

Sarasota Obedience Training Club

Constitution, By-Laws, Standing Rules, Policies and Procedures

Updated 9/2023

Revision F

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Mission Statement

Sarasota Obedience Training Club promotes responsible dog ownership by providing a wide variety of training classes and activities using the latest positive, humane methods. Our experienced trainers and active, dedicated members create a supportive community for like-minded dog lovers.

5/2007

Objectives

Sarasota Obedience Training Club is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to positive dog training, to promoting responsible dog ownership, and to improving the canine/human relationship. Our instructors regularly attend seminars to keep current on the most effective ways to train dogs using positive training methods, and several are accredited by national training organizations.

1/2009

CONSTITUTION and BY-LAWS

CONSTITUTION

Article 1 **Name and Objects**

- Section 1 The name of the club shall be Sarasota Obedience Training Club, Inc.
- Section 2 The object of the Club shall be:
- a. To further the advancement of all dogs;
 - b. To educate the general public on the benefits of dog training;
 - c. To conduct obedience, rally and agility trials and other performance events under the rules of the American Kennel Club.
- Section 3 The Club shall not be conducted or operated for profit and no part of any profits or remainder or residue from dues or donations to the Club shall insure to the benefit of any member or individual.
- Section 4 The members of the Club shall adopt and may from time to time revise such By-Laws as may be required to carry out these objectives. Order of priority for the Club's governing documents and hierarchy is as follows: State of Florida Statutes for Not-for-Profit Corporations, Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, By-Laws, Standing Rules, and Policies and Procedures.
- Section 5 These Bylaw are subject to and governed by the State of Florida Not-For-Profit Corporation Laws and the Articles of Incorporation of the State of Florida. In the event of a direct conflict between the provisions of these bylaws and the mandatory provisions of the State of Florida Not-For-Profit Corporation Laws, the State of Florida Not-For-Profit Corporation Act will be controlling.

BY-LAWS

Article 1 **Membership**

- Section 1 Eligibility – There shall be four types of membership open to all persons who are in good standing with the American Kennel Club and who subscribe to the purposes of this Club.
- a. Regular (Individual) - Enjoys all club privileges including the right to vote and hold office.
 - b. Household – Two (2) adult members residing in the same household, each eligible to vote and hold office. Only one household member can hold office at any given time.
 - c. Junior Membership – Open to minors under 18 years of age; a non-voting/non office holding membership which may automatically convert to regular membership at age 18.
 - d. Life-Time Membership – For those individuals who have been members of the Club for 25 consecutive years; Life members pay no dues but are eligible to vote and hold office.
 - e. Honorary Membership – An individual who has made significant contributions to the Club or has been recommended by the Board of Directors for election by the membership; honorary members pay no dues and are not eligible to vote, but can maintain regular (or household) membership) if they pay dues.

Membership is restricted to persons actively interested in Dog Training.

While membership is to be unrestricted as to residence, the Club’s primary purpose is to be representative of the exhibitors in its immediate area.

- Section 2 Dues – Dues shall be determined by the membership at large.
In no case while dues are unpaid may a member vote on club business.

- Section 3 Election to Membership – Prospective members must complete an application form which shall be read at two separate General Meetings (excluding the December meeting, which is an awards banquet). Applicants must be present at the meeting where their readings take place.

Each applicant for membership shall apply on a form as approved by the Board of Directors and which shall provide that the applicant agrees to abide by these Constitution and By-Laws and the rules of the American Kennel Club. The application shall state the name, address and occupation of the applicant and it shall carry the endorsement of two members.

Procedure for New Membership:

1. A prospective member will bring his/her completed application for membership to a club meeting for a first reading. A completed application must have the signatures of two active club members who will be responsible for sponsoring this member. Sponsoring members shall serve as informal mentors to the applicants.
2. Second reading will occur at the next meeting that the applicant attends. However, applications will only be considered active for six months after the first reading.
3. Each applicant for individual membership must work at least a total of 4 hours at two different club activities under the direct supervision of club members; household membership applicants must work at least 6 hours at two different club activities under direct supervision of club members. Club activities will include trials, demos, unpaid assisting at classes, and any other activities approved by the Board where club members will get to know a prospective new member. The hours spent on these activities will count towards active member status and half-price cards/trial entry certificates to be issued when applicant becomes a member.
4. After the activity requirement is met, the applicant's name will be published as eligible for membership in the next newsletter.
5. At the general meeting following newsletter publication, he/she will be voted on by secret, written ballot at the next club meeting. Affirmative votes of 3/4 of the members present and voting at that meeting shall be required to elect the applicant. At this time, dues will be accepted from the applicant.
6. Applicants will be notified (by email, letter or phone) after this meeting regarding approval status.

Applicant Rejection

Applicants for membership who have been rejected by the Club may not reapply within six months after such rejection.

Reinstatement

Any club member whose membership was terminated by resignation or by lapsing may be reinstated into membership through the following procedure. The former member must ask for reinstatement during a general meeting and explain his or her reason for desiring reinstatement. Upon affirmation votes of the members present and payment of appropriate dues, reinstatement shall be granted.

Section 4

Termination of Membership – Membership may be terminated:

- a. By Resignation – Any member in good standing may resign from the Club upon written notice to the Secretary; but no member may resign when in debt to the Club. Dues obligations are considered a debt to the Club and they become incurred the first day of each fiscal year.
- b. By Lapsing – Members who have not paid their dues by the October meeting each year shall be considered terminated and their names published in the newsletter.
- c. By Expulsion – A membership may be terminated by expulsion as provided in Article VI of these Constitution and By-Laws.

Article II
Meetings and Voting

- Section 1 Club Meetings – Meetings of the Club shall be held at the Club facility on the second Wednesday of each month, at such hour as designated by the Board of Directors. Club meetings may be held by communication technology, at the discretion of the Board. Communication technology may also be used to supplement attendance to an on-site meeting. Written notice of each Club meeting shall be mailed or emailed prior to the date of each meeting. The quorum for such meetings shall be 20% of the members in good standing.
- Section 2 Special Club Meetings – Special Club meetings may be called by the President or by a majority vote of the members of the Board who are present and voting at any regular or special meeting of the Board and shall be called by the Secretary upon receipt of a petition signed by five members of the Club who are in good standing. Special meeting shall be held at the Club facility or by means of communication technology, at the discretion of the Board, and at such hour and place as may be designated by the person or persons authorized herein to call such meeting. Written notice of such a meeting shall be mailed and/or emailed by the Secretary at least 5 days and not more than 15 days prior to the date of the meeting, and said notice shall state the purpose of the meeting, and no other Club business may be transacted thereat. The quorum for such as meeting shall be 20% of the members in good standing.
- Section 3 Board Meetings – Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held prior to each regular monthly Club meeting at such hour and place as designated by the Board. Board meetings may be held either in-person or by means of communication technology at the discretion of the Board. Communication technology may be used to supplement attendance to an on-site meeting. The quorum for a meeting shall be a majority of the Board.
- Section 4 Special Board Meetings – Special meetings of the Board may be called by the President, and shall be called by the Secretary upon receipt of a written request signed by at least three members of the Board. Such special meetings shall be held at such place, time and hour as may be designated by the person authorized herein to call such meeting. Special board meetings may be held in-person or by means of communication technology at the discretion of the Board. Communication technology may be used to supplement attendance to an on-site meeting. Written notice of a special board meeting shall be mailed and/or emailed prior to the date of the meeting. Any such notice shall state the purpose of the meeting and no other business shall be transacted. A quorum for such a meeting shall be a majority of the Board.
- Section 5 Voting – Each member in good standing whose dues are paid for the current year shall be entitled to one vote at any meeting of the Club at which he or she is present. Proxy and/or absentee voting will not be permitted at any Club meeting or election.
- Section 6 Board Development and Training Meetings – The Board of Directors may meet for the

intent and purpose of board orientation, education, training or development in a closed session. Advance notice to the members is not required. No Club business will be discussed.

