

**Examination  
for  
CERTIFIED BEHAVIOR CONSULTANT CANINE -  
Knowledge Assessed**

Handbook for Candidates



Certification Council for  
Professional Dog Trainers

**SPRING 2019 TESTING PERIOD**

**Application Deadline: April 5, 2019**

Testing Period Begins: Saturday, May 18, 2019

Testing Period Ends: Saturday, June 1, 2019

**FALL 2019 TESTING PERIOD**

**Application Deadline: September 27, 2019**

Testing Period Begins: Saturday, November 9, 2019

Testing Period Ends: Saturday, November 23, 2019

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This handbook contains necessary information about the Examination for Certified Behavior Consultant – Canine – Knowledge Assessed (CBCC-KA). Please retain it for future reference. Candidates are responsible for reading these instructions carefully. This handbook is subject to change.

## Mission Statement

The Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers (CCPDT) exists to be the industry leader in defining and maintaining competency in the canine training and behavior profession.

### Guiding Principles of the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers

- To develop a recognized standard of proficiency based on current scientific evidence for canine training and behavior professionals through an independent certification process of standardized testing.
- To maintain empirically validated certification examinations that are psychometrically sound, based on current scientific evidence in the profession, and independent of commercial influence.
- To recognize documented training and behavior experience as valid, functional criteria relevant to the certification process.
- To encourage growth in, and fluency of knowledge in, the profession, and thus foster a link in the community of trainers, behavior consultants, academics, veterinarians and veterinary staff, breeders, rescues, shelters, and other animal professionals.
- To benefit animal and human welfare by promoting strategies and methods based on humane practices defined by the CCPDT Core Values.
- To promote and protect the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainer designations as the publicly recognized credential of canine training and behavior professionals committed to education, experience, and professional excellence.

## Position Statements

The CCPDT adheres to a LIMA (Least Intrusive Minimally Aversive) standard - incorporating the Humane Hierarchy - in canine behavior training. Please review our LIMA policy statement, found in this handbook. We also support the Punishment Position Statement of the American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior (AVSAB) which can be found on their website at [www.avsab.org](http://www.avsab.org).

## Certification

The Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers (CCPDT®) endorses the concept of periodic certification by examination for all canine training and behavior professionals. Certification focuses specifically on the individual and is an indication of relevant current knowledge in a specialized area of practice. Certification for canine training and behavior professionals is highly valued and provides formal recognition of basic knowledge.

The CCPDT reserves the right to change any of the requirements concerning its Certified Behavior Consultant Canine - Knowledge Assessed® (CBCC-KA®) credential, including but not limited to, the eligibility requirements, examination content, recertification requirements, fees, use of the mark, name of the mark, and the website. Information published in the current version of the CBCC-KA Handbook for Candidates on the CCPDT website supersedes all other printed or electronic versions of this Handbook. Neither the Handbook, the examination application form, the examination, nor the CCPDT credential constitutes a contract between the candidate or the certificant and the CCPDT.

## Purposes of CBCC-KA Certification

To promote delivery of safe and effective canine behavior consultations through the certification of qualified professional canine behavior consultants by:

1. recognizing formally those individuals who meet the eligibility requirements of the CCPDT and pass the Certification Examination for Behavior Consultant Canine - Knowledge Assessed;
2. encouraging continued professional growth in the practice of canine behavior modification;
3. establishing and measuring the level of knowledge and skills required for certification in canine behavior consultation;
4. providing a standard of knowledge and skill requisite for certification; thereby, assisting the employer, public, and members of the professional dog care industry in the assessment of the canine behavior consultant.

## Eligibility Requirements

1. A log documenting three hundred (300) hours in canine behavior consulting dealing with such issues as fear, phobias, compulsive behaviors, anxiety, and aggression within the previous three (3) years. Canine behavior consulting hours cannot be accrued during group class instruction or by working with your own dog. Note: Blank and sample logs can be found on the CCPDT website.
2. A high school diploma or GED equivalent
3. A signed and completed attestation statement from a CCPDT certificant or veterinarian  
Note: The Attestation Statement form can be found at the end of this handbook.
4. Acknowledgment of the CCPDT Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics within the online application.
5. Completion of the online application
6. Payment of required fee

Note: An individual convicted of a felony shall be ineligible to apply for certification until release from confinement and completion of any probationary period.

## Appeals on Eligibility

Candidates who have been deemed ineligible to sit for an examination may appeal in writing to the CCPDT Executive Committee, sent to either the headquarters office of the CCPDT or by email to [appeals@ccpdt.org](mailto:appeals@ccpdt.org). The letter must be accompanied by supporting documents and must be received within ten (10) business days after the notification of ineligibility is sent to the candidate. The CCPDT will review the appeal and notify the candidate in writing of its decision within ten (10) business days of receipt of the written appeal.

Should the decision be in favor of the eligibility of the candidate to sit for the examination, but past the deadline for the current testing period, the candidate will be enrolled to take the examination during the next regularly scheduled testing period.

## Non-discrimination

The Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers does not discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, gender, age, disability, physical limitation, marital or familial status, sexual orientation, religion, political beliefs or any other characteristic prohibited by law.

## Administration

The Certification Program is sponsored by The Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers. The Certification Examination for Behavior Consultant Canine - Knowledge Assessed is administered for the CCPDT by the Professional Testing Corporation (PTC), 1350 Broadway – Suite 800, New York, NY 10018, (212) 356-0660, [www.ptcny.com](http://www.ptcny.com). Prior to taking and passing the examination, questions concerning the examination should be referred to PTC.

