

UPPER SUNCOAST DOG TRAINING CLUB, INC.

Policy and Procedures Manual

Revised: 2023

MISSION STATEMENT

Upper Suncoast Dog Training Club provides quality training and educational opportunities based on proven techniques and positive reinforcement. The goal is to bring out the best in both the dog and handler with an emphasis on sportsmanship, teamwork, and fun.

GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

USDTC IS AN ALL-VOLUNTEER CLUB

As per Section 3 of USDTC's Constitution, "The Club shall not be conducted or operated for profit and no part of any profits, or remainder or residue from dues or donations to the Club, shall benefit any member or individual."

SECTION 1: MEMBERSHIP

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

General membership meetings are held at the Club on the fourth Wednesday of every odd month or by electronic means if deemed suitable or necessary by the Board. If the meeting falls on the day before Thanksgiving, the third Wednesday is designated as the meeting date.

BECOMING A MEMBER

1. Prospective members must complete and submit an application, along with membership fees that include the signatures of two sponsors. Sponsors must be a member in good standing with USDTC and AKC.
2. The membership application will be read and reviewed at the next Board

- meeting.
3. The Secretary will then submit the application to the membership at the following General Membership meeting.

The General Membership shall vote on the new member's application with a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority vote of members in attendance and in good standing. The prospective member must be present.

MEMBER BENEFITS

1. Members receive a 20% discount on classes their first year of membership which runs from the date they join through the end of the fiscal year (January 31st). Thereafter, those who volunteer a minimum of 12 hours before renewal time are granted a 40% discount on classes. Members who do not meet the minimum requirement of 12 volunteer hours may still retain membership but with no class discount. Discounted class fees apply to 4-, 5-, 6-, 7-, and 8-week classes as well as drop-in classes.
2. Members in good standing may practice in the Club after hours, when no scheduled classes are in session, as long as an authorized keyholder is present. This training time cannot conflict with the scheduled Club cleaning time.
3. Members pay \$10 per hour for after-hours floor use. DogBiz credits or Doggie Dollars may be used instead of cash or check. Members earn these credits and Doggie Dollars by participating in club activities.
4. Practice time is not considered a class nor does it afford class time toward award bars or plaques.
5. Private paid lessons are not permitted in the Club or on Club grounds.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

The Club's fiscal year shall commence on February 1st and end on January 31st. Both applications and membership dues shall be submitted by January 31st; a 30-day grace period will be granted to members who are late. After that date, members must reapply for membership.

There will be no refunds on dues once paid, except under extenuating circumstances after being reviewed by the Board on a case-by-case basis.

The following is the membership dues schedule:

Family Annual Membership: \$40
Single Annual Membership: \$30
Junior Annual Membership (10-17 years of age): \$10

The following schedule of class fees is for non-members:

8-week session \$110
7-week session \$100
6-week session \$ 85

4-week session \$ 55
Drop-in bundle \$110 for (8 classes)
Single drop-in class \$15 per class

The following pertains to service dogs and their handlers:

The first session of classes will be free; any additional classes will be half-price.

REFUND POLICY

A class tuition refund can be given if the Registrar is notified after the first class and before the second class in a session. Refunds will be offered first in the form of credit for another class, or as DogBiz credits. After the second class, no refund will be given, but the student may be transferred to another class with their dog or given a credit to attend another session. The student is responsible for payment of class(es) already taken. USDTC will issue a partial credit/refund if the dog and/or handler are injured, suffer an illness, or are expelled, preventing them from continuing in a class into the foreseeable future. Refunds or credits will not be issued for students who miss class because of vacations or dropping out.

SECTION 2: VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

There are an abundance of volunteer opportunities at the Club such as assisting at trials and Club events, making phone calls, planning Club parties, and manning the news desk. Members also serve in key positions such as Area Directors, instructors and assistants, Board Members, and cleaning crews as defined below:

AREA DIRECTORS

Openings in the areas of Agility, Conformation, and Obedience Directors will be announced when there is an upcoming vacancy. Anyone interested in these positions should submit an application and resume to the Board for consideration.