Article III **Directors and Officers**

- Section 1 **Board of Directors** – The Board shall be comprised of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and three other persons, all of whom shall be members in good standing and all of whom shall be for one-year terms at the Club’s annual meeting as provided in Article IV and shall serve until their successors are elected. General management of the Club’s affairs shall be entrusted to the Board of Directors.
- Section 2 **Officers** – The Club’s officers, consisting of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer shall serve in their respective capacities both with regard to the Club and its meetings and the Board and its meetings.
- a. **The President** – Shall preside at all meetings of the Club and of the Board, and shall have the duties and powers normally appurtenant to the office of President in addition to those particularly specified in these By-Laws,
 - b. **The Vice President** – Shall have the duties and exercise the powers of the President in case of the President’s death, absence or incapacity.
 - c. **The Secretary** – Shall keep a record of all meetings of the Club and of the Board and of all matters of which a record shall be ordered by the Club. He or she shall have charge of the correspondence, notify members of meetings, notify new members of their election to membership, notify officers and directors of their election to office, keep a roll of the members of the Club with their addresses and carry out such other duties as are prescribed by these By-Laws.
 - d. **The Treasurer** – Shall collect and receive all moneys due or belonging to the Club. He or she shall deposit the same in a bank satisfactory to the Board, in the name of the Club. His or her books shall be at all times open to inspection of the Board and he or she shall report to them at every meeting the condition of the Club’s finances and every item of receipt or payment not before reported; and at the annual meeting he or she shall render an account of all moneys received and expended during the previous fiscal year.
- Section 3 **Vacancies** – Any vacancies occurring on the Board or among the offices during the year shall be filled until the next annual election by a majority vote of all the then members of the Board at its first regular meeting following the creation of such vacancy, or at a Special Board Meeting called for that purpose; except that a vacancy in the office of President shall be automatically filled by the Vice-President and the resulting vacancy in the office of the Vice-President shall be filled by the Board. Any member with active status who agrees to the Board’s nomination is eligible to fill a vacancy

Article IV
The Club Year, Annual Meeting, Elections

Section 1 Club Year – The Club’s fiscal year shall begin on the 1st day of October and end on the 30th day of September. The Club’s official year shall begin immediately at the conclusion of the election at the annual meeting and shall continue through the election at the next annual meeting.

Section 2 Annual Meeting – The annual meeting shall be held in the month of October at which Officers and Directors for the ensuing year shall be elected by secret written ballot from among those nominated in accordance with Section 4 of this Article. They shall take office immediately upon the conclusion of the election and each retiring officer shall turn over to his or her successor in office all property and records relating to that office within 30 days after election.

Section 3 Elections – The nominated candidate receiving the greatest number of votes for each office shall be declared elected. The three nominated candidates for other positions on the Board who receive the greatest number of votes for such positions shall be declared elected.

Section 4 Nominations – Those eligible for nomination must maintain active SOTC membership for at least one full year. No person may be a candidate in a club election who has not been nominated. During the month of June, the Board shall select a Nominating Committee consisting of three members and two alternates, not more than one of whom shall be a member of the Board. The secretary shall immediately notify the committee and alternates of their selection. The Board shall name a Chairman for the committee and it shall be his or her duty to call a committee meeting, which shall be held before August 1st.

1. The Committee shall nominate one candidate for each office and three candidates for the other three positions on the Board and after securing the consent of each person so nominated immediately report their nominations to the Secretary in writing.
2. Upon receipt of the Nominating Committee’s report, the Secretary shall before August 15th, notify each member in writing of the candidates so nominated.
3. Any person so nominated who refuses to be a candidate for the position to which he or she has been nominated shall notify the Secretary in writing within 10 days of the date of the Secretary’s notification.
4. Immediately after the expiration period in which nominees may so decline the nomination, the Secretary shall mail to each member a notice of all such declinations, which have been received by him or her.
5. Additional nominations may be made at the September meeting by any member in attendance provided that the person so nominated, in accordance with Section 4, accepts when his or her name is proposed, and provided further that if the proposed candidate is not in attendance at this meeting, his or her nominator shall present the Secretary a written statement from the proposed candidate signifying his or her

willingness to be a candidate. No person may be a candidate for more than one position, and the additional nominations which are provided for herein may be made only from those members who were not nominated by the Nominating Committee or who declined such nominations as above provided. However, no person who has declined the Committee's nomination may be nominated at the September meeting for the same position.

6. Nominations cannot be made at the annual meeting or in any manner other than as provided in this Section.

Article V **Committees**

- Section 1 The Board may each year appoint standing committees to advance the work of the Club in such matters as shows, obedience and agility trials, trophies, annual prizes, membership, and other fields which may well be served by committees. Such committees shall always be subject to the final authority of the Board to aid it on particular projects.
- Section 2 Any committee appointment may be terminated by a majority vote of the full membership of the Board upon written notice to the appointee; and the Board may appoint successors to those persons whose services have been terminated.

Article VI **Discipline**

- Section 1 American Kennel Club Suspension – Any member who is suspended from the privileges of the American Kennel Club automatically shall be suspended from the privileges of this Club for a like period.
- Section 2 Charges – Any member may prefer charges against a member for alleged misconduct prejudicial to the best interests of the Club. Written charges with specifications must be filed in duplicate with the Secretary together with a deposit of \$10, which shall be forfeited if such charges are not sustained by the Board following the hearing. The Secretary shall promptly send a copy of the charges to each member of the Board or present them at a Board meeting and the Board shall first consider whether the actions alleged in the charges, if proven, might constitute conduct prejudicial to the best interests of the Club. If the Board considers that the charges do not allege conduct which would be prejudicial to the best interests of the Club, it may refuse to entertain jurisdiction. If the Board entertains jurisdiction of the charges, it shall fix a date of hearing by the Board not less than 3 weeks nor more than 6 weeks thereafter. The Secretary shall promptly send one copy of the charges to the accused member by registered mail together with a notice of hearing and an assurance that the defendant may personally appear in his or her own defense and bring witnesses if he she wishes.
- Section 3 Board Hearing – The Board shall have complete authority to decide whether counsel may

attend the hearing, but both complainant and defendant shall be treated uniformly in that regard. Should the charges be sustained, after hearing all the evidence and testimony presented by complainant and defendant, the Board may by a majority vote of those present suspend the defendant from all privileges of the Club for not more than six months from the date of the hearing. And, if it deems that punishment insufficient, it may also recommend to the membership that the penalty be expulsion. In such case, the suspension shall not restrict the defendant's right to appear before his or her fellow members at the ensuing Club meeting which considers the Board's recommendation. Immediately after the Board has reached a decision, its findings shall be put in written form and filed with the Secretary. The Secretary, in turn, shall notify each of the parties of the Board's decision and penalty, if any. A brief notice with the member's name, the charge, and the decision shall be posted in the newsletter for documentation.

Section 4 Expulsion – Expulsion of a member from the Club may be accomplished only at a meeting of the Club following a Board hearing and upon the Board's recommendation as provided in Section 3 of this Article. Such proceedings may occur at a regular or special meeting of the Club to be held within 60 days but not earlier than 30 days after the date of the Board's recommendation of expulsion. The defendant shall have the privilege of appearing in his or her own behalf, though no evidence shall be taken at this meeting. The President shall read the charges and the Board's findings and recommendations, and shall invite the defendant, if present, to speak in his or her own behalf if he or she wishes. The meeting shall then vote by secret written ballot on the proposed expulsion. A 2/3 vote of those present and voting at the meeting shall be necessary for expulsion. If expulsion is not so voted, the Board's suspension shall stand.

Article VII **Amendments**

Section 1 Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws may be proposed by the Board of Directors or by written petition addressed to the Secretary signed by 20% of the membership in good standing. Amendments proposed by such petition shall be promptly considered by the Board of Directors and must be submitted to the members with recommendations of the Board by the Secretary for a vote within three months of the date when the petition was received by the Secretary.

Section 2 The Constitution, By-Laws, and Policies and Procedures may be amended by a 2/3 vote of the members present and voting at any regular or special meeting called for the purpose, provided the proposed amendments have been included in the notice of the meeting and emailed to each member prior to the date of the meeting.

Section 3 Proper and accurate records should be kept of when amendments are adopted by the membership so that the club is governed by the appropriate documents. Revised bylaw documents must be made available to club members once the document is adjusted to contain amendments to avoid confusion as to which document is in effect.

Article VIII
Dissolution

Section 1 Dissolution – The Club may be dissolved at any time by the written consent of not less than 2/3 of the members. In the event of the dissolution of the Club other than for the purpose of reorganization whether voluntary or involuntary or by operation of the law, none of the property of the Club shall be distributed to any members of the Club but after payment of the debts of the Club, its property and assets shall be given to a charitable organization for the benefit of dogs selected by the Board of Directors.

