

**AGILITY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA (AAC)**  
**ASSOCIATION D'AGILITÉ DU CANADA (AAC)**  
**CODE OF CONDUCT**

<b>APPROVED:</b>     <b>Board Resolution No. 250916</b>	<b>VERSION 3.0</b>
	<b>EFFECTIVE:</b>  <b>September 17, 2025</b>
<b>Purpose:</b> <p>The Agility Association of Canada (“AAC”) strives to foster a safe, inclusive and respectful environment for everyone participating in any AAC-sanctioned activity. The purpose of the AAC’s Code of Conduct (this “Code”) is to make individuals aware that there is an expectation of behaviour that is consistent with the AAC’s core values, including that all individuals are treated with respect.</p> <p>The AAC takes a zero tolerance stand against all forms of maltreatment, bullying and harassment, whether it be direct or indirect.</p> <p>The requirements described in this Code are intended to maintain a respectful and safe environment. This Code identifies the standard of behaviour which is expected of anyone who participates in any AAC-sanctioned activity, including but not limited to, handlers, officials, volunteers, Directors, committee members, and trial hosts/organizers, regardless of whether or not they are AAC members.</p> <p>Although the various matters dealt with in this Code do not cover the full spectrum of permitted and prohibited activities, they are indicative of the AAC’s commitment to the maintenance of high standards of conduct and are to be considered descriptive of the type of behaviour expected from all those associated with the AAC.</p> <p>The AAC respects the value of freedom of expression in Canadian society but also believes that its exercise by any individual must be appropriately balanced with the need to maintain a respectful, safe and inclusive environment for everyone by ensuring that divergent viewpoints and legitimate critiques are expressed in a constructive manner. The requirements of this Code are intended to support this goal.</p>	

## 1. Interpretation

1.1. In this Code, capitalized terms reflect the definitions set out in the Bylaws, in addition to which the following definitions apply:

- a) **“AAC employees”** means any paid person in a permanent or temporary position with the AAC;
- b) **“AAC Officials”** includes Judges, Course Approvers, Directors or Board Members, AAC employees;
- c) **“AAC-related Social Media”** includes, but is not limited to, websites and well-known channels such as Facebook, X (Twitter), LinkedIn or Instagram that host:
  - I. AAC-managed content (e.g. AAC National Team; Regional discussion groups; AAC committees and working groups); and
  - II. AAC-related content (e.g. Regionals or Nationals host committee; National Team fundraising);
- d) **“AAC-sanctioned event”** includes any event held under the auspices of the AAC, including local trials, Open Special Events, Regional Championships, National Championships, and events involving the AAC National Team;
- e) **“Bullying”** includes a continuum of behaviours that can range in severity from name-calling to criminal assault. The following are common forms of bullying:
  - I. Physical bullying, which includes inappropriate contact directed towards another person (e.g. hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, beating up), or towards another person’s property (e.g. stealing, or damaging property).
  - II. Verbal bullying, which includes name-calling, mocking, hurtful teasing, humiliating or threatening another person.
  - III. Social bullying, which includes excluding a person from a group, gossiping or spreading rumours, setting other people up to look foolish.
- f) **“Committee member”** means a member of an AAC Committee or Working Group established by the Board of Directors;
- g) **“Director” or “Board Member”** means any Member of the AAC Board of Directors (Regional Director and/or Executive);

