

## **Revised Code of Ethics – 6/29/19**

**Ethical Statements** - *BTCA members should always act ethically in their actions with their dogs, fellow fanciers, the public, puppy buyers and co-owners. (Ethics deals with conduct, not morals. It governs individual and group behavior, emphasizing strong principles, placing high value on honesty, fairness, justice, kindness, dignity and chivalry. It cannot be effectively governed, but can be impressed through community emphasis).*

### **Commitment Statement for BTCA members:**

- I will keep the integrity and welfare of the breed as my first and foremost concern.
- I will not in any way misrepresent, mislead or be fraudulent.
- I will never place monetary gain over the welfare of my Bull Terriers, those that I have bred or sold.
- I will advertise honestly.
- I will be open to discussing existing and potential defects in my stock with those persons interested in the health and welfare of my Bull Terriers.
- I will make myself available to assist/mentor novices and the general public with information concerning Bull Terriers.
- I will conduct myself in the same manner that I would like to be treated.

**Commitment Statement for Owners:** The following are examples of, but are not limited to, recommended ethical behavior of good owners. As I endeavor to be an ethical Bull Terrier owner:

- I will appreciate the unique nature of the Bull Terrier and I will strive to provide responsible care at all times.
- I will maintain the best possible standards of canine health, cleanliness and care.
- I will take all practical precautions to ensure that my dog does not escape and is not stolen. Additionally, I will communicate these great concerns of escape and theft to puppy buyers, as well as people who are interested in Bull Terriers in general.
- I will conduct myself with kindness and dignity, whether it be a face to face encounter or on a social media setting.

**Recommendations to Breeders** – *Breeders have a substantial obligation to buyers, to the public, to the animals used in a breeding program, and to the animals produced from those breedings. It should be recognized that these obligations are profound and that individual choices made in breeding can affect the future of the breed as a whole. The following are examples of, but not limited to, recommended ethical behavior of good breeders. Ethical practices include: being knowledgeable of and up to date on currently available anecdotal and scientific information relative to breeding dogs, and those specific issues facing Bull Terriers. Education and recommendations by the BTCA Board of Directors and the BTCA Health Committee will continue to be updated and made available.*

**I understand that it is recommended that:**

- I will only breed Bull Terriers that display sound and balanced temperament. I will not breed any Bull Terrier that displays unpredictable aggression towards humans, or

uncontrollable dominant aggressive behavior to other dogs, as well as any other animals. I further will not breed Bull Terriers with obsessive-compulsive disorders or other neurological disorders, such as seizures, spinning, tail chasing, air snapping, shadow or fly chasing, chest or flank sucking.

- I will only have litters when responsible care can be provided in raising the puppies, and when responsible homes are available.
- I will plan each breeding with the advancement and preservation of the breed as my primary goal.
- I will consider the health and well-being of the bitch when determining the frequency of breeding.
- I will not breed a bitch if it would knowingly compromise the health of the bitch. This will include ensuring not breeding any bitch prior to the third (3rd) season or two years of age.
- I will be honest and forthright to inform other breeders, involved in a mating of a bitch to a stud dog, of any potential or produced serious genetic problems related to the bitch or the dog.
- I will be responsible for the placement of puppies afflicted with known serious genetic health defects only into non-breeding homes and after full disclosure of the condition, or in euthanizing them if the condition so warrants.
- I will offer a stud dog contract with each breeding, outlining the lifetime responsibility of the owner of the brood bitch in the placement and care of the resulting puppies.
- I will act responsibly toward all puppies produced by my own bitch or stud dog for the lifetime of the puppies. This includes puppies born to bitches under breeding terms. Responsible involvement would include re-homing the puppy or assisting in that re-homing process. The expected financial involvement is up to the original contract of sale. Members in good standing who comply with the BTCA Code of Ethics may look to the Club and its resources for support and assistance in re-homing Bull Terriers in need.

