

# GOOD DOG

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## GOOD DOG Code of Ethics

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### Preamble

Good Dog acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the First Australians, whose lands we share, and we pay respect to their unique values, and continuing cultures which enrich the life of our nation and communities. As a social work practice Good Dog is responsible for ensuring that we are culturally competent, safe and sensitive.

Good Dog also acknowledges the increasing role animals play in the health and wellbeing of Australians. And we are committed to uphold and protect the wellbeing and welfare of all human and non-human animals in the animal therapies sector.

Good Dog is committed to all ethical codes that uphold the values, ethics, integrity and applicable legislation of social work and the partnered animals that assist in delivering animal assisted services (including therapies, learning, activities and assistance animal handler team advocacy).

### Our commitment

Good Dog is committed to the social work profession and the pursuit and maintenance of human and animal wellbeing. We aim to maximise the development of human and animal potential, in partnership, and the fulfillment of human and animal needs through equal commitment

As a social work practice, we operate at the interface between people, animals, and their social, cultural and physical environments. In practice this may include:

- engaging in interpersonal practice including casework, counselling, clinical intervention; work with individuals, families, partnerships, communities and groups; advocacy; community work; and social action to address both personal difficulties and systemic issues
- undertaking research, social policy development, administration, management, consultancy, education, training, promotion, supervision and evaluation to further human and animal wellbeing and development

As a social work practice, Good Dog, in all contexts maintains a holistic focus on assisting human and animal functioning, their mutual bond, and identifying the systemic issues that create inequity and injustice.

### **Good Dog's values and principles**

In the determination, pursuit and integrity of Good Dog's commitment as a social work practice and champion of the rights of working animals in partnership; Good Dog will:

- have a compassionate and non-judgemental respect for persons and animals, and in the model of One Health-One Welfare;
- work in the pursuit of social justice;
- work with professionalism, safety and integrity with all intrinsic and sentient beings – human and animal.

Good Dog embraces the democratic values and principles embraced by social work, in particular within the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) Constitution (2008), including:

- compliance with the AASW Code of Ethics and Animal Therapies Ltd. Code of Ethics;
- belief in the equal worth of all human beings, and the animals who work with Good Dog;
- commitment to the Australian democracy around human equality under law and equal opportunity;
- respect for others, both human and non-human, including compassion, fairness, equity and justice;
- acceptance of the uniqueness of each individual being – both human and non-human;
- belief in collaboration and cooperation as the cornerstone of effective social work practice;
- valuing families and communities as social structures fundamental to the functioning and wellbeing of individuals – both human and non-human, and society;
- positive change that brings about growth and development for humans, in partnership with working animals;
- human and animal choice, and human personal and collective responsibility;
- high quality social work service provision;
- the right of human individuals to have the right to privacy, and it respected;
- valuing diversity and difference amongst humans, and animals;
- promoting human and animal rights.

## Good Dog ethical responsibilities

Good Dog is committed to ethical behaviours and responsibilities at all times and in carrying out our practice responsibilities. Good Dog will:

- respect human and animal dignity and worth; demonstrating a respect for clients and seek to preserve and promote their dignity, individuality, rights and responsibilities;
- be culturally competent, safe and sensitive; recognising and acknowledging the diversity within and among cultures, taking into account individual, family, group and community needs and differences, and any impact to Good Dog's partnered animals;
- be committed to social justice, human and animal rights; promoting policies, practices and social conditions, using anti-oppressive principles, that uphold these rights to ensure access, equity, participation and legal protection;
- uphold the high standards of social service delivery and propriety; ensuring clients and animals can exercise self-determination, decision-making and input, and that Good Dog will carry out all professional duties with integrity;
- be committed to animal-assisted social work practice competence; maintaining and working to expand our growing levels of competence, knowledge, theory and skill in order to provide quality service and accountable and transparent practice – both human and non-human;
- maintain professional boundaries, dual relationships and safety; between all parties – both human and non-human;
- be aware of any conflicts on interest, or its potential, that may affect our ability to exercise professional discretion and unbiased judgement;
- be aware and mitigate any risks to both human and non-human participants.

## Availability and review of Policy

Good Dog's Code of Ethics is available on request and is provided as a link on our website.

This Code will be reviewed from time to time and any amendments will be incorporated into the updated Code.

Undersigned by



**Hannah Taino-Spick**

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Social Worker, Animal Assisted Therapies

Professional Member of Animal Therapies Ltd. & Australian Association of Social Workers  
(AASW)