To be eligible for an Area Director position in Agility, Conformation, and/or Obedience, the candidate must be active in their department. There is no requirement to be titled at the highest level as these are managerial positions.

Area Directors are appointed by the Board and serve at the Boards' discretion. Only the Board of Directors may override an Area Director. In the event that an Area Director position cannot be filled, Co-Directors or a Committee may be formed to handle the responsibilities.

AREA DIRECTORS BENEFITS

Area Directors, Co-Directors and Committee Members may be awarded DogBiz credits and T-shirts for their service. The credits will be divided among Co-Directors and Committee Members when the leadership role is shared.

INSTRUCTORS

Every instructor who teaches a class at USDTC must be a member in good standing. It is preferred that the instructor have an AKC and/or UKC title on their current or past dog(s) for qualification to instruct the class. Alternatively, an assistant may be promoted to an instructor position with recommendations from the instructor and approval of the Area Director. People skills and teaching skills are a must. Strict adherence to the [Code of Conduct](#) is expected.

RULE ENFORCEMENT

Instructors will enforce the following rules in their classes:

1. Handlers are responsible for the behavior of their dogs.
2. Dogs in Puppy or Basic classes should always be on lead except when doing recalls.
3. Dogs in advanced classes will do off-lead heeling in preparation for showing.
4. At all times the dog should be under the control of the handler.
5. Dogs tending to wander will be put back on lead.
6. Instructors are requested to have their students leave by the back door.
7. Classes will end 10 minutes before the posted ending time and the floor will be cleared to allow the following class to begin in a timely fashion.

The instructor with the key is responsible for:

1. Collecting payments and writing receipts.
2. Moving all equipment to their original location.
3. Making sure all doors are locked securely when leaving.
4. No instructor is permitted to lend their key to anyone.
5. Locking the door when working alone in the building.
6. Incident reports: Whenever there is an incident, the instructor is responsible for filling out a report. Incidents include, but are not limited to falls, dog bites, or any other event that presents a potential liability to USDTC. This report should then be put in the President's mailbox at the Club.

INSTRUCTOR BENEFITS

1. Instructors and assistants will have key access to the building and office.
2. Instructors and assistants will receive eight (8) class credits for each session taught.
3. Continuing Education: By cashing in their credits, instructors will be reimbursed up to \$300 per year for completing classes, workshops and seminars designed to improve their teaching skills. Each credit is worth \$10; instructors may cash in up to 30 credits per year. Credits may also be used to reimburse instructors for certifications and renewals. Reimbursement requests are to be submitted to the

Club Treasurer.

4. Instructors and assistants shall receive one USDTC shirt.

TEEN ASSISTANTS

These young assistants will be allowed to help with classes under the direction of an instructor but will not conduct a class. Teens should not be given access to a key, nor should unattended minors ever be left alone in the Club.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board meets monthly to discuss affairs relevant to the Club. There are a maximum of nine (9) Board of Directors, four of whom shall serve as Club Officers, all of whom should be members for more than one year. The number of Board Members may change from time to time, but in no case will there be less than five (5), and the total of the Board Members should always be an odd number. Officers are elected for a one-year term; the other five (5) Directors will serve as Board Members and shall be elected for a two-year term. Three (3) Board Members are elected in the even year and two (2) Board Members are elected in the odd year. No two (2) members from a single household shall serve as an Officer or a Board Member during the same term.

BOARD BENEFITS

Board Members are granted eight (8) class credits for every session served.

CLEANING CREWS & AC MAINTENANCE

Cleaning crews: Members will perform these duties every week:

1. Vacuum all floors.
2. Clean both bathrooms; replace soap, towels, and toilet paper as needed.
3. Ensure that paper towels and enzymatic cleaning spray are available.
4. Empty trash and place bags in the dumpster on an as-needed basis but no less than weekly.
5. Clean doors and windows as needed.
6. Vacuums and extension cords must be returned to the supply area.
7. Vacuum containers are to be emptied after each use.