## Certification and Recertification

Eligible candidates who pass the Certification Examination for Behavior Consultant Canine - Knowledge Assessed are able to use the designation, Certified Behavior Consultant Canine - Knowledge Assessed (CBCC-KA), after their names and will receive a certificate verifying their certified status from the CCPDT. This certificate is the property of the CCPDT. A registry of Certified Behavior Consultants Canine - Knowledge Assessed will be maintained by the CCPDT. Certified Behavior Consultant Canine - Knowledge Assessed certificants' names and contact information may be posted on the CCPDT website at [www.ccpdt.org](http://www.ccpdt.org). If you do not wish to have your information publicly available on our website, please notify the CCPDT at any time and we will remove you from the listing.

The Certified Behavior Consultant Canine - Knowledge Assessed designation is recognized for a period of five (5) years at which time the certificant must have accumulated continuing education credits at CCPDT approved programs and meet any new requirements or measures of qualification. Alternatively, the certificant may opt to retake and must pass the current Certification Examination for Behavior Consultant Canine - Knowledge Assessed in order to maintain the credential.

## Revocation of Certification

Certification will be revoked for any of the following reasons:

1. Falsification of any part of an application.
2. Felony convictions that occur during the certification period.
3. Misrepresentation of certification status.
4. Violation of the CCPDT Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics.

The Certification Compliance Committee of the CCPDT provides the appeal mechanism for challenging revocation of CCPDT certification. It is the responsibility of the individual to initiate this process.

## Application Procedure

The online application is accessed via the CCPDT website. To obtain additional copies of this Handbook for Candidates for the Certification Examination for Behavior Consultant Canine --- Knowledge Assessed visit the CCPDT website at [www.ccpdt.org](http://www.ccpdt.org).

Read and follow the directions on the application and in this Handbook for Candidates.

## Completion of Application

Complete all information requested in the online application.

**NOTE: The name you enter on your application must match exactly the name listed on your government-issued photo ID, such as driver's license or passport.**

**STANDARDS OF PRACTICE and CODE OF ETHICS:** All candidates must read and agree to adhere to the CCPDT Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics as part of their online application.

### SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

**Please save the necessary documents in .jpg or PDF format and upload them as part of the online application process.**

**ATTESTATION STATEMENT:** The signed Attestation Statement is required in order to be eligible to sit for the Examination for Certified Behavior Consultant Canine – Knowledge Assessed. The statement can be filled out by either a veterinarian or a CCPDT Certificant. The Veterinarian must provide their license number and the Certificant must provide their certificate number and expiration date on the Attestation Statement. The Attestation Statement Form can be found at the end of this handbook as well as on the CCPDT website.

**BEHAVIOR LOG:** See Eligibility Requirements for details. The Behavior Log Form can be found on the CCPDT website.

**SUBMIT THE APPLICATION:** Submit the application, the Attestation Statement and the Behavior Log online by the deadline shown on the cover of this Handbook.

## Fees

Application fee for the Certification Examination for Behavior Consultant Canine - Knowledge Assessed: **\$385.00**.  
Late fee for applications received up to 2 weeks past the deadline: **\$100**.

**After you submit the online application it will be reviewed and you will be notified via email how to submit payment. Please note that without a successful payment your application will be in pending status and you will not be registered to take the test.**

## Refunds

**There will be no refund of fees.** Candidates unable to take the examination as scheduled may request a transfer to the next testing period if the request is submitted with the transfer fee of \$210 and received within thirty (30) days after the testing periods ends. **Exams may only be transferred once - please plan carefully.**

## International Testing

Candidates outside the United States and Canada must complete and submit the Request for Special Testing Center Form found on the [www.ptcny.com](http://www.ptcny.com) homepage. This form must be uploaded to your application no later than 8 weeks prior to the start of the chosen testing period. Fees for testing at an international computer test center (outside the United States and Canada) are \$100 in addition to the examination fee. PTC will arrange a computer-based examination at an international test center for you.

## Examination Administration

The Certification Examination for Behavior Consultant Canine - Knowledge Assessed is administered during an established two-week testing period at computer-based testing facilities managed by PSI. PSI has several hundred testing sites in the United States and Canada. Please note: Hours and days of availability vary at different centers. Scheduling is done on a first-come, first-served basis. To find a testing center near you visit: <http://www.ptcny.com/cbt/sites.htm> or call PSI at (833) 207-1288. Rules You will not be able to schedule your examination appointment until you have received a Scheduling Authorization from [notices@ptcny.com](mailto:notices@ptcny.com). See below for more information regarding the Scheduling Authorization.

## Testing Software Tutorial

A testing tutorial can be viewed online at [www.ptcny.com/cbt/demo.htm](http://www.ptcny.com/cbt/demo.htm) This online document may give you an idea about online testing features.

## Scheduling Your Examination Appointment

After your application has been verified and processed, PTC will email a Scheduling Authorization to you from [notices@ptcny.com](mailto:notices@ptcny.com). These notices are emailed approximately five weeks prior to the start of the testing period. The Scheduling Authorization will indicate how to schedule your examination appointment as well as the dates during which testing is available. Appointment times are first-come, first-served, so schedule your appointment as soon as you receive your Scheduling Authorization in order to maximize your chance of testing at your preferred location and on your preferred date.

A candidate not receiving a Scheduling Authorization or other correspondence at least three (3) weeks before the beginning of the two-week testing period should contact the Professional Testing Corporation by telephone at (212) 356-0660. See below for more information regarding the Scheduling Authorization.