- h) **“Harassment”** includes but is not limited to the following:
- I. Written or verbal abuse, threats, or outbursts;
  - II. The display of visual material which is offensive or which a reasonable person ought to know is offensive in the circumstances;
  - III. Unwelcome remarks, jokes, comments, innuendo, or taunts;
  - IV. Leering or other suggestive or obscene gestures;
  - V. Condescending or patronizing behaviour, which is intended to undermine self-esteem, diminish performance or adversely affect conditions of participation;
  - VI. Practical jokes which cause awkwardness or embarrassment, endanger a person’s safety or negatively affect performance;
  - VII. Retaliation or threats of retaliation against an individual who reports harassment;
  - VIII. Bullying;
  - IX. Offensive or intimidating phone calls, texts, voice mails or emails;
  - X. Displaying or circulating offensive pictures, photographs or materials in printed or electronic form;
  - XI. Psychological abuse;
  - XII. Discrimination;
  - XIII. Words, actions or an environment which is known or should reasonably be known to be offensive, embarrassing, humiliating, demeaning or intimidating; and
  - XIV. Behaviours such as described above that are not directed towards a specific individual or group but have the same effect of creating a negative or hostile environment.
- i) **“Host”** means AAC Trial Host Committee member and/or Trial Secretary;
- j) **“Member”** means anyone who has a valid AAC membership;
- k) **“Official” or “Judge”** means an individual recognized by the AAC as a certified person for officiating AAC events, and includes without limitation an AAC Official;
- l) **“Related Parties”** means a person in attendance at an AAC trial or event who is not a Trial Participant, including without limitation a family member or friend of a Trial Participant who is attending a trial, but not for the purpose of assisting a trial participant;
- m) **“Representative”** means an individual who represents the AAC as a Director or Board Member, Course Approver, Judge, Committee member, AAC Employee or Host;
- n) **“Sexual Harassment”** includes, but is not limited to:
- a) sexist jokes;
  - b) sexual violence;

- c) displays of sexually offensive material;
  - d) sexually degrading words used to describe a person;
  - e) inquiries or comments about a person's sex life;
  - f) unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances, requests, invitations or propositions;
  - g) inappropriate sexual touching, advances, suggestions or requests;
  - h) unwanted physical contact including, but not limited to, touching, petting, pinching, or kissing; and,
  - i) sexual assault;
- o) **"Social Media"** includes but is not limited to websites and well-known channels such as Facebook, X (Twitter), Snapchat, TikTok, and Instagram. It also includes any online forums, chat rooms, and message boards where an individual may be posting content that can be seen, shared, and/or copied by others;
- p) **"Trial Participant"** means:
- I. handlers;
  - II. anyone who owns/supervises a dog in attendance at an AAC-sanctioned activity;
  - III. family/friends attending the trial to assist another Trial Participant;
  - IV. AAC Officials or Judges;
  - V. volunteers; and
  - VI. hosts/trial organizers;
- q) **"Violent Behaviour"** includes, but is not limited to:
- I. verbal threats;
  - II. sending or leaving threatening notes, texts, voice mail or emails;
  - III. making threatening physical gestures;
  - IV. wielding a weapon;
  - V. hitting, pinching or unwanted touching which is not accidental;
  - VI. throwing an object in the direction of someone;
  - VII. blocking normal movement or physical interference, with or without the use of equipment; and
  - VIII. any attempt to engage in the type of conduct outlined above; and
- r) **"Volunteer"** means an individual who is serving in an unpaid capacity as a trial worker.

## 2. Authority

- 2.1. The Code is part of the AAC Rules and Regulations, and may be amended, deleted, or replaced, by the Board of Directors. The authority for establishing

this Code of Conduct can be found in the Bylaws, s. 6.2– Policies and Procedures:

“The Board may establish such rules, regulations, policies or procedures relating to the affairs of the Association as it deems expedient, provided that no rule, regulation, policy or procedure is valid to the extent that it is inconsistent with the Act, the Articles or these Bylaws.”

and

Bylaws, s. 13.2 – Discipline and Appeals:

“The Board will establish policies, procedures, rules and regulations concerning the discipline of its members, including the authority of the discipline and appeal committees, respectively. The Board will make all such policies and procedures available to the Members.”

- 2.2. Any regular Member, provisional Member or associate Member contravening these Bylaws, or the rules, regulations, policies or procedures established by the Board for the Association is subject to discipline. (ref. Bylaws, s 13.1 - Member Discipline and Appeals, Scope).

### **3. Scope**

- 3.1. This Code applies to anyone participating in AAC-sanctioned activities, regardless of their AAC membership status, including but not limited to:
- a) Members;
  - b) Trial Participants;
  - c) Representatives; and,
  - d) Related Parties.
- 3.2. This Code applies to both AAC-related Social Media and personal use of Social Media as it relates to the AAC including, but not limited to comments that are made:
- a) on an individual’s personal Social Media page;
  - b) as a respondent on another individual’s Social Media page;
  - c) on an AAC-owned discussion group (e.g. a private Slack channel or Facebook group with limited membership); or,
  - d) through Direct Message (DM), Private Message (PM), or text messages.
- 3.3. This Code is not intended to specifically define every instance of misconduct. Misconduct that is inconsistent with the values of the AAC or with the purpose of this Code may still constitute a breach of this Code and be subject to sanctions, even though the behaviour amounting to misconduct is not specifically referenced in this Code.

