked during this time.

2.11 Vehicles should be cleaned and disinfected regularly.

2.12 Vehicles should be cleaned immediately of faeces and urine and every opportunity taken to allow dogs to toilet prior / after transport.

2.13 Dogs should be appropriately restrained in order to prevent becoming projectiles in the event of an accident (tethers, barriers, crates).

Providing Exercise

Dogs may have individual conditions that will affect their ability to go for walks, as will their age; and all dogs have their own individual personalities and characteristics which will affect how they are walked, who they can be walked with and where they can be walked. This is of particular importance if dogs do not interact well with other dogs, people or other species. Additionally some dogs will become afraid or worried in some situations e.g. with loud noises.

3.1 No more than 12 dogs per handler (or follow your local council regulations on numbers of dogs). Each handler should stick to a number related to experience and knowledge.

3.2 The dog walker should not conduct any behaviour modification or offer any advice unless they are suitably qualified, experienced and knowledgeable. The walker must obtain the owner's express permission.

3.3 The dog walker should check that all dogs are vaccinated, wormed and treated for fleas regularly, unless exempt by a vet.

3.4 Dog walkers should be familiar with signs of disease, infection and illness so that dogs showing signs of infectious disease, such as kennel cough, are not walked or socialised with other animals.

3.5 Use of longlines when training dogs off lead reliability

3.6 Where dogs are to be walked in groups, the dog walker should assess each dog's suitability / behaviour and be assured that each dog will be relaxed and happy during transportation and on the walk.

3.7 The dog walker should check all equipment is well fitting and fit for purpose at the start of each walk, Ensure you have a lead for each dog.

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Providing Exercise Cont

4.1 The dog walker should not act in any way which would cause fear, anxiety or distress.

4.2 Dog walkers should give full attention at all times to the dog/s under their control.

4.3 Dogs that are allowed off the lead should be able to be called back to the walker reliably and immediately. If this is not possible, then dogs should be walked on a lead. When dogs are walked on a lead, ideally they should be trained to walk calmly, on a loose lead. The lead should be held in a secure manner, and be maintained at an appropriate length for the situation.

4.4 Dogs should be provided with adequate fresh water as needed.

4.5 Dog walkers exercising groups of dogs should avoid meeting up with other dog walkers unless they are able to control each and every dog reliably and immediately.

4.6 Dogs must not be allowed to frighten, threaten or interfere with wildlife.

4.7 Dogs must not rush or approach members of the public / and their dogs.

4.8 Dog walkers must keep dogs on a lead in designated areas.

4.9 Follow rules of the environment / park you are walking

4.10 Provide shade and water in hot weather

Returning Dogs Home

5.1 Every effort should be made to ensure the dog is comfortable including toweling down, if appropriate, after the walk with water access.

5.2 Dog walkers should report any concerns about the health, behaviour or welfare of the dog to the client.

5.3 Dog walkers should ensure they securely lock the property when they leave, as instructed by the client. Any keys should be kept in a secure location to aid in this security.

Emergency

Unforeseen incidents may happen on walks and it is essential that dog walkers are prepared for this eventuality to maintain the welfare of all dogs in their care.

6.1 Dog walkers should have emergency contact details of all owners accessible at all times.

6.2 Prior written agreement should be made between the owner and dog walker over actions if a dog becomes sick or injured during a walk. This should include the authority to seek veterinary attention and the level of decision-making agreed to by the owner, if the owner is not contactable. It should also be confirmed in which veterinary practice this treatment should take place.

6.3 If a dog gets lost, dog walkers should contact the dog's owner and animal management immediately. Dog walkers should ensure dogs are never left unattended in public places.

6.4 First AID kit should be accessible and handlers should have an understanding of providing basic first aid.

6.5 Walkers should hold current liability insurance.

Impact On Environment

7.1 Taking dogs for regular walks is essential for the mental and physical well-being of the animals by providing exercise, stimulation and interest to their daily routine. However, walking can impact on the local environment and professional dog walkers should minimise this and show care and respect for the environment whilst also meeting all legal requirements.

7.2 Dog waste left in the environment is unhygienic, a health and safety risk for humans and other animals and can cause serious damage to plant and animal communities.

7.3 Dog walkers must pick up faeces from all dogs in their care and ensure this is appropriately sealed and disposed of in suitable bins.

7.4 Dog walkers should have sufficient poo bags on them at all times for the number of dogs they are exercising.

Impact On The Public

8.1 Dog walkers should be aware that some members of the public may feel scared and intimidated by, or dislike dogs. This can particularly be the case around children or if walking groups of dogs. Dog walkers should avoid areas that are heavily populated with children e.g. playgrounds.

8.2 In some cases these areas will be covered by local bylaws preventing access for dogs, which must be followed at all times.

8.3 Dog walkers must follow restrictions on the number of dogs to be walked in this COC or your local council restriction.

8.4 Members of the public should be given right of way at all times and if walking with groups of dogs the dog walker should, wherever possible, avoid bottleneck points and narrow pathways.

8.5 Respect public shared space, choose your environment wisely.

8.6 Dogs should not rush or interfere with members of the public

Training Staff

9.1 All dog walkers who exercise and handle dogs, should be adequately trained to ensure the dog's welfare and safe handling.

9.2 Dog walkers should be suitably trained prior to undertaking dog walking alone

9.3 Staff should walk the amount of dogs to the level of skill and knowledge required

Misconduct & Complaints

10.1 CISA prides itself on the quality and conduct of its members as well as its dedication to holding them to high standards of professionalism. In order to protect the general public, the reputation of our membership and the organization, the CISA accepts complaints against current members.

10.2 Anyone who is found in violation of the Code of Conduct may be subject to; Depending on the severity of the violation. This may range from a letter, hearing, suspension or termination of membership.

10.3 If you are notified of a complaint against you, please remember that participation in the process is a requirement of membership. We are required to process all complaints received; nobody is exempt based on their status in the industry, service to the CISA, or any other factor. In addition, we expect you to conduct yourself according to professional standards of courtesy. Poor treatment towards the complaint or CISA including abusive language or personal attacks is unacceptable and may be presented as a secondary violation.

10.4 If a respondent does not agree with the outcome of the complaint, they may file an appeal and have the case re-evaluated by a Hearing Panel. This process is time-sensitive and no further appeals are available.

10.5 Once complaints have been reported, these will be assessed and be decided if they are in violation to the Code of Conduct and if so what the consequences will be.

Contact

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