Article IX
Order of Business

Section 1 At the meetings of the Club, the order of business, so far as the character and nature of the meeting may permit, shall be as follows:

- Roll call
- Minutes of last meeting
- Report of the Board
 - Report of the President
 - Report of the Secretary
 - Report of the Treasurer
 - Report of Committees
- Election of Officers and Board (at annual meetings)
- Election of new members
- Unfinished business
- New Business
- Adjournment

Section 2 At meetings of the Board the order of business, unless otherwise directed by majority vote of those present, shall be as follows:

- Reading of minutes of last meeting
- Report of Secretary
- Report of Treasurer
- Reports of Committees
- Unfinished business
- Election of new members
- New business
- Adjournment

Approved May 2007, January 11, 2023

Standing Rules

1. The regular meeting of the club shall be held at 7:00 pm unless changed by a vote of the club.
2. These standing rules may be amended or adopted at any business meeting by a majority vote with previous notice.
3. All committees/teams shall serve from the second Wednesday in November for one year.
4. An appropriate floral offering or a gift to charity from the Sunshine Fund will be sent upon the death of a member or an immediate relative of a member. In the event of illness, the Secretary is to send a get-well card and/or flowers.
5. The club's fiscal year is from October 1 through September 30. Dues are due by Oct 1 for the following year. Dues must be paid and received by the Treasurer before October 1 for a member to be eligible to vote during the October general membership meeting. The fee rate for dues is determined by the Board and presented to the membership at a general meeting for a vote with a majority approval of members attending required for adoption. (9/2013, 2021, 2023)
6. All fee rates are reviewed annually by the Board, and posted in the Membership section of the SOTC website. Changes are presented to the membership at a general meeting for a vote with a majority approval of members attending required for adoption.
7. Variable length classes will be priced at a pro-rated amount of the six-week class fee with approval of the Board. Active SOTC members will receive a discount on full-pay class fees where no other member discount is applied. Drop-in class fees are not eligible for the discount. Drop-in participation in a class requires permission of the instructor. There will be a cancellation fee for a previously registered class that is cancelled by the student. (2021)
8. Volunteer Hours. Active membership at SOTC requires members to earn a designated minimum number of "volunteer hours" through volunteering/working in club-related activities. Such activities include, but are not limited to working at trials, building and field maintenance and cleaning, committee participation, class or seminar instruction, event planning and executing, and other activities approved by the Board. Hours are fiscal year specific and are tracked through the fiscal year. There is no banking or rolling over of hours from one fiscal year to another.

Members who earn hours beyond the designated minimum for active membership will receive Volunteer Certificates, for each 8-hour block of volunteer work.

Club members may use earned volunteer certificates to defray the cost of classes, and other events as approved by the Board to include:

- Any 5-8 hour SOTC instructional hour class or two 4 instructional hour classes for half of the regular price.
- SOTC seminar registrations. Amount to be determined and noted per event registrar or registration form.

- SOTC Trial Entry. Cannot be used to cover event recording fees.

9. Levels of Membership are as follows:

Officers, Board Members, Training Director(s), Newsletter Editor, Webmaster, DogBizPro Administrator, Trial Chairperson(s): Board members may elect 48 hours of volunteer time or free classes. Members in these positions may elect 48 hours of volunteer time or free SOTC classes.

Active Member: To be an active member, one must attend at least two club meetings (not counting the annual Awards Event). Individual members must also work a minimum of 16 hours per fiscal year at club-related activities approved by the Board. Those holding Household Memberships must work a minimum of 24 hours per fiscal year on club-related activities. Active members are entitled to all club benefits after meeting annual hour requirements (16 for single membership and 24 for Household membership).

Active Membership Benefits Include:

- Free Access to building, field and equipment for practice when not in use for classes, trials, seminars or other Club sanctioned events.
- Discount “half price” Volunteer Certificates. Member receives one (1) certificate for every eight (8) hours volunteer member work after annual required hours for membership are met. Discount certificate can be applied to class fee or other event as approved by the Board.
- Reduced prices at club sponsored seminars and other such activities.
- Eligibility to represent SOTC at tournaments such as DACOF, DOCOF, CanAm/U-FLI Nationals or other venue team events, as approved by the Board, where the team is representing SOTC on an annual basis.
- Free participation in club Fun Days & other club activities.
- Reduced Rates for open practice sessions and run-thru's.
- Members with dogs earning titles within a club fiscal year will receive a certificate at the annual awards event. Engraving on plaques and pins are available for purchase.
- Discount on all SOTC classes offered, with the exception of drop-in class prices.

New Member: New members begin membership benefits by receiving the newsletter and are eligible to attend club activities such as the Awards Event. New members are able to use the building for an hourly fee - and need to be in the company of an active member. After completing the requirements of active membership, new members will become active members and will receive all other applicable benefits.

Non-active Member: These members pay dues, receive the newsletter, attend club activities such as the Awards Event, but receive no other club benefits. Non-active members may use the building and field when accompanied by an active member for a hourly fee. Refer to current Fee Rates posted in the Membership section of website.

Applicants and Non-members: May use the building and field when accompanied by an active member for an hourly fee. Refer to current Fee Rates posted in the Membership section of website.

Lifetime Member: These members receive all active membership benefits, do not pay yearly dues, and are entitled to take SOTC classes for free.

10. To encourage class attendees to join the club, non-members may use SOTC facilities for practice while in the company of an active club member. Use of the facility by members to conduct private lessons or classes for any personal financial gain is prohibited without Board approval. Violation of this rule may result in dismissal from the club.
11. Any officer or Board member who misses more than two consecutive board meetings without cause shall be asked to resign his/her position and a replacement will then be appointed by the Board.
12. No member in good standing shall be excluded from any Board meeting, special board meeting, general meeting, or special general meeting for any reason. "Member in good standing" is an individual who is not suspended by The American Kennel Club; and whose dues for the year are already paid.
13. No use of SOTC endorsements or logo without express written permission of the Board.

Approved January 11, 2023

Policies and Procedures

Policy and Procedure Revisions

Changes to the Policies and Procedures may be proposed by any member in good standing. The proposed changes must be presented to the Board and be published in the newsletter and brought before the membership for discussion and vote. Revisions and additions to the Policies and Procedures require a 2/3 vote of the members present and voting at any regular meeting or special meeting called for the purpose.

4/2007, 3/2023

Board Meeting Agenda

To promote the orderly flow of information and the effective use of time during Board Meetings.

- Information for agenda items will be submitted to the President 1 week prior to the next scheduled Board meeting.
- Any information received within the week prior to the Board meeting will be added to the agenda for the following meeting unless it is deemed to be an urgent or emergency item.
- Any information that is presented at the Board meeting that is not on the agenda may be tabled at the Board's discretion until the following Board meeting.
- Complete supporting documentation must accompany a request to have an item put on the agenda. If no supporting documentation is received, the item will be tabled until the supporting documentation is received.
- Complete supporting documentation must be submitted to all Board members.
- If information/documentation is received by only one board member, that Board member is responsible for forwarding it to the remaining Board members.

1/2013, 3/2023

Other Membership Benefits

See Standing Rules, Item 9

3/2023

New Membership

See By-laws, Article 1, Section 3

3/2023

Re-Applying for Membership After Rejection

See By-laws, Article 1, Section 3

3/2023

Committees

See By-laws, Article 5

3/2023

Classes

The Sarasota Obedience Training Club offers educational classes to encourage responsible dog ownership, and participation in canine performance sports. Club members are encouraged to participate in the education and training component of the club's mission as instructors, assistant instructors and apprentices.

Registration for classes occurs through the Dog Biz Pro application accessed through the SOTC website. Class schedules are created by the Training Directors in consultation with instructors and Registrars. Information handouts for class participants/trainees which outline expectations and club policies should be provided to all participants. Copies of handouts are available in the Appendices.

A class must have sufficient number of participants to cover class expenses to be held. The Dog Biz Pro Administrator will notify the appropriate Training Director one week prior to the start date if class registration numbers do not meet minimal level to cover expenses.

1/2014, 3/2023

Members who have earned free classes, volunteer cards or certificates count as full pay students and the instructor should be rewarded accordingly.

3/2019

Collar Policy

In all SOTC classes, dogs are trained using martingale or flat buckle collars. Harnesses are also allowed for dogs at risk of neck injury or breathing issues.

Special training devices that are used to exert a higher element of control and training including, but not limited to, collars with prongs, chain "choke" collars, muzzles and head collars may be allowed in classes at the discretion of the instructor.

Electronic (e-collar) or similar collars will not be allowed or used in SOTC classes.

9/2023

Junior Handlers

The Club believes that junior handlers are the future and require cultivation and nurturing. When a child or adolescent shows interest in working with, training and bonding with their canine companion the Club should make every effort to assist in making that a reality.

1. SOTC offers half price aptitude and introduction classes in each discipline (Agility, Obedience, Rally and Flyball) for junior handlers.
 - a. Junior Handlers must be between the ages of 10 and 18.
 - b. The dog must have passed basic obedience.
 - c. The dog must be non-reactive.
 - d. A parent/guardian must accompany the junior handler and participate in any setup or tear down required for the class.

If it is determined that the size or temperament of the dog makes it difficult for the Junior Handler to

control the dog, the accompanying adult will be asked to handle the dog.