You **MUST** present your current government-issued photo identification, such as a driver's license or passport at the test center. Temporary, paper driver's licenses are not accepted. The name on your Scheduling Authorization must exactly match the name on your photo I.D. Call PTC at 212-356-0660 if you need a duplicate Scheduling Authorization or if your name is not correct.

After you make your test appointment, PSI will send you a confirmation email with the date, time, and location of your examination. Please check this confirmation carefully for the correct date, time, and location. Contact PSI at 800-733-9267 if you do not receive this email confirmation or if there is a mistake with your appointment.

- **It is your responsibility as the candidate to call PSI to schedule the examination appointment.**
- **It is highly recommended that you become familiar with the testing site prior to your exam date.**
- **Arrival at the testing site at the appointed time is the responsibility of the candidate. Please plan for weather, traffic, parking and any security requirements that are specific to the testing location. Late arrival may prevent you from testing.**

## Changing Your Examination Appointment

If you need to cancel your examination appointment or reschedule to a different date within the two-week testing period, you must contact PSI at (800) 733-9267 no later than 12:00 PM eastern time of the second business day PRIOR to your scheduled appointment. **Please note:** PSI does not have the authority to authorize refunds or transfers to another testing period.

## Online Practice Test

Candidates can experience what the computerized test will be like by taking an online practice exam. This fifty (50) question practice test gives a glimpse into the CBCC-KA exam using actual questions which have been retired from past forms of the exam. Scores by content area are provided upon completion. This is an opportunity to experience taking the computerized exam, to review content included in the Examination for Certified Behavior Consultant Canine - Knowledge Assessed, and to learn more about question format and style. Two (2) hours are allotted to complete the fifty (50) questions for a fee of \$60. The examination can be found at the PTC website at [www.ptcny.com](http://www.ptcny.com).

## Individuals with Special Needs

CCPDT and PTC support the intent of, and comply with, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). PTC will take steps reasonably necessary to make certification accessible to persons with disabilities covered by the ADA. Special Needs testing arrangements may be made upon receipt of the Application, examination fee, and a completed and signed Request for Special Needs Accommodations Form, available from [www.ptcny.com](http://www.ptcny.com) or by calling PTC at (212) 356-0660. This Form must be uploaded with the online application at least EIGHT weeks before the testing period begins. Please use this Form if you need to bring a service dog, medicine, food or beverages needed for your medical condition with you to the testing center.

Information supplied on the Request for Special Accommodations Form will only be used to determine the need for special accommodations and will be kept confidential.

## Rules for the Examination

1. You must present your current, government issued photo ID (such as a driver's license or passport) at the time of your scheduled appointment. Temporary, paper driver's licenses are not accepted. Candidates without their valid ID will NOT be permitted to test.
2. Bulky clothing and outerwear such as coats, jackets, sweatshirts with hoods (hoodies), and hats/head coverings, except those worn for religious reasons, cannot be worn during your examination.
3. All Electronic devices that can be used to record, transmit, receive, or play back audio, photographic, text, or video content, including but not limited to, cell phones, laptop computers, tablets, Bluetooth devices, wearable technology such as watches and Fitbit-like devices, MP3 players such as iPods, pagers, cameras and voice recorders are not permitted to be used and cannot be taken in the examination room. The test center may have lockers or you may be asked to lock your personal items in your car. For this reason, we suggest that you do not bring personal items with you, other than what is specifically needed for your examination.
4. No papers, books or other reference materials may be taken into or removed from the examination room.
5. No questions concerning content of the examination may be asked during the testing period. The candidate should carefully read the directions that are provided on screen at the beginning of the examination session.
6. No dogs are permitted in the testing center except service dogs for your own disability. Please notify PTC at 212-356-0660 if you will be bringing your service dog with you.



7. Candidates are prohibited from leaving the testing room while their examination is in session, with the sole exception of going to the restroom.

Violation of any of the rules listed above may lead to forfeiture of fees, dismissal from the testing room and cancellation of your test scores.

## **Report of Results**

Candidates will be notified by mail within four (4) to six (6) weeks of the close of the testing period whether or not they have passed the Certification Examination for Behavior Consultant Canine - Knowledge Assessed. This period allows for the psychometric and administrative review required to ensure accurate and reliable scores. Scores on the major areas of the examination and on the total examination will be reported. Successful candidates will also receive a certificate from the CCPDT.

## **Examination Challenges**

It is the policy of The Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers to provide every candidate with an opportunity to question the reliability, validity, and/or fairness of a test and its questions. Candidates may submit a complaint in writing to the CCPDT's administrative offices no later than fourteen (14) calendar days after taking the examination. Complaints and challenges must be communicated in writing and within this time frame. The CCPDT will NOT consider late challenges or complaints, or challenges or complaints not submitted in writing.

All challenges and complaints shall receive the CCPDT's full attention. The CCPDT shall investigate each challenge or complaint and acknowledge it in writing to the complainant.

## **Re-examination**

The Certification Examination for Behavior Consultant Canine - Knowledge Assessed may be taken as often as desired upon filing of a new application (including all application components as defined in Eligibility Requirements above) and payment of the examination fee. There is no limit to the number of times the examination may be repeated.

## **Confidentiality**

The CCPDT will release the individual test scores ONLY to the individual candidate and only by mail. Any questions concerning test results should be referred to the CCPDT or the Professional Testing Corporation.

