

Members' Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour expected from all members of the Assistance Dog Council (ADC). Compliance with these principles ensures the highest standards of assistance dog welfare, training, and public behaviour, as well as safeguarding vulnerable individuals.

1. Principles and Responsibilities

As a member of ADC, whether as a volunteer or staff member, you have a duty to ensure that assistance dog handlers, the public, and particularly vulnerable individuals, are treated with dignity and respect. It is your responsibility to:

- Maintain the welfare, training, and behaviour of your assistance dog in accordance with ADC standards.
- Ensure your behaviour is appropriate at all times.
- Observe the rules established for the safety and security of children, young people, and vulnerable adults.
- Follow safeguarding procedures when dealing with suspicion, disclosure, or allegations of abuse.
- Recognise the position of trust in which you have been placed and act accordingly.
- Adhere to ADC's policies on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

2. Assistance Dog Welfare and Training

Members must ensure their assistance dogs are:

- Well-groomed: Regularly bathed, brushed, and free from excessive shedding or matting.
- Preventatively treated: Up to date with flea and worm treatments.
- Vaccinated: In accordance with veterinary recommendations.
- Trained to a high standard: Behavioural and task-specific training should be maintained through regular reinforcement.
- Socialised: Exposed to different environments to ensure calm, reliable behaviour in public.

Any deterioration in a dog's behaviour that could impact public safety or access rights must be addressed promptly through additional training, and removal of public duties until rectified.

Any illness should be addressed by removal of public duties, and rest or veterinary aid if required.

3. Public Conduct and Business Interactions

Members must ensure their assistance dogs:

- Exhibit impeccable behaviour in public spaces.
- Are not disruptive to businesses, public transport, or other public environments.
- Are behaved well whilst in the view of others.

Members are advised to

- Wear clear identification for their assistance dog whilst working. This should include a jacket/harness, preferably with the organisation name and contact details.

- Carry a copy of our guide for Assistance Dogs, which can be found in the resources of our website. This does not have to be a printed version, but members should be able to find it if required.

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Members must:

- Engage courteously with the public and businesses.
- Address any complaints about their dog's behaviour promptly.
- Avoid using their assistance dog for unfair advantages in access situations.
- Engage courteously to other members and staff/volunteers

4. Safeguarding Responsibilities

All members must uphold safeguarding best practices when working with or around children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

Code of Behaviour

DO

- ✓ Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- ✓ Set a positive example in all interactions.
- ✓ Plan activities ensuring visibility and safety.
- ✓ Respect the personal privacy of children, young people, and vulnerable adults.
- ✓ Encourage concerns to be raised and take them seriously.
- ✓ Follow ADC's safeguarding procedures.
- ✓ Keep colleagues informed about your activities when interacting with vulnerable groups.

DO NOT

- ✗ Trivialise or ignore concerns of abuse.
- ✗ Engage in inappropriate relationships or behaviour with vulnerable individuals.
- ✗ Permit or engage in abusive peer activities such as bullying.
- ✗ Use inappropriate, suggestive, or threatening language.
- ✗ Rely solely on personal reputation to safeguard against allegations.



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5. IT and Communication Standards

Members must comply with ADC's Acceptable Use Policy regarding IT, communication, and data protection. Key obligations include:

- Keeping all ADC -related information secure and confidential.
- Using IT resources, emails, and the internet responsibly and professionally.
- Avoiding the dissemination of inappropriate, offensive, or misleading information.
- Not sharing information from groups you may be part of, this can include emails, or social media groups. The only information that is able to be shared, is that which the ADC has posted on their public pages.
- Complying with UK data protection laws.
- Reporting any IT security breaches or concerns immediately.

6. Compliance and Accountability

Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct may result in:

- A formal warning.
- Suspension of membership or privileges.
- Permanent removal from the ADC in cases of serious or repeated breaches.

By signing this Code of Conduct, members acknowledge their commitment to upholding these standards, ensuring the highest level of professionalism, assistance dog welfare, and safeguarding.

This document is able to be signed electronically, and then submitted to the Assistance Dog Council Membership Team (Memberships@ADCouncil.org.uk)

Member Declaration

7. Declaration

I, _____, agree to adhere to the Assistance Dog Council's Code of Conduct and commit to maintaining the highest standards of care, training, and behaviour for my assistance dog.

Signature: _____

Date: _____