Additionally, classes are available to 4-H students for half price.

6/2013

Shelters and Rescues

Humane Societies, Rescues and Shelters (Adopted Puppies and Dogs)

As a canine training facility, SOTC supports that all dogs should have a good, loving home and a close bond with their handlers/pet-parents. The way to achieve this bond is through patient training with positive reinforcement. To assist in the bonding process and to ensure that all rescues have the best chance of staying in their new forever homes, offer the following:

1. SOTC offers a half price Puppy or Beginner's Obedience Class to anyone, member or non-member, who adopts a dog from a Humane Society, rescue or shelter. To receive the half price Beginner's Obedience Class, complete the Class Registration form available online and mail the certificate from the adoption packet or a copy of the adoption paperwork with the registration fee.
2. SOTC offers a discount on the next class taken after completion of the first 4 weeks of the Puppy or Beginner's Obedience Class. A discount certificate will be given to class participants/trainees at the end of the 4th class. The next class does not have to be an obedience class.

7/2009, 3/2023

Humane Societies, Rescues and Shelters (Puppies and Dogs Not Yet Ready for Adoption)

The Club acknowledges that not all puppies and dogs are ready to be adopted upon arrival at a shelter or rescue. To assist in helping these canines become more adoptable and increase chances of finding their forever home, the Club offers free classes to Humane Societies, Rescues and Shelters. To be enrolled in the class, complete the Class Registration form available online and note the organization's name on the form. The dog must be accompanied by the representative of the organization listed on the registration form. An alternative representative may also be listed for convenience. There is a limit of 2 rescue dogs per class.

6/2007, 3/2023

Puppy Raisers for Southeastern Guide Dogs are allowed to take free classes. There is a limit of 2 dogs per class.

1/2013

Volunteer Hours

Active membership at SOTC requires members to earn a designated minimum number of "volunteer hours" through volunteering/working in club-related activities. Such activities include, but are not limited to working at trials, building and field maintenance and cleaning, committee participation, class or seminar instruction, event planning and executing, and other activities approved by the Board. Hours are Club fiscal year specific and are tracked through the fiscal year. There is no banking or rolling over of hours from one fiscal year to another. (See Standing Rule #8 & 9)

Members who earn hours beyond the designated minimum for active membership will receive Volunteer

Certificates, which represent 8 hours of volunteer work. These cards can be used to defray the cost of classes and other events as approved by the Board.

The Volunteer Certificate may be used to reduce the cost of the standard SOTC class fee by one-half of the current cost. A member may use only one half-price certificate per class. Half-price certificates are for personal use of the designated member and cannot be given to other members or non-members for use.

Volunteer Relationship

The SOTC Member Volunteer understands and agrees that his/her services are being provided strictly in a voluntary capacity and without any express or implied promise of salary, compensation, employee benefits, or other payment of any kind whatsoever. Member Volunteers have no employment relationship with SOTC. To demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the volunteer relationship with the Club, new members complete the *Volunteer Agreement, Release & Waiver* when joining the club. A copy of the *Volunteer Agreement, Release & Waiver* is available in the Appendices.

Reimbursements in cash or like kind benefits, such as Member half-price class discounts, Seminar Certificates and Instructor Reimbursements, count towards the federal tax limit of \$600 per calendar year when used or applied. Club members are responsible for tracking their federal tax liability.

Events/Activities Hour Tracking Procedure:

For events or activities, the event chair will provide a Volunteer Hours Event Form (see Members Only Web Section, Forms) for member volunteers to record their start and end time. Each member should sign her/his name next to her/his end time when leaving the event. (It is the volunteer's responsibility to complete the sign in sheet so that the hours can be properly recorded.)

For projects approved by the Board that do not require an event chair, the member should send the following information by mail or email to the Membership Chair: Member(s) name, date(s), project work completed with time required per date, hours per date if more than one date is required to complete the project or work.

Board Members do not earn individual hours for their Board related activities. Each Board Member receives 48 volunteer hours at the end of the fiscal year OR free classes during the fiscal year term. Board Members may submit volunteer hours for time committed to other activities, projects and events.

Run Thru Chairs may request up to 2 volunteer hours for their effort.

10/2011, 04/2023

12/2013, 04/2023

Instructors and Assistant Instructors

Sarasota Obedience Training Club offers classes to the public as a means to fulfilling its mission, and providing financial support for the Club. The class education organization relies on a tiered model of instructors, and training directors to whom these instructors report, and the Board. This model depends on instructors cooperating with the Club and its policies to mitigate any potential risk for the club, the class participants, and the dogs. Instructors and Assistant Instructors should possess the characteristics of good sportsmanship; competency; and an acquired level of skills in training and instruction. Completion of the

application process is required to be included in the instructor pool.

The two categories of instructors are: volunteer and independent contractor. Volunteer instructors earn membership hours for their volunteer efforts and reimbursement (see Instructor Reimbursement Policy). Independent contractors need not be members and are individuals who are hired by the Board on a fee basis to teach dog training classes or seminars. To help ensure that the club is in compliance with federal and state regulations, instructors and assistant instructors shall sign a volunteer or independent contractor agreement annually.

The Training Directors for the program areas (Agility, Flyball, Obedience and Scentwork) shall be responsible for recruitment of instruction personnel. Training Directors will review all requests for Instructor and Assistant Instructor status in their program areas, and shall approve those individuals whom they feel meet the appropriate criteria. Instructors may not offer Assistant Instructor positions without prior approval of the applicable Training Director. (See Appendices for Training Director Position Description)

Procedure

1. Before teaching any SOTC classes, individuals being considered for instructor/assistant instructor status must complete the Instructor Application detailing their background and experience in teaching/instruction and dog training. Upon completion of the Instructor Application, the Training Director will confirm the applicant's previous teaching venues, as well as titles received.
2. Approved applicants will receive a volunteer or independent contractor agreement for signature. The volunteer agreement will be signed annually and filed in a locked cabinet in the SOTC office. The Independent Contractor agreement will be completed as required by session or annually. Training Directors must provide the names of instruction personnel to the designated Board member responsible for maintaining the agreements.
3. To support compliance with club policies and class curriculum, and promote professional development, Instructors and Assistant Instructors may be periodically observed by the Training Director or a team comprised of the primary Training Director and another member (e.g., Board member, another training director, veteran instructor). Constructive feedback will be provided to the instructors.
4. Termination of an instructor or assistant instructor for cause such as poor class management, poor instruction technique or style, inability to follow policies, procedures and curricula, or inappropriate behavior, can be initiated by the Training Director and submitted with documentation to the Board for its review and final approval.

Expectations

- Instructors are expected to document incidents occurring in class that would be considered unsafe or disruptive by the average person. This includes incidents between canines, between canines and humans, and between humans. The incident report must be given to the Training Director immediately (within 48 hours).
- If an Instructor is ill or cannot make the class due to a conflict, it is her/his responsibility to notify the Training Director as soon as possible and discuss options. Options may include class cancellation or substitute instructor. If a class is cancelled, it is the instructor's responsibility to make sure all class participants are informed in a timely fashion.
- Instructors and Assistant Instructors are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful and professional manner when interacting with class participants and other instructors. This includes

when participating as class participants in SOTC classes.

Position Descriptions

Volunteer Instructors

1. Each Instructor must:
 - a. be 18 years of age or over,
 - b. be a current member of the Club with no discipline sanctions,
 - c. have completed a class with the Club,
 - d. have assisted for at least one session, at the discretion of the Training Director,
 - e. have a combination of experience and background in training and instruction which can include canine sports competition, related professional dog training certifications, canine consultant/professional trainer employment,
 - f. For competition classes, have a good knowledge of the titling rules specific to the title-awarding organization and have titled a dog at the level of the class to be taught or have actively competed at the title level of the class to be taught,
 - g. For scentwork classes, instructors will be selected at the discretion of the Scentwork Training Director, based on scentwork knowledge, past experience and credentials such as titles, certificates, continuing education, and familiarity with various competition venues.
2. Instructors are responsible for:
 - a. following the curriculum, although the sequence in which various elements and topics are introduced may be changed based on the circumstances of the class as long as the final result is the same,
 - b. discussing suggested changes to the curriculum with the Training Director,
 - c. ensuring the class Assistant Instructor knows his/her duties and provides assistance within his/her comfort level,
 - d. ensuring that the class participants are aware of the Club safety policies and that dogs should be actively supervised on leash at all times except when specifically working on an off-lead exercise in a ring,
 - e. canceling class in the event of inclement weather and notifying all class members, and
 - f. finding a replacement or rescheduling a class in the event a regular class time must be missed.

