

American Tibetan Mastiff Association Code of Ethics

The American Tibetan Mastiff Association ("ATMA"), in keeping with its goal of encouraging love and respect for the Tibetan Mastiff and the breeding of the finest possible specimens, with the best possible health, has adopted the following Code of Ethics to promote and foster the highest standards among breeders and owners and to encourage cooperation in the advancement and protection of the Tibetan Mastiff breed. All members of the American Tibetan Mastiff Association shall abide by this Code of Ethics.

Responsibilities of All Members

ATMA members recognize that, as individuals, our practices of ownership, breeding, sportsmanship and ethics directly affect the welfare of the breed. No code will ever cover every behavior necessary to protect the breed, and, accordingly, we acknowledge that our actions are the truest reflection of our personal integrity and ethics, our commitment to the enhancement of our breed and true concern for the welfare of the breed.

1. Promoting the Standard of the Breed. In accordance with the purposes of ATMA, as set forth in its Constitution, all ATMA members will use the breed standard created by ATMA and adopted by the American Kennel Club for the Tibetan Mastiff to assess the suitability of dogs' temperament and type for exhibition in AKC and Club events and for breeding.

2. Advancing the Objectives and Integrity of the Club. All ATMA members will adhere to all AKC rules, regulations and requirements pertaining to the support of dogs, the constitution, by-laws and regulations of the American Tibetan Mastiff Association and this Code of Ethics. In addition, all members agree to share knowledge truthfully, constructively and respectfully when conveying information about members and members' breeding programs, as well as about individual TMs. All ATMA members agree to display good sportsmanship and conduct themselves in a manner that gives credit to ATMA, the AKC and the breed and to encourage and promote public awareness of responsible pet ownership. All members agree to ensure that in all dog-related activities, the dog's welfare takes precedence over considerations of breeders, trainers, owners, organizations, sponsors and officials.

3. Protecting the Interests of the Breed and Individual Dogs. All ATMA members will:

- a) Keep only as many dogs as they can provide a high standard of healthcare, shelter, nutrition, attention, affection, and overall care;
- b) Provide appropriate training, exercise and supervision to ensure their dogs are well-mannered, kept in safe conditions and are not abused or neglected;
- c) Not allow their dogs to roam at large unsupervised, nor to become a public nuisance or a public burden;
- d) Ensure to their best ability that all dogs they place are not brokered, wholesaled or consigned through a pet shop, auction or other commercial establishment and are not offered as prizes in contests, raffles or fund-raising events; and
- e) Ensure that all animals released to the care of others have received the health care appropriate for their age and needs.

4. Ethics. In all questions of ethics, whether or not covered by this Code, the individual member shall act solely in the best interests of the breed, and the membership as a whole shall willingly aid any fellow member in upholding these interests.

Responsibilities of Breeders.

Members who wish to breed Tibetan Mastiffs should do so with the full understanding of the responsibility they bear to the future of the breed and with the paramount intention of improving and protecting the breed. Breeders should understand the ATMA breed standard, as approved by AKC, evaluate individual mature dog's traits, evaluate traits present in a breeding dog in immediate and extended family and apply the principles of genetics. Additionally, breeders should understand genetically inherited health issues and have a practical knowledge of mating, care of the bitch and whelp, raising a litter, and the time, effort and resources required to engage in this activity.

1. Rules on Breeding. Experienced member breeders should make themselves available as a resource to novice breeders when requested. Conversely, novice breeders should actively recruit assistance from experienced breeders when engaging in this activity. All members should assist the breeders of their dogs by keeping them informed of their dog's development and health throughout life. ATMA members who breed will:

- a) Adhere to AKC rules applying to litter and individual registrations, ensuring that any litter they produce is eligible for AKC registration;
- b) Refrain from breeding females and males prior to the age of 2 years;
- c) Refrain from breeding females after the age of 8 years;
- d) Ensure that a female has no more than two litters in three years;
- e) Use for breeding only animals which exhibit good type, are in good health, and are physically and temperamentally sound; shy and aggressive dogs will be eliminated from breeding;
- f) Obtain an evaluation for hip dysplasia from the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA) prior to using a TM for breeding. Regardless of any prior evaluations, all dogs over 24 months of age who are to be used for breeding must be evaluated by the OFA for hip dysplasia after 24 months of age and prior to being bred. Only animals receiving hip scores of excellent, good or fair may be bred. If a breeder prefers, PennHip may be used and the dog's score shall be no greater than the average for large breed dogs;
- g) Obtain, within 12 months prior to each breeding, a thyroid panel indicating all thyroid levels (T3, T4 and Free T4) within the normal levels;
- h) DNA register all dogs in their possession with AKC;

