

**Examination
for
CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL DOG TRAINER –
Knowledge Assessed**

Handbook for Candidates



Certification Council for
Professional Dog Trainers

SPRING 2021 TESTING PERIOD

Application Deadline: Wednesday, January 20, 2021

Testing Period Begins: Saturday, March 13, 2021

Testing Period Ends: Saturday, March 27, 2021

FALL 2021 TESTING PERIOD

Application Deadline: Wednesday, July 21, 2021

Testing Period Begins: Saturday, September 11, 2021

Testing Period Ends: Saturday, September 25, 2021

Table of Contents

- Mission Statement 3
- Guiding Principles of the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers 3
- Position Statements 3
- Certification 3
- Purposes of CPDT-KA Certification 4
- Eligibility Requirements 4
- Appeals on Eligibility 4
- Non-discrimination 5
- Administration 5
- Certification and Recertification 5
- Revocation of Certification 5
- Application Procedure 6
- Completion of Application 6
- Fees 6
- Refunds 6
- Examination Administration 7
- Scheduling Your Examination Appointment 7
- Changing Your Examination Appointment 7
- Transferring to a New Testing Period 8
- Failing to Report for an Examination 8
- Online Practice Test 8
- Individuals with Special Needs 9
- Preparing for the Examination 9
- What to Expect at the Testing Center 10
- Rules for the Examination 10
- Report of Results 11
- Examination Challenges 11
- Re-examination 11
- Confidentiality 11
- Content of Examination 12
- Content Outline – CPDT-KA 12
- Sample Examination Questions 15
- References 17
- Policy: Application of the Least Intrusive Minimally Aversive (LIMA) Effective Behavior Intervention and the Humane Hierarchy 20
- Position Statement: Electronic Collars and the Humane Hierarchy 24
- Policy: Dog Training and Behavior Intervention Practices 25
- Policy: Standards of Practice and Professional Code of Ethics 26
- Attestation Statement 29

Mission Statement

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

Certification

The Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers (CCPDT®) endorses the concept of periodic certification by examination for all dog 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 dog 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 Professional Dog Trainer - Knowledge Assessed® (CPDT-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 CPDT-KA Handbook for Candidates on the CCPDT website supersedes all other printed or electronic versions of this Handbook. Neither the Handbook for candidates, the examination application form, the examination, nor the CCPDT credential constitutes a contract between the candidate or the certificant and the CCPDT.

Purposes of CPDT-KA Certification

To promote delivery of safe and effective dog training through the certification of qualified professional dog trainers by:

1. recognizing formally those individuals who meet the eligibility requirements of the CCPDT and pass the Examination for Certified Professional Dog Trainers - Knowledge Assessed;
2. encouraging continued professional growth in the practice of professional dog training;
3. establishing and measuring the level of knowledge and skills required for certification in professional dog training;
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 professional dog trainer.

Eligibility Requirements

1. A log documenting at least three hundred (300) hours of experience in dog training within the last three (3) years. Two hundred twenty-five (225) hours of experience must be training hours that include: instructing group dog training classes, conducting private training lessons, consulting with clients, and training hands-on with one or more dogs. A candidate may log training hours as a Trainer's Assistant, providing they are actively instructing a client or training a dog as part of their assistant role. Seventy-five (75) hours of experience can be in other related areas such as volunteering at an animal shelter, consulting with another trainer about current cases, designing training plans, working as a veterinary technician or dog groomer, and assisting another trainer but not actively instructing a client or training a dog. Please note: Hours training your own dog are NOT permitted.
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 and the CCPDT Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive (LIMA) Effective Behavior intervention Policy (within the online application)
5. Completion of the online application
6. Payment of the 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, by sending a letter either by postal mail to the headquarters office of the CCPDT (Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers, Professional Testing Corporation, 1350 Broadway, Suite 800, New York, NY 10018), or by email to 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 Examination for Certified Professional Dog Trainer - 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. Prior to taking and passing the examination, questions concerning the examination should be referred to PTC.