### **4. Responsibilities**

- 4.1. Participants in AAC-sanctioned events, meetings and other activities must conduct themselves in a manner that is responsible and promotes the values of the AAC and must refrain from any behaviour or conduct that could reflect poorly on themselves, the AAC, or that is detrimental to the integrity of the sport of agility.
- 4.2. Participants in AAC-sanctioned activities are responsible for directing criticisms appropriately and respectfully, making sure that all communications (including those on Social Media) are free from words, phrases or tones that undermine, threaten, degrade, insult, exclude, stereotype, or belittle Trial Participants, Representatives, Members, Related Parties, or the AAC as an organization.
- 4.3. Participants in AAC-sanctioned events, meetings and other activities shall:
- a) demonstrate respect to individuals through actions and words, regardless of body type, physical characteristics, athletic ability, age, ancestry, colour, race, citizenship, ethnic origin, place of origin, creed, disability, family status, marital status, gender identity, gender expression, sex, sexual orientation or any other grounds protected under federal and provincial Human Rights legislation in Canada;
  - b) treat everyone fairly and reasonably;
  - c) not handle their dogs in any way that is harsh or abusive or may have the appearance of abuse, including:
    - i. shouting or screaming harshly at a dog;
    - ii. behaviour that is intended to intimidate, threaten or harm a dog;
    - iii. making harsh corrections to a dog in or out of the ring; and,
  - d) refrain from any type of Bullying, Harassment, Sexual Harassment or Violent Behaviour; and,
  - e) demonstrate respect for the principles of fair play, which include:
    - i. Respect for both the letter and spirit of the rules;
    - ii. Respect for Officials and their decisions;
    - iii. Respect for other Trial Participants;
    - iv. Maintenance of self-control;
    - v. Refraining from the use of power or authority to coerce another person;
    - vi. Promoting the sport of agility in the most constructive and positive manner possible;
    - vii. Respecting the property of others and not willfully causing damage;
    - viii. Respecting the Host's site-specific rules & regulations; and,
    - ix. Adhering to all federal, provincial, and municipal laws.

## **5. Social media**

- 5.1. The AAC encourages constructive dialogue on Social Media in the context of making suggestions for improvement or discussion of possible solutions to legitimate problems or concerns. While criticism may include negative

comments, feedback must be presented respectfully, with the intention of seeking improvement or change.

- 5.2. Cyber bullying of any kind will not be tolerated. Examples of cyber bullying include, but are not limited to, sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean comments that seek to intimidate, manipulate, falsely discredit, put down, try to control, rudely confront, demand, or try to incite further issues. It also includes sharing personal or private information about an individual causing embarrassment or humiliation.
- 5.3. Participants in AAC-sanctioned events, meetings and other activities must refrain from making comments, sharing content posted by others, or participating in any dialogue on Social Media or any other forum, that is directed towards or about Members, Trial Participants, Representatives, or the AAC as an organization when those comments or related content could be perceived by a reasonable person as abusive, bullying, harassment, threatening, or degrading.
- 5.4. Comments directed towards or about Members, Trial Participants, Representatives, or the AAC as an organization, are the responsibility of the author of the content, even if they are shared without their consent.
- 5.5. Participants in AAC-sanctioned events, meetings and activities must be careful to distinguish between their personal opinions and those of the AAC as an organization. This is especially important when comments are made by Members, Officials, Representatives, or Hosts/organizers as they may be perceived as representing the views of the organization.
- 5.6. The AAC recognizes that there may be circumstances where individual accounts are “hacked” or posts attributed to an individual are in fact not their own. Everyone is encouraged to report these incidents to the Social Media platform and attempt to have those posts deleted from their own account.