**Puppy Placement:** I will sell or place Bull Terriers only when confident that the buyer will provide responsible and humane care. This can be accomplished by means which include:

- Inspection of each puppy's home facilities – either personally or by a local representative. My puppy's home should have adequate availability of exercise which may include a fenced yard, other secure enclosure, or availability of other frequent exercise means. I will ensure that potential owners are prepared to provide age appropriate care throughout the day.
- I will check references, especially local veterinarians. Other references I may check could include neighbors and co-workers, or family members outside the home.
- I will strongly encourage new owners to enroll in puppy kindergarten and socialization classes and/or manners classes.
- I will provide a written contract of sale which outlines the expectations of both myself as the breeder/seller and the buyer.

**Contracts:** I understand that the BTCA strongly recommends that the contract between breeders/seller and the new owners include provisions in the following areas:

- AKC registration – Puppies not to be used in my breeding program should be sold on Limited Registration. As the breeder, this is a reversible option. I will encourage all buyers of puppies/dogs sold to become BTCA members, as well as their regional BT club.
- Warranty – Warranty terms and specific conditions under which the buyer may receive consideration should be outlined in my contract. The BTCA recommends a minimum one-year term.
- Code of Ethics – I will review the BTCA Code of Ethics with each prospective new owner. My contract of sale should include a copy of the Code of Ethics.
- Return/re-homing – I will be willing to take back or assist in re-homing puppies and/or adult dogs that I have sold/placed because of situations or circumstances that have changed in the life of the buyer. The BTCA suggests a written contract for each puppy that I sell or place requesting that the puppy must be returned to me and the terms under which it is returned. I agree that I will be responsible for placing any dog/puppy returned to me into an appropriate home, or keep that puppy/dog myself. Furthermore, if I am the owner of the sire, I recognize that I have a shared responsibility in the well-being and safety of any puppies produced by my dog.
- I will explain to prospective owners their obligations regarding Bull Terriers, especially protection from theft or accidental loss. I will follow up with puppy/dog owners and provide consultation when requested or indicated.
- I will tattoo/or microchip all Bull Terriers before registering, selling or placing them. I understand that the BTCA recommends DNA profiling of all Bull Terriers. These identifications should be registered with the AKC and any applicable registry. Registration will include my (the breeder's) and the new owners' contact information.

**Rules** – *The following defined behaviors are enforceable by the disciplinary provisions of the By-laws of the BTCA. And I further understand that as a BTCA member I am required to adhere to these rules:*

- I will become familiar with, and abide by, the rules of the AKC.
- I will act with responsible and courteous behavior, both with fellow members and the public, as a representative of the Bull Terrier breed and the BTCA. This includes having control of my Bull Terrier at all times and cleaning up after my dog(s) in public places. This also means leaving public places, including hotels, in the same condition in which they were found.
- I will keep accurate records and pedigrees.
- I will not engage in any fight-related activities.
- I will not breed or become party to the breeding of a Bull Terrier for the wholesaling of litters or selling to such places as pet dealers, catalog houses, or other commercial sources of distribution, laboratory facilities or auctions.
- I will exhibit good Sportsmanship at all dog-related activities (see AKC Code of Sportsmanship).
- I will not disparage other owners, exhibitors, breeders or their dogs.
- I will only engage in behavior that is in accord with the accepted standards of the BTCA community. As a member of the BTCA community, I will not engage in bullying, harassing or unacceptable (disorderly conduct) behavior toward other person(s) or creature (s). Bullying is defined by repeated inappropriate behavior, direct or indirect, whether verbal, gesture, physical or otherwise conducted by one person or persons against another person or persons. This includes but is not limited to: Cyber-bullying – (using an electronic device or social networking sites to intimidate harass, gossip, demean or harm by emailing, texting, posting or sending messenger photos) is considered prejudicial to good sportsmanship and detrimental to the community at large. I will not communicate in a false or misleading manner by means of

electronic devices. I understand this behavior makes the club, as a whole, less desirable. It is harmful to the whole community. I understand that substantiated and proven claims of the above may result in suspension of my club membership. I understand there will be a **Zero-tolerance** policy.

