

## **20.6 CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS - SOCIAL MEDIA**

Members shall at all times conduct themselves with behaviour as set out in the DOGS Victoria Policy Statement – Social Media Code of Conduct dated 15 July 2016. (15/07/16)

### **DOGS Victoria Policy Statement Social Media Code of Conduct**

#### **Background**

Social media has become an integral part of day to day communication for individuals as well as businesses.

Social media is defined as the social interaction among people in which they create, share or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks.

Social media may include but is not limited to magazines, Internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, microblogging, wikis, social networks, podcasts, photographs or pictures, video, rating and social bookmarking. Technologies include blogging, picture-sharing, vlogs, wall-posting, music-sharing, crowdsourcing and voice over IP.

Its ability to capture community sentiment and shape opinions is driven by its dynamic and immediate nature.

What constitutes ethical behaviour can be somewhat ambiguous when engaging in social forums, however DOGS Victoria believes its members should uphold the highest ethical standards displaying respect, honesty and integrity.

This Social Media Code of Conduct aims to provide guidelines on best practice behaviour when using social media.

#### **Guidelines**

- Abide by DOGS Victoria rules & regulations
- Be reasonable and respectful – do not post malicious, misleading or unfair content in relation to DOGS Victoria or its affiliates, DOGS Victoria staff, DOGS Victoria members or members of other ANKC affiliated bodies or indeed of members' dogs
- Be accurate – any comment posted as fact should be able to be substantiated
- Act in manner that is consistent with good community expectations

The same values that apply in the real world also apply in the virtual world and in social media exchanges.

Despite the seemingly unregulated nature of social media, the law is applicable to online content. Postings online (and similarly in email or text messages) are subject to the law in areas such as defamation, racial discrimination, intimidation and bullying.

#### **Breach of the Social Media Code of Conduct**

DOGS Victoria continually monitors activity in relation to the organisation and its members.

Dogs Victoria takes compliance with this policy seriously. Where members believe that behaviour is in breach of our Rules, Regulations or codes and is reported, the disciplinary process may be initiated by DOGS Victoria. Where proven, either formal warnings or other penalties may apply or if it is of a serious nature the offending members may be considered liable under the law.

#### **Consultation or advice**

This policy has been developed to provide guidance for DOGS Victoria members.

Any members who are unsure of their rights, liabilities or actions online and seek clarification should contact DOGS Victoria Management Committee or the DOGS Victoria CE.