

AMERICAN BRUSSELS GRIFFON ASSOCIATION

CODE OF ETHICS

This Code of Ethics is a guideline for how American Brussels Griffon Association (ABGA) members conduct themselves as they pursue their hobby of owning, showing and breeding Brussels Griffons. The purpose is not to punish a member for his/her conduct, but to point the way toward responsible, caring ownership, exhibiting and breeding. Membership in the ABGA requires acceptance of and adherence to these guidelines.

Responsible Breeding Practices

1. Each member's breeding program shall strive to conform to the approved Brussels Griffon breed standard to improve progeny and minimize faults.
2. Each member who conducts a breeding program agrees to have an obligation for the well-being of every puppy produced. This obligation shall include offering to take back or help place into a new home any Griffons of their breeding found to be in inappropriate living conditions or if the new owner is no longer able to keep the dog.
3. When planning a breeding program each member will only consider using mature, healthy dams and sires that possess breed type as set forth in the standard, and that are temperamentally and physically sound, with no known or suspected serious inheritable defects or diseases as determined by appropriate screening protocols.
4. No breeder will breed a bitch before her second season or before she is 18 months old, nor shall she be bred after her 8th birthday.
5. It is recommended that each sire and dam be screened and certified free from hereditary eye defects and patellar luxation prior to breeding. This includes annual Canine Eye Registration Foundation (CERF) evaluation and certification for eye defects as long as the dog is being bred and Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA) evaluation and certification for patellar luxation once after the age of two. Certificates of CERF and OFA of the sire and dam should be made available to puppy buyers.
6. Each member will raise puppies in a healthy environment with socialization and training pertinent to the puppies' developmental stages and will provide appropriate inoculations and all other appropriate veterinary care.
7. No member will offer stud service to United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) license holders, brokers, agents who resell dogs, pet shops or bitches who have not been properly screened for health disorders.
8. Members shall be familiar with American Kennel Club (AKC) rules concerning record keeping, registration, sale and transfer of dogs, and shall abide by these rules.

Responsible Placement Practices

1. Each prospective buyer will be carefully screened with the intent of placing the puppy in a permanent home. Members shall never sell a Griffon to USDA license holders, brokers, pet shops, or agents who resell dogs. The member will be prepared to keep every puppy for as long as it takes to find the right home.
2. No member will agree to transfer or release a puppy before the age of 12 weeks. New owners should be advised that at any time in the future the owner is unable to keep the dog, the owner is to contact the member and the member will have the responsibility to either take the dog back or find it a new home.

3. Each member will supply each purchaser with the following:
 - AKC registration application certificate
 - Complete medical records which show the Griffon's health status as determined by a veterinary exam
 - Feeding and diet information
 - Care and maintenance information
 - Share health testing results of sire and dam (CERF, OFA etc.)

The member will be available to assist in any way to promote the successful transfer and on-going adjustment of the puppy (or older dog) in the new home.

4. Each member will ensure that Griffons sold as pets are not used in breeding by registering them using the AKC limited registration and/or by age-appropriate spaying or neutering at the earliest possible age as recommended by the veterinarian. If an intact pet is sold, the member will use a written agreement requiring the new owner to spay or neuter the pet at an appropriate age as recommended by the new owner's veterinarian.

Responsible Ownership Practices

1. Each member will provide care for their own Griffon(s) including, but not limited to proper living conditions, proper grooming, nutrition, veterinary health care, socialization, training and exercise.
2. Members are encouraged to participate in the AKC Canine Health Information Center (CHIC) program for the Brussels Griffon.
3. Members are encouraged to conduct additional health tests for suspected health conditions such as thyroid abnormalities, hip dysplasia, progressive retinal atrophy (PRA), and syringomyelia (SM) for potential sires and dams.
4. All members are encouraged to support and encourage research activities designed to improve the health and welfare of Brussels Griffons.

Responsible Behavior Promoting the Sport of Purebred Dogs

1. Each member will at all times, while at dog shows, in the show ring, or traveling and staying at hotels or motels conduct themselves in such a manner as to reflect positively on the sport, particularly as it relates to the Brussels Griffons.
2. Each member who is an experienced owner, breeder and/or exhibitor should willingly mentor novice owners, exhibitors and/or breeders offering advice, constructive criticism or assistance with problems when requested to do so.
3. Each member of ABGA signs a pledge statement as part of the Membership Application process agreeing to abide by the Code of Ethics set forth by the club.
4. The ABGA "Code of Ethics" document as well as each Member of ABGA is subject to the governing documents (i.e.- Constitution & By-Laws) of the ABGA and AKC.

Approved by the ABGA Membership – January
2010

The Code of Ethics is a revision of "Guidelines for Responsible Practice," originally developed and adopted in 1999. It was revised and renamed in 2010 by the ABGA Code of Ethics Committee (Chairperson: Meg Prior, Anne Catterson, Mark Grigalunas, Jeff Kestner and Pam Waldron).

The revisions are a result of AKC recommendations. The ABGA Code of Ethics Committee recommends periodic review and revisions to this Code of Ethics document as necessary to reflect the current issues surrounding the sport of dogs, breeding for health, pet welfare and animal rights.