Certification and Recertification

Eligible candidates who pass the Examination for Certified Professional Dog Trainer - Knowledge Assessed may use the designation, Certified Professional Dog Trainer - Knowledge Assessed (CPDT-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 Professional Dog Trainers – Knowledge Assessed certificants' names and contact information will be maintained by the CCPDT. Certified Professional Dog Trainers - Knowledge Assessed names and contact information may be posted on the CCPDT website at 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 Professional Dog Trainer - Knowledge Assessed designation is recognized for a period of three (3) 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 Examination for Certified Professional Dog Trainer - 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 and/or the Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive (LIMA) Effective Behavior Intervention Policy

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 Examination for Certified Professional Dog Trainer - Knowledge Assessed visit the CCPDT website at 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 first and last names you enter on your application must match exactly the first and last names listed on your current government- issued photo ID, such as a 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. (The Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics can be found at end of this handbook and on the CCPDT website.)

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 Professional Dog Trainer - 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.

TRAINING LOG: See Eligibility Requirements for details. The Training Log form can be found on the CCPDT website.

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

Fees

Application fee for the Examination for Certified Professional Dog Trainer - Knowledge Assessed: **\$385.00**

Late fee for applications received up to 2 weeks past the deadline: **\$100**

After you submit the online application and application fee, your application will be reviewed and you will be notified via email of your eligibility status. Please note that your application will not be reviewed until your payment has been submitted and received. Applications without payment will be in pending status and you will not be registered to take the test.

Candidates who are deemed to be ineligible will be refunded the exam fee, less a \$100 administrative fee. Late fees are non-refundable.

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.**

Examination Administration

The Examination for Certified Professional Dog Trainer - Knowledge is administered during an established two-week testing period on a daily basis, Monday through Saturday, excluding holidays, at computer-based testing facilities managed by Prometric.

Scheduling Your Examination Appointment

Approximately 11 weeks prior to the first day of the testing period, you will be emailed a Scheduling Authorization from **notices@ptcny.com**. Please ensure you enter your correct email address on the application and add the 'ptcny.com' domain to your email safe list. If you do not receive a Scheduling Authorization at least six weeks before the beginning of the testing period, contact the Professional Testing Corporation at (212) 356-0660 or online at www.ptcny.com/contact.

The Scheduling Authorization will indicate how to schedule your examination appointment with Prometric, 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. Candidates who wait until the last minute run the risk of missing out on their preferred date, time, and testing center. Candidates unable to schedule an appointment will forfeit their fees.

After you make your test appointment, Prometric will send you a confirmation email with the date, time, and location of your exam. Please check this confirmation carefully for the correct date, time, and location. Contact Prometric at (800) 741-0934 if you do not receive this email confirmation or if there is a mistake with your appointment.

Note: International candidates may also schedule, reschedule, or cancel an appointment online at prometric.com.

IMPORTANT! You MUST present your current driver's license, passport or U.S. military ID at the test center. Expired, temporary, or paper driver's licenses will NOT be accepted. The first and last names on your Scheduling Authorization MUST exactly match the first and last names on your photo ID. ***Fees will not be refunded for exams missed because of invalid ID.***

Changing Your Examination Appointment

Candidates are able to reschedule their examination appointments within the same testing period as long as the request is submitted within the timeframe described below. Reschedule within the permitted time frame by calling or going to the Prometric website: www.prometric.com/ccpdt.

Time Frame	Reschedule Permitted?	Stipulations
Requests submitted 30 days or more before the original appointment	Yes	None
Requests submitted 29 to 5 days before the original appointment	Yes	Candidate must pay Prometric a rescheduling fee of \$50.
Requests submitted less than 5 days before the original appointment	No	Candidates who do not arrive for their appointment to test will be considered a no-show and all their examinations fees will be forfeited. Candidates will need to reapply and pay fees for a future testing period.

