

# Dogs New Zealand (Dogs NZ) Social Media Code of Conduct

*In 2017 Executive Council adopted its Social Media Code of Conduct, as set out below, effective from the date of publication of the February 2018 edition of NZ Dog World.*

## Background

Social media has become an integral part of day to day communication for individuals as well as businesses.

Social media is defined as the social interaction among people in which they create, share or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks.

Social media is the variety of online communications services dedicated to community-based input, interaction, collaboration and content-sharing. Social media includes websites and applications dedicated to forums, microblogging, social networking, social bookmarking and social curation. Social media is rapidly evolving so no definition can be all encompassing.

Its ability to capture community sentiment and shape opinions is driven by its dynamic and immediate nature.

What constitutes ethical behaviour can be somewhat ambiguous when engaging in social forums, however Dogs NZ believes its members should uphold the highest ethical standards displaying respect, honesty and integrity.

This Social Media Code of Conduct aims to provide guidelines on best practice behaviour when using social media.

## Guidelines

- Abide by the Dogs NZ Rules, Regulations and its Codes.
- Be reasonable and respectful – do not post malicious, misleading or unfair content in relation to Dogs NZ or its affiliates, Dogs NZ staff, Dogs NZ members or members of other Dogs NZ affiliated bodies or indeed of members' dogs.
- Be accurate – any comment posted as fact should be able to be substantiated.
- Act in a manner that is consistent with good community expectations.

The same values that apply in the real world also apply in the virtual world and in social media exchanges.

Despite the seemingly unregulated nature of social media, the law is applicable to online content. Postings online (and similarly in email or text messages) are subject to the law in areas such as defamation, racial discrimination, intimidation and bullying.

Would  
you say  
that to  
my



## Breach of the Social Media Code of Conduct

Dogs NZ continually monitors activity in relation to the organisation and its members. Dogs NZ takes compliance with this code seriously. Where members believe that behaviour is in breach of our Rules, Regulations or Codes and it is reported i.e. a formal complaint is laid under the Dogs NZ Discipline and Settlement of Disputes

Regulations, disciplinary processes may be initiated by Dogs NZ. Where proven, either formal warnings or other penalties may apply. If the breach is of a serious nature the offending members may be considered liable under New Zealand law.

This code has been developed to provide guidance for Dogs NZ members. Any members who are unsure of their rights, liabilities or actions online and seek clarification should contact the Director Secretary.

# Could you be mean to this dog?



It's so much easier online, isn't it



## Online Bullying

At the beginning of this year (11 January) there was an article on Stuff reporting the sad story of a 14 year old girl who committed suicide after being bullied online. Online bullying is a serious issue, which we need to do our best to stamp out.

The following is a list of organisations that can be contacted if you feel you are being bullied.



## Where to Get Help

**1737** – Need to talk? Free call or text any time for support from a trained counsellor

**Lifeline** – 0800 543 354 or (09) 5222 999 within Auckland

**Youthline** – 0800 376 633, free text 234 or email [talk@youthline.co.nz](mailto:talk@youthline.co.nz) or online chat

**Samaritans** – 0800 726 666

**Suicide Crisis Helpline** – 0508 828 865 (0508 TAUTOKO)

**What's Up** – 0800 942 8787 (for 5–18 year olds). Phone counselling is available Monday to Friday, midday–11pm and weekends, 3pm–11pm. Online chat is available 7pm–10pm daily.

**Kidsline** – 0800 54 37 54 (0800 kidsline) for young people up to 18 years of age. Open 24/7.

**thelowdown.co.nz** – or email [team@thelowdown.co.nz](mailto:team@thelowdown.co.nz) or free text 5626

**Anxiety New Zealand** – 0800 ANXIETY (0800 269 4389)

If it is an emergency or you, or someone you know, is at risk call 111.