In order to provide marketing assistance to our Certified Behavior Consultants, the CCPDT will publish on its website, in a searchable manner, the name, city, state, email address, and phone number of each of our Certified Behavior Consultants Canine – Knowledge Assessed. If you do not wish to have your information publicly available on our website, please notify the CCPDT at any time and we will remove you from the listing.

## Content of Examination

1. The Certification Examination for Behavior Consultant Canine - Knowledge Assessed is composed of a maximum of one hundred eighty (180) multiple-choice, objective questions with a total testing time of four (4) hours.
2. The content for the examination is described in the Content Outline in this Handbook.
3. The questions for the examination are obtained from individuals with expertise in canine behavior and are reviewed for construction, accuracy, and appropriateness by the CCPDT.
4. The CCPDT, with the advice and assistance of the Professional Testing Corporation, prepares the examination.
5. The Certification Examination for Behavior Consultant Canine - Knowledge Assessed will be weighted in approximately the following manner:

Applied Behavior Analysis	33%
Anatomy, Physiology, and Biology	10%
Ethology, Body Language, Observational Skills	19%
Health, Development, Life Stages	15%
Consulting Skills & Best Practices	23%

## CBCC-KA Content Outline

### I. APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS

- A. Learning Theory
- B. Behavior Analysis Terminology
- C. Functional Relationship Between Environment and Behavior
  1. Identification of Antecedents, Behaviors and Consequences
  2. Equipment/Environment Use
  3. Mitigating/Eliminating Behavior Problems Through Environmental Enrichment and Management
- D. Reinforcement Schedules
- E. Critical Thinking
  1. Setting Criteria
  2. Evaluating Effectiveness of Intervention Strategies (Immediate and Long-Term) and If/When To Change Intervention Strategies
- F. Behavior Modification
- G. Scientific Method

### II. ANATOMY, PHYSIOLOGY AND BIOLOGY

- A. Basic Structures and Functions of Body Systems
- B. Physiological Mechanisms of Behavior
- C. Basic Genetics and Evolutionary Systems

### III. ETHOLOGY, BODY LANGUAGE AND OBSERVATIONAL SKILLS

- A. Canine Communications
  1. Vocal Signaling
  2. Body Language
  3. Stress-Related and/or Displacement Behaviors
- B. Observation and Interpretation of Behavior
  1. Theory and Principles
  2. Examples
- C. Domestication and Effects on Interactions
  1. Function / Purpose of Different Breeds and Effects on Behavior

#### IV. HEALTH, DEVELOPMENT AND LIFE STAGES

- A. Physical and Behavioral Signs Suggesting Veterinary Referral
  - 1. Pain-induced Behaviors, Anxiety-Related Behaviors, Aggressive Behaviors, Sudden Onset of Behavioral Changes
  - 2. Cognitive Changes
  - 3. Normal vs. Abnormal Physical / Behavioral Development From Puppyhood into Adulthood
- B. Physical and Behavioral Developmental Stages
  - 1. Neonate, Puppy, Juvenile, Adolescent, Adult, Senior / Geriatric
  - 2. Implications for Learning in Different Stages
- C. Prevention of Behavior Problems
  - 1. Socialization and Developmental Periods
  - 2. Role of Training in Behavior Problem Prevention

#### V. CONSULTING SKILLS AND BEST PRACTICES

- A. History Taking Skills
- B. Client Coaching and Training Skills
- C. Humane Hierarchy
- D. Referrals to Other Professionals
- E. Client Rights
- F. Training and Behavior Equipment
- G. CCPDT Training Policies and Position Statements
- H. Interpersonal Skills
- I. Ethics in Practice

## Sample Examination Questions

In the following questions, choose the one best answer.

1. The length of time from a specific cue to the onset of behavior is the
  1. interval.
  2. latency.
  3. frequency.
  4. topography.
2. The peripheral nervous system includes the
  1. inhibitory system.
  2. excitatory system.
  3. endocrine system.
  4. autonomic system.
3. What is the number of times a response occurs during an observational period?
  1. Rate
  2. Duration
  3. Intensity
  4. Frequency
4. A dog engaging in excessive self-licking may be
  1. highly excited.
  2. malnourished.
  3. relaxed and being offered little stimulation.
  4. anticipating social activity with conspecifics.
5. Behavior analysts work primarily with
  1. specific, defined behaviors.
  2. educated interpretations of behavior.
  3. clinical symptoms of canine problems.
  4. genetic causes of undesirable behavior.
6. Which of the following best describes a professional code of ethics?
  1. Addresses cutting-edge issues uniformly
  2. Identifies ethical goals of the profession
  3. Applies only if a professional has read the code
  4. Defines appropriate decisions in specific situations
7. If a behavior occurs during 25 out of 200 sample intervals, what is the score for this one-zero sampling?
  1. 0.125.
  2. 1.25.
  3. 12.5.
  4. 175.
8. Which of the following involves the systematic manipulation of environmental contingencies?
  1. Functional analysis
  2. Behavioral accountability
  3. Statistical function analysis
  4. Contingent assessment tool

### **CORRECT ANSWERS TO SAMPLE QUESTIONS**

1.2; 2.4; 3.4; 4.3; 5.1; 6.2; 7.1; 8.1

## References

The following list of references may be helpful in preparing for the examination. This list does not attempt to include all acceptable references nor is it suggested that the Certification Examination for Behavior Consultant Canine - Knowledge Assessed is necessarily based on these references.