Transferring to a New Testing Period

Candidates unable to take the examination during their scheduled testing period may request a **one-time** transfer to the next testing period. **There is a transfer fee of \$210.00.** You cannot transfer more than once, so ***please plan carefully.***

NOTE: Requests to transfer to the next testing period must be received within 30 days of the end date of your originally scheduled testing period.

Candidates wishing to transfer to a new testing period need to follow the steps below.

1. Go to <http://secure.ptcny.com/apply>.
2. Click "Start New Application."
3. Choose CCPDT in the first drop-down menu. Then choose the new examination period in the second drop down menu and fill out the rest of the information on the page.
4. Fill out the application, making sure you answer **yes** to the question asking if you are transferring. You will need your current PTC ID Number.
5. When you have finished the application, click "Submit Request for Transferring Verification" in the Examination and Certification Information section of the application.
6. PTC Support will send you an email letting you know your transfer application was approved and that you can log back into your application and pay the one-time transfer fee.

Call 212-356-0660 if you have any questions regarding the transfer process.

If candidates are unable to attend the examination on the date for which they registered and elect not to transfer to another testing period within the 30-day grace period, the application will be closed and all fees will be forfeited. **There will be no refund of fees.**

The transfer fee is based on costs and is not punitive in nature. The transfer fee must be paid at the time the request is approved. **The candidate is also responsible for contacting Prometric and canceling the original examination appointment, if one was made.**

Exams may only be transferred to a new testing period once; please plan carefully.

Please note: Transferring your examination only refers to instances when a candidate is unable to take their exam during a testing period for which they have already applied and been approved. Candidates who did not pass their examination and are retaking the examination need to pay the full examination fee.

Failing to Report for an Examination

If you fail to report for an examination, you will forfeit all fees paid to take the examination. A completed application form and examination fee are required to reapply for the examination.

Online Practice Test

Candidates can experience what the computerized test will be like by taking an online practice exam. There are two CPDT-KA practice tests now available for purchase. These fifty (50) question practice tests give a glimpse into the CPDT-KA exam using actual questions that have been retired from past forms of the examination. 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 Professional Dog Trainer - 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.

Consider taking one practice exam when you apply for the examination and the other close to your test date. Both versions are meant to help prepare you for the CPDT-KA examination. Be sure to note in your files which form you have purchased so you do not purchase the same version twice.

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 under the ADA. According to the ADA, an individual with a disability is a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity (such as seeing, hearing, learning, reading, concentrating, walking) or a major bodily function (such as a function of the neurological, endocrine, or digestive system). The information you provide and any documentation regarding your disability and special test accommodations will be held in strict confidence.

All approved testing accommodations must maintain the psychometric nature and security of the examination. Accommodations that fundamentally alter the nature or security of the exam will not be granted.

Special testing arrangements may be made upon receipt of the Application, examination fee, and a completed and signed Request for Special Needs Accommodations Form, available at

www.ptcny.com/PDF/PTC_SpecialAccommodationRequestForm.pdf or by calling PTC at (212) 356-0660.

This Form must be uploaded with the online application no later than 8 weeks prior to the start of the chosen testing period.

Only those requests made and received on the official Request for Special Needs Accommodations Form will be reviewed. Letters from doctors and other healthcare professionals must be accompanied by the official form and will not be accepted without the form. All requests must be made at the time of application. Accommodations cannot be added to an existing exam appointment.