## **6. Representatives, Officials, and Hosts/Organizers**

- 6.1. The conduct of Representatives, Officials, and Hosts/organizers is a direct reflection on the professionalism of the organization. As such, these individuals are appointed, hired and/or qualified partially based on their demonstration of their ability to represent the AAC within the agility community at levels of conduct which are beyond reproach.
- 6.2. In addition to the Responsibilities described above, Representatives, Officials, and Hosts/organizers must:
  - a) act with honesty and integrity and conduct themselves in a manner which maintains confidence in the AAC;
  - b) conduct themselves professionally, lawfully and in good faith in the best interests of the AAC;

- c) where appropriate, fully disclose any real or potential conflicts of interest that might arise between their responsibilities as Representatives, Officials or Hosts/organizers and their personal or private interests. "Personal or private interests" are deemed to include the interests of any individual or organization with which the individual has an immediate family, intimate, or commercial relationship;
- d) be fair, equitable, considerate, independent, honest and impartial and not influenced by self-interest, outside pressure, expectation of reward, or fear of criticism;
- e) behave with decorum appropriate to both circumstance and position;
- f) exercise the degree of care, diligence, and skill required in the performance of their duties;
- g) give Members an opportunity to express their opinions, and give all opinions equal consideration and weight;
- h) respect the confidentiality of all non-public information obtained by virtue of their role, including documents and reports, financial details, strategies, internal affairs, and deliberations until such a time as the public sharing of that information has been approved;
- i) refrain from behaviour that could cause damage to the AAC's reputation.

## **7. Reporting Alleged Violations**

- 7.1. Alleged violations of this Code may be reported using the online "Incident Report" form, found on the AAC website home page (under Forms).
- 7.2. Representatives, Officials, and Hosts/organizers have a duty to report alleged violations of this Code.
- 7.3. Individual participants in AAC-sanctioned events, meetings and other activities are encouraged to report alleged violations of this Code.
- 7.4. Reporting violations that one knows or should reasonably suspect to be false may result in discipline.

## **8. Investigation and Discipline**

- 8.1. Investigations of reported violations of this Code fall under the mandate of the AAC Discipline and Appeal Committees and will be dealt with in accordance with the policies and procedures of those committees.
- 8.2. Any breach of this Code will be treated as a violation of the AAC Rules and Regulations. Individuals may be subject to sanctions as determined by the AAC Discipline Committee after a hearing has been conducted.
- 8.3. Non-member participants in AAC-sanctioned events, meetings and other activities may be sanctioned for failure to comply with this Code.



8.4. Sanctions imposed by the Discipline Committee on Officials for violation of this Code may also include the complaint being sent to the Board of Directors to consider further action.

## **9. No Retaliation**

9.1. Individuals making a report or participating in an investigation of an alleged violation of this Code will be treated fairly and respectfully.

9.2. Retaliation against a person includes any action or treatment that is intended to harm a person because they have filed a complaint against someone, participated in the complaint process, or acted as a witness or provided information about a possible violation of the Code will not be tolerated.

9.3. All forms of retaliation by Members, Trial Participants, Representatives, or Related Parties, will be considered a violation of this Code and may result in sanctions. These actions include, but are not limited to:

- a) verbal - threats, intimidation, harassment;
- b) material - damage to a person's property;
- c) economic - loss of income, denying or threatening loss of opportunities to earn income;
- d) social - harming someone's reputation; causing others to shun a person; and,
- e) virtual - using Social Media to threaten, harass, or spy on someone, or to damage their reputation.

## **REVISION HISTORY**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Revisions</b>
March 15, 2018	This document is intended to replace all previously published or existing texts referred to as AAC Code of Conduct.
November 16, 2022	Corrected logo  Revised: Social media conduct added  Revised: "Staff" changed to "AAC employees"
September 17, 2025	Revised: Format changed  Revised: Purpose  Expanded: Definitions

	<p>Added: Authorities - enabling Bylaw sections</p> <p>Revised: Previous content condensed to remove duplication and redundancies.</p> <p>Added: Responsibilities - clarification of what is meant by harsh treatment of a dog</p> <p>Revised: Social Media conduct to be respectful; constructive criticism is acceptable; cyberbullying, comments, or content that could be perceived by a reasonable person as abusive, bullying, harassment, threatening, or degrading is not acceptable.</p> <p>Revised: Reporting of alleged violations</p> <p>Added: Forms of retaliation that can be a violation of this Code</p>
--	---