

Ethics Agreement

This Ethics Agreement establishes the professional and moral standards required of all individuals and entities affiliated with the International Association of Holistic Animal Practitioners (IAHAP).

This agreement applies to all applicants, active members, credential holders, educational providers, and approved businesses.

Effective Date: _____

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Ethics Agreement is to ensure the highest standard of holistic animal care, safeguard the welfare of animals, protect the public, and maintain the integrity and reputation of IAHAP and its affiliated professionals.

2. Scope

This Agreement governs the professional conduct, educational practices, business operations, and public representations of all IAHAP affiliates. By obtaining and maintaining an IAHAP membership, credential, or approval, the signatory agrees to adhere strictly to these terms.

3. Core Ethical Principles

All affiliated practitioners and entities must operate according to the following foundational principles:

- **Integrity:** Acting with honesty, truthfulness, and strong moral principles in all professional interactions.
- **Compassion:** Approaching every animal and client with empathy, patience, and genuine care.
- **Animal-Centered Care:** Prioritizing the health, comfort, and best interests of the animal above financial gain or personal convenience.
- **Humane Handling:** Employing safe, gentle, and fear-free techniques that minimize stress and prevent harm.
- **Professionalism:** Maintaining a respectful, dignified demeanor with clients, peers, and veterinary professionals.
- **Transparency:** Providing clear, accurate information regarding services, qualifications, outcomes, and costs.
- **Lawful Practice:** Operating strictly within the legal boundaries of one's jurisdiction.
- **Referral When Appropriate:** Recognizing the limits of one's training and scope, and referring clients to licensed veterinarians or specialized professionals when necessary.

- **Respect for Veterinary Relationships:** Supporting and respecting the primary veterinary-client-patient relationship.

4. Professional Conduct

Signatories shall conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on the holistic animal care profession. Disruptive, abusive, or unprofessional behavior toward clients, animals, peers, or IAHAAP staff will not be tolerated.

5. Animal Welfare and Safety

The physical and emotional safety of the animal is paramount. Practitioners must immediately halt any session or service if the animal exhibits severe distress, pain, or medical emergency, and advise the owner to seek veterinary care.

6. Scope of Practice and Referrals

Practitioners must only provide services for which they have verifiable training and competence. Holistic animal bodywork and care are complementary modalities; they are not a substitute for veterinary medicine. Practitioners shall not diagnose illnesses, prescribe medications, or perform surgery, and must promptly refer medical concerns to a licensed veterinarian.

7. Truthful Representation and Credentials

Signatories must accurately represent their education, training, credentials, and the anticipated outcomes of their services. Misrepresenting one's qualifications or claiming to cure medical conditions is strictly prohibited.

8. Education, Competence, and Continuing Education

Professionals are expected to maintain and enhance their skills through lifelong learning. Credentialed members must complete the required continuing education (CE) credits to ensure their practice remains current and effective.

9. Client Communication and Informed Consent

Practitioners must communicate openly with animal owners, explaining the proposed modalities, potential risks, and expected benefits. Informed consent must be obtained prior to initiating any service.

10. Confidentiality and Privacy

All client and animal records, including health history and personal information, must be kept strictly confidential unless disclosure is authorized by the client in writing or required by law.

11. Recordkeeping and Documentation

Accurate, legible, and contemporaneous records of all client consultations, assessments, and sessions must be maintained and securely stored in compliance with local regulations.

12. Legal and Regulatory Compliance

Signatories must comply with all local, state/provincial, and national laws governing animal care, business operations, and consumer protection.

13. Non-Discrimination and Respect

Services must be provided without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or age.

14. Conflict of Interest

Affiliates must avoid conflicts of interest that could compromise their professional judgment or the welfare of the animal. Any potential conflicts must be fully disclosed to the client.

15. Marketing and Public Statements

All advertising, marketing materials, and public statements must be factual, verifiable, and free of misleading or sensational claims. Affiliates shall not guarantee specific health outcomes.

16. Use of IAHAAP Name, Badges, Certificates, and Logos

The IAHAAP name, logo, badges, and certificates may only be used by active members and approved entities in good standing, precisely in accordance with IAHAAP brand guidelines. Misuse of these assets will result in disciplinary action.

17. Educational Provider Standards

Approved Educational Providers must adhere to the following specific standards:

- Provide accurate and transparent course descriptions, objectives, and prerequisites.
- Maintain a high standard of educational quality, utilizing evidence-based or historically established holistic methodologies.
- Honestly represent the number of CE credits awarded and the nature of the certification provided.
- Provide adequate student support, grading, and responsive communication.
- Regularly update curriculum to reflect current best practices and safety guidelines in animal care.

18. Approved Business Standards

Facilities and entities holding the IAHAAP Ethical Business Approval must adhere to the following:

- Provide consistently humane care and ensure safe, sanitary, and low-stress environments for all animals.
- Ensure all staff members conduct themselves ethically and are appropriately trained for their roles.
- Make only truthful public claims regarding the business's services, ethical standards, and certifications.
- Cooperate fully and transparently with IAHAAP during any review, audit, or inspection processes.

19. Reporting Ethical Concerns

Signatories are encouraged to report observed violations of this Ethics Agreement to IAHAAP. Reports must be made in good faith and based on factual observation.

20. Review, Investigation, and Corrective Action

IAHAAP reserves the right to review and investigate any allegations of ethical misconduct. Affiliates are required to cooperate fully with IAHAAP investigations, providing requested documentation and honest testimony.

21. Disciplinary Action

Violations of this Agreement may result in disciplinary actions, including but not limited to written warnings, mandatory corrective education, temporary suspension of membership/credentials, or public censure.

22. Termination or Revocation

Severe or repeated violations of this Ethics Agreement will result in the immediate revocation of IAHAAP membership, board certifications, specialty designations, educational provider status, or business approval, without refund of fees.

23. Agreement to Updates

IAHAAP reserves the right to update this Ethics Agreement as professional standards evolve. Signatories agree to comply with the most current version of this Agreement as published by IAHAAP.

24. General Acknowledgment

By signing below, the individual and/or authorized business representative acknowledges that they have read, understood, and agree to be legally and morally bound by the entirety of this Ethics Agreement.

IMPORTANT NOTE: IAHAAP credentials, memberships, educational provider statuses, and business approvals do not replace, supersede, or substitute for local, state, or national legal and veterinary requirements. All affiliates must operate strictly within

their legal scope of practice and adhere to their jurisdiction's laws governing veterinary medicine and animal care.

Printed Name of Applicant / Representative

Membership, Credential, or Business Name

Role / Category (e.g., Professional Member, Provider)

Date

Signature

Optional / Office Use Only

Witness or IAHAAP Representative Signature

Date