### **BTCA Code of Ethics- Health Testing Recommendations Appendix**

The following represents a basic minimally responsible approach to the application of screening health tests which should be employed by responsible BTCA breeder members. These recommendations represent the current best understanding of these issues at the time of this current revision. As greater understanding of these issues become available, these guidelines will be revised to reflect the then current recommendation regarding these health issues, including adding specific guidelines and recommendations to the Appendix as the progression of science dictates. It is being both responsible and optimally educated that gets us to our end goal. The breeding of purebred dogs is not an exact science. It is not always possible to prevent the occurrence of inherited diseases, as there are not yet definitive tests to identify carriers of all the genetic diseases in our breed. A breeder's obligation with regard to genetic diseases is to make every effort to prevent their occurrence and share openly and honestly all information available regarding the genetic health status of his/her dogs. While elimination of genetic diseases is a worthy goal, the converse is that excessive culling of animals from the gene pool may have the equally deleterious effect of limiting the gene pool in the breed. Breeders should be cautious about removing animals from the breeding pool solely because they are distantly related to an affected individual. Responsible breeding also should always be intent upon eliminating adverse characteristics – cosmetic, health, or temperament. Testing should be viewed as a means to this goal. Breeders should be able to provide proof that their breeding stock has been checked for hearing, heart, kidney and patella related issues.

Great care and concern should be exercised when breeding animals that have a non-life-threatening genetic problem. The point of the health screening tests is to help identify animals which have both desirable qualities and an undesirable health issue, to allow their qualities to be passed on to offspring and to remove offspring which exhibit the undesirable health issue. By using only the resulting normal offspring for subsequent breeding, we attempt to clear the "gene pool" of affected breeding stock in as few generations as possible. This technique is the only tool we have at present. With this in mind, the BTCA **strongly recommends** the following:

Bitches should be health tested before each breeding or at least annually, and annually for each stud dog. Minimally, these tests should include a physical examination, a screening for parasites and evaluation of the following specific areas:

**Heart** – An internist and/or cardiologist should auscultate all breeding animals. Optimally all breeding animals should have a color Doppler/echo cardiogram. All murmurs should be followed by a color Doppler/echocardiogram evaluation.

**Kidney** – A urine sample should be checked for the protein/creatinine ratio. This test is called UPC (Urine Protein Creatinine ratio). All breeding dogs should be checked annually and bitches before each breeding. The recommended UPC should be <0.5. This recommendation is based upon information

made available from Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine – Urinalysis. Please see <https://www.vet.cornell.edu.....Testing>Testing> Protocols and Interpretations.

“In healthy **dogs**, the **urine protein to creatinine ratio** (UP:UC) is usually <0.5. Values between 0.5-1.0 in non-azotemic **dogs** are considered equivocal and continued monitoring for progression is recommended. Values >1.0 in non-azotemic **dogs** are abnormal and diagnostic evaluation is warranted.”

**Hearing** – A BAER (Brainstem Auditory Evoked Response) test should be done on all puppies before the puppy leaves for a new home. This result is usually stable throughout the life of the dog. It is recommended that all animals used for breeding should be BAER tested and have bilateral hearing. No bilaterally deaf dogs should ever be bred.

**Patella** – Checked by palpitation, looking for luxation. Palpations are rated as No Luxation or luxation scored 1- 4 (1 is slight, 4 severe). Preferably, all breeding animals should be free of patella luxation.

**Lethal Acrodermatitis** - It is recommended that both dogs and bitches be screened for LAD. It is a simple cheek swab that can be done by the owner of the bitch or stud dog and submitted to PennGen for results. You can locate the LAD test, registration, order swabs and instructions on where to submit the samples at <https://www.vet.upenn.edu/research/academic-departments/clinical-sciences-advanced-medicine/research-labs-centers/penngen/penngen-tests>.

**Immune Mediated Disorders** – Bull Terriers may exhibit low grade (non-life-threatening) immune dysfunction. The best current veterinary advice suggests that this may exhibit itself in primarily two ways. These are 1) allergy – either food related or environmental allergies (like allergy to grass) and 2) low-normal thyroid function. Animals who exhibit these traits should only be bred to animals that do not. Consult your local vet if you have questions.

The BTCA will provide a member password protected space on the parent website health pages for members to voluntarily post LAD status, cardiac status, BAER (hearing) status etc. These test results will not be substantiated by the BTCA; therefore, the BOD suggests consulting the breeders/posters for original copies of these tests preceding breeding decisions.