

CFODC POLICIES

California Federation of Dog Clubs' Policy Statements

INTRODUCTION

The following are CFODC policy statements. They are based in large part upon the Policies of the American Kennel Club. We endorse the following AKC Policies as stated in the current issue of The American Kennel Club Policy Manual.

ANIMAL WELFARE

The CFODC supports animal welfare. Animal welfare is the concept that human beings should treat animals in a kindly manner, protect them and prevent them from suffering. We support the definition of animal protection as defined in the Journal of American Veterinary Medical Association, JAVMA, Vol. 196, No. 1, January 1, 1990 which states: "all aspects of animal well-being, including proper housing, management, nutrition, disease prevention, control and treatment, responsible care, humane handling, and when necessary, humane euthanasia".

CFODC opposes invasive laws which attempt to control the ownership and treatment of dogs, other than as described above. This includes medical decisions which are better made by the owner in consultation with the dog's veterinarian.

SPAYING AND NEUTERING

The CFODC supports an owner's choice to spay or neuter their pet in consultation with their veterinarian taking into consideration recent research regarding the potential negative consequences of such surgery.

PROPER CARE AND HUMANE TREATMENT OF DOGS

Dog owners bear a special responsibility to their canine companions to provide proper care and humane treatment at all times. Proper care and humane treatment includes an adequate and nutritious diet, clean water, clean comfortable living conditions, and veterinary care when needed, kind and responsive human companionship, as well as socialization and training in appropriate behavior. We do not believe dogs should be kept in circumstances where all of these needs cannot be adequately fulfilled.

CANINE LEGISLATION

CFODC believes that dog owners should be responsible for their dogs, as defined above, and that laws should impose appropriate penalties on irresponsible owners who treat their dogs otherwise. CFODC also believes in a well-defined procedure for dealing with dogs proven to be dangerous which includes, if necessary, the destruction of such animals. Such legislation should not single out specific breeds or phenotypic classes of dogs.

THE ANIMAL WELFARE ACT

CFODC strongly supports enforcement of the requirements of the Animal Welfare Act in all situations for which it is applicable.

PURE-BRED DOG RESCUE

The CFODC supports and encourages the effort by clubs, organizations and individuals to rescue adoptable dogs from animal shelters, from owners who can no longer care for their dogs in a responsible manner, or strays found wandering at large.

DOG AUCTIONS

The CFODC strongly opposes disposing of dogs by offering them as prizes or giveaways in auctions, raffles, contests or promotional events. The acquisition of a dog should be an informed and educated decision on the part of the owner to be.

DOG BREEDING

The CFODC strongly supports and actively promotes a wide range of programs to educate the public about responsible breeding practices and the responsibilities of pet ownership. We support enforceable laws that protect the welfare, health and well being of dogs.

A large percentage of AKC recognized breeds are relatively rare and endangered. Responsible pure-bred dog breeders are domestic animal preservationists. Without planned breeding programs, the rarer breeds would be in danger of extinction.

CANINE POPULATION

The CFODC recognizes that there is a population of dogs entering shelters for various reasons, including financial hardships and uninformed choices. Two major deterrents to adoption and responsible

ownership are laws which limit the number of pets per household and pet forbiddance in affordable rental housing. Euthanasia rates may appear high due to feral cats and owner requested euthanasia.

Since the 1970s there has been a steady year by year downward trend in both nationwide and statewide euthanasia rates due to increased responsible ownership brought about by education of the dog buying public. This downward trend has occurred without coercive and onerous legislation and despite increases in the human population.

SALES OF DOGS

CFODC believes all breeders bear a responsibility to assure that those who purchase their animals understand and are capable of carrying out their responsibilities as pet owners. We further recommend and support education of the public to avoid impulse buying of dogs and to encourage the purchase of dogs from responsible breeders. CFODC opposes legislation that bans sales of animals.

ANIMAL TERRORISM

The CFODC opposes acts of violence against dogs, dog owners, kennels and research facilities committed by those who object to the keeping of animals. We respect the right to express and advocate personal opinions in lawful ways; however, we do not condone illegal actions such as the “liberation” of animals, or destruction of property.

