

All members of the Association of INTORescue must agree to follow our code of practice which conforms with the Companion Animal Welfare Council (CAWC) code of practice. This code exists to ensure best practice and covers key principles that are mandatory for professionals working with dogs.

Each individual member has a professional and ethical obligation to the animals under their care in the workplace, their customers and the animals of customers, as in the CAWC code 2.1. Members have a professional obligation to their employers, to colleagues in the rescue, veterinary, behaviour and training fields, and to society as a whole. These obligations include courtesy, appropriate use of skills, clear feedback and guidance to colleagues, volunteers adopters and fosterers, and appropriate previously agreed-upon follow-up.

CORE VALUES must include the following:

- Knowledge of animal welfare and understanding of whether needs are being fully met; also, of which measures should be taken to ensure optimum welfare.
- A high degree of competence is expected in the application of knowledge and skills and in communicating effectively with colleagues and those involved with the rescue e.g. adopters. It is vital that INTORescue members are respectful in all communications with and about colleagues, volunteers, fosterers, customers and other professionals.
- Confidentiality in all dealings with colleagues and other professionals regarding work in progress or that has been undertaken. In cases where information needs to be shared, e.g. with other rescue professionals, veterinary staff or through referral, permission must first be gained.
- Effective provision for meeting the needs of the animals in their care and in any dealings with animals belonging to external parties is vital. For dogs in their care this includes an ethical low stress assessment or the willingness to design one with the help of INTORescue, force free behaviour modification plans with ongoing assessment of behavioural needs.
- Integrity is vital for gaining the trust of external parties and colleagues, and allowing effective work to be accomplished. Members must be honest in all dealings with colleagues, volunteers, fosterers and the public. The “positive”, force-free methods that form the foundation for INTORescue membership must be explained, if necessary, and adhered to.

TRANSPARENCY.

This applies to all dealings with customers, colleagues, volunteers, external parties and the Association of INTORescue.

CPD.

All training and behaviourist members of INTORescue must undertake regular Continued Professional Development. These can take the form of in-person seminars and courses, and online seminars and webinars. All CPD can be logged with our Membership Co-Ordinator and kept on file.

PRINCIPLES.

CAWC Code 4.

DUTIES.

The Association of INTORescue and its individual members have a duty to (4.1) ensure that the Code of Conduct is readily available to their workplace and colleagues, if requested,

through prominent display on the INTORescue website, and is displayed either in full on individuals' websites, if applicable, or with a link to the INTORescue Code of Conduct page.

All members must work within the legal framework of the country in which their services are being employed. This necessitates a thorough understanding of the dog laws and animal welfare laws of that country (4.2).

All members must safeguard and promote the welfare of others (4.3), including public and customers visiting the rescue, colleagues, the animals in the rescue, animals in the home if doing home visits or in home consultations, family members, guests to the client's home.

Each member must also take measures to ensure their own safety at work and work to ensure the safety of colleagues, volunteers, customers, and public during their daily work including training sessions.

All possible steps must be taken to ensure that colleagues and clients are aware of which steps need to be taken and adhered to in order to keep themselves, their animals, and other humans safe. All members must work in the best interests of each animal and the people responsible for the animal's care, and must take steps to ensure that no harm is caused to any animals or humans through the approach used or guidance given (4.4).

Members must take care to avoid any violation of professional boundaries, to act with integrity at all times, and to refrain from unproductive criticism of their colleagues, volunteers, fosterers their customers and other professionals that could be damaging to customer-rescue relationships or to the professional standing of others.

Members must treat all other members of INTORescue, INTODogs, and external organizations with respect and professional courtesy, and bring any breach or grievance directly to the committee. Personal attacks or commentary on others will not be tolerated. Any grievance or criticism of the INTORescue organization must be addressed to the Chair.

Any public criticism of the INTORescue organization, the INTODogs organization, the committee or individual member may be deemed as gross misconduct.

Members must ensure that no discrimination takes place in their dealings with colleagues, customers and the public, and that they do not act out of prejudice against any person or

group, regardless of origin, age, ethnicity, gender, status, sexual orientation, and disability 4.6).

