



# AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB®

## Parent Club Best Practices

### Health Regulations & Enforcement

#### Responsibility of Parent Club

- Identify health challenges
- Analyze
  - risk,
  - incident of occurrence
  - ways to eliminate or reduce occurrence
- Support appropriate research
  - Track developments
  - Inform members of results
- Educate members and the public
- Establish health testing protocol
- Fund raising for needed projects

#### Organizational considerations

1. Health & Science Officer
  - a. May or may not be on the Board of Directors of the Parent Club.
  - b. It is helpful to appoint a person with a scientific, medical or veterinarian background.
  - c. Reports to the board
  - d. Good approach when starting. However, if the complexity or frequency of issues increases, consider establishing a committee
2. Committee
  - a. May delegate various aspects to committee members
    - i. Reporting Duties
    - ii. Developing surveys

- iii. Liaison with research projects
    - iv. Liaison with reporting depository agencies
  - b. scientific, medical or veterinarian background is helpful. However, other skills would also aid the committee:
    - i. Communication
    - ii. Long-term breeders
  - c. Reports to the board
  - d. With board permission, reports to the membership
- 3. Separate 501(c)3 organization
  - a. Form a separate organization.
  - a. There may be some overlap of personnel between this organization and the parent club. Consult with a professional regarding how independent this organization must be.
  - b. Since this is a separate organization, future goals and projects of this organization may be at odds with the parent club.
  - c. Any limitations to shared personnel?
    - 1. Shared individuals
    - 2. Designate a position of the parent club board to serve on this organization (president, health committee chair, etc)
  - b. Consult with a professional in the state regarding formation requirements.
    - a. Bylaws
    - b. Board
    - c. Conflict of interest issues
  - c. Consult with a professional in obtaining 501(c) status
    - a. This allows donations to be tax deductible

## Health Testing

- 1. Types of testing
  - a. Research your breed
  - b. Identify the major health challenges in the breed
    - i. Identify the rate of incidence
    - ii. Identify how debilitating the health issue is
  - c. Is there testing currently available?
    - i. Is the testing widely available throughout the USA?
    - ii. What is the cost: benefit for the testing?
    - iii. Can you develop better tests?

- iv. How determinative is the test?
  - 1. A marker with a low incidence of occurrence?
  - 2. A physiological test which can determine the existence of the health issue. (an example is BAER testing)
- d. Determine if any or all challenges should be tested prior to breeding.
  - i. Which testing and test outcomes should be required/recommended.
    - 1. Specify in Code of Ethics
    - 2. Recommend that the Board get membership approval for the required and suggested health screening
    - 3. Do any negative results prohibit breeding?
    - 4. Testing may include blood draws, DNA swabs, etc.
      - a. [DNA tested Diseases](#) Click on the Link
  - e. Determine repository for test results.
    - 1. Independent laboratories
    - 2. CHIC [The Canine Information Center](#) Click on the link
    - 3. Club sponsored and owned repository
- d. Blood Draws
  - a. Locations for Blood Draws
    - 1. The National Specialty is the primary location for an annual blood draw.
    - 2. Other events held by the Parent Club or an approved specialty
    - 3. Sponsor an independent event
  - b. Blood draws done in bulk and designated to go to one particular research entity can save the club money (discounts may be available). Blood draws should be setup as close to the rings as possible. Participation will increase with this close proximity
  - e. Health clinics at nationals.
    - a. Consider hiring specialists to conduct health testing at nationals. Cardiologists, eye specialists and BAER testing are examples of specialists who have tested at nationals.
    - b. Contract with a specialty clinic near the national specialty for exhibitors to visit the clinic after hours.
      - 1. Don't schedule a conflicting event during this time
  - c. Publicize these events

- d. Determine if there is a minimum number of examinations
- f. Participation in studies with CHF

## Health Surveys

1. Content of surveys –breed specific
2. Frequency
3. What medium do you use to conduct the surveys? Survey Monkey?
4. Conducted by the health committee or an outside entity?
5. Establish confidential parameters
6. Review results. May use professionals to interpret the results.
7. Make recommendations for changes to health testing, additional testing, or additional research
8. Report to the board
9. Distribution of survey upon approval by board
  - a. Through the club’s membership list.
  - b. Through club publications
  - c. Through club social media platforms (website, FB, etc)
    - i. Decide if results are for members only or for the public as well
    - ii. Share with the breed’s Health Charitable Organization

## Whom do you educate?

1. Members
  - a. Establish a single voice on health issues
  - b. Include a health-related article in every club newsletter
2. Breeders
  - a. Inform AKC’s Parent Club Committee about health statement so that it can be used by AKC Bred By HEART program
3. Potential buyers
  - a. Develop a “so you want a puppy” section on social media that discusses the questions buyers need to ask
4. Veterinarian community
  - a. Ask veterinarians to assist in educating their clients.
  - b. For example, some show veterinarians will refuse to assist in reproductive procedures unless the parent club testing is done
5. The general public
  - a. Have pre-prepared statements for the press on health issues

Where do you publish health information?

1. Club Newsletter:
  - a. Include a health-related article in every issue of your club periodical
  - b. Publish periodic CHIC reports
2. Share with your Charitable Health Organization
3. Social media sites (website, FB, etc)
  - a. Post information to the club's website and social media sites
    - i. Decide what should be restricted to members and what should be public

Health seminars

1. Where?
  - a. At every National Specialty and/or National Field Trial
  - b. At local specialties
  - c. Club meetings
2. Speakers or round-table discussions
  - a. Researchers currently working on a breed concern
  - b. AKC/CHF resources
  - c. Breeders in your breed or another breed with a similar issue. How are they researching/handling a health issue?
  - d. Club members/breeders
  - e. Veterinarians in the community
  - f. Researchers working on a concern of your breed

## Fund Raising

1. Types
  - a. One time donation
  - b. Annual donations
  - c. Legacy donations
  - d. Singular purpose donations
  - e. Donation “in memory” of person and/or dog
  - f. If a separate entity, may or may not have financial support from the Parent Club
2. Accounting for funds
  - a. In the club’s account with reporting to specify which funds are designated for Health.
  - b. A separate account only for funds designated to Health