


All-Breed Clubs Committee Recommended Best Practices

Legislation

All-Breed Delegate Committee - Best Practices Sub Committee


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➤ The All-Breed Clubs committee has set a goal to establish recommended best practices for all-breed clubs. In the Fall of 2014, a subcommittee consisting of Margaret DiCorleto, Nancy Fisk, John Ronald, Ann Wallin, Peggy Wampold, and Cathy Rubens, chair, began work on the first phase of the project, which dealt with club membership. In 2016, Mike Houchard joined the committee. The 2017 survey, which was sent to licensed and member all-breed club presidents, secretaries, and delegates addressed club legislation.



➤ Complete survey results and the entire *Best Practices: Club Legislation* document can be found at the All-Breed [All Breed Clubs Resource](#) located on the AKC website. The document can be revised, updated, and amended as needed in the future. The committee welcomes suggestions from other delegates.


➤ The committee would like to thank the staff of AKC Government Relations, especially Sheila Goffe, AKC Vice President Government Relations, for assisting our committee with valuable comments and suggestions. We strongly encourage clubs to partner with AKC Government Relations when faced with dog related legislative issues.


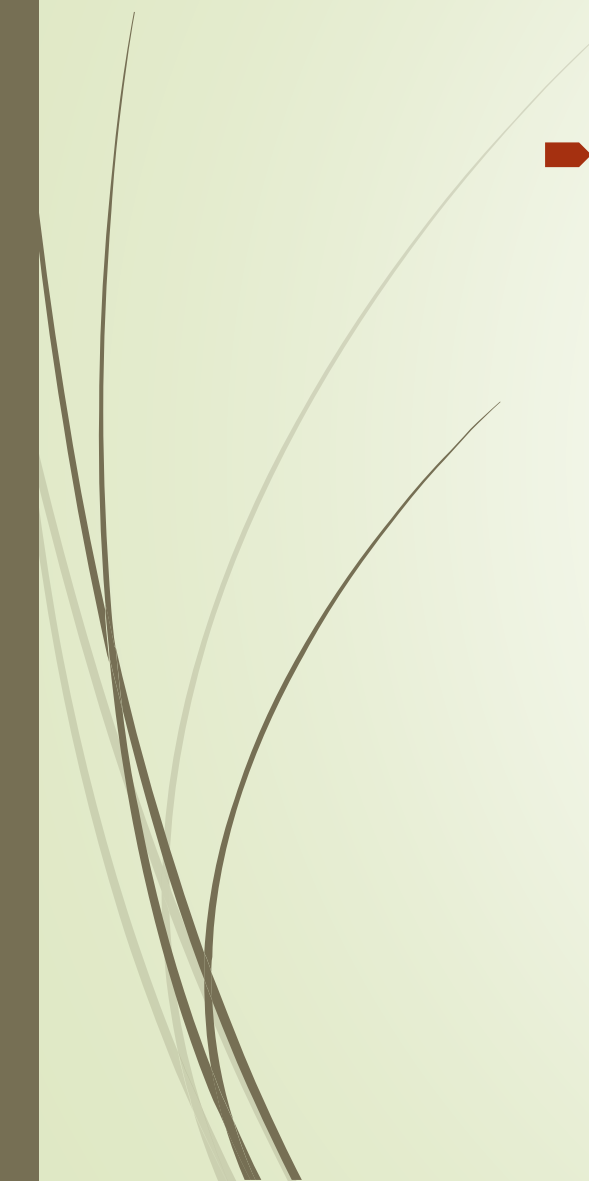



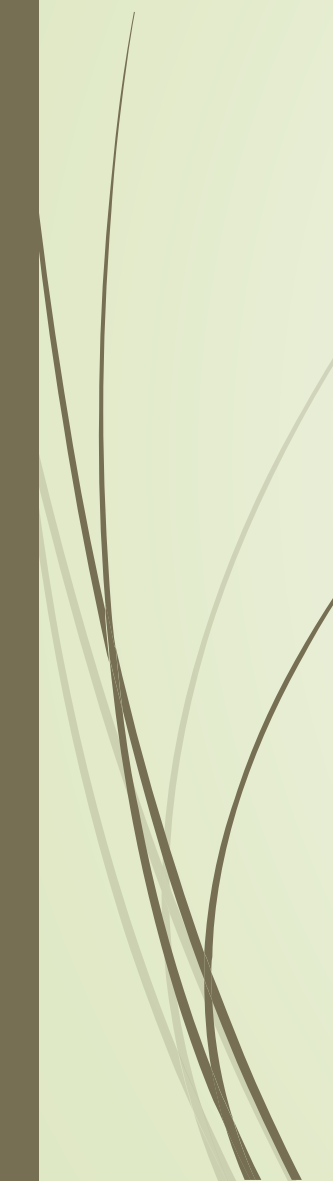
After carefully reviewing all the survey results, the committee offers the following recommendations:


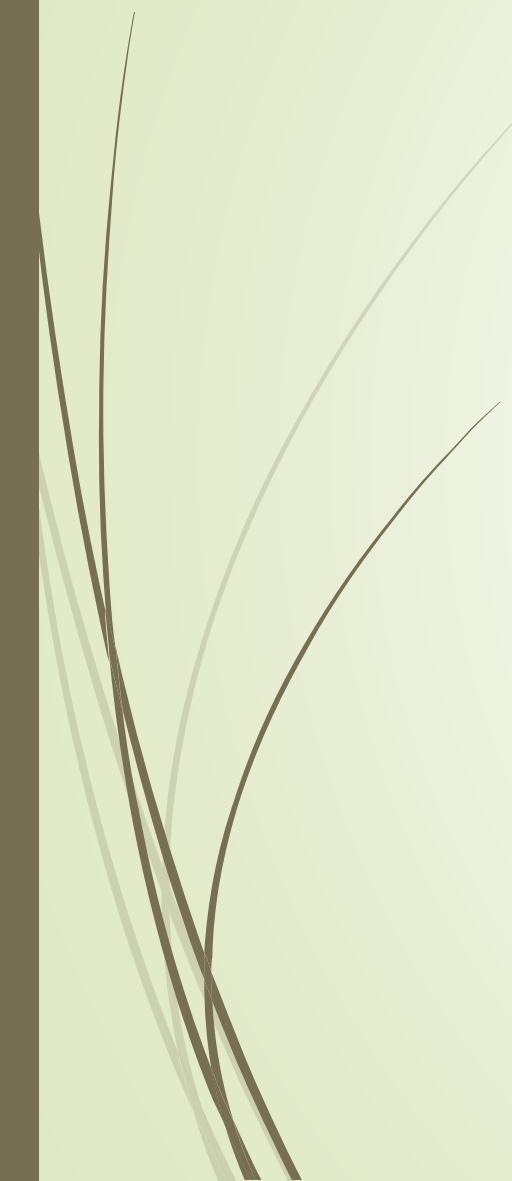
- Most clubs consider legislative issues and their involvement as an important part of their club's mission and vital to their existence. Clubs should prioritize legislative action.
- All clubs should have a designated AKC legislative liaison and should consider joining a state dog federation or alliance.
- Clubs need to be aware of both the organizations that benefit, and those that are a threat to, our sport of purebred dogs.


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- Clubs should encourage their members to vote. Voting places people on the roster of those who can affect dog-related issues. Elected officials are more likely to listen to involved voting constituents.
 - Clubs should designate one or more members to monitor all media sources for proposed or pending local ordinances or state legislation. Unfavorable dog legislation can easily slip by if no one is watching.
 - Encourage club members to join local animal control boards, zoning boards, or other boards that deal with local dog ordinances and regulation. Establish relationships with directors and officers of local animal control agencies.

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- When any canine-related legislation is identified, clubs should contact American Kennel Club Government Relations (AKC GR) immediately. AKC GR is a vital resource which can offer guidance and assistance for dealing with local and state issues and provides organizational leadership.
 - AKC GR Online Legislative Action Center - <https://akcgr.org/>
 - AKC GR Taking Command Newsletter - <https://www.akc.org/clubs-delegates/government-relations/newsletters/taking-command/>
 - AKC GR Legislative Alerts - <https://akcgr.org/alerts>
 - AKC GR Position Statements - <https://www.akc.org/clubs-delegates/government-relations/position-statements/>

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- Clubs should have a plan to ensure they will have input on legislative issues. All club members should be involved by:
 - getting to know elected officials
 - monitoring laws being proposed
 - networking with animal control boards etc.
 - supporting the efforts of a club legislative liaison or a lobbyist, if your club has one.

