



# Operational Transparency Policy

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## A) PHILOSOPHY

ForceFreePets has a philosophy to “do good” and “do no harm.” Because of this ethos, ForceFreePets agrees that the following equipment is, by design, intended to manipulate, change, and manage behavior by an approach using pain, force, or fear. Therefore, shock collars, prong collars, and choke collars are not used in any way and for any purpose in the training or care of pets or on ForceFreePets property,

ForceFreePets also recognizes the fault in approaching training as just a systematical operant or respondent procedure. Instead, it is essential to consider the pet’s emotional, physical, and environmental wellbeing to ensure a behaviorally sound and empowered pet.

## B) METHODOLOGY

ForceFreePets is informed by science, guided by empathy, and governed by ethics.<sup>®</sup> We pledge to approach behavior, training, and care using humane, ethical, and force-free procedures. The preferred and most prevalent approach is the use of Positive Reinforcement-based Operant and Respondent Conditioning. This approach recognizes that animals are sentient beings and that there is a powerful need to protect and safeguard their emotional, behavioral, and environmental wellbeing. ForceFreePets chooses not to use any training approach that works through pain, force, fear, or by eliciting a startle or alarm reaction

### Definition of Force

Any definition can never be so expansive and explicit that every possible situation is addressed. This is seen everywhere in life and, most obviously, in the US legal system. Courts often cannot agree on a single interpretation of what terms and definitions mean, including physical force.

Recognizing this, we understand that in our Guiding Principles and as a general framework, physical force means “any intentional physical act against a pet that causes psychological or physical pain, harm or damage to the pet.”

## C) EQUIPMENT

ForceFreePets provides information to the general public regarding why their team members choose not to use training equipment that works through pain, force, fear, or by eliciting a startle or alarm reaction. Specific equipment is covered in the NonNegotiables section of our Code of Ethical Conduct. However, the use of many harnesses, head halters, collars (non-choking), and leashes would not be considered physical force under this guiding definition if 1) they are used

consistently with our Guiding Principles, 2) they are used as intended and designed, and 3) they are not used in a way that is contrary to their design and intent, i.e., not used in a manner which would cause psychological or physical pain, harm or damage.