



Ethics Review Process



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All reports of alleged violations of ForceFreePets's Code of Ethical Conduct will be handled according to this policy. Complaints must be limited to alleged violations of our Code of Ethical Conduct. The responsibility for the investigation of alleged violations is designated to Management.

- Complaints must be made in a timely fashion; allegations of violations occurring more than thirty (30) days prior will be considered only under special circumstances as determined by Management.
- Any person that feels they have been treated in a fashion that violates the ForceFreePets's Code of Ethical Conduct may file a complaint. Management will only consider complaints filed on behalf of a third party if the complaint is accompanied by verifiable independent evidence such as publicly available records, reports, business records, including those of a public agency, judgments of a court, marketing advertisements, commercial documents, and reports, commercial publications and the like.
- All ethics complaints will be investigated and handled within an appropriate timeline.

A) FILING A REPORT OF AN ALLEGED MEMBERSHIP VIOLATION

- The individual filing the alleged violation must present the allegation to Management in writing.
- The report will remain confidential.
- The following information must be included in the alleged violation report:
 - The names of the alleged violator and the actual complainant in reference to the violation. This must be specific. The complaint must directly reference which area of the Code the complainant feels has been violated by including the actual quoted text in their report.
 - A specific description including when and where the violation was alleged to have occurred, who was involved, and what happened.

B) REPORT RECEIPT

- Management will acknowledge receipt of the alleged violation without comment within 24 hours of receipt.

- The individual filing the report will be notified to keep the complaint confidential; this means no information about the complaint will be discussed with any other person. If confidentiality is breached, it may be considered a violation of our Code of Ethical Conduct.
- The complaint details will be kept confidential to preserve the organizational ability to fairly and objectively interact with the member.

C) THE INVESTIGATION

- Management will review the complaint. They will gather more information and schedule an interview with the complainant if necessary.
- If the initial review indicates that the alleged infraction is not a violation of our Code of Ethical Conduct, then the complainant will be notified in writing, and no investigation will be pursued unless further facts or evidence is proffered.
- If it appears that a violation of professional ethics has occurred based on the preponderance of the evidence (is more likely to be true than not), then Management will notify the individual or group that are the subjects of the complaint and provide seven (7) calendar days for a reply. If there is no reply to the complaint notification, then Management will make a decision based on all available information.
- Once all the information has been gathered, Management will decide on the sanctions; this may include:
 - Education. The need for education and mentoring.
 - Employment Probation. From one week up to six months. This may be combined with education.
 - Termination. Termination of employment

D) THE APPEAL PROCESS

- If an individual wishes to appeal the Management decision, they will be given ten (10) calendar days.
- A final decision will be made within five (5) calendar days, and the individual will be notified in writing.

E) CONFIDENTIALITY MANDATE

- All involved parties shall maintain complete confidentiality throughout the process.
- Once a determination has been made, the parties involved will be notified that a determination has been made.
- Details of the determination will remain private.
- A violation of confidentiality by any party involved in the matter will be considered a violation of our Code of Ethical Conduct.