THE RIGHT TO KEEP AND ENJOY DOGS

The human-canine bond pre-dates recorded history. Since the dawn of civilization, humans have enjoyed the companionship and assistance of dogs. Dog ownership has existed in all cultures, races, climates and economic situations. The domestic dog as a species exists only in close proximity to human settlement.

CFODC strongly endorses the right to own, keep and breed dogs in a responsible and humane manner. We are convinced that responsible dog ownership can be compatible with virtually any living environment. We support responsible pet ownership, including by residents of senior citizen and government subsidized housing facilities.

CFODC recognizes the special obligation of dog owners not only to their pets but to their neighbors and society. We support “curbing” and clean up ordinances, leash laws and other regulations designed to ensure that dogs and their owners do not become a nuisance or a threat to public health and safety.

We believe that people should be allowed to own as many dogs as they can responsibly care for. We oppose artificial limits on the number of pets a person may own. We believe that neighborhood

problems arising from irresponsible dog ownership such as pet odor and noise should be addressed through strict enforcement of noise and nuisance ordinances. Numbers of pets owned by an individual have no relationship to nuisances. A person with one dog that runs loose or barks at night is a greater nuisance than a person with a dozen dogs that are quiet, clean, and kept confined to their owner's property.

Legal Background on Unlimited Pet Ownership

Kadash vs City of Williamsport: "What is not an infringement upon public safety and is not a nuisance cannot be made one by legislative fiat and then prohibited. Even legitimate legislative goals cannot be pursued by means which stifle fundamental personal liberty when the goals can be otherwise more reasonably achieved".

The Commonwealth Court in the State of Pennsylvania struck down a county limit on the number of animals a resident can own. In so deciding, the court found that ordinances regulating nuisances must define the existence of a nuisance and establish that an ordinance protects the community from such nuisance. The law limiting pet ownership exceeded the county's authority, according to the court, because it did not specify why the presence of more than five pets in a household qualifies as a nuisance or a risk to public health and safety.

DOG FIGHTING

The CFODC unequivocally opposes the "sport" of dog fighting and the breeding and/or training of dogs for fighting. We support state laws making any form of participation in organized dog fights a felony.

USE OF DOGS FOR ASSISTANCE AND SERVICE

The CFODC strongly supports the training and use of dogs to provide assistance and service to humans. Dogs provide valuable service as Seeing Eye, hearing, therapy, handicapped assistance, as well as drug, bomb, disease and arson detection, search and rescue dogs, and dogs for tracing and locating missing persons and fugitives.

We oppose those who seek to define the assistance and service dogs provide to mankind as exploitive, and encourage the continuation and further development of the use of dogs for these purposes.

PUREBRED VS. MIXED BREED DOGS

For thousands of years, humans have bred strains of dogs with desired characteristics and/or abilities and instincts to perpetuate and enhance these characteristics. Purebred dogs breed true to type, i.e., their offspring are relatively predictable in appearance, temperament and instinct.

Various breeds of purebred dogs have appeared and disappeared throughout history. Various dog registries throughout the world recognize more than 400 pure breeds. Some of these are of relatively recent origin, while others have existed for centuries.

Many mixed breed dogs and dogs of indeterminate breeding are capable of providing excellent canine companionship and in some cases even human service and assistance, just as purebred dogs do. However neither the appearance nor genetic characteristics of mixed breed dogs are predictable, nor can they be perpetuated reliably.

The choice of a purebred dog permits the prospective dog owner to select the size, appearance, disposition and instincts that the owner desires with assurance that a puppy purchased from a responsible breeder will possess those characteristics.

USE OF ANIMALS IN RESEARCH

The CFODC recognizes the invaluable contributions to both human and veterinary medical knowledge that have resulted from medical research on animal subjects. We believe that all efficacious alternatives to the use of animal subjects should be explored before using animal subjects, that the value of research results should clearly merit use of animal subjects, and that standards of humane care and treatment of animals should be scrupulously observed. Further, we believe strongly that users of animals for research bear full responsibility for ascertaining the source of their animals, and for assuring that suppliers comply with Federal, state and local regulations.

TAIL DOCKING AND EAR CROPPING

The CFODC supports those parent breed clubs which require tail docking, ear cropping and/or dewclaw removal in their Standards.



California Federation of Dog Clubs

P. O. Box 2341

Lancaster, CA 93539