These cleaning and maintenance duties will be performed as needed:

1. Deep clean the floors/mats.
2. Change the air filters in the AC units monthly.

There is to be no training while the Club is being cleaned.

CLEANING CREW BENEFITS

Crew members are allotted eight (8) Dog Biz class credits per weekly cleaning. If more than one member works together to complete a cleaning, the credits will be shared between them.

SECTION 3: REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS/DOGS

MINIMUM PUPPY AGE

The minimum age for all dogs to participate in classes or events is 12 weeks of age.

VACCINE REQUIREMENTS

The minimum age for all dogs to participate in classes or events is 12 weeks. Before participating in a class or event, owners must show proof of age-appropriate vaccines per the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) current recommendations. DAPP and Bordetella are required for all dogs. Rabies shots are required for all dogs over 16 weeks of age. Exceptions will be considered with a veterinarian's recommendation.

AGGRESSIVE/REACTIVE DOGS

1. **In a class:** If an instructor deems a dog to be consistently disruptive in class and/or a possible danger to the health and well-being of other dogs and people, the dog and handler will be excused from class and must exit the building immediately.
2. The instructor must file an incident report with the Club President and Area Director.
3. A committee of two experienced instructors and the Area Director will then evaluate the dog's needs at the next class.
4. If the committee determines the class does not meet the dog's and handler's needs at this time, the team will be permanently excused from the class.
5. The handler has the right to appeal. Appeals need to be presented to the Board of Directors.
6. **In an event or trial:** If the chairperson of an event or trial deems a dog to be disruptive or threatening, the dog and handler must exit the building or area immediately.

SECTION 4: BUILDING

BUILDING RENTAL

The cost of renting the Club for an event will be \$200 per day. A cleaning fee of \$125 will be waived if the party renting the building empties the trash, sweeps/vacuums the floors, and stacks all chairs. A charge of \$50 per day is added for the use of the obedience/agility equipment. All entities must adhere to USDTC vaccine requirements.

CAMERAS

Cameras are installed in the building for the protection of our members, dogs and guests. Access to the cameras shall be available to Board Members only when necessary to investigate and/or verify an incident, formal complaint or problem. Videos are not for viewing by the general public or membership.

PEST CONTROL

Pest control: The building is sprayed for pests on an as-needed basis. The exterior property will be sprayed as needed for fleas and ticks.

SECTION 5: FINANCIALS

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Any person who signs checks must pass a background check and be bonded.

PURCHASES

Any purchase over \$200 must have prior approval of the Board. Members who are permitted to make purchases for the benefit of USDTC shall be:

1. Board Members
2. Instructors
3. Area Directors
4. Cleaning and maintenance staff
5. Trial/Event Chairpersons

An invoice or receipt must accompany each payment request and should be submitted within thirty (30) days.

TRIAL ENTRY ADMINISTRATION FEES

Doggie Dollars may be used toward AKC Agility & Obedience trial entries. Please note that the \$5 AKC administrative fee (per entry/run) will remain the entrant's responsibility and is payable only by cash or check.

SECTION 6: DACOF & DOCOF

USDTC provides 8 free classes to prepare those dog/handler teams selected to

compete and represent USDTC at DACOF and/or DOCOF events.

The Club is responsible for the cost of membership and entry fees associated with competing and representing USDTC at DACOF and/or DOCOF for those dog/handler teams selected.

USDTC will pay for the team T-shirts for DACOF and DOCOF, one per person as needed.

SECTION 7: AWARDS

USDTC will provide awards for AKC titles earned, or titles earned from the dog's primary registry at no charge to any member in good standing.

