

DOGS NZ AGILITY CODE OF CONDUCT

AGILITY COMMITTEE & SUB COMMITTEES.

The purpose: to underpin how committee member should behave towards one another both during and outside of meetings and to underline the individual's commitment to the work of the agility committee and sub committees.

I will respect and uphold the core values of Dogs NZ Agility Committee as well as subscribing to:

- Inclusiveness – we recognize that diversity is a strength and will seek to involve all people, as active participants in the agility community.
- Responsive – we will strengthen the efforts of individuals and groups to meet the needs of the agility community and make a difference.
- Quality – we will strive for excellence in the diversity of our services that we provide to the agility community.

I will:

- Act within the governing documents of Dogs NZ and Dogs NZ Agility Committee and the law, and abide by the policies and procedures of these organisations.
- Remember that AC members participate for the benefit of the sport not for personal gain
- never ridicule or yell at committee members for making a mistake
- be reasonable in demands on members' time, energy and enthusiasm
- display control, respect and professionalism to all involved with the sport including other committee members, club members, judges and competitors. I will encourage my fellow committee members to do the same.
- be a good sport as I understand that actions speak louder than words
- always respect, remain loyal to and support other committee members
- accept responsibility for my actions and decisions
- condemn unsporting behaviour and promote respect for the individuality of committee members
- avoid any situations which may lead to or be construed as a conflict of interest
- refrain from any form of personal abuse towards other committee members, either verbally or written
- treat all committee members as I like to be treated. I will not bully or take unfair advantage of another member
- not gain materially or financially from my involvement on the Agility Committee or Sub Committees unless specifically authorized to do so
- declare any conflicts of interest as these may be considered a breach of this code
- actively engage in discussion, debate and voting in meetings and through online discussion mediums, contributing in a considered and constructive way, listening carefully, challenging sensitively and avoiding undue conflict
- I will participate in collective decision making, accept a majority decision and will not act individually unless specifically authorized to do so

Breaches of this Code of Conduct may result in removal from the Dogs NZ Agility Committee and/or Sub Committees.

DOGS NZ AGILITY CONFLICT & RESOLUTION GUIDELINES

AGILITY COMMITTEE & SUB COMMITTEES.

Every management committee will face periods of conflict. Healthy conflict, in which conflicting viewpoints are debated can be of significant benefit if it is effectively managed. Unhealthy conflict can divert energy, demoralize people and prevent an organization from fulfilling its mission.

Disputes can prove costly in terms of:

- Time delays
- Uncertainty of outcome
- Damaging publicity
- Charges of breach of trust
- Relationships and morale
- Stress
- Hampering the work of an organization
- Legal fees, if litigation is involved

How to reduce the risks

1. Define Roles

Many conflicts are due to individuals infringing on another person's role or acting outside their authority.

In order to be able to do this, the committee itself must have a clear understanding of their role and the division of responsibilities. This is especially important with sub committees, and this is Terms Of Reference for each subcommittee is vital.

Ensure that everyone involved is clear regarding what is expected from them and the role they should play. Give consideration to circumstances where individuals where multiple 'hats' and provide clear guidance on how they should reconcile these. Establish clear mechanisms for regular and open communication between the committee itself.

Draft a role description for committee members including the commitment expected, key responsibilities, specific qualities and skills required, and support that is available to them.

2. Provide Induction

Induction provides an opportunity for the relevant individual to quickly familiarize themselves with the mission and activities of the committee and the roles played by others in achieving this. This enables them to make a more informed and effective contribution based on a shared understanding of the committee, where it is going and who provides leadership. This should be done at the first meeting of a new committee, once the roles have been established.

3. Keep the committee focused on their responsibility to act with integrity at all times. The committee should act reasonably at all times in the interest of the sport and of it's present and future beneficiaries and members. This requires members to put aside personal differences and work together to achieve the organisations mission.

Committee members should have a sound understanding of their governance role with agility and Dogs NZ. Again this should be part of the induction process, but it may be helpful for the whole committee to refresh their understanding through discussion exercises.

4. Code of Conduct

A COC provides committee members with clear guidelines as to their standard of behavior, responsibilities and best practice in fulfilling their obligations and expectations.

A COC provides clarity to committee members and can become an effective tool in calmly and effectively dealing with behaviors and actions which may otherwise help fuel conflict.

5. Recruit a strong Chair

The chair can play a vital role in minimizing and handling conflict within or involving the committee.

They should:

- Provide leadership, ensuring the committee remains focused on its mission and goals
- Provide appropriate support to committee members
- Foster good relationships with committee members
- Enforce the Code of Conduct
- Effectively manage and chair discussions at meetings, to ensure healthy debate and discussion

Chairing Meetings

The role of the chair during meetings can be decisive regarding whether conflict remains healthy or becomes destructive and damaging. The chair should give consideration as to how they carry out their chairing role, how they can effectively manage the personalities or factions of their committee, and how discussion of each agenda item can be managed.

- Maintain control – Set out any time limits and keep to the agenda
- Encourage full participation and freedom of expression
- Draw out quieter members, but don't force people to contribute
- Discourage those who are monopolizing the meeting
- Be tactful and sensitive to the feelings of members, making all feel valued
- Steer members to work harmoniously and purposefully as a team, focused on the best interest of the sport
- Discourage any personal attacks or point scoring
- Weigh up contributions impartially, summarizing all points in favour against all points not in favour, to enable informed decision making
- Agree the appropriate approach for committee decision making on each item
- Be willing to record dissenting opinions, but affirm that the final decision becomes the decision of the whole committee
- Keep Calm!

Dealing with damaging conflict

Conflict within a committee occasionally blows up publicly, but more usually eats steadily away under the surface, draining the enthusiasm of those involved. If allowed to persist, damaging conflict can harm the ability of the committee to fulfil its mission.

It is unlikely that a single straightforward option open to you will have an immediate impact, completely resolving the situation. Rather, you will need to adopt a combination of approaches over a period of time, dealing with both the conflict and the resulting fallout. The exact measures will be specific to the circumstances, challenges and personalities concerned.

Whatever the circumstances, the following pointers may be helpful:

- Be sensitive and reasonable to all parties involved
- Avoid point scoring
- Confirm what's really at the root of the conflict
- Try to identify a win-win solution for all parties involved
- Leave a way out for the individuals concerned
- Follow procedure where possible and seek advice from Dogs NZ
- Focus on the best interests of the sport

Dealing with factions

Factions often develop where the committee is split over a significant decision or strategy. The members are often strongly value based and may each be convinced that their stance is the best interest of the sport. Unfortunately this may increase the intensity of the conflict.

- Consider whether there are reasonable options available that could reach some accommodation with the view of both factions.
- Consider how the committee conducts its strategic planning. Do they encourage full and free expression? Are all members encouraged to contribute? Are conflicting opinions openly voiced and sensitively considered?
- Consider how decision-making is conducted. It is important to be clear regarding how decisions are to be reached on governance matters and that any delegated decision-making authority is clarified in writing with appropriate reporting mechanisms.
- Remind members that they are bound by the decision of the committee, even where they disagree, and must continue to carry out with integrity their responsibilities to act in the best interest of the sport. Highlight the damage that can be caused to the committee and/or sport by such factional conflict.