

## **CAZA Progressive Discipline Policy**

CAZA and its members, like a chain, are only as strong as its weakest link. To build and protect the reputation of the Association and its members, there must be clear expectations of behaviour and performance. CAZA must be able to enforce these expectations in a manner that is clear to both members and to external observers.

For the Association to move forward in an open and transparent manner, a disciplinary process based on the concept of progressive discipline is appropriate.

Progressive discipline is a system of escalating responses designed to correct behaviours and to improve performance and/or conduct. The goals of progressive discipline are to communicate clear expectations for performance or conduct; to provide support when appropriate; and to improve performance or conduct.

Ensuring effective and timely communication of the outcomes of investigations, adjudications and enforcement actions is a key element of CAZA's progressive discipline. It serves to:

- 1) Protect individual and institutional reputations against unsubstantiated allegations;
- 2) Educate and inform key audiences about evolving rules and standards;
- 3) Act as a deterrent against inappropriate behaviour and activities; and
- 4) Build trust in the value of CAZA accreditation among its key audiences.

Moreover, because of the special recognition in law, policy and administrative practices that is sometimes granted to institutions accredited by CAZA, as well as to Fellow Members of the organization, CAZA has a fiduciary responsibility to inform regulators and other agencies of any changes to the membership status of an institution or individual that may follow disciplinary action.

The Ethics and Compliance Committee (ECC) is responsible for addressing complaints from members or the public related to the failure of a member to adhere to elements of the Accreditation Standards or the Code of Ethics. If the ECC determines that a violation of the Code of Ethics or the Accreditation Standards has occurred, a number of disciplinary options shall be considered.

## Stage 1- Letter of Reprimand

A letter of reprimand may be employed if the ECC determines that discipline is appropriate but believes that there are mitigating factors, including but not limited to:

- There has been no major violation of the Code of Ethics or the Accreditation Standards;
- The violation was related to a lack of understanding on the part of the member relating to CAZA's interpretation of the standard, Code or policy violated;
- The matter is an operational issue that can be resolved within six (6) months.

A letter of reprimand will be sent to the institution or individual member advising them of the ECC's decision. The letter shall include a clear statement of the decision and the actions the institution or individual member must take to prevent moving to stage two of the process, which is suspension of membership. If the issue requires specific actions, the length of the compliance period is at the discretion of the ECC, up to a maximum of six (6) months.

If the letter of reprimand specifies actions to be completed during the compliance period, the affected member shall submit a written report to the ECC prior to the end of the period. Upon receiving this written report, the ECC will evaluate whether the institution has resolved the identified issues. From this evaluation the ECC shall decide whether to withdraw the reprimand or to proceed to stage two of the disciplinary process, suspension of membership.

If the letter of reprimand directs a member to cease or change certain behaviours or practices, the member must submit a written statement to the ECC confirming their commitment to making the identified changes prior to the end of the reprimand period. Failure to meet this requirement will result in the ECC moving to stage two.

The letter of reprimand will remain in the member's file. The contents of the letter may be used in determining discipline for future violations of the Code of Ethics or the Accreditation Standards.

A letter of reprimand is subject to appeal under the CAZA Disciplinary Appeal Process.

## **Option to Bypass Stage 1**

If the Committee believes that the issues of concern are significant enough, it has the option to bypass Stage 1 - Letter of Reprimand and move to Stage 2 - Suspension of Membership. Implementing this option requires a unanimous vote of the ECC.

## **Stage 2 - Suspension of Membership**

If, at the end of the reprimand period, the ECC has determined that the required actions have not been done, or if the ECC believes that the issues are significant enough to warrant immediate suspension, the individual or institutional membership shall be suspended. The ECC will determine the length of the suspension based on a review of the facts in the case. The affected member shall be given notice of CAZA's intention to suspend membership at least fifteen (15) days before such action is taken.

If an individual or institutional membership is suspended, the following sanctions shall be applied:

- The National Office, shall notify all CAZA members by email of the member's status. This communication will advise that membership has been suspended and may or may not detail the reasons for the action.
- In the case of an institutional member, its name shall be removed from the CAZA website and all public lists of accredited members.
- In the case of an individual member, the individual's name shall be removed from the CAZA website and membership listing.
- The member shall lose the right to vote on any question that is brought to that class of membership for resolution.

Suspension is subject to appeal under the CAZA Disciplinary Appeal Process. In the event that a member secures leave to appeal, disciplinary action will be stayed pending the decision of the Appeal Panel. If the appeal is successful, no disciplinary action will be taken and the membership status will be restored to what it was prior to discipline. If the appeal fails, the disciplinary action will proceed in accordance with the original notification.

All records of discipline will remain in the member's file. This information may be used in determining discipline for future violations of the Code of Ethics or the Accreditation Standards.

## **Option to Bypass Stages 1 & 2**

If the ECC believes that the issues of concern are significant enough, it has the option to bypass Stages 1 and Stage 2 and immediately move to Stage 3 - Termination of Membership. The decision to implement this option requires a unanimous vote of the ECC.

## **Stage 3 - Termination of Membership**

If, at the end of the suspension period, the ECC believes that the member has not resolved the issues in question, or if the ECC believes that the issues are significant enough to warrant immediate termination of membership, membership shall be revoked. The affected member shall be given notice of CAZA's intention to terminate membership at least fifteen (15) days before such action is taken.

When individual or institutional membership in CAZA is terminated, the following steps shall be applied.

- The ECC, working in conjunction with the National Office, shall notify all CAZA members by email of the member's status. This communication will advise that membership has been terminated; it may or may not detail the reasons for the action.
- The individual or institution's name shall be removed from the CAZA website and from all public lists of members.
- In the case of an institution, the institution must remove the CAZA logo from its website and literature and cease any claim of affiliation with CAZA.
- Since accredited status in CAZA may be the basis of an institution's participation in SSP programs, the AZA National Office shall be notified of the loss of accredited status. If requested, CAZA shall work with the AZA and the institution to assist in the appropriate re-homing of affected SSP animals.
- Staff of the affected institution who are Professional Fellow members shall have their membership status changed to that of an Associate Affiliate. Any institutional staff serving on the Board of Directors must resign from the Board.
- If requested, CAZA shall assist the institution in the dispersal of its animal collection in a manner consistent with CAZA policies.

While informing all potential municipal regulators of the suspension or loss of membership may not be practical, every effort will be made to inform federal and provincial regulators. Moreover, regulators will be made aware of CAZA's progressive discipline regime and encouraged to consult the CAZA website to determine the membership status of an institution or an individual.

Termination is subject to appeal under the CAZA Disciplinary Appeal Process. In the event that a member successfully launches an appeal, the disciplinary action will be stayed pending the decision of the Appeal Panel. If the appeal is successful, no disciplinary action will be taken and membership status will be

restored to what it was prior to discipline. If the appeal fails, the disciplinary action will be applied in accordance with the original notification.

A member that loses membership must wait for a period of one year before re-applying for membership. A full membership application will be required.

All records of discipline will remain in the member's file. The information contained in the file may be used in the evaluation of an application for membership renewal or to determine discipline related to future violations of the Code of Ethics or the Accreditation Standards.

### **Other Communications Provisions**

Notwithstanding the generality of the foregoing, if the Board deems that the issue(s) that resulted in the suspension or termination is sufficiently egregious, or that public communication of any disciplinary decision, including a finding of no fault, is in the interest of the public, CAZA or the affected member, it may, on advice from staff, instruct the National Office to issue a public statement in that regard. The statement may include the release of all or part of the decision.