### **BOOKS**

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# **Policy: Application of the Least Intrusive Minimally Aversive (LIMA) Effective Behavior Intervention and the Humane Hierarchy**

## **What Is LIMA?**

“LIMA” is an acronym for the phrase “least intrusive, minimally aversive.” LIMA describes a trainer or behavior consultant who uses the least intrusive, minimally aversive strategy out of a set of humane and effective tactics likely to succeed in achieving a training or behavior change objective. LIMA adherence also requires consultants to be adequately educated and skilled in order to ensure that the least intrusive and aversive procedure is used.[1]

LIMA does not justify the use of punishment in lieu of other effective interventions and strategies. In the vast majority of cases, desired behavior change can be affected by focusing on the animal's environment, physical well-being, and operant and classical interventions such as differential reinforcement of an alternative behavior, desensitization, and counter-conditioning.

## **LIMA Is Competence-Based**

LIMA requires trainers/consultants to work to increase the use of positive reinforcement and eliminate the use of punishment when working with animal and human clients. In order to ensure best practices, consultants should pursue and maintain competence in animal behavior consulting and training through continuing education, and hands-on experience. Consultants should not advise on problems outside the recognized boundaries of their competencies and experience. [2]

## **Positive Reinforcement and Understanding the Learner**

Positive reinforcement should be the first line of teaching, training, and behavior change program considered, and should be applied consistently. Positive reinforcement is associated with the lowest incidence of aggression, attention seeking, avoidance, and fear in learners. [3]

Only the learner determines what may be reinforcing. It is crucial that the consultant understands and has the ability to appropriately apply this principle. This fact may mean that the consultant assesses any handling, petting, food, tool, and environment each time the learner experiences them. Consultant bias must not determine the learner's experience. The measure of each stimulus is whether the learner's target behavior is strengthening or weakening, not the consultant's intent or preference.

## **Systematic Problem Solving and Strategies**

The trainer/consultant is responsible for ensuring learner success through a consistent, systematic approach that identifies a specific target behavior, the purpose of that behavior, and the consequences that maintain the behavior.

A variety of learning and behavior change strategies may come into play during a case. Ethical use of this variety always depends on the trainer/consultant's ability to adequately problem solve and to understand the impact of each action on the learner, as well as sensitivity toward the learner's experience.

## **Preventing Abuse**

We seek to prevent the abuses and potential repercussions of inappropriate, poorly applied, and inhumane uses of punishment and of overly-restrictive management and confinement strategies. The potential effects of punishment can include aggression or counter-aggression; suppressed behavior (preventing the consultant from adequately reading the animal); increased anxiety and fear; physical harm; a negative association with the owner or handler; increased unwanted behavior; and, new, unwanted behaviors. [4]

## **Choice and Control for the Learner**

LIMA guidelines require that trainer/consultants always offer the learner as much control and choice as possible. Trainer/consultants must treat each individual of any species with respect and awareness of the learner's individual nature, preferences, abilities, and needs. [5]

### **What Do You Want the Animal TO do?**

We focus on reinforcing desired behaviors, and always ask the question, “What do you want the animal TO do?” Relying on punishment in training does not answer this question, and therefore offers no acceptable behavior for the animal to learn to replace the unwanted behavior. These LIMA guidelines do not justify the use of aversive methods and tools including, but not limited to, the use of electronic, choke or prong collars in lieu of other effective positive reinforcement interventions and strategies.

When making training and behavior modification decisions, trainers/consultants should understand and follow the *Humane Hierarchy of Behavior Change – Procedures for Humane and Effective Practices*, outlined in the diagram [6]

For these reasons, we, strongly support the humane and thoughtful application of LIMA protocols, and we applaud those individuals and organizations working with animals and humans within LIMA guidelines.

### **Purpose**

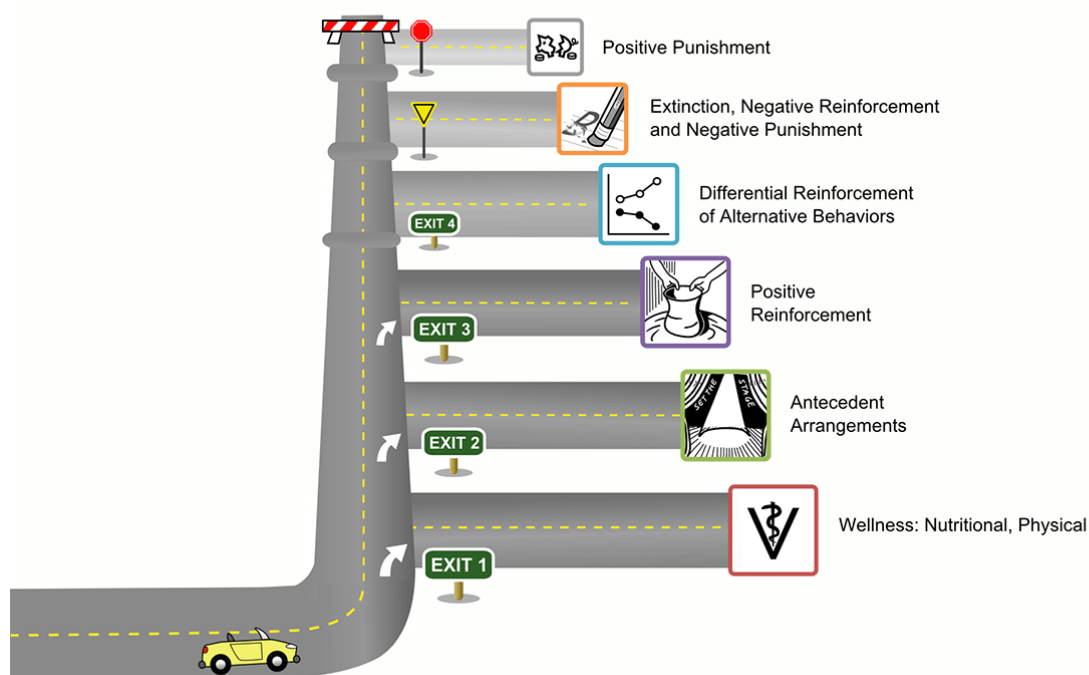
The Humane Hierarchy serves to guide professionals in their decision-making process during training and behavior modification. Additionally, it assists owners and animal care professionals in understanding the standard of care to be applied in determining training practices and methodologies and the order of implementation for applying those training practices and methodologies.