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- Be well informed. Attend local or state legislative meetings. Introduce yourself and become a recognizable face. Be prepared to speak and offer facts and recommendations. Make yourself known as the knowledgeable resource of dog-related issues. The physical presence of well-informed constituents at hearings will have a greater impact than only sending letters and emails to legislators.
 - Encourage club member attendance at regional Government Relations Conferences by offering financial support for attending.
 - Clubs should be aware of the AKC's Political Action Committee and encourage members to contribute. Contributors can recommend candidates/legislators to receive campaign funds. This is an excellent way to support a candidate the club may have educated. A candidate's position on dog-related issues could be a tipping point for support of that candidate.

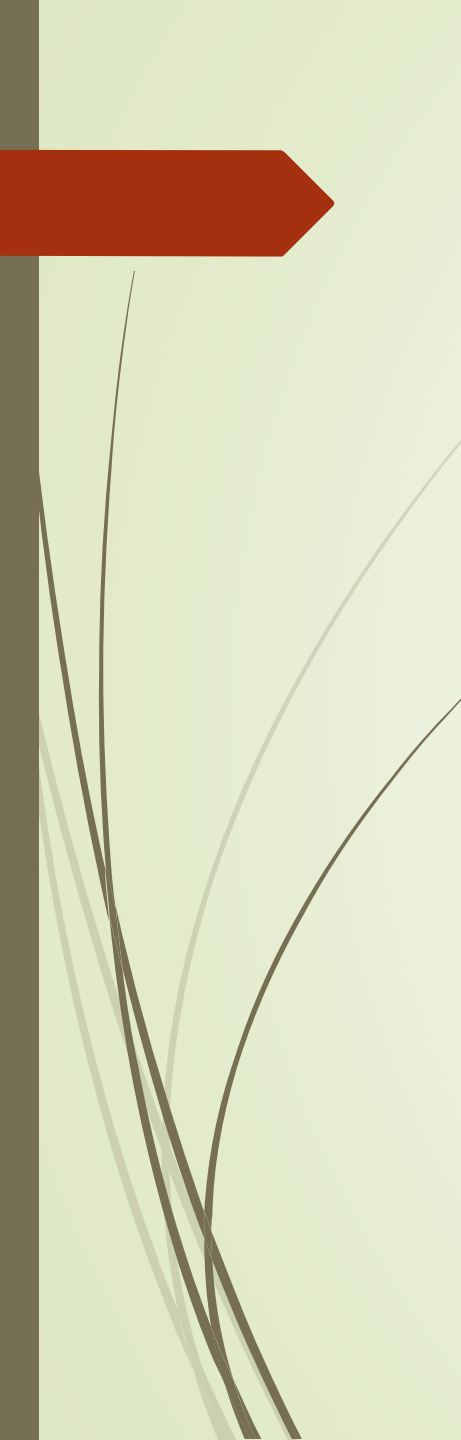
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- AKC Position Statements and legislative information should be displayed on the education tables at shows or other club events.
 - Community outreach is very important. We encourage all clubs, with their members, to develop a list of strategies for increasing club visibility.
 - Host an AKC Responsible Dog Day event
 - Offer dog training classes or other dog related events
 - Invite legislators to your shows and remind them of the financial benefits of being a dog-friendly community.
 - Clubs should request public acknowledgment for any dog related charitable activity. This could be a photo op and story in the local newspaper, a short TV spot, a Facebook post, or a club/AKC logo on a police car.



➤ Identify your allies. Successful grassroots advocates form strategic alliances with like-minded groups (owners/ breeders of other pet species, sportsmen, agricultural groups, groomers, pet industry professionals, veterinarians, animal owners, etc.), and those who face similar challenges and who share common ideologies..

➤ Share mutually relevant communication with allies. Include them in your grassroots outreach. When appropriate, reciprocate and support your allies regarding their issues.

There is strength in numbers!



Legislation and public policy has the capacity to impact the future of our breeds, our breeding programs, and our sport more quickly and more effectively than just about any other outside action. Harmful legislation can destroy generations of work and our sport nearly overnight. Positive legislation that celebrates purebred dogs and responsible dog ownership can elevate our sport and introduce new generations to the joy of purebred dog ownership. The All-Breed Committee urges all clubs to play an active role in their communities, monitor proposed dog laws, and to use AKC Government Relations resources whenever they encounter issues impacting dog ownership.

The future is in our hands.



Thank you for your attention.

Any Questions?