Preparing for the Examination

- Check your government issued photo ID (driver's license, passport or U.S. Military ID) when you make your examination appointment. Is it expired? Does the name on your ID match the name on your Scheduling Authorization email? Proctors at the Prometric testing center will refuse admission to candidates with expired IDs, IDs with names that do not match their records, and temporary paper IDs. Candidates will be marked as no-shows and will forfeit their exam fees.
- Check your PTC Scheduling Authorization email and Appointment Confirmation email from Prometric to make sure everything is accurate (i.e., your name, exam name, appointment date, time, and location).
- Make yourself familiar with the location of your chosen testing site and any requirements they may have for parking, and check the weather and traffic conditions before you leave for the testing center. Make sure you give yourself plenty of time to arrive as late arrival may prevent you from testing.
- In the event of inclement weather, check the Prometric website for site closures: <https://www.prometric.com/closures>.
- Prometric's website provides information on what you can expect on your test day, including a walkthrough of check in and security procedures: www.prometric.com.
- This Handbook provides the Content Outline for the Examination (see appendix). Use this to help you start studying for the examination.
- Review the Rules for the Examination in the following section before your appointment.

What to Expect at the Testing Center

PTC has partnered with Prometric Testing Centers to deliver examinations to candidates. Here is what you can expect when you arrive at your Prometric Testing Center.

- Candidate Check-In
 - Candidates will be asked to present their IDs.
 - Candidates will be asked to empty and turn out their pockets.
 - Candidates will be “wanded” or asked to walk through a metal detector.
 - Inspection of eyeglasses, jewelry, and other accessories will be conducted. Jewelry other than wedding and engagement rings is prohibited.
 - Religious headwear may be worn into the testing room. However, it may be subject to inspection by a testing center administrator before entry into the testing room is permitted.
 - Prometric provides lockers for candidates to store their purses, mobile phones, jackets, food, drinks and medical supplies.
- During the Exam
 - No breaks are scheduled during the exam. Candidates who must leave the testing room to take a break will not be given extra time on the exam.
 - Accessing mobile phones or study materials during the examination is prohibited.
 - Smoking is prohibited at the testing center.
 - All examinations are monitored and may be recorded in both audio and video format.

Please keep in mind: Other exams will be administered at the same time as your examination. Therefore, examinees may hear ambient noises such as typing, coughing, or people entering and exiting the testing room that cannot be avoided. Prometric is unable to provide a completely noise-free environment. However, headphones may be requested to minimize impact.

Please see [Prometric’s website](#) for more information about what to expect on testing day.

Rules for the Examination

Please read the information below carefully. You are responsible for adhering to the examination rules while at the testing center.

- You must present your current driver’s license, passport, or US Military ID at the testing center. Candidates without valid ID will **NOT** be permitted to test. Temporary or paper copies of your ID will NOT be accepted.
- No electronic devices that can record, transmit, receive, or play back audio or video content, or display text or photographs, are permitted. Such devices include, but are not limited to, cell phones, laptop computers, tablets, Bluetooth devices, wearable technology (such as smart watches), MP3 players (such as iPods), pagers, cameras, and voice recorders. These items may not be taken into the examination room. Prometric provides lockers for your personal items.
- No papers, books, or reference materials may be taken into or removed from the testing room.
- No questions concerning content of the examination may be asked during the examination session. The candidate should read carefully the directions that are provided on screen at the beginning of the examination session.

- Candidates are prohibited from leaving the testing room while their examination is in session, with the sole exception of going to the restroom.
- Bulky clothing, such as sweatshirts (hoodies), jackets, coats, and hats (except hats worn for religious reasons), as well as most types of jewelry, may not be worn while taking the examination. Proctors will ask you to remove such items and place them in your locker. Please see [Prometric's statement on Test Center Security](#) for more information.
- Watches and "Fitbit" type devices cannot be worn during the examination.
- No food or beverages are permitted inside the testing room. Leave these items in your assigned locker.

Contact PTC at (212) 356-0660 or www.ptcny.com/contact with any questions about the Examination Rules.

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 email within four (4) to six (6) weeks of the close of the testing period whether or not they have passed the Examination for Certified Professional Dog Trainer - 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 an e-certificate from the CCPDT via email.