### **Hierarchy of Procedures for Humane and Effective Practice**

- 1. Health, nutritional, and physical factors: Ensure that any indicators for possible medical, nutritional, or health factors are addressed by a licensed veterinarian. The consultant should also address potential factors in the physical environment.**
- 2. Antecedents: Redesign setting events, change motivations, and add or remove discriminative stimuli (cues) for the problem behavior.**
- 3. Positive Reinforcement: Employ approaches that contingently deliver a consequence to increase the probability that the desired behavior will occur.**
- 4. Differential Reinforcement of Alternative Behavior: Reinforce an acceptable replacement behavior and remove the maintaining reinforcer for the problem behavior.**
- 5. Negative Punishment, Negative Reinforcement, or Extinction (these are not listed in any order of preference):**
  - a) Negative *Punishment*– Contingently withdraw a positive reinforcer to reduce the probability that the problem behavior will occur.**
  - b) Negative *Reinforcement*– Contingently withdraw an aversive antecedent stimulus to increase the probability that the right behavior will occur.**
  - c) Extinction – Permanently remove the maintaining reinforcer to suppress the behavior or reduce it to baseline levels.**
- 6. Positive Punishment: Contingently deliver an aversive consequence to reduce the probability that the problem behavior will occur.**



## Hierarchy of Behavior-Change Procedures Most Positive, Least Intrusive Effective Intervention



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### Useful Terms

Intrusiveness refers to the degree to which the learner has counter control. The goal of LIMA is for its trainers/consultants to determine and use the least intrusive effective intervention which will effectively address the target behavior. In the course of an experienced consultant's practice, he or she may identify a situation in which a relatively more intrusive procedure is necessary for an effective outcome. In such a case, a procedure that reduces the learner's control may be the least intrusive, effective choice. Additionally, wellness is at the top of the hierarchy to ensure that a trainer/consultant does not implement a learning solution for behavior problems due to pain or illness. The hierarchy is a cautionary tool to reduce both dogmatic rule following and practice by familiarity or convenience. It offers an ethical checkpoint for consultants to carefully consider the process by which effective outcomes can be most humanely achieved on a case-by-case basis. Rationale like, "It worked with the last case!" is not appropriate. The evaluation and behavior change program of every animal should be a study of the individual (i.e., individual animal, setting, caregiver, etc.). Changing behavior is best understood as a study of one.

### References:

- 1 Steven Lindsay, Handbook of Applied Dog Behavior and Training Vol 3 pgs. 29 & 726.
- 2 Per the IAABC, APDT, and CCPDT Code of Ethics Principle 3.7
- 3 "[The] use of positive reinforcement alone was associated with the lowest mean scores (attention-seeking score 0.33; fear (avoidance) score 0.18; aggression score 0.1). The highest mean attention-seeking score (0.49) was found in dogs whose owners used a combination of positive reinforcement and negative reinforcement. The highest mean avoidance score (0.31) was found in dogs whose owners used a combination of all categories of training method. Owners using a combination of positive reinforcement and positive punishment had dogs with the highest mean aggression score (0.27)." Emily J. Blackwell, Caroline Twells, Anne Seawright, Rachel A. Casey, The relationship between training methods and the occurrence of behavior problems, as reported by owners, in a population of domestic dogs, Journal of Veterinary Behavior: Clinical Applications and Research, Volume 3, Issue 5, September–October 2008, Pages 207-217, ISSN 1558-7878, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jveb.2007.10.008>.

5 See avsab.org • Hutchinson RR. 1977. By-products of aversive control. In: Honig WK, Staddon JER, eds. Handbook of Operant Behavior. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall: 415-431. • Azrin NH. 1960. Effects of punishment intensity during variable-interval reinforcement. J Exp Anal Behav 3: 123-142. • Azrin NH, Holz WC, Hake DR. 1963. Fixed-ratio punishment. J Exp

Anal Behav 6: 141-148. • Pauli AM, Bentley E, Diehl AK, Miller PE. 2006. Effects of the application of neck pressure by a collar or harness on intraocular pressure in dogs. J Am Anim Hosp Assoc 42(3): 207-211. • Drobotz KJ, Saunders HM, Pugh CR, Hendricks JC. 1995. Noncardiogenic pulmonary edema in dogs and cats: 26 cases (1987-1993). J Am Vet Med Assoc 206: 1732-1736. • Azrin NH, Rubin HB, Hutchinson RR. 1968. Biting attack by rats in response to aversive shock. J Exp Anal Behav 11: 633-639.

