



Code of Ethics Policy

June 2024

Approved by the VWB/VSF & VWB USA Board of Directors on June 17th, 2024

“VWB NA” refers to “Veterinarians Without Borders North America,” which consists of two organizations:

- Veterinarians Without Borders/Vétérinaires sans frontières (VWB), registered under the Canada Corporations Act.
- Veterinarians Without Borders USA, registered as a 501(c)(3) in the United States.

1. Purpose of the Policy

This Code of Ethics establishes the standards of ethical conduct required by all individuals associated with Veterinarians Without Borders North America. It is designed to promote honesty, integrity, and transparency in all actions and decisions.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, board members, and any individuals directly associated with the organization in both Canada and the United States.

3. Principles of Ethical Conduct

- **Integrity and Honesty:** All actions and interactions should be conducted honestly, fairly, and with integrity.
- **Professionalism:** All individuals shall perform their duties with competence, respect, and diligence while adhering to the highest standards of professional behavior.
- **Respect and Fairness:** Treat all colleagues, partners, and communities with respect and fairness, and promote a culture of inclusiveness.
- **Accountability and Transparency:** Demonstrate accountability and transparency in all dealings, ensuring that activities align with the mission and values of the organization.
- **Compliance with Laws:** Comply with all applicable local, national, and international laws, and adhere to professional standards and practices.
- **Confidentiality:** Safeguard confidential information and disclose such information only when authorized or legally mandated.
- **Conflict of Interest:** Avoid conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest and report any such conflicts in accordance with organization policies.
- **Stewardship of Resources:** Use resources responsibly and in a manner that advances the mission of the organization.
- **Respect for Animal Welfare:** Adhere to the highest standards of animal welfare in all professional activities.

4. Reporting and Addressing Ethical Concerns

- **Reporting Mechanism:** All reports of unethical behavior or breaches of this Code can be emailed to: confidential@vwb.org without fear of retribution. A dedicated confidential hotline will also be available.
- **Investigation Procedures:** All reported concerns will be investigated fairly and promptly by a designated ethics officer or committee.
- **Corrective Action:** VWB will take appropriate corrective actions to address issues arising from violations of this Code, which may include disciplinary measures up to and including termination of employment or volunteer status.

5. Training and Communication

- VWB will ensure that all associated individuals are aware of and understand this Code of Ethics through regular training sessions and accessible communication materials.
- VWB encourages continuous dialogue on ethical issues to reinforce the importance of ethics within the organization.

6. Review and Updates

This Code of Ethics will be reviewed biennially by the Board of Directors to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness, with updates made as necessary.

7. Acknowledgment of the Code of Ethics

All employees, volunteers, and board members must sign the below acknowledgment form stating that they have read, understood, and agreed to comply with the Code of Ethics.

Code of Ethics Acknowledgment Form

Veterinarians Without Borders North America

This acknowledgment form is to confirm that you have received, read, understood, and agreed to comply with the Code of Ethics for Veterinarians Without Borders North America (VWB), which includes both Veterinarians Without Borders (VWB) and Veterinarians Without Borders USA.

Acknowledgment

I acknowledge that I have received, read, and understood the Code of Ethics for Veterinarians Without Borders North America. I agree to adhere to the principles and guidelines set forth in the Code of Ethics and to conduct myself in a manner that upholds the integrity, professionalism, and ethical standards of VWB.

I understand that compliance with this Code of Ethics is a condition of my association with VWB, whether as an employee, volunteer, board member, or any other capacity. I commit to reporting any suspected violations of this Code of Ethics to the designated reporting mechanism, understanding that such reports will be handled confidentially and without fear of retribution.

I also acknowledge that I have a responsibility to seek guidance from the appropriate resources within VWB if I have questions or need clarification on any aspect of the Code of Ethics.

Please complete the following information:

- **Name:** _____
- **Position/Title:** _____
- **Department/Division:** _____
- **Location (Canada/USA):** _____
- **Date:** _____

Signature: _____

Instructions for Submission:

Please sign and return this acknowledgment form to the Executive Director.

Contact Information: For any questions or concerns regarding the Code of Ethics or this acknowledgment form, please contact:

- **Email:** charmaine@vwb.org

Thank you for your commitment to upholding the ethical standards of Veterinarians Without Borders North America.

