

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

Handbook for Candidates



Certification Council for  
Professional Dog Trainers

**SPRING 2021 TESTING PERIOD**

**Application Deadline: Wednesday, March 10, 2021**

Testing Period Begins: Saturday, May 1, 2021

Testing Period Ends: Saturday, May 15, 2021

**FALL 2021 TESTING PERIOD**

**Application Deadline: Wednesday, September 8, 2021**

Testing Period Begins: Saturday, October 30, 2021

Testing Period Ends: Saturday, November 13, 2021

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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 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](http://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 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 consulting;
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 at least three hundred (300) hours of experience in canine behavior consulting within the last three (3) years. A minimum of two hundred twenty-five (225) hours of experience must be behavior-consulting hours that include behavior modification training with an individual dog or a client and their dog in the areas of fear, phobias, compulsive behaviors, anxiety, or aggressive behavior. A candidate may log a maximum of seventy-five (75) hours of experience through instructing a specialized group dog training class where the curriculum is dedicated to addressing fear, phobias, anxiety, or aggressive behavior. Canine behavior consulting hours cannot be accrued during basic obedience group class instruction or by working with the candidate's personal 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 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](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 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 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, the Behavior Log, and fees online by the deadline shown on the cover of this Handbook.

## Fees

CCPDT fees are **non-refundable**. Please plan carefully.

Application fee for the Certification Examination for Behavior Consultant Canine - Knowledge Assessed: **\$385**

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

Transfer fee for requests received within 30 days of the end of the original test period: **\$210**

**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. In the unlikely event that a refund is granted, a \$100 administrative fee will be deducted from each refund amount.

## 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

Eleven weeks prior to the first day of the testing period, you will be emailed a Scheduling Authorization from [notices@ptcny.com](mailto: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](http://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](http://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](http://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.***

**Please note:** requests to transfer to a new testing period must be received within 30 days 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 [CLIENT ACRONYM] 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, 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. 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. This fifty (50) question practice test gives a glimpse into the CBCC-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 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 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](http://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](http://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 d

## 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](http://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 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 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 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	41%
Ethology, Body Language, Observational Skills	10%
Health, Development, Life Stages, Anatomy and Physiology	6%
Consulting Skills & Best Practices	43%

## CBCC-KA Content Outline

### I. Applied Behavior Analysis

1. Assess impact, interactions, and behavior of other animals in the household
2. Select equipment needed for training and behavior modification
3. Develop a contingency statement describing the antecedents, problem behavior, and maintaining consequences
4. Determine if a functional analysis is required
5. Collect data to evaluate effectiveness of behavior modification plan
6. Evaluate a behavior as observable, measurable, and reproducible
7. Identify appropriate reinforcers for a dog
8. Identify appropriate punishers for a dog
9. Use stuffed animals, dolls, or other tools to assess behavior
10. Collect baseline data on a behavior
11. Monitor people and dog interaction
12. Develop a behavior modification plan
13. Set measurable goals
14. Choose and adjust a reinforcement schedule based on individual circumstances
15. Identify an appropriate alternate behavior
16. Demonstrate to a client how to countercondition and desensitize
17. Explain management as a strategy
18. Teach stimulus discrimination (e.g. cues) and generalization
19. Select appropriate training and management equipment
20. Lure a behavior
21. Shape a behavior
22. Chain behaviors
23. Mark correct behavior
24. Use food to reward correct behavior
25. Capture a behavior
26. Physically mold behavior
27. Prompt behavior
28. Fade a lure or prompt
29. Use flooding to change behavior
30. Use positive reinforcement to modify behavior
31. Use negative reinforcement to modify behavior
32. Use positive punishment to modify behavior
33. Use negative punishment to modify behavior

34. Use extinction to modify behavior
35. Use counterconditioning and desensitization to modify behavior
36. Use continuous reinforcement schedule
37. Use a fixed ratio reinforcement schedule
38. Use an intermittent ratio reinforcement schedule
39. Use a fixed reinforcement interval schedule
40. Use an intermittent interval reinforcement schedule
41. Use a differential reinforcement schedule
42. Use deprivation for behavior change
43. Use decoy animals (e.g. dogs, cats)
44. Eliminate antecedents to modify behavior
45. Create a safe training environment
46. Manage the physical environment for optimal learning

## **II. Ethology, Body Language, Observational Skills**

1. Perform a behavior/temperament evaluation
2. Identify canine species-specific behavior
3. Identify action patterns/motor programs
4. Assess predictability, frequency, and intensity of behavior
5. Observe, assess, and interpret dog vocal signals
6. Observe a training or behavior problem
7. Observe, assess, and interpret canine body language
8. Explain a dog's body language to a client
9. Explain displacement behaviors to a client