6.S. Friedman, What's Wrong with this Picture? Effectiveness is Not Enough, APDT Journal March/April 2010

Effective January 1, 2019

Please direct any questions regarding this standard of care to our administrator at [board@ccpdt.org](mailto:board@ccpdt.org).

## Position Statement: Electronic Collars and the Humane Hierarchy

The Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers (CCPDT) recognizes that there are many disciplines in the world of dog training. The CCPDT does not limit its certificant profile to one type of dog trainer or one type of training discipline. With that understanding, the CCPDT does not forbid the use of electronic collars that are used within the constraints of the Humane Hierarchy. (Please see the position statement on the Application of the Humane Hierarchy found in this handbook and at [www.ccpdt.org](http://www.ccpdt.org))

The CCPDT believes that the administration of an electric stimulus during training should only be used after all other training options have been considered and rejected. A CCPDT certificant should never authorize or employ the use of electric stimulation as an initial training option. We strongly believe that the use of an electronic collar should be the last form of training considered before its use.

A CCPDT certificant is expected to exhaust all other training strategies before considering the use of an electronic collar. The CCPDT certificant should attempt or carefully rule out the following training strategies prior the use of electrical stimulation:

- Changes in antecedent stimuli
- Positive reinforcement of alternative behaviors
- A comprehensive program of counter conditioning and desensitization
- Negative punishment
- Negative reinforcement
- Consultations with other behavior professionals for alternative training suggestions

In the event that a CCPDT certificant determines that an electronic collar is the appropriate course of action for a particular dog, that trainer should never apply more than one electronic stimulation to a dog at the same time. Furthermore, the electronic stimulation should never be administered to any location other than the neck of the dog.

A CCPDT certificant who violates these directives in this position statement risks losing his or her certification. A certificant who loses his or her certification as the result of violating the directives in this position statement will have his or her name published on our website with the reason for the decertification.

Amended 5/23/2014

# Policy: Dog Training and Behavior Intervention Practices

## Purpose

This policy serves to govern those practices that a Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers (CCPDT) certificant may not use during the practice of dog training or behavior modification. This policy will clarify for dog owners and dog care professionals those practices in which a CCPDT certificant may not engage.

The CCPDT recognizes that this policy does not address every practice under debate in the dog training industry. The goal of this policy is to ensure that CCPDT certificants do not engage in certain practices which can in no way be considered humane or sound by scientific standards. It also acknowledges that certain additional practices remain under debate, such as the use of electronic stimulation collars. This policy is intended as a first step in ensuring that CCPDT certificants are not using practices that are potentially egregiously harmful to dogs, either physically or emotionally.

## Definition

For the purposes of this policy, an electrical stimulation collar is defined as a collar which is used in a mode that causes electrical energy to pass through any part of the dog's body.

## Policy

The following practices are never acceptable for use by a CCPDT certificant, for any reason:

- Helicoptering or hanging a dog (defined as lifting the dog off of the ground and either holding it off of the ground or swinging the dog off of the ground by the collar or leash for any period of time) or otherwise restricting the airway of the dog in any manner.

- Purposely lifting a dog by the collar, leash, or scruff such that two or fewer of the dog's legs remain on the ground.

- Applying a collar that delivers an electrical stimulation to a dog without first exhausting alternative intervention strategies, including, at a minimum, positive reinforcement of alternative behaviors, changes in antecedent stimuli, and either negative punishment, negative reinforcement, or extinction.

- Applying more than one (1) electrical stimulation collar to a dog at the same time.

- Applying an electrical stimulation collar to the genital region or abdomen area of the dog.

- Applying a toe or ear pinch (defined as applying a pinching pressure either with the hand or with a tool of any sort - including but not limited to a cord or wire - to a toe, ear or any other body part of the dog with the intention of causing the dog to perform or cease a behavior).

- Drowning (defined as submersion of the dog's head in water for any period of time).

- Applying a cattle prod to any part of the dog's body.

No trainer or behavior consultant who has been certified through a CCPDT certification program shall engage in any of the above-named acts for any reason. To report any such conduct by a trainer or behavior consultant whom you believe has been certified through one of the CCPDT's certification programs, please refer to the CCPDT's Certification Compliance and Disciplinary Procedures or contact our administrator at [administrator@ccpdt.org](mailto:administrator@ccpdt.org).

(Adopted 8/4/11)

## Standards of Practice

The Standards of Practice provide a framework of principles to convey a collective principle of professionalism, skills and values. As members / certificants (collectively referred to as “members”), each individual member will undertake the following:

- To understand and promote Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive (LIMA) training and behavior work.
- To continue professional development by reading relevant material; attending conferences, workshops and seminars; and pursuing other educational opportunities.
- To review and understand source material and academic texts for information.
- To abstain from representing training and behavioral information as scientific, unless the information is derived from peer-reviewed and published research.
- To refrain from offering guarantees regarding the outcome of training and behavior work.
- To always maintain personal professionalism through:
  - Providing your services honestly
  - Treating animals and clients respectfully
  - Valuing and preserving the privacy of clients
  - Maintaining professionalism with colleagues and other professionals.

## Professional Code of Ethics

The Professional Code of Ethics was created to set forth guidelines for members. Any members is subject to termination of membership, revocation of certification, and/or other disciplinary actions if they: (a) are convicted of a felony that involves violence against people or animals (b) engage in conduct which could lead to conviction of a felony, or a misdemeanor, related to their qualifications or functions; (c) engage in cruelty, abuse, or neglect of animals or humans, crimes against humanity or of violence against animals or humans; (d) fail to cooperate with the organization at any point from the inception of an ethical complaint through the completion of all proceedings regarding that complaint. Any member, or member applicant, who wishes to appeal the termination may do so in accordance with the complaints process.