Members must be transparent, honest and accurate regarding their qualifications, experience, competence, achievements and affiliations (4.7).

Members should only accept work that is within their existing qualifications, skills and capabilities, or when a specific programme to attain the required skills has been undertaken (4.8). If in any doubt about their capability to safely or competently carry out the task, advice should be sought from a more experienced staff member or in house behaviourist/trainer.

Members must regularly maintain and extend competence in order to provide a quality service that is accountable and is recorded by the INTORescue Secretary (4.10). Each individual must appraise themselves of, and study, new methods and techniques in order to extend experience and knowledge. Any members needing guidance in this area should contact the Chair of INTORescue.

Training and Behaviour members must provide honest and reliable written (where appropriate) assessments, opinions and feedback, whilst remaining objective and non-judgmental towards customers and other professionals (4.11). If an action plan is agreed upon with the customer during a consultation, each member must provide this in writing within a specified time frame agreed upon during the consultation.

Members must take appropriate action, such as referral to another professional, which can be in-house, if physical or mental health, or any other factor is likely to interfere with judgement or performance of duty (4.12).

When making any statements, members must clarify whether they make these as private individuals or as representatives of the Association of INTORescue or any other organization (4.13). If a member is making a statement on behalf of INTORescue, permission must first be sought for this from the Vice-Chair or Chair so that we can be assured that the representation is in accordance with our principles and code of ethics.

Records must be kept by the Secretary of all complaints and the actions taken to deal effectively with these (4.14), in accordance with the INTORescue Complaints Procedure. Should mediation be necessary, this must be sought as early in the complaints process as possible to ensure swift resolution.

Any members carrying out private external training and behaviour work must hold appropriate and adequate third party, as well as professional indemnity and public liability insurance, and any other insurance necessary that corresponds to the work and the activities undertaken (4.15).

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Each individual member must be alert to, and guard against, all possibility of any conflict of interest which may affect their ability to exercise discretion in their work or may lead to any bias in their judgement (5). In the event that any conflict of interest may be present, the member must refer the client to another professional who is not affected by this.

INFORMED CONSENT

Individual members must not take any action without the informed consent of their workplace or customers where applicable, unless they are required by law to take steps to protect the animal, the person or any other from the risk of coming to harm (6).

CONFIDENTIALITY

Should it be necessary to disclose any information to a third party, consent to disclose this must first be obtained from the customer before any information is shared outside of the confidential relationship between the customer and professional (7). Any disclosure of information must be made only with the customer's written permission unless there are overriding legal, safety or ethical considerations. This includes information given during a referral process to another professional.

The Membership Co-Ordinator of INTORescue maintains and updates records of members' qualifications and CPD.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In order to maintain, develop and enhance practitioner skills for training and behaviourist members, members must undertake appropriate CPD on a regular basis (9). This must be recorded by the individual and confirmation of each CPD session, seminar, webinar or course must be sent to the Membership Secretary. Individuals are also encouraged to reflect on their own professional practice and assess which areas need additional study or focus. INTORescue will hold optional monthly webinars for members on a variety of related subjects from July 2019. It is expected that members will undertake to complete a minimum of six CPD sessions each year.

COMMERCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Members must be honest and clear in any form of advertising (10.1) and take steps to avoid misleading or deceiving those they are in contact with by making sensational, unrealistic or unsubstantiated claims. They must not create unrealistic expectations about the length of time in which successful results will be seen to the workplace or external parties. Members must not criticise or disparage the work or characters of other individuals or organisations.

Members must not sell or recommend any product, service or individual service providers without first being satisfied that this would benefit the animals in their care or in the care of external parties. Practitioners must be suitably qualified and experienced before making any such recommendations (10.2).

Members must not allow financial interest to influence their choice of provision, service, care or treatment to the detriment of the animal or service user (10.3).

Transparency in the terms and conditions, fees and charges that members provide is mandatory (10.4). When possible, these must be agreed with the customer in advance and confirmed in writing.

Note: All membership is given at the discretion of the committee. All membership and accreditation can be removed at the discretion of the committee at any time, without warning or reason, with any fees reimbursed pro rata.