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 Examination for Certified Professional Dog Trainer - 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 trainers, 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 trainers. 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 Examination for Certified Professional Dog Trainer - Knowledge Assessed is composed of objective multiple-choice items. There are 180 scored items on the exam, plus 20 pre-test items. Only the scored items count towards a candidate's final score. The pre-test items are randomly distributed throughout the exam and do not count towards a candidate's score. The pre-test items are being evaluated to determine if they perform well enough to be introduced as scored items on future examinations.
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 dog training 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 Professional Dog Trainers - Knowledge Assessed will be weighted in approximately the following manner:

Instruction Skills	48%
Animal Husbandry	4%
Ethology	7%
Learning Theory	36%
Equipment	5%

Content Outline – CPDT-KA

I. Instruction

1. Interpersonal Skills
 - a. Obtain dog's history (health, home environment, training, behavior issues) from client
 - b. Ask client about the goals and expectations of training
 - c. Assess client's ability to implement training recommendations
 - d. Advise client on appropriate breed/puppy selection
 - e. Determine when the work with client is concluded
 - f. Adjust training plan based on individual progress
 - g. Determine an appropriate follow-up schedule
 - h. Design a maintenance and management plan with a client
 - i. Teach a private lesson
 - j. Teach a group class
 - k. Provide feedback to a client
 - l. Demonstrate empathy and compassion when giving feedback
 - m. Motivate client to participate in training
 - n. Determine if client needs special assistance
2. Teaching Skills
 - a. Help client determine how to prioritize training goals
 - b. Observe client training
 - c. Create a lesson plan
 - d. Design a class curriculum
 - e. Develop a training plan
 - f. Set criteria for at-home practice
 - g. Collect data on training progress
 - h. Teach client how to train a behavior
 - i. Teach client how to properly fit and use equipment
 - j. Teach client how to use voice as a training tool
 - k. Teach client how to identify, prevent, and respond to dangerous situations
 - l. Teach client how to prevent rehearsal of problem behavior
 - m. Teach client proper timing and delivery of reinforcers
 - n. Teach client to apply skills/techniques

- o. Instruct client to maintain a training log
 - p. Explain a dog's body language to a client
 - q. Explain displacement behavior to a client
 - r. Teach client how to keep dog below emotional threshold
 - s. Teach client how to play with dog
 - t. Demonstrate to client how to countercondition and desensitize
 - u. Explain how developmental stages affect behavior
 - v. Explain prevention as a strategy
 - w. Explain management as a strategy
 - x. Teach stimulus discrimination (e.g. cues) and generalization
 - y. Use client-friendly terminology
 - z. Explain the expected training or behavior outcome to a client
 - aa. Write a report for client about training findings
 - bb. Conduct a follow-up session with a client
3. Managing the Training Environment
 - a. Monitor people and dog interactions
 - b. Create a safe training environment
 - c. Manage the physical environment for optimal learning
 - d. Create emergency plans
 4. Business Practices and ethics
 - a. Assess personal competency to begin and continue working with client
 - b. Arrive at a consultation/lesson prepared
 - c. Obtain a signed confidentiality release form from a client
 - d. Obtain informed consent from a client
 - e. Consult another animal professional
 - f. Explain client roles, rights and responsibilities
 - g. Explain policies to clients
 - h. Check training plan against humane hierarchy
 - i. Make a referral to another professional (e.g., vet behaviorist, lawyer, insurance agent)
 - j. Take notes regarding each training session
 - k. Securely store client information
 - l. Adhere to state and local dog laws

II. Animal Husbandry

1. Obtain a copy of a dog's vaccination history
2. Obtain a veterinarian release, as appropriate, prior to a class or session
3. Have knowledge about contagious disease and transmission in canines
4. Have knowledge about general health and wellbeing of canines
5. Identify action patterns/motor programs

III. Ethology

1. Perform a behavior/temperament evaluation
2. Identify canine species-specific behavior
3. Assess bite level/severity of bite
4. Assess/interpret dog vocal signals
5. Assess/interpret canine body language
6. Observe a training or behavior problem