### ***Principle I: Responsibility to Clients***

- 1.1 Trainers/behavior consultants provide professional assistance to persons without discrimination on the basis of race, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability, gender, health status, religion, political beliefs, national origin, or sexual orientation.
- 1.2 Trainers/behavior consultants are aware of, and comply with, applicable laws regarding the reporting of animal bites and suspected abuse or neglect.
- 1.3 Trainers/behavior consultants respect the right of clients to make decisions regarding their pet’s management, training and care. Trainers/behavior consultants are responsible for helping clients understand the potential consequences of those decisions.
- 1.4 Trainers/behavior consultants obtain informed consent from clients before videotaping, audio recording, or permitting third-party observation.
- 1.5 Trainers/behavior consultants obtain signed waivers, contracts, or agreements prior to the start of services.
- 1.6 Trainers/behavior consultants ensure and oversee the safety of clients, animals, and the public in implementing training and behavior programs.

### ***Principle II: Confidentiality***

- 2.1 Trainers/behavior consultants do not share confidential information that could reasonably lead to the identification of a client, or prospective client, research participant, or other person with whom they have a confidential relationship, unless they have obtained the prior written consent of the client, research participant, or other person with whom they have a confidential relationship.

2.2 Trainers/behavior consultants keep accurate and complete records of all clients, their animals, services provided, and the conclusion of the services provided.

2.3 Trainers/behavior consultants provide referring veterinarians with professional feedback on services provided and training or behavior plans to improve continuity of care and ensure the collaborative relationship between health and behavior professionals.

### ***Principle III: Professional Competence and Integrity***

3.1 Trainers/behavior consultants work to minimize the use of aversive stimuli and maximize the effective use of positive reinforcement to modify animal behavior through a Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive (LIMA) based approach.

3.2 Trainers/behavior consultants maintain competence in training and behavior through continuing education.

3.3 Trainers/behavior consultants maintain adequate knowledge of, and adhere to, applicable laws, ethics, and professional standards.

3.4 Trainers/behavior consultants provide truthful advertising and representation concerning their qualifications, certifications, experience, performance and pricing of services.

3.5 Trainers/behavior consultants refrain from providing guarantees regarding the specific outcome of training and behavior plans.

3.6 Trainers/behavior consultants provide full disclosure of potential conflicts of interest to clients and other professionals

3.7 Trainers/behavior consultants work within their professional education and individual expertise.

3.8 Trainers/behavior consultants seek help and education when confronted with complex or difficult cases, and refrain from taking cases beyond their professional experience.

3.9 Trainers/behavior consultants do not advise on problems outside the recognized professional education and certifications, and do not provide advice or recommendations in areas of veterinary medicine or family counseling unless licensed and qualified to do so.

3.10 Trainers/behavior consultants do not permit employees, subcontractors or supervisees to perform or to hold themselves out as competent to perform professional services beyond their training, level of experience, and competence based on certification and education.

3.11 Trainers/behavior consultants exercise care when stating their professional recommendations and opinions through public statements.

### ***Principle IV: Responsibility to the Profession***

4.1 Trainers/behavior consultants are respectful of colleagues and other professionals and do not condemn the character of their professional acts, nor engage in public commentary, including commentary in public presentations, written media or on websites, internet discussion lists or social media, that is disrespectful, derisive or inflammatory. This includes cyberbullying, that is, the use of electronic media for deliberate, repeated and hostile behavior against colleagues.

4.2 Professional trainers/behavior consultants maintain adequate professional liability insurance coverage.

### ***Principle V: Financial Arrangements & Truthful Representation of Services***

5.1 Prior to entering into the professional relationship, Trainers/behavior consultants clearly disclose and explain to clients all financial arrangements and fees related to professional services.

5.2 Trainers/behavior consultants represent facts truthfully to clients, third party payors and students regarding services rendered.

### ***Principle VI: Advertising***

6.1 Trainers/behavior consultants accurately represent their competencies, education, training, and experience relevant to their practice of training and behavior.

6.2 Trainers/behavior consultants do not use titles that could mislead the public concerning the identity, responsibility, source, and status of those practicing under that name.

6.3 Trainers/behavior consultants correct, wherever possible, false, misleading, or inaccurate information and representations made by others concerning the consultant's qualifications, services, or products.

6.4 Trainers/behavior consultants do not represent themselves as providing specialized services unless they have the appropriate education, training, or experience.

6.5 Trainers/behavior consultants refrain from making misrepresentations regarding marketing and logos for which the practitioner is no longer eligible, and remove logos and claims of certification when no longer maintained by the practitioner.

6.6 Trainers/behavior consultants agree to use the most current logos, and follow recommended usage of said marketing materials.

6.7 Trainers / behavior consultants shall not commit business fraud, plagiarism or copyright infringement, misuse or misappropriation of logos, trademarks, theft of intellectual property, slander or libel.

Effective January 1, 2019

## Attestation Statement

Candidate's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate's Address: \_\_\_\_\_

The candidate named above is registering to sit for an examination offered by the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers. By signing this reference, you indicate that to the best of your knowledge and belief the candidate has successfully demonstrated a positive relationship with clients, including the safe handling of dogs, in his/her role as a dog training or canine behavior professional in your community.

Reference Name (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Reference Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Check one:  Veterinarian License Number: \_\_\_\_\_

CCPDT Certificant Certificate Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_