To qualify for these awards:

1. The dog eligible for the award must have been trained at the Club's facility for at least one 8-week period during regular class sessions within the award year. Drop-in classes count toward this requirement.
2. After-hour training is not considered a regular class session.
3. If the dog was not trained at the Club facility for at least one 8-week training session during the year, USDTC is not obligated to provide the award to the member.
4. The member may request the award by attaching a personal check to the Awards Form to cover the cost of the award.
5. If the dog received the title from a registry other than the dog's primary registry, a personal check will need to be included with the Awards Form to cover the cost of the award. This charge will be at the rate currently charged to the Club by the supplier.
6. USDTC will provide one base plaque award to the member at no cost for each new dog, and up to three title bars per year per dog.

SECTION 8: CODE OF CONDUCT

1. All members must acknowledge they have read and agree to abide by the [Code of Conduct, By-Laws](#), and Policy and Procedures and sign an acknowledgment of such.
2. Infractions of these rules may result in: Verbal and/or written censure Removal or suspension from instructor or committee position
3. Loss of membership and suspension from the Club classes for a time determined by the Board not to exceed six (6) months
4. Members violating the Code of Conduct and deemed to have committed an offense detrimental to USDTC and its membership may be expelled for life by a recommendation of the Board and a majority vote of the membership.
5. Should the charges be sustained, after hearing all the evidence and testimony presented by the complainant and defendant, the Board may by a majority vote

of those present, suspend the defendant from all privileges of the Club for not more than 6 months from the hearing date. And, if it deems that punishment insufficient, it may also recommend to the membership that the penalty be expulsion.

6. In such case, the suspension shall not restrict the defendant's rights to appear before his/her fellow members at the ensuing Club Meeting which considers the Board's recommendation.
7. Immediately after the Board has reached a decision, its findings shall be put in written form and filed with the Secretary.
8. The Secretary, in turn, shall notify each of the parties of the Board's decision and penalty, if any. Section
9. **EXPULSION.** Expulsion of a member from the Club may be accompanied only at a meeting of the Club following a Board hearing and upon the Board's approval.

Section 9. – DISCIPLINE

AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB SUSPENSION.

Any member who is suspended from the privileges of the American Kennel Club automatically shall be suspended from the privileges of this Club for a like period.

1. **CHARGES.** Any member may prefer charges against a member for alleged misconduct prejudicial to the best interest of the Club.
2. Written charges with specifications must be filed in duplicate with the Secretary together with a deposit of \$10 which shall be forfeited if such charges are not sustained by the Board following a hearing.
3. The Secretary shall promptly send a copy of the charges to each member of the Board or present them at a Board Meeting, and the Board shall first consider whether the actions alleged in the charges if proven, might constitute conduct prejudicial to the best interests of the Club.
4. If the Board considers that the charges do not allege conduct that would be prejudicial to the best interests of the Club, it may refuse to entertain jurisdiction.
5. If the Board entertains jurisdiction of the charges, it shall fix a date of a hearing by the Board not less than 3 weeks nor more than 6 weeks thereafter.
6. The Secretary shall promptly send one copy of the charges to the accused member by registered/email mail together with a notice of the hearing and an assurance that the defendant may personally appear in his/her defense and bring witnesses if he/she so desires.

BOARD HEARING.

1. The Board shall have complete authority to decide whether counsel may attend the hearing, but both complainant and defendant may have equal right to representation.
2. Such proceedings may occur at a regular or special meeting of the Club to be held within 60 days but not earlier than 30 days after the date of the Board's recommendation.
3. The defendant shall have the privilege of appearing on his/her behalf, though

no evidence shall be taken at this meeting.

4. The President shall read the charges and the Board's findings and recommendations and shall invite the defendant, if present, to speak on his/her behalf if he/she wishes. The members shall then vote by secret ballot on the proposed expulsion. A 2/3 vote of those present and voting at the meeting shall be necessary for expulsion. If expulsion is not so voted, the Board's suspension shall stand.