



Code of Conduct & Social Media Use Policy

Amended – 7 June 2023
Amended – 16 June 2026

1.0 DEFINITION

- 1.1 A **code of conduct** is a set of rules outlining the social norms and rules and responsibilities of, or proper practices for, an individual, party or organisation. Related concepts include ethical, honour, moral codes and religious laws.

"Principles, values, standards, or rules of behaviour that guide the decisions, procedures and systems of an organisation in a way that (a) contributes to the welfare of its key stakeholders, and (b) respects the rights of all constituents affected by its operations."

From 2007 International Good Practice Guidance, "Defining and Developing an Effective Code of Conduct for Organisations", the International Federation of Accountants.

2.0 POLICY PURPOSE

- 2.1 This Policy is intended to provide members, exhibitors and volunteers of CATS NSW Inc with instructions on what is acceptable behaviour towards each other, and instructions on how to interact with social media, in a positive way so as not to offend or cause distress to others.
- 2.2 To also achieve CATS NSW Inc's objective of promoting the cat fancy and the welfare of all cats, their owners and fellow breeders in a positive way within the New South Wales community and the broader world stage.

3.0 GUIDELINES FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND DELEGATES CONDUCT

- 3.1 CATS NSW INC is an incorporated body subject to corporate law and as such needs to be managed in an efficient, transparent and accountable manner on behalf of the affiliated clubs. As an elected member of the CATS NSW Executive or an affiliated club representative of the Committee of CATS NSW INC, you have taken on a responsibility to act at all times on behalf of the association.
- 3.2 You are a representative of CATS NSW INC and you have duties under common law which are:
- 3.2.1 to act honestly in the exercise of your powers and in the discharge of your responsibilities;
 - 3.2.2 to exercise a reasonable degree of care and diligence;
 - 3.2.3 to declare any conflicts of interest;
 - 3.2.4 to not make improper use of information acquired to gain advantage for yourself or others;
 - 3.2.5 to not make improper use of your position to gain an advantage for yourself or others or to cause detriment to the association;
 - 3.2.6 do not discuss matters outside of the meeting until and unless these have been publicized by the Secretary in the form of the meeting minutes, or expressly requested to do so by a CATS NSW meeting;
 - 3.2.7 if you wish to raise a matter, write to the Secretary prior to the meeting to have this put on the agenda;
 - 3.2.8 to have a good working knowledge of CATS NSW INC Constitution, Rules, Policies and Guidelines (if you do not have copies, ask the CATS NSW INC Secretary to send you copies, or go to the CATS NSW INC website www.catsnsw.com.au);
 - 3.2.9 to be aware of current legislation including but not limited to the Companion Animals Act 1998 and the Companion Animals Regulation 2008 and also of Local Government Regulations;
 - 3.2.10 to show respect for other members – inside & outside of meetings;
 - 3.2.11 to be a good ambassador – courteous, respectful, and encouraging; and
 - 3.2.12 to not send bulk emails and beware of 'Reply All' in a response– these are often misconstrued & can be a significant cause of ill feeling.

4.0 GUIDELINES FOR CATS NSW MEMBERS CONDUCT

- 4.1 To be an active and effective member, you must:
- 4.1.1 have a good working knowledge of CATS NSW INC Constitution, Rules, Policies and Guidelines (if you do not have copies, ask the CATS NSW INC Secretary to send you copies, or go to the CATS NSW INC website;
 - 4.1.2 be aware of current NSW legislation including but not limited to, the Companion Animals Act 1998 and the Companion Animals Regulation 2008 and of Local Government Regulations;
 - 4.1.3 show respect for other members – inside & outside of meetings and at all CATS NSW INC events;
 - 4.1.4 actively promote CATS NSW INC;
 - 4.1.5 be a good ambassador – courteous, respectful, and encouraging;
 - 4.1.6 not send bulk emails and beware of 'Reply All' in a response– these are often misconstrued & can be a significant cause of ill feeling;
 - 4.1.7 not engage in conduct which is dishonest, malicious, vexatious, or scandalous;
 - 4.1.8 not engage in conduct discreditable to any member; and
 - 4.1.9 not engage in conduct which could be perceived as prejudicial or injurious to any member.

Exhibitor Conduct at CATS NSW Shows

- 4.2 All Exhibitors must:
- 4.2.1 have a working knowledge of the CATS NSW show rules;
 - 4.2.2 show respect for officials, other exhibitors and visitors at the show;
 - 4.2.3 be a good ambassador for the cat fancy – courteous, respectful and encouraging;
 - 4.2.4 not engage in conduct which is dishonest, malicious, vexatious or scandalous; and
 - 4.2.5 not engage in conduct which could be perceived as prejudicial or injurious to any exhibitor or official

5.0 SOCIAL MEDIA USE POLICY

Cats NSW is committed to a safe, respectful and professional Cat Fancy. This includes how members conduct themselves on social media and other online platforms.

The same standards that apply at shows and meetings apply online. When you post about cats, breeding, shows or other fanciers, you are representing yourself **and** the wider Cat Fancy.

5.1 Definition

(Source: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/dciths/policies-plans-and-procedures/social-media-policy>)

'Social media refers to social media sites, applications, tools and platforms that provide users with online infrastructure and resources to connect and communicate and exchange content or information online.

Activity on social media governed by this policy includes, but is not limited to:

- posts
- uploads
- live streams
- comments
- replies
- retweets or reposts
- liking
- reacting.

It is any conversation or activity that occurs online where people can share information about, or that might impact on CATS NSW Inc., its affiliated clubs, or members of any affiliated bodies who use our services or participate in the events run by our organisation or any of our affiliated bodies.

Social media provides an excellent opportunity for people to gather in online communities of shared interest, to share knowledge, celebrate success and to learn about the cat fancy. CATS NSW INC sees social media as an important tool of engagement. It includes, but is not limited to:

- Social networking sites – for example Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, Bebo, Friendster, Pinterest, LinkedIn;
- Video and photo sharing websites and applications – for example Flickr, Instagram, YouTube, Tumblr;
- Blogs, including corporate blogs and personal blogs – for example SharePoint;
- Blogs hosted by media outlets – for example comments or 'your say' feature;

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- Micro-blogging – for example Twitter;
 - Wiki's and online collaborations – for example Wikipedia;
 - Forums, discussion boards and groups – for example Google Groups, Yahoo Groups, Facebook Groups, Whirlpool; and
 - VOD and podcasting – for example SoundCloud.

5.2 Scope

This policy applies to all Cats NSW members in any online space where:

- They identify themselves as a Cats NSW member, exhibitor, breeder or official; or
- Their identity as a Cats NSW member is reasonably known within the Cat Fancy community.

5.3 Official Social Media Accounts and Personal Accounts

The official Cats NSW social media accounts and pages are managed by authorized administrators approved by the Committee. Only authorized persons may post or respond on behalf of Cats NSW. Official announcements, policies or decisions must not be shared from personal accounts before they appear on official channels.

Members are free to use personal social media accounts, but they must:

- Make it clear when expressing personal opinions that they do not represent Cats NSW
- Refrain from engaging in public disputes involving Cats NSW, its members, associate members or affiliated member bodies.
- Not use personal pages to promote misinformation, gossip or hostility about Cats NSW, its Committee, the Committee members, its members and their activities or individuals.
- Obtain written permission from the CATS NSW Inc before posting any content on any Social Media platform or using any I.T. service to make statements or comments on behalf of the CATS NSW Inc or otherwise which may be construed to be attributed to the CATS NSW Inc or using the CATS NSW Inc logo;
- **Obtain written permission from any registered breeder or exhibitor of CATS NSW or any judge whose photo or video they plan to publish on social media. Request and permission may be via email; and**
- **Not post photos, videos, or results until the conclusion of any show.**

5.4 Guiding principles for acceptable conduct

Whenever CATS NSW Inc. affiliated clubs, members, volunteers and exhibitors are interacting on Social Media, whether in an official or personal capacity, the following guiding principles must be followed at all times in any interaction concerning the feline community:

- 5.4.1 They must act in a way which falls within the community expectations of good and appropriate manners;
- 5.4.2 They must be polite and respectful to CATS NSW Inc., its affiliated clubs, members, exhibitors, stewards, card room and other volunteers including judges;
- 5.4.3 They must not criticise, disparage or make derogatory or negative comments about CATS NSW Inc., members or affiliated clubs, or any domestic or international judges, either expressly or implicitly;
- 5.4.4 They must respond to others' opinions respectfully and professionally;
- 5.4.5 They must not harass, bully or intimidate, nor will they create a perception of harassment, bullying or intimidation towards any person or organization;
- 5.4.6 They must not make negative or adverse comments about any person regarding the exhibits of another exhibitor or member of CATS NSW Inc or any of its affiliates, or create such comment that would be perceived as being derogatory or negative against exhibits of another member or exhibitor of CATS NSW Inc or any of its affiliates;
- 5.4.7 They must not utilise abusive, profane, obscene or sexually explicit language or material;
- 5.4.8 They need to adhere to the Terms of Use, and seek to conform to the cultural and behavioural norms, of the social media platform being used;
- 5.4.9 They need to respect copyright, privacy, financial disclosure and other applicable laws when publishing on social media platforms;

5.5 Expectations for members in all public forums

- 5.5.1 Cats NSW expects members to behave professionally and respectfully in all public forums, including social media, websites, messaging groups and online chats. Members should:
 - Be courteous and respectful, even when disagreeing
 - Protect the reputation of Cats NSW, the Cat Fancy and our breeds
 - Avoid any online behaviour that could bring Cats NSW or the Cat Fancy into disrepute
 - Poor behaviour, harassment, bullying, public "name and shame" posts or ongoing online disputes will not be tolerated.
- 5.5.2 All social media conduct may be considered when assessing whether a member is "in good standing" with Cats NSW.

5.6 Where complaints and concerns must be raised

- 5.6.1 If a Cats NSW member has a complaint or concern about any person in the Cat Fancy, it must be raised through the committee of the organisation that the person belongs to, using the proper complaints process.
- 5.6.2 If a Cats NSW member believes they have been unfairly targeted, harassed or defamed online by a member of Cats NSW, they should report the matter directly to the Cats NSW Committee, with any supporting evidence (screenshots, links, dates).
- 5.6.3 Cats NSW will:
- Address the matter with the member concerned, if they are a Cats NSW member, under our disciplinary procedures, or
 - Refer the matter in writing to the relevant cat association if the matter involves a person who is a member elsewhere.
- 5.6.4 Provide information to the New South Wales Police Service or other jurisdiction as required.
- 5.6.5 Social media is **not** an appropriate forum for complaints, disputes or allegations about individuals, clubs, committees or judges.
- 5.6.6 Mis-use of Social Media can have serious consequences for the CATS NSW Inc, its volunteers and registered breeders and members of affiliate clubs. All reports of mis-use of any I.T. service or Social Media by CATS NSW Inc members will be investigated.

5.7 Complaints made on social media

- 5.7.1 Cats NSW will not investigate complaints that are made or pursued on social media instead of being raised with the committee through proper channels.
- 5.7.2 However, where a Cats NSW member has made such posts, the conduct of the poster may itself be investigated as a disciplinary matter.
- 5.7.3 Members must not disclose confidential Cats NSW committee business, investigations, or disciplinary matters on social media.

5.8 Inappropriate use of social media

- 5.8.1 If a Cats NSW member uses any social media or online platform to raise complaints, allegations or negative commentary about another Cat Fancy member (whether they are a Cats NSW member or not), this will be treated as **inappropriate behaviour** and a potential breach of this Code of Conduct.

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- 5.8.2 This includes (but is not limited to) posts, comments, messages or images that are:
- Harassing, bullying or intimidating
 - Defamatory or damaging to reputation
 - Discriminatory, obscene, threatening or hateful
 - Denigrating another breeder, exhibitor, judge, club or their cats.

- 5.8.3 Such behaviour will follow the same process and potential outcomes as other disciplinary matters (for example poor sportsmanship), including investigation, warnings, suspension or other sanctions as set out in Cats NSW Constitution.

5.9 Guidance and support

Members unsure about whether a post or comment may breach this policy are encouraged to avoid posting until they seek advice from a Committee member or the Secretary.

Remember, if in doubt, leave it out.

5.10 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two (2) years, or earlier if required, to ensure it remains relevant and effective in maintaining the integrity and reputation of Cats NSW Inc.