

At a Glance



> CAZA Code of Professional Ethics

CAZA's ethical and professional standards are what set its member institutions apart from non-accredited zoos and aquariums. CAZA members are responsible not only for the welfare of the animals in their care, but also for educating and engaging the public about the natural world and the critical role that we all can play in species conservation.

CAZA standards fall into two distinct streams: accreditation and ethics. Accreditation Standards set the operational requirements for membership. The Code of Professional Ethics sets the standard for professional and personal behaviour.

While the Code of Professional Ethics is aspirational in tone, should any member be considered in violation of the standards of behaviour it sets out, it also serves as a basis for disciplinary action. Discipline is meant to encourage positive change and contribute to the evolution of the accredited zoo and aquarium community. Under the Code, discipline can range from a letter of reprimand to suspension of membership, or outright termination of membership. The CAZA Ethics Committee investigates potential violations of the CAZA Code of Professional Ethics. The Ethics Committee is not a permanent committee of the Board but is empanelled on a case-by-case basis to deal with potential ethics violations.

Below is a brief summary of our Code of Professional Ethics.

Code of Professional Ethics

All members of CAZA pledge to promote the welfare of zoological parks, aquariums and related animal exhibits in Canada as humane agencies of recreation, education, conservation, and science, and to encourage their continuous improvement. Their efforts to keep this pledge are guided by a Code of Professional Ethics:

- The first responsibility of all CAZA members is to the animals under their care.
- Members will display the highest integrity and the best ethical judgment, and share professional information and advice openly and honestly with others.
- They will improve zoos and aquariums and promote the interests of wildlife conservation, biodiversity and animal welfare both to colleagues and the public.
- No animal under a member's care will be mutilated for cosmetic purposes or have its physical appearance altered without valid husbandry or medical reasons.
- Members will cooperate with the wider conservation community to help maintain global biodiversity, along with governments and other bodies to improve animal welfare standards.
- Members will ensure that, when an animal is obtained from the wild, its extraction will not negatively affect the remaining population, and that it is acquired by legal and ethical means supported by appropriate documentation.
- Members participating in release-to-the-wild programs are expected to follow the IUCN/SSC/Reintroduction Specialist Group guidelines for reintroduction.
- No member will knowingly engage in activities that contravene local, provincial, federal or international laws related to our profession, nor engage in conduct that adversely affects or is prejudicial to the concepts and ideals of CAZA.
- Members will ensure that all animals in their collections receive appropriate levels of care, and make every effort to confirm that they are acquired and disposed of in accordance with CAZA's current policies.
- No animal will find its way into the hands of an individual or organization unqualified to care for it properly.
- Any member with information concerning a clear violation of a Mandatory Standard, must immediately advise the Ethics Committee of CAZA. No member shall issue any statement to the public that he/she knows (or should know) to be false or misleading.
- No applicant will make any materially false statement or knowingly fail to disclose information in connection with an application for CAZA membership. No member will support the application of anyone known by the member to be unqualified in respect to character, education, length of service, or some other relevant factor.

What is CAZA

Canada's Accredited Zoos and Aquariums (CAZA) is a private not-for profit organization founded in 1975 representing the leading zoological parks and aquariums in Canada.

CAZA does not grant or rescind operating licences or license the keeping of animals by zoological institutions. In Canada, the granting of licences is the purview of provincial and/or municipal governments.

CAZA's mission is to promote the continuing evolution of Canadian zoos and aquariums as ethical agencies of recreation, education, conservation, and science. It does this through a comprehensive and evolving framework of standards and policies based on global best practices as well as a code of professional ethics grounded in community values.

CAZA often partners with governments and animal welfare agencies such as the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (OSPCA) by providing training for inspectors as well as expert assistance in investigations and in the rehoming of exotic animals.

Over 12 million people visit our accredited member institutions each year. For more information visit: www.caza.ca

