

At its annual meeting on January 13, 2022, the American Spaniel Club Board of Directors considered a proposal to update the language of the ASC Code of Ethics.

Since the time of its original writing, there has been a global emergence of a robust cyber-environment which has produced multiple social media and other communications outlets.

The ASC encourages members to communicate across various digital platforms so long as references to the organization, its members, and breeding programs are honest, fairly represented, and in the spirit of good sportsmanship. This ensures the ASC maintains its high reputation among other breed clubs and under the umbrella of the AKC and encourages the highest level of sportsmanship for all members.

WHAT OTHER CLUBS ARE DOING.

The AKC has absorbed social media sportsmanship into the broad language of their Code of Sportsmanship. Other breed clubs also have specifically addressed the issue in their own Code of Ethics.

Here are some examples of action that has been taken by other clubs.

American Maltese Association includes the following language in its Code of Ethics.

"I will refrain from publicly making or publishing, including on social media, any false or malicious statements about another member or members and will refrain from seeking to impair the reputation of another member. I will be courteous and helpful to people who contact me. I will conduct all advertising in an honest manner that will not, in any way, misrepresent, defraud or mislead."

West Highland White Terrier Club of America includes in its Code of Ethics, *"Members shall not apparently or obviously demean other members, either directly or in the context of any social media posting."*

Skye Terrier Club of America states in its Code of Ethics that members are *"to adhere to AKC's Good Sportsmanship policy which means to always promote the breed in a positive light; to act toward competitors and club members in a courteous, civil manner which is extended not only in face to face encounters but to include no personal attacks or inflammatory statements on social media sites, e.g. Facebook, Twitter, etc."*

The ASC Board has approved the following additional language indicated in **bold** to update the ASC Code of Ethics. Under the ASC ByLaws, any changes to the club's Code of Ethics must be reviewed by the membership prior to a formal vote of the membership. Please review and send all comments to:

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PROPOSED CHANGES TO ASC CODE OF ETHICS:

ASC CODE OF ETHICS

PREAMBLE

Membership in the American Spaniel Club is granted because of the individual's commitment to the protection, preservation, and promotion of the Cocker Spaniel. Implicit in being a member of the American Spaniel Club is the acceptance and understanding of the Code of Ethics, which is established and designed as a guide to protect the interest of the Club and Cocker Spaniels. The American Spaniel Club expects adherence to this Code. Its tenets should not be violated.

CANNON OF ETHICS

A. Members of the American Spaniel Club have an obligation to protect the interests of their breeds by conducting themselves **in person, by representation, and/or via cyber environments**, in a manner designed to reflect credit on themselves, their breeds, and on the American Spaniel Club.

B. Members are expected to observe the highest standards of sportsmanship; conduct themselves **in person, by representation, and/or via cyber environments**, in such a manner as to reflect positively on the sport of showing dogs; and exhibit good will at all breed shows, obedience and field trials.

C. Members who contemplate breeding a litter, or who allow the use of their stud dog to the same end, shall direct their efforts toward producing dogs of exceptional quality, temperament, and condition. Members are not to use their stud dogs on pet quality bitches, totally lacking in breed type.

D. Members shall not engage **in person, by representation, and/or via cyber environments**, in false or misleading advertising or misrepresentation of their breeds, nor shall they malign their competition **or others** by making false or misleading statements regarding their competitors' **or others'** dogs, breeding practice or person.

NOTE: These proposed changes add broad cyber environments language to the Code of Ethics which is meant to include all current and future forms of social media or other Internet-based communication applications

II. RESPONSIBILITIES AS A BREEDER

Breeders shall:

A. Be familiar with their breeds and standards, and breed only those specimens which conform to it.

B. Be familiar with A.K.C. rules concerning record keeping, registration, sale and transfer

of dogs, and abide by these rules.

C. Use for breeding only those dogs that are healthy and free from serious congenital and hereditary defects characteristic of their breed or breeds.

D. Produce puppies only when the breeder has the time and facilities to provide adequate attention to physical and emotional development and retain or house only the number of dogs for which they have adequate facilities.

E. Refrain from further use of a bitch or stud that has become affected with or has produced any serious inherited defects detrimental to the animal's well-being, such as blindness, deafness, lameness, or impairment of the vital functions, and who consistently produces like results with different mating partners.

F. Maintain the best possible standards of health for their animals and care of their kennels.

G. Breeders shall not breed bitches every season. (It is recommended a bitch not be bred more than four times during a lifetime).

H. Refrain from selling puppies to pet shops either outright or on consignment; refrain from supplying puppies for auctions, raffles, or other such enterprises; refrain from selling to persons whose intention to resell is known or suspected; refrain from breeding litters primarily for the pet market.

I. Refrain from selling puppies in litter lots and shall sell only quality dogs to foreign countries (not their cast-offs that they don't want to be seen in the U.S.A.)

III. RESPONSIBILITIES AS A JUDGE

ASC Member Judges:

A. Shall be familiar with and abide by the A.K.C.'s published "Guidelines for Dog Show Judges", the A.S.C.'s By-Laws and Code of Ethics.

B. The A.K.C.'s published "Guidelines for Dog Show Judges" covers a wealth of material, but the three keys to excellence in judging are of vital importance. These are:

1. Breed Knowledge
2. Impartiality
3. Procedure

C. Judges must avoid any appearance of wrong doing and not merely wrong doing itself. They should be highly circumspect in their conduct outside, as well as inside the show ring. A perfectly innocent action or discussion can be misconstrued even by experienced exhibitors.

D. Judges should approach all assignments with a positive attitude and be courteous and

polite to the exhibitors.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES AS AN EXHIBITOR AND/OR HANDLER

Exhibitors/Handlers shall:

- A. Act professionally at all times in caring for and exhibiting any dog in their charge.
- B. Not engage in any questionable contact with judges prior to exhibiting under them.
- C. Be familiar with and abide by the A.K.C.'s Rules and Regulations for Dog Shows, Obedience Trials, Field Trials, other events and The Guidelines for Dog Show Judges.
- D. Exhibit/handle only those dogs that conform as closely as possible to their respective breed standards.

V. ENFORCEMENT

- A. The American Spaniel Club shall enforce Article VI of its By-Laws entitled "Discipline", should violations of its Code of Ethics be brought before its Board or Committee.
- B. Article VI entitled "Discipline" addresses the areas of Suspension, Charges, Board Hearings and Expulsion. Each member is expected to be familiar with this very important By-law.

VI. ACCEPTANCE

Upon acceptance as a member of the American Spaniel Club I will adhere to the best of my ability to the rules and guidelines set forth in the American Spaniel Club Code of Ethics, **and will demonstrate unwavering commitment to the principles of the American Spaniel Club Code of Ethics.**

NOTE: The above proposed change strengthens the acceptance clause of the Code of Ethics, making adherence to and practice of the Code compulsory for all members.