



Barkitecture Ethics & Training Standards Agreement

Purpose:

To ensure all Barkitecture trainers, volunteers, and affiliated professionals share a commitment to the ethical treatment of animals through compassionate, evidence-based methods. This agreement outlines the core values and expectations that guide all interactions with dogs under Barkitecture's care.

Core Training Philosophy

Barkitecture is committed to Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive (LIMA) principles, using the least amount of force necessary to achieve behavioral change while preserving the animal's physical and emotional well-being.

As a Barkitecture-approved trainer, handler, or volunteer, I agree to:

- ☐ Use reward-based reinforcement whenever possible as a first line of behavior change.
- ☐ Utilize aversive tools (such as slip leads, prongs, or e-collars) only when humane alternatives have been explored or exhausted and use is deemed ethical, fair, and minimally aversive by Barkitecture leadership.
- ☐ Prioritize de-escalation and proactive prevention of unwanted behavior through structure, thresholds, and controlled setups.
- ☐ Treat dogs with dignity, patience, and empathy-regardless of their behavior history.
- ☐ Treat adopters, fosters, and staff with kindness and transparency.
- ☐ Never use intimidation, yelling, or pain as a primary training tool.
- ☐ Avoid 'alpha theory,' dominance-based corrections, or flooding techniques not sanctioned by Barkitecture.
- ☐ Be open to feedback and collaboration.
- ☐ Continue learning through courses, mentorship, and hands-on experience.
- ☐ Report concerns about a dog's medical or mental health promptly.
- ☐ Refrain from taking cases that exceed my current experience or skill level.
- ☐ Maintain accurate training notes when applicable.
- ☐ Provide progress updates to Barkitecture if working on a referred or sponsored case.
- ☐ Use discretion when sharing Barkitecture dogs online.



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Prohibited Practices

I agree not to:

- Use choke chains or electric collars without Barkitecture board approval.
- Apply physical corrections that cause distress, pain, or panic.
- Use alpha rolls, leash pops for dominance, or 'learned helplessness' protocols.
- Ignore signs of medical distress or mental deterioration in any dog.

Confidentiality

I understand that Barkitecture's training methods, documents, and casework may be confidential. I will not share internal materials or represent myself as a Barkitecture employee without permission.

Acknowledgement

I affirm that I understand, support, and will uphold the mission and ethical standards of Barkitecture. I agree to work in partnership with the Barkitecture team to ensure the well-being, growth, and adoptability of every dog we serve.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____