IV. Learning Theory

1. Operant Conditioning
 - a. Identify appropriate reinforcers for a dog
 - b. Identify appropriate punishers for a dog
 - c. Lure a behavior
 - d. Shape a behavior
 - e. Chain behaviors
 - f. Use targeting to obtain a behavior
 - g. Use body blocking to obtain a behavior
 - h. Capture a behavior
 - i. Physically mold behavior
 - j. Prompt behavior
 - k. Fade a lure or prompt

- l. Use positive reinforcement to modify behavior
 - m. Use negative reinforcement to modify behavior
 - n. Use positive punishment to modify behavior
 - o. Use negative punishment to modify behavior
 - p. Use extinction to modify behavior
 - q. Use continuous reinforcement schedule
 - r. Use a fixed ratio reinforcement schedule
 - s. Use an intermittent ratio reinforcement schedule
 - t. Use a fixed reinforcement interval schedule
 - u. Use an intermittent interval reinforcement schedule
 - v. Use a differential reinforcement schedule
 - w. Use deprivation for behavior change
2. Classical Conditioning
- a. Use flooding to change behavior
 - b. Use counterconditioning and desensitization to modify behavior
3. Training Problems
- a. Identify antecedents, behavior, consequence sequences
 - b. Evaluate effectiveness of training plan
 - c. Define a behavior as observable, measurable, and reproducible
 - d. Assess predictability, frequency, and intensity of behavior
 - e. Set measurable goals
 - f. Identify an appropriate alternative behavior
4. Environmental Management
- a. Eliminate antecedents to modify behavior

V. Equipment

- 1. Select equipment needed for training
- 2. Make physical and mental enrichment recommendations
- 3. Properly fit and use training equipment
- 4. Select appropriate training and management equipment
- 5. Use decoy animals (e.g. dogs, cats)

Sample Examination Questions

In the following questions, choose the one best answer.

- 1.) If an owner calls before class and says that his puppy has had diarrhea for the past two days, the trainer should
 1. advise the owner to put the puppy on a bland diet.
 2. instruct the owner to immediately take the puppy to the vet.
 3. tell the owner not to bring the puppy to class and to call its veterinarian.
 4. ask the owner for more details to determine whether the puppy should come to class.

- 2.) Which of the following information would be most important to obtain before a dog comes to class?
 1. Owner's training goals
 2. Dog's previous training
 3. Dog's vaccination and behavior history
 4. Dog's breed, age, and reproductive status

- 3.) A slip collar should not be left on an unsupervised dog because
 1. the collar may loosen and slip off the dog.
 2. the dog may catch the collar on something and strangle.
 3. it is difficult to put identification tags on this type of collar.
 4. the dog can only tolerate the collar for a short period of time.

- 4.) Which outcome is expected when an unpleasant stimulus is removed following a response?
 1. Positive punishment
 2. Negative punishment
 3. Positive reinforcement
 4. Negative reinforcement

- 5.) How should a dog trainer aid an owner with limited mobility?
 1. Tell the owner to bring someone to assist during class
 2. Refer owner to a colleague with experience training assistance dogs
 3. Discuss a variety of options and agree on reasonable accommodations
 4. Recommend board and train, giving the dog back to the owner with instructions

- 6.) A frightened dog may display which of the following behaviors?
 1. Mounts owner or dogs during playtime
 2. Instigates "keep away" with other dogs
 3. Wags tail with ears set neutrally on head
 4. Scans facility and does not focus on owner

- 7.) Which of the following is the most appropriate type of equipment for a dog with a collapsed trachea?
 1. Prong collar
 2. Body harness
 3. Breakaway collar
 4. Limited slip collar

- 8.) Which of the following conditions is common in large, deep-chested breeds and is associated with exercise, excessive food and water intake, and/or stress?
 1. Heat stroke
 2. Hip dysplasia
 3. Gastric torsion
 4. Thyroid disease

CORRECT ANSWERS TO SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1.3; 2.3; 3.2; 4.4; 5.3; 6.4; 7.2; 8.3

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 Examination for Certified Professional Dog Trainer - Knowledge Assessed is necessarily based on these references.