Assistant Instructors

1. Each Assistant Instructor must:
 - a. be 16 years of age or older,
 - b. be a current member of the Club with no discipline sanctions,
 - c. have completed a class with the Club,
 - d. have some experience in training or instruction which can include canine sports competition, related professional dog training certifications, canine consultant/professional trainer employment, or brick and mortar teaching experience,
 - e. be comfortable handling various breeds.

Assistant Instructors will be selected at the discretion of the Training Director, and in collaboration with instructors.

If an Instructor and Assistant Instructor disagree about a particular training method or an issue with a class participant, discussion of the subject should be held privately. In the event of a serious disagreement, the Training Director should be brought into the conversation for assistance.

Those instructing shall not handle a class participant's dog without the participant's permission.

Harsh physical corrections can be allowed if in the Instructor/Assistant Instructor's reasonable discretion, there is an immediate or imminent threat of physical injury to a dog(s) or person(s). At those times necessary caution must be used for the safety of all humans and dogs in the vicinity.

Responsible equipment use shall be discussed by Instructors at the beginning of each class. Instructors and Assistant Instructors also may cover topics such as digging, crate training, barking and mouthing with their trainees. If a dog has serious issues related to aggression or anxiety, the instructor may advise the participant that the dog cannot attend class or limit the dog's participation in the class. Instructors should recommend that participants that have dogs with behavioral problems consult with their veterinarian for evaluation. If the Instructor has questions on how to approach an issue with a class participant, the Instructor should discuss the problem with the Training Director before making recommendations.

Independent Contractor Instructors

Independent Contractor Instructors are hired by the Board on a fee basis per class term to conduct dog training classes at SOTC. The class must have a minimum of four participants to support an independent contractor instructor. The Independent Contractor Instructor should have experience in training and instruction which can include canine sports competition, professional dog training certifications, and canine consultant/professional trainer employment.

The Independent Contractor liaises with the Training Director on the goals of the contracted course, and determines the manner and means by which she/he performs the work. The Independent Contractor must have own personal liability insurance and provide proof of this insurance to SOTC annually. The contractor maintains responsibility for own tax liability, and will receive a 1099 annually.

9/2023

Instructor Reimbursement

To support member involvement in training classes, help active instructors in covering expenses, and stimulate instructor skill development, SOTC implemented an expanded model of categories.

The categories include:

- Volunteer Instructor fulfilling membership hours requirement
- Volunteer Instructor- Reimbursed
- Independent Contractor

The Instructors and Assistant Instructor will automatically receive volunteer hours for the first class taught per calendar year. After this requirement is met, Instructors and Assistant Instructors may choose one of several options. Class enrollment and class expense will impact the type of instructor reimbursement. A class must have a minimum of 5 learners for an assistant to receive cash reimbursement.

Instructors are responsible for submitting the forms for themselves and their assistants and apprentices at

the end of the class term. The completed forms are submitted to a Board designee for processing and tracking.

Volunteer Instructor

Instructor elects to accrue 3 volunteer hours per hour taught (6-week class = 18 volunteer hours). Assistant Instructors will receive 2 Volunteer Hours per hour assisted (6-week class = 12 volunteer hours).

Volunteer Instructor- Reimbursed

Options include:

Instructor elects one free class taught by an SOTC instructor. Cannot be applied to seminars or classes taught by non-SOTC members.

Instructor/Assistant Instructor elects to receive expense/mileage reimbursement calculated from home to the SOTC facility mileage at the federal IRS standard mileage rate

Instructor elects to receive honorarium (capped at \$100 per class, not to exceed \$600 annually). Recipient is responsible for reporting and paying state or federal income tax.

Instructor/Assistant Instructor elects to receive Continuing Education Certificates (capped at \$100/\$75 per session; not to exceed \$600 annually; Recipient is responsible for reporting and paying state or federal income tax).

A volunteer that reaches the \$600 annual limit through receipt of certificates or honorarium, can only receive mileage reimbursement.

Instructors are responsible for tracking their federal tax liability. Reimbursements in cash or like kind benefits, such as Member half-price Volunteer Certificate class discounts and Instructor Reimbursements, count towards the federal tax limit of \$600 per calendar year.

SOTC Continuing Education Certificates may be used to cover seminar fees, and classes. Certificates are numbered and tracked and will be emailed to the email address in the member directory.

Independent Contractor

The Board may choose to hire an independent contractor to serve as an instructor. This requires the following:

- Signed SOTC Independent Contractor agreement to teach a class for a specifically agreed upon fee by the Independent Contractor and the Board, and stated on the exhibit page of the Contractor Agreement,
- Must have own personal liability insurance and provide proof of this insurance to SOTC annually,
- Declare that he/she meets Workman's Compensation rules by not having 4 or more employees,
- Maintain responsibility for own tax liability, and will receive a 1099 annually.

9/2023

Apprenticeship Program for Trainers

The purpose of this program is to introduce potential Instructors and Assistant Instructors to SOTC training philosophies and teaching techniques.

1. Requirements and Prerequisites.
 - a. Must be an SOTC member.
 - b. Must be at least 18 years of age.
 - c. Must comply with all SOTC policies and procedures.
 - d. Recommended to have some training experience of at least one dog in the activity of teaching interest or have taken the class previously.

Note: The Apprentice Program Committee (APC) may grant waivers to these requirements with approval of the SOTC Board.

2. How to Apply.
 - a. Complete the Apprenticeship Application. (Available online)
 - b. Mail or email the completed application to the SOTC Apprentice Program Committee Chairperson.
3. Acceptance into the Program.
 - a. Once the application is received it will be reviewed by the SOTC Apprentice Program Committee.
 - b. If all the requirements and prerequisites are met, an interview will be scheduled with the appropriate Apprentice Program Committee personnel.
4. The Program.
 - a. After being accepted into the apprentice program, the apprentice will interview with the instructor who will be their mentor in the desired venue. The instructor will work with the apprentice to determine in which class(es) they will work.
 - b. During the apprenticeship, the apprentice will be instructed and observed by the instructor and assistant instructor. The instructor will record the apprentice's progress on the Apprentice Evaluation form.
 - c. At the end of three class sessions, the instructor will complete the mid-session evaluation of the apprentice's progress. This evaluation will be discussed with the apprentice and will be submitted to the APC. At the end of the course, the Instructor will complete a final evaluation.

1/2018, 4/2023

Member Use of Facilities for Personal Practice and Training

To support the training and competition goals of members, it is the policy of the Sarasota Obedience Training Club (SOTC) to provide opportunities for active members in good standing to reserve a ring in the building or a ring in the agility field for personal practice during open periods on the Club facility calendar. Open periods are defined as time not reserved for classes, seminars, events, trials or other club-approved events. As the facilities are shared by a number of members, an attitude and practice of courtesy and mutual cooperation is essential.

Non-active members, applicants and non-members may use the building and field as guests of active members on a fee basis. See Fee Master for fee amount.

Active members must submit reservations to the Facilities Registrar through the online reservation system

accessed through the Member section of the SOTC website. SOTC reserves the right to cancel a reservation at any time for Club use of the building or field. SOTC will inform the person with the reservation promptly.

All reservations are pending until recorded on the calendar by the Facilities Registrar. Submission of this form does not guarantee the selected day and time. Any changes to posted reservations must be submitted on the RESERVE FORM by the member who made the original request. This will ensure that a record of any changes is properly maintained.

Upon entry to the building or field for a practice reservation, Members and guests are required to immediately “sign in” using the appropriate notebook. Guests are also required to sign in and Members are required to collect guest and non-active member fees. Fees should be deposited in the safe in an envelope labeled with member, guest names, and the date. Members are responsible for their guests’ activities and actions on SOTC property.

Members are required to leave facilities in “ready condition” which includes: return all equipment to original or storage site; clean/vacuum dog hair; adjust AC thermostat; turn off lights; latch gates and shed doors; close driveway gate and clip chain.

Failure to follow facility use policy and procedures may impact a member’s future ability to reserve and use the facilities.

Reservation Requirements:

- A personal practice reservation is limited to one ring in the building or one section of the agility field. Exceptions can be made for activities that require space beyond the dimensions of one ring (specifically Flyball, Freestyle which will require more than one ring).
- A practice reservation period in the building for an individual member with one training dog is limited to one (1) hour and one ring.
- An individual member with two or more training dogs may reserve up to two hours for one ring in the building.
- A member may reserve the same day/ time NO more than 2 weeks in a row maximum.
- Members training/practicing together with multiple dogs may reserve up to two (2) hours for one ring under a single reservation. The entire building or entire field is not available for a practice reservation. Use of the entire facility is considered a rental and will be handled per the Facility Rental policy. Names of members training together must be listed on the reservation request. Members training together are not permitted to cobble multiple practice reservations to create exclusive time blocks.
- An agility practice reservation for the field is limited to one section of the field for two (2) hours to accommodate equipment setup, breakdown and storage.
- A flyball team practice reservation for the building is limited for two (2) hours to accommodate equipment setup, breakdown and storage.
- Exception requests for more than one ring, other than Flyball or Freestyle, must be submitted to the Board via the President for review and approval within 48 hours after request submission through the reservation system, and no later than 48 hours prior to the scheduled practice reservation time. The Calendar Volunteer will not accept two ring/field reservations that have not been approved by the Board.