## **III. Health, Development, Life Stages, Anatomy and Physiology**

1. Assess physical condition of a dog relevant to training/behavior
2. Identify stereotypies
3. Explain how developmental stages affect behavior
4. Explain prevention as a strategy
5. Explain biological basis of behavior (species/breed development)
6. Discuss potential behavioral effects of neutering/spaying

## **IV. Consulting Skills and Best Practices**

1. Assess personal competency to begin and continue working with client
2. Obtain dog history (health, environment, training, behavior)
3. Ask a client about the goals and expectations of behavior modification
4. Assess a client's ability to implement behavior recommendations
5. Help client determine priority of issues to address
6. Advise a client on appropriate breed/puppy selection
7. Determine when the work with client is concluded
8. Assess bite level/severity of bite
9. Observe client performing training/behavior modification technique
10. Make physical and mental enrichment recommendations
11. Design a maintenance and management plan with a client
12. Provide feedback
13. Teach client how to train a behavior
14. Teach client how to properly fit and use equipment
15. Teach client how to use voice as a training tool
16. Teach client how to identify, prevent and respond to dangerous situations
17. Teach client how to prevent rehearsal of problem behaviors
18. Teach client proper timing and delivery of reinforcers
19. Teach client to apply skills or techniques
20. Instruct a client to maintain a behavior/training log
21. Teach client how to keep dog below behavioral threshold
22. Explain baseline data to a client
23. Use client-friendly terminology
24. Demonstrate empathy and compassion
25. Motivate client to participate in training for behavior modification
26. Explain the expected behavior modification outcome to a client
27. Arrive at a consultation/lesson prepared

28. Determine if client needs special assistance
29. Obtain a copy of a dog's vaccination history
30. Obtain a veterinarian release, as appropriate
31. Obtain a signed confidentiality release form from a client
32. Obtain informed consent from a client
33. Consult another animal professional
34. Explain client roles, rights and responsibilities
35. Explain policies to a client
36. Check behavior modification plan against Humane Hierarchy
37. Make a referral to another professional (e.g. vet behaviorist, lawyer, insurance agent)
38. Create emergency plans
39. Write a report for client about behavior findings
40. Write a report for another professional about behavior findings
41. Conduct a follow-up session with a client
42. Set parameters for safe videotaping and data collection process by client
43. Take notes regarding each behavior/training session
44. Securely store client information
45. Write closing case summary
46. Adhere to state and local dog laws

## 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.

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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.

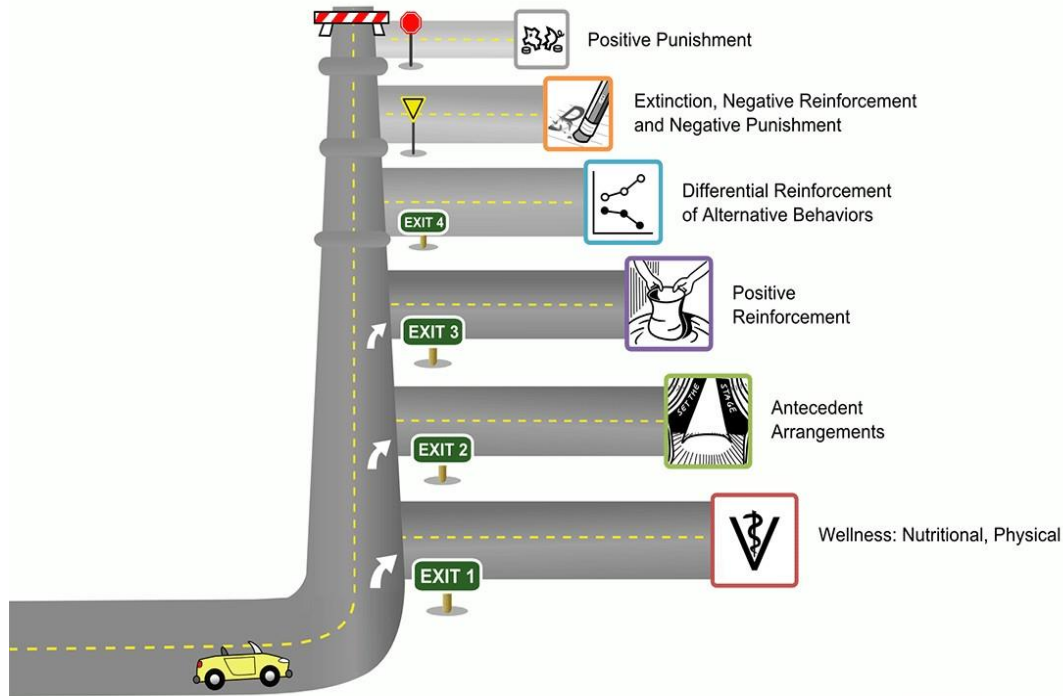
### **Purpose**

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

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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.



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).*