Instruction

Books

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Books

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Books

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Additional Animal Behavior & Training Resources

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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 counterconditioning.

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.

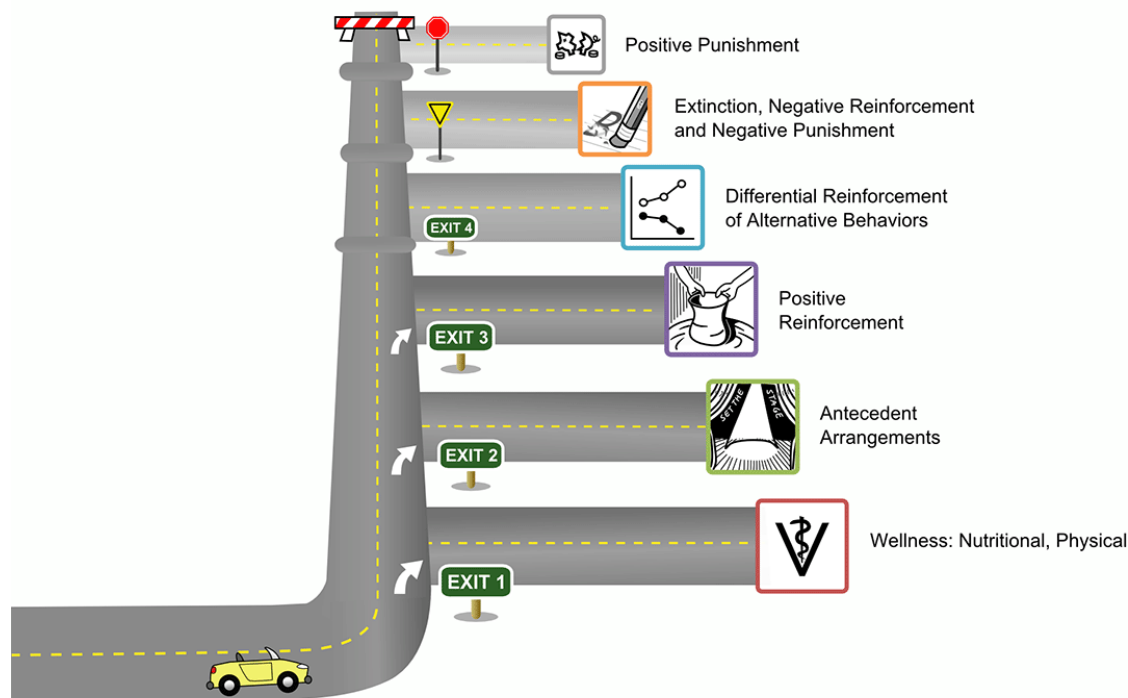
Purpose

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>.
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6.S. Friedman, What's Wrong with this Picture? Effectiveness is Not Enough, APDT Chronicle of the Dog March/April 2010

Effective January 1, 2019

Please direct any questions regarding this standard of care to our administrator at 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)

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.

(Adopted 8/4/11)

Policy: Standards of Practice and Professional Code of Ethics

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.

The **Professional Code of Ethics** was created to set forth guidelines for members. Any member 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



Certification Council for
Professional Dog Trainers

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: _____

Reference Address: _____

Reference Phone Number: _____

Signature: _____

Date*: _____

Check one: Veterinarian License Number: _____

CCPDT Certificant Certificate Number: _____

Expiration Date*: _____

Please print. All fields are required.

** Attestation Statements are valid for one (1) year from the Signature Date provided the CCPDT Certificant's certification is still valid (if applicable).*