- Team (four or more participants) practices, specifically DACOF, DOCOF or other teams recognized by the Club, may reserve both rings, or both sections of the field for team practices. Please write team participants' names in "Description of Event" field on reservation form.
- Blocking access to the restrooms, doors of the building, and pathways around the rings during a personal practice is not permitted for safety reasons.
- Reservation period includes setup, practice and cleanup activities. Practice space must be vacated at the end time of the reservation time period.
- A member may make no more than two (2) practice reservations per week, and no more than one month ahead of the desired date/ time.
- If more than one requester shows up for a time slot that is open on the calendar, in the 24 hours before the desired open time slot, the first requester to arrive gets the spot and may choose to share with second requester.
- Volunteer (non-contract) instructors may book practice time adjacent to the instructor's scheduled class for the length of the class term. If the adjacent time is not available, the volunteer instructor may book practice at another available time during the week. Instructor must note in the reservation request which class this practice is associated.
- When scheduling on the same day as an event, a member's reserve time must allow a minimum of 1/2 hour before and/or after listed event time.
- When scheduling on the same day as a class, a member's reserve time must allow a minimum of 15 minutes before, after, or between classes as necessary for instructor clean up. Classes with extensive equipment setup (Rally, Flyball, Agility, Scentwork, Freestyle) or a class with no assistant may reserve 30 minutes before, after, or between classes per instructor discretion.

9/2023

Support for SOTC's Competitive Teams

To defray members' financial burden when representing the Club in statewide competitions (e.g., DOCOF, DACOF), SOTC will assist in supporting up to two (2) full teams. SOTC will cover the entry fees for 2 dogs per person; and pay for 1 team shirt per person. Reimbursement for expenses such as mileage, food, RV space rental, etc. in the amount of up to \$100.00 to each team member will be issued with submitted receipts. Mileage reimbursement is factored on the federal government mileage reimbursement rate from the location point of home origin to the location point of the competition. (See Standing Rule # 9)

2/2017, 4/2023

Bitches in Season

Bitches in season are not allowed in the building or on fields at any time.

12/2011,4/2023

Electronic Communication Use

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on use of electronic communications for the facilitation of communication within the club's community, and to share information about club activities with interested public constituencies. This policy assumes the exercise of common sense, common courtesy,

and a respect of the rights and property of SOTC and others.

Electronic Communications: In the context of this policy, this term refers to sending, posting, publishing, download, or otherwise sharing of digital information using communication systems or the Internet including social media systems. Examples are: Email, Teleconferencing, Video Conferencing (e.g., Skype, FaceTime, Zoom etc.), Social/Business Networking (e.g. Facebook).

Meetings conducted with the use of Video Conferencing

As stated in the SOTC Bylaws, electronic communication technology may be used instead of an on-site meeting per decision/discretion by the Board. Board meetings, general membership meetings, special board meetings and special meetings can be held using a video conferencing format. The Club will maintain a designated account for the conduct and recording of these meetings. A Board member or Board-designee will serve as “host” of the meeting. Recordings of meetings conducted with video conferencing are the property of SOTC and kept as source material. Copies will not be made for member distribution. The Club Corresponding Secretary will have unlimited access to assist in developing meeting minutes and reports. Board members will not replay the recordings in settings outside of club business.

To facilitate club business, voting may occur during conferenced meetings (video or teleconference). Voting may be facilitated by oral acclamation, Zoom participant features, use of voting/polling electronic platforms or other pre-approved method. The use of a voting electronic platform requires pre-planning by a committee chaired by the SOTC Webmaster.

SOTC “Blasts”

SOTC Blasts are used for disseminating club information to the members via email. It is not to be used by individual members for mass email dissemination. The Board identifies and authorizes a volunteer member to develop and disseminate Blast communications. Content for Blasts is sent to the Authorized Member through the email sotccommunications@gmail.com.

Social/Business Networking

SOTC may maintain a Social/Business Networking presence. (e.g., Facebook). Members are encouraged to contribute content including photos, brags, and canine sports related information. A volunteer member, appointed by the Board, serves as the administrator.

3/2023

SOTC Website

The Sarasota Obedience Training Club maintains a website as a communication and content resource for both the public and club members, and provides a portal for class registration.

The following information, at minimum, shall be maintained on the web site:

- the location of and directions to the training facility,
- the dates for all Board of Directors and General Membership meetings,
- information about joining the Club and any forms necessary to join,
- the current class schedule and class descriptions, any information regarding upcoming classes, and the registration portal,
- the list of Club officers and their contact information, and
- information regarding future scheduled events and any event premiums that are available.

Two volunteer positions have been created to maintain the website and online class registration process. The Webmaster and Dog Biz Pro Administrator are appointed by the SOTC Board. Position Descriptions are located in the Appendices. The Webmaster is responsible for supervising and maintaining the website. The Dog Biz Pro Administrator is responsible for facilitating the class registration process through the class registration software.

At least two individuals shall have administrative access to the web site at all times. At least one of those individuals must be a club member.

3/2023

Member Address & Contact Information

To facilitate member communication, SOTC maintains a data list of members' names, addresses, phone number and email address in the Members Only restricted access area on the SOTC website. Members are requested to submit changes and updates in their information to the Board Secretary.

Members should not use the email addresses for the purpose of mass communication to the membership. Club-wide communications are sent through the SOTC Blast process. Members are prohibited from providing member address and contact information to non-members and outside entities.

9/2023

Member Behavior and Misconduct

Sarasota Obedience Training Club is comprised of individuals dedicated to dog training, participating in canine performance sports, and conducting trials and other performance events under the rules of the American Kennel Club, and other national organizations.

In order that all members can fully enjoy the club community and resources of SOTC, it is imperative that members abide by the By-Laws, Standing Rules, and Policies and Procedures. Additionally, members should treat each other with civility, fairness and honesty. SOTC prohibits bullying and harassment (as defined in State of Florida Statutes Chapter 748.048, 1 a & b) of members and non-members on club property and at club-related events. Per the By-Laws, misconduct and violations of Bylaws, Standing Rules, and Policies and Procedures are referred to the SOTC Board to address. Member misconduct and violations of club rules may have a negative impact on an individual's SOTC membership status and privileges.

Procedures

1. The Sarasota Obedience Training Club Constitution and By-Laws describe the functions and organization of the Club. The Board has the authority to oversee the safe and effective operation of the Club and support the club community and atmosphere, and is responsible for addressing misconduct and violations of By-Laws, Standing Rules, Policies & Procedures by members. The Board is not responsible for addressing interpersonal difficulties or "squabbles" between members.
2. Misconduct, inappropriate behavior, and violation of By-Laws, Standing Rules, and Policies should be promptly reported to the Board to address. Reporting may include written documentation.

Examples of misconduct, inappropriate behavior, and violations include, but are not limited to: Failure to leave facilities in “ready condition” after a personal practice; Failure to sign-in when arriving for personal practice; Failure to sign-in guests for personal practice and collecting guest fee; Claiming a member half-price class discount without providing appropriate documentation; Providing non-members with collective member contact information such as email addresses without prior Board approval; Behaving in a manner that disrupts the orderly conduct of a Board or Membership meeting and with disregard to requests by members to cease.

3. The Board may choose to address alleged violations:
 - a. If warranted, the Board discusses the alleged violation, and if appropriate, designates one of its members to investigate. That member talks with the person who reported the violation and if appropriate, the person whose activity was reported. The member presents this information to the Board. The Board discusses the situation at a Board meeting to determine if there is a violation and if action is necessary. The Board may choose to not take action or to vote to provide an oral or written warning to the club member. Oral warnings will be delivered by a Board officer. A written warning to the club member (email or standard mail) should include the date(s) of specific incidents and the specific By-Law, Standing Rule, Policy & Procedure which was violated. A copy of a written warning will be kept as a Board record. Board action should be documented in the meeting minutes.
 - b. If the violation persists after a written warning, the Board considers the circumstances at a Board meeting or a Special Board meeting to the point of a voted decision and may move forward with more serious consequences. Consequences may include additional written warnings, reduction of membership benefits such as practice time, class participation; and exclusion from participation in club sponsored trials and events.
 - c. The member may be present at Board discussions, but attendance is not required. The member shall receive 7 days-notice of the Board’s intent to discuss a concern of misconduct, or violation. Outside counsel is not allowed.
4. Serious or consistent and repetitive misconduct that is prejudicial to the best interests of the club is subject to action as outlined in Article VI, Discipline, Sections 2-4, of the SOTC By-Laws.

Administrative Discipline Hearing Process for By-laws Article VI, Sections 2-4

Per recommendation of the AKC (*Tips and Best Practices for Effective Club Bylaws*), the procedures described in the AKC booklet *Dealing with Misconduct at American Kennel Club Events* serve as a guide for the methodology of conducting a fair administrative hearing process. The Club’s Board, or a designated Board Hearing Panel of no less than 4 members (odd number preferred), is the only body which has charge over handling internal disciplinary issues and cannot be charged/assigned to any other members or committees of the club.

The hearing is closed and attendees are limited to the Hearing Panel, the complainant and respondent, and called witnesses. The hearing will be conducted in a fair, orderly, and impartial manner. Both the complainant and the respondent have the right to make statements, present witnesses on their behalf, and to cross question all witnesses. The Hearing Panel may ask questions for clarification. The complainant and respondent will not question each other but may prepare questions for each other that are posed by the Hearing Panel. The Hearing Panel will meet in closed session to make a decision. A decision letter will be mailed or emailed to the respondent within five business days. This letter will describe the outcome of

the hearing.

The hearing is recorded. This tape is the property of SOTC and is kept as Board records. No transcripts or copies will be provided, nor are other parties allowed to record these proceeding. Post hearing and decision, the Hearing Panel will not discuss the details of this hearing with others. Post hearing, notification will be published in the SOTC newsletter in a style reflective of disciplinary notices published in the AKC Gazette.

9/2023

Agreements and Other Contracts

All agreements and contracts, including those related to trial judges and sites, seminar presentations, facility maintenance, and financial activities, must be reviewed and approved by the SOTC Board prior to signature. Agreements and contracts can be entered into only by the Board as the managing entity of the Club. Members cannot commit the Club to an agreement or a contract. Contracts and agreements must be kept accessible as club records.

9/2023

Use of Equipment

SOTC purchases equipment with club funds to be used for training, instruction and trial purposes. Members are expected to return all equipment used for practice and classes to where it was found when members are done using it. Club equipment cannot be removed from club facilities without permission from the appropriate Training Director and the Board.

Members should report damaged and broken equipment to the appropriate Training Director and the Board.

6/2011, 9/2023

Facility Rental Fees

SOTC facilities are available for rental by individuals, external organizations and by SOTC members representing external organizations for events such as trials, seminars, training events, presentations, etc. Requests must be submitted to the Board in written form detailing the name of the requesting organization, purpose, dates, and rental party contact information. Once approved, a Board member will be assigned to serve as liaison with the rental party contact person. An agreement will be prepared for signature by the Club signatory and the responsible party for the rental. A deposit of 50% of the rental fee must be provided at the time the agreement is signed. The agreement may be cancelled by either party no later than seven (7) working days prior to the event date and the deposit will be refunded. Individuals and organizations who rent SOTC facilities must provide the club with a copy of an insurance declaration form covering the activities which will be occurring at SOTC's facilities. SOTC does not provide insurance coverage for individuals or organizations renting club facilities.

Fees for building and field rental are available on the Fee Master. RV plugs are also available.

3/2009, 11/2013, 9/2023

Financial Accounting

Expense Reimbursements. Reimbursements for expenses are to be submitted to the Treasurer in an expedient manner after the expense is incurred. Documentation to be submitted includes the Expense Reimbursement Form, posted in the Members Section of the SOTC Website, and the related receipts. The reimbursement check will be mailed to the member after processing.

Drop-in and Non-member facility use fees. Money collected for drop-in class and non-member usage of the facility are to be collected by the responsible member; placed in an envelope with the date, member name, purpose of collection, and amount; and deposited in the office safe.

Fee Master. All SOTC fees are outlined on a Fee Master which is available for reference by members in the Membership section of the SOTC website. As stated in Standing Rule Item 6, fee rates are reviewed annually by the Board, and posted on the Fee Master.

Class Size Minimum for Independent Contractors. Classes conducted by Independent Contractors are required to have a minimum of four (4) students in the class. If the minimum is not reached the class will be cancelled.

9/2023

Appendices

Class Policies Handouts

Obedience Class Policies Handout

Registration Information

- All Classes are in 50–60-minute sessions.
- Registration and payment are required ONE WEEK before the class start date. Class Registration is completed through the on-line system on the SOTC website.
- All classes are limited in size in order to provide individual attention to each participant and are filled on a First-Come-First-Served basis.
- NO REFUNDS will be made after the first night of class.
- If a class does not meet the minimum number of students by one week before the starting date, the class may be canceled or re-scheduled.
- Applicants shall be liable to SOTC for a fee in the event a check is returned for non-payment.

General Class Policies

Please plan to arrive 10 minutes early for your class. This will enable you to have time to walk your dog and check in with your instructor.

- All dogs present in the building and field must be held on leash or confined to crates except when working with their handler. Dogs must also be leashed and supervised in the parking lots and the “potty pen”.
- Do not feed your dog during the 4 hours before class. Feed your dog after class.
- Bring some small SOFT treats (no bigger than a Cheerio) such as hot dogs, or string cheese and a cheerful attitude to class with you each week.
- All Puppy and Beginner Levels I & II classes require dogs to be trained on buckle, martingale or head-halter collars and a 4 - 6-foot leash. Harnesses are allowed only at the instructor's discretion. No chain, prong or similar type collars are allowed. No flexi or retractable leads are allowed. Your instructor will help you choose which type of collar & leash will work best in training your dog.
- All classes above Beginner II have the instructor's discretion about types of collars.

Training

- SOTC classes are taught using positive training methods, including "lure and reward" training. Harsh corrections or rough handling is not allowed.
- Participants are required to wear closed-toe flat shoes such as sneakers in the training ring. NO OPEN-TOED/HEELED OR HIGH-HEELED SHOES. NO SANDALS OR CLOGS. Anyone wearing other shoes will have to sit outside the training ring.

Dogs that are in heat, sick or injured

- If your dog is in heat, DO NOT bring her to class. However, you should attend the classes so that the lessons may be practiced at home. This policy also applies to injured and ill dogs.
- Any dog that is uncontrollable, that disturbs the class, or is aggressive will be dismissed from the class; or at the discretion of the instructor, the owner may be asked to muzzle the dog or work the dog in a separate area. SOTC instructors will make every effort to help you get your dog under control. However, the Club cannot accept the liability of aggression. If necessary, the handler and dog may be referred to an animal behaviorist.

Junior Handlers

- SOTC will only accept Junior Handlers age 10 & older. Each Junior Handler is required to have a

responsible adult present. If it is determined that the size or temperament of the dog makes it difficult for the Junior Handler to control the dog, the accompanying adult will be asked to handle the dog.

Dog Walking Area

- Please make sure your dog is walked before each class to prevent accidents. Each owner is responsible for cleaning up after his dog. There is a fenced potty yard on the south end of the building and there are plastic bags available at different locations around the building. Please pick up after your dog and dispose of the waste bag in designated container. If you walk your dog anywhere else, it is still necessary that you pick up after your dog and dispose of the waste bag in designated container. Thank you for helping us to maintain our facility and surroundings.

Agility Class Policies Handout

Scheduling Policies

- Unless otherwise listed, Maximum enrollment per class is 8 dogs.
- Advanced Handling: Maximum enrollment per class is 6 dogs.
- All Levels: Minimum class size is 4 dogs.
- If any class does not meet the minimum of 4 students by one week before the starting date, the class may be canceled or re-scheduled.
- Pre-registration and payment are required ONE WEEK before the class start date. Registration forms submitted within one week of the class start date will be returned. NO registration forms will be accepted the first night of class.

Advancement Policies

- If there is any question about class level placement, an Agility Instructor will evaluate the dog and handler and make a recommendation. In order to be successful, dogs should be placed in the proper class for their skill level. Keep in mind that different dogs will advance at different rates. And, beginning handlers will need more instruction than an experienced one. Recommendations about placement will be made in order to assure that the dog and handler can maintain the highest level of accomplishment at each level. There is no prescribed length of time for Level 3, 4, 5 or 6. Please see Advancement Requirements for more information.

Uncontrollable, Disruptive or Aggressive Dogs

- Any dog that is uncontrollable, that disturbs the class, or is aggressive will be dismissed; or at the discretion of the instructor, the owner may be asked to muzzle the dog or work the dog in a separate area. We will make every effort to help you get your dog under control. However, we cannot accept the liability of aggression. If necessary, the handler and dog may be referred to an animal behaviorist.

Junior Handlers

- We will only accept Junior Handlers age 10 & older. Each Junior Handler is required to have a responsible adult present. If it is determined that the size or temperament of the dog makes it difficult for the Junior Handler to control the dog, the accompanying adult will be asked to handle the dog.

Dog Walking Area

- Make sure your dog is walked before each class to prevent accidents. Each owner is responsible for cleaning up after his dog. There is a fenced potty yard on the south end of the building and there are plastic bags available at different locations around the building. Please pickup after your dog and dispose of the waste bag in designated container. If you walk your dog anywhere else, it is still necessary that you pick up after your dog and dispose of the waste bag in designated container. Thank you for helping us to maintain our facility and surroundings.

General Class Policies

The following is to help ensure that each dog and handler has a safe and positive experience while training at SOTC:

- All dogs present in the building and field must be held on leash or confined to crates except when working with their handler. Dogs must also be leashed and supervised in the parking lots and the “potty pen”.
- You will want to wear comfortable clothing so that you can move unrestricted. Because of the heat, shorts and t-shirts work well, but long sleeves and pants can protect you from insects. Pockets are helpful to hold treats or toys. Absolutely NO sandals or heels will be allowed on the agility field. Any type of running, walking or soccer shoes will give you the support and traction that you will need.
- Your dog’s attire is much simpler. One option is a quick-release, flat buckle collar with NO tags or hanging objects (AKC regulations). Another option is the martingale collar which looks just like a flat buckle collar, but has a “handle” built into it that allows the handler a bit more control. A third option is no collar at all (running naked!). You will need to decide which option works best for you and your dog.
- The dog walking area is the grassy area the left of the parking lot. It is your responsibility to pick up after your dog. Waste disposal cans are available in front of the building and in front of the agility field. For younger dogs, it is a great idea to give your dog plenty of exercise before you come to class. That way, your dog will have eliminated at home and you will have “taken the edge off” so that your dog can focus on you and agility.
- If you are scheduled for the first class of the evening, please arrive early (15 min.) to help the instructor set up that night’s courses. And, if you are scheduled for the last class of the evening, please help move and / or put equipment away. By helping with the equipment, not only are you helping your instructor, you are also learning about using the equipment properly and where and how it is all stored.
- If you are scheduled for the second class of the evening and arrive early, please be courteous to the previous class and wait outside the gate until the instructor says it’s ok to come in.
- Check in with the class instructor (or assistant) each week to make sure your attendance is recorded. Plan to be ready to work when class begins.
- This is a great time to put together an “Agility Bag.” This will be any type of bag that you will take to an agility trial that will hold things such as an extra leash, poop bags, treats, toys, balls, water (for two!) and a water bowl.
- You will be exploring different motivators for your dog – some dogs will work for food only. Different food treats to try are hot dogs, cooked chicken, string cheese, chopped dog food rolls, or any variety of biscuits. The key to all of these is to cut them into tiny bite-sized pieces. They should be a taste only – you do not want to have to wait for your dog to chew and swallow or even worse, for them to crunch up a biscuit and then have to dig around in the grass for the extra pieces.
- Other motivators can be a ball or a tug toy. And, some dogs like the combination of both food and toys. Your job will be to mix it up and make it fun and interesting for the dog.
- In order to assure each handler has plenty of opportunity to work their dog, please watch for “your turn” and be ready to begin the sequence when the handler before you have completed their turn. This practice will get you prepared for agility trials where you must be aware of the running order and be at the gate and ready run when your number is called.
- You will need to get your dog warmed up a bit before each sequence. Practice jumps are always available. It is never a good idea to warm up on equipment that you or your dog are not familiar with. Your instructor will help you with different ideas on how to warm up your dog properly.

- Be considerate of other handlers and their dogs. You are responsible for your dog's behavior, so please keep an eye on your dog at all times.
- The entire class time is your opportunity to learn. Working with the instructor is only one way to improve your skills. Another is to watch how the other participants handle their dogs and then listen to any suggestions the instructor has. We all make the same mistakes and therefore, a suggestion for one person will also work for another.
- If your dog becomes injured or comes in season, you are welcome to come to class without your dog. If you have another dog at the same level or above and would like to work that dog instead, please contact your instructor for the OK.
- Don't hesitate to ask questions or to make suggestions. Keep in mind that our sessions can be flexible and that any special handling "issues" can be incorporated into a future class course layout.
- Level 5 and Level 6 Class Policy: Dogs must be in a crate or X pen when not working. This will allow you to walk the courses and listen to your instructor without distraction. Also, this is a good time to teach your dog about the crate and about good crate manners, which will be needed during agility trials. This policy will also reduce any unwanted interaction between dogs. Please remember that dog parks are for play and class time is for learning and bonding between you and your dog.
- Non-Negotiable Class Policy: EVERYONE is expected to adjust jump heights when needed – cooperation from all helps the class to run more smoothly and gives everyone extra opportunity to work with their dogs.
- Agility lessons don't have to end when you walk off the field! You are encouraged to set up some jumps at home to practice your handling. Your instructor can help you with some ideas for different sequences. You are also encouraged to purchase or make a set of weave poles, which is one piece of equipment that everyone who is serious about agility should own.

Flyball Class Policies Handout

Scheduling Policies

- Classes are in 50-minute sessions.
- Maximum and Minimum Class Sizes: 4 to 8 dogs.
- If any class does not meet the minimum of 4 students by one week before the starting date, the class may be canceled or re-scheduled.
- Pre-registration and payment are required.

Uncontrollable, Disruptive or Aggressive Dogs

- Any dog that is uncontrollable, that disturbs the class, or is aggressive will be dismissed; or at the discretion of the instructor, the owner may be asked to muzzle the dog or work the dog in a separate area. We will make every effort to help you get your dog under control. However, we cannot accept the liability of aggression. If necessary, the handler and dog may be referred to an animal behaviorist.

Advancement Policies

- If there is any question about class level placement, a Flyball Instructor will evaluate the dog and handler and make a recommendation. In order to be successful, dogs should be placed in the proper class for their skill level. Keep in mind that different dogs will advance at different rates. And, beginning handlers will need more instruction than experienced ones. Sometimes dogs may need to repeat a Flyball class before moving to the next level.

Junior Handlers

- We will only accept Junior Handlers age 10 & older. Each Junior Handler is required to have a responsible adult present. If it is determined that the size or temperament of the dog makes it difficult for the Junior Handler to control the dog, the accompanying adult will be asked to handle the dog.

Dog Walking Area

- Make sure your dog is walked before each class to prevent accidents. Each owner is responsible for cleaning up after his dog. There is a fenced potty yard on the south end of the building and there are plastic bags available at different locations around the building. Please pick up after your dog and dispose of the waste bag in designated container. If you walk your dog anywhere else, it is still necessary that you pick up after your dog and dispose of the waste bag in designated container. Thank you for helping us to maintain our beautiful facility and surroundings.

General Class Policies

The following is to help ensure that each dog and handler has a safe and positive experience while training at SOTC:

- All dogs present in the building and field must be held on leash or confined to crates except when working with their handler. Dogs must also be leashed and supervised in the parking lots and the "potty pen".
- You will want to wear comfortable clothing so that you can move unrestricted. Pockets or bait bags are helpful to hold treats or toys. Absolutely NO sandals or heels will be allowed on the Flyball floor. Any type of running or walking shoes will give you the support you need.
- Your dog's attire is much simpler. One option is a quick-release, flat buckle collar with NO tags or

hanging objects. Another option is the martingale collar which looks just like a flat buckle collar, but has a "handle" built into it that allows the handler a bit more control. A third option is a Flyball harness in addition to the collar. Your instructor will help you decide which option works best for you and your dog.

- The dog walking area is the grassy area in the parking lot. It is your responsibility to pick up after your dog. Baggies and waste disposal are available on the concrete area in front of the building. For younger dogs, it is a great idea to give your dog plenty of exercise before you come to class. That way, your dog will have eliminated at home and you will have "taken the edge off" so that your dog can focus on you and Flyball. Please do not feed your dog before Flyball class.
- If you are scheduled for the first class of the evening, please arrive early (10 min.) to help the instructor set up. And, if you are scheduled for the last class of the evening, please help put equipment away. By helping with the equipment, not only are you helping your instructor, but you are also learning about setting up the Flyball course and where and how it everything is stored.
- This is a great time to put together a "Flyball Bag." This will be any type of bag