



## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

*Approved by the Board of Directors on June 30, 2008  
Revised March 29, 2010*

### **1. Administration of the Code of Conduct**

The Code of Conduct sets forth minimum standards for Nova Scotia SPCA (NS SPCA) board members, volunteers and staff. You are expected to conduct the Society's business in full compliance with both the letter and spirit of the law, the Code and any other policies and procedures that may be applicable to you.

The Code is intended to provide general guidance regarding your conduct as an employee, volunteer or director of the SPCA.

### **2. Consequences of Violating the Code of Conduct**

Compliance with the Code, by-laws and any other policies and procedures applicable to you is a term and condition of employment, volunteering, or serving on the Board of Directors. Violations of the code or other applicable policies and procedures or failure to co-operate as directed by the Society with an internal or external investigation may result in corrective action, including dismissal from employment, volunteering or the Board of Directors.

### **3. Ethical Guidelines**

#### **3.1 Ethical Treatment of Animals**

We will act in accordance with the Nova Scotia *Animal Protection Act*, the Society's mission statement and all applicable legislation.

#### **3.2 Human Relations**

We will treat everyone with respect and dignity. We will be open and honest when dealing with staff, volunteers and the general public. We will not engage in gossip and rumor. It is our belief that employees and volunteers are essential to fulfilling the mission

and vision of the NS SPCA; therefore, we will acknowledge individual contributions and respect each other, while working together for the benefit of the Society.

We strive to offer all participants an environment free from discrimination on the basis of age, race, language, culture, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religious or spiritual beliefs nationality or status in life and free from harassment, intimidation and workplace violence.

#### **4. Confidential Information**

In the course of your activities with the Society, you may have access to confidential information related to the Society's business. Such information includes, but is not limited to, all Society's activities, investigations and personal information. You may not either during your period of service or thereafter, directly or indirectly use or disclose to anyone any such information, except as required by law. The exception to this is Directors who are representatives of government departments or the NSMVA who may have to provide reports to their superiors on specific issues.

You should observe the following principles when dealing with the Society's business and activities:

- a) Assume that all information you have regarding the Society is confidential, unless the contrary is obvious.
- b) Treat all personal information as confidential.
- c) Before sharing confidential information with others in the Society, make sure that you are permitted to do so.
- d) Do not disclose confidential information to anyone outside the Society, with the exception of the appointed representatives noted above.
- e) Keep in mind that all forms of communication are covered, including but not limited to verbal, written, telephone, faxes, e-mail, chat rooms, blogging and text messaging.

When you are not sure of a situation consult your supervisor, the Executive Director or the President of the Society.

#### **5. Communicating To the Media**

Protecting the reputation of the Society and maintaining a good public image is everyone's responsibility. Dealing with the media requires skill, tact, diplomacy and knowledge of the topic. Only the Executive Director, President or someone appointed by him or her is authorized to speak to the media. Under no circumstances will anyone speak to the media in regards to any business or activities of the Society. You will respond with "no comment" to all media inquiries and direct them to the Executive Director.

## 6. **Conflict of Interest**

Staff and members of the Board are required to disclose any personal, family or business interests that they have, that by creating a divided loyalty, could influence their judgment and hence the wisdom of their decisions. A conflict of interest exists wherever an individual could benefit, disproportionately from others, directly or indirectly, from access to information or from a decision over which they might have influence, or where someone might reasonably perceive there to be such a benefit and influence.

Examples of possible conflict of interest situations with respect to the NS SPCA include:

- A board or staff member makes a decision motivated by consideration other than the best interests of the NS SPCA.
- A board or staff member or close family member personally contracting with the NS SPCA.
- A board or staff member learns of an opportunity for profit which may be valuable to him/her personally or to another organization of which he/she is a member.
- A board or staff member assists a third party in their dealings with the organization, where such assistance could result in favorable or preferential treatment being granted to the third party, by the NS SPCA.
- The NS SPCA is employing someone who is directly related to a board or staff member.
- A board or staff member has a personal or financial relationship with a client or supplier of the NS SPCA outside of the society.

Conflicts of interest, both real and perceived are unavoidable and should not prevent an individual from serving as a director or staff member unless the extent of the interest is so significant that the potential for divided loyalty is present in a large number of situations.

Full disclosure in writing is the first step in possible conflict of interest issues. Contact the Compliance Officer for guidance.

## 7. **Financial**

### 7.1 Expense Reimbursement

Expenses actually incurred by the employee or Board Member in performing NS SPCA business must be documented on expense reports in accordance with policy procedures. Receipts must be attached to the expense form in order for payment to be made.

### 7.2 Company Credit Cards

Credit cards are provided to employees for convenience in conducting NS SPCA business. No personal expenses can be charged on company credit cards.

Charges on NS SPCA credit cards for which a properly approved expense report has not been received at the time of an employee's termination of employment will be deducted from the employee's last pay cheque. The NS SPCA will pursue repayment by the employee of any amounts it has to pay on the employee's behalf.

### 7.3 Assets and Transactions

Compliance with prescribed accounting procedures is required at all times. Employees having control over NS SPCA assets and transactions are expected to handle them with the strictest integrity and ensure that all transactions are executed in accordance with management's authorization. All transactions shall be accurately and fairly recorded.

## 8. Employee Conduct

### Conduct on SPCA business

8.1 Dishonest or illegal activities on NS SPCA premises or while on NS SPCA business will not be condoned and will result in disciplinary action, including dismissal and criminal prosecution.

The following illustrates activities that are against company policy and will not be tolerated on NS SPCA premises, in NS SPCA vehicles or while engaged in NS SPCA business:

- Consumption and storage of alcoholic beverages
- The use of controlled substances such as drugs or alcohol
- Driving vehicles or operating NS SPCA equipment while under the influence of alcohol , controlled or illegal substances.
- Illegal betting or gambling

The NS SPCA reserves the right to inspect any property that might be used by employees for storage of their personal effects. This includes desks, lockers and vehicles owned by the NS SPCA.

## 9. Accountability

We will make every effort to provide timely, accurate information to all stakeholders. We will be as open as possible regarding the decisions and actions we take regarding Society business to those who have a right to know, while respecting the privacy of all individuals. We will act responsibly when managing the finances of the Society and ensure we receive the best value for our donors.

10. **Whistle Blowing**

The SPCA encourages all staff and volunteers to report wrongdoing. Those who report wrongdoing, who do so in good faith, will not have to fear any reprisals from management or be subject to any form of discrimination. All wrongdoing can be reported to your immediate supervisor, the Executive Director or to the President of the Society.

12. **Amendments**

The Code of Conduct shall be reviewed annually by the Board of Directors, which will make any changes it deems necessary.

All changes will be approved by the Board of Directors.

I have read and been given a copy of the NS SPCA Code of Conduct. I understand and will abide by its provisions. I further understand that this Code of Conduct may be revised from time to time and that I will be made aware of the revisions and that as a condition of my employment or tenure as a volunteer or director, I will be required to abide by any such revisions.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please Print)

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_

Tear off this page and keep on file.