- i) Although not required, it is strongly recommended that (i) an evaluation for elbow dysplasia from the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA) be obtained prior to using a TM for breeding (this shall apply only to those TMs that are evaluated after the effective date of this Code Of Ethics) and that only those dogs that are given an OFA elbow number be used for breeding, and (ii) a CERF number be obtained prior to using any TM for breeding;
- j) Provide new owners with the following documentation: this Code of Ethics, an AKC registration application for the individual dog, health and veterinary care history, evidence of the individual's and/or sire and dam's health certifications or evaluations, a three-generation pedigree, and recommendations for general care and training;
- k) Remain available for advice, when sought, for the lifetime of offspring from their dogs; if at any time during the lifetime of any such offspring, the purchaser shall be unable or unwilling to keep such offspring, the breeder shall take back such offspring; and if any such offspring shall not be taken back by the breeder and shall be placed with Tibetan Mastiff Rescue, Inc., such breeder shall donate not less than \$300 to Tibetan Mastiff Rescue, Inc. to help defray its expenses;
- l) Ensure to the best of their ability that puppies produced from any of their TMs will be raised and sold in a manner in accordance with this Code of Ethics;
- m) Microchip or tattoo every puppy prior to sale or transfer;
- n) Exhibit at dog shows and matches where feasible;
- o) If at any time hereditary health problems arise in either sire or dam or in any puppy in the litter, the breeder will promptly inform all owners of dogs from such litter and remove the effected dog from the breeding pool;

- p) Sell all puppies pursuant to a written contract; no such contract shall require the purchase of a puppy bitch to breed that bitch at any time; and
- q) Any puppy sold with limited registration will be sold pursuant to a contract requiring the puppy to be spayed/neutered prior to the age of 1 year unless such contract provides for a lifting of the limited registration if an acceptable OFA score is obtained, in which case such contract will require the puppy to be spayed/neutered prior to the age of 2 ½ years if such OFA score is not obtained.

Responsibilities of Stud Owners.

Anyone using their dog as stud bears great responsibility to the future of the breed. Accordingly, a stud owner shall use the dog discriminantly and with the paramount intention of advancing and protecting the breed.

1. Health Requirements. No member shall offer to stud a TM that does not meet the requirements set forth above in paragraphs b, f and g under "Responsibilities of Breeders".

2. Information. If the stud has not been bred before or has not produced a live litter or has had breeding problems in the past, such information shall be provided to the owner of the bitch before the bitch is accepted for breeding.

3. Requirements with respect to the Bitch.

a) It shall be the responsibility of the stud owner to ascertain that any bitch brought to any stud shall meet the requirements of this Code, whether or not owned by a member of ATMA;

b) The stud owner shall further ascertain to the best of his or her ability that any produce of the breeding shall be raised and sold in a manner in keeping with the ethical standards of this Code. The stud owner shall supply any bitch owner who is not an ATMA member with a copy of this Code;

c) Bitches shall be bred only to the stud specified by her owner unless an acceptable substitute is agreed upon by both parties. The owner of the stud is under no obligation to provide stud service for a bitch who when brought to the

stud dog is not as represented by her owner or presents serious hereditary defects or is not in good health. The owner of a male should not accept a bitch for service if the bitch cannot be maintained in a safe and healthy manner;

d) All members who are owners of either the stud or the bitch shall sign a written agreement, clearly stating the conditions and terms of service;

e) The owner of the stud dog has an obligation to all puppies sired by his or her dogs. Therefore, if the owner of the bitch refuses to take responsibility for the puppies produced as set forth in this Code of Ethics, the owner of the stud dog shall assume that responsibility.

Advertising.

It should be borne in mind that advertising may be read by persons having little or no knowledge of dogs. Each member is responsible to see that all advertising in his/her name does not promote his/her Tibetan Mastiffs through misleading or exaggerated statements or distortion of fact, or through stated or implied deprecation of the Tibetan Mastiffs of others.

Discipline.

1. All suspected infractions should be reported to the Secretary in writing. All reports must be signed by the complaining party and shall be accompanied by a **\$100.00** deposit which shall be refunded if the complaint is upheld. Complaints against members under this Code may be filed by non-members.
2. Within 30 days the Board of Directors shall appoint a committee of 3, no more than one of whom may be a member of the Board of Directors.
3. The investigation committee shall immediately contact the accused party and provide him or her with a photocopy of the complaint, including the name of the complaining party. Once the investigation is undertaken, both the complainant and the accused shall refrain from harassment of the other. Any violation of this shall be reported to the committee and may be considered a violation of the Code. The committee shall investigate the complaint, including but not limited to, contacting the accused and the complaining party.
4. Upon completion of the investigation and after consideration of the facts developed, the committee will report its finding and recommendations to the

Board of Directors within 30 days. The Board of Directors will then vote upon the action to be taken.

5. Penalties:

- a) In the case of a first offense members shall be given one month in which to correct the violation in keeping with the recommendation of the investigating committee and proof of such correction shall be submitted to the committee. Further, the Secretary shall be directed to remove the name of the member from the breeder referral list for a period of 6 months.
 - b) In the case of repeated or flagrant violations, the committee may recommend that the case be submitted to the Board for action on suspension or expulsion. In addition, the Secretary shall be directed to remove the name of the member from the breeder referral list permanently.
 - c) In all cases of repeat or flagrant violation the names of the member, the nature of the violation and the conditions of discipline shall be published in the ATMA Gazette.
 - d) Lack of compliance with the terms of discipline shall be considered a flagrant violation and shall be submitted to the Board.
6. Nothing in this implementation section shall in anyway preclude the Board or any individual member from taking stronger action as provided by the Bylaws on discipline.

Exceptions.

The Board of Directors or the membership as a whole may, upon sufficient evidence and under certain stipulations, where the good of the breed is protected, waive any of the foregoing provisions. Members are urged to bring to the Board any problems that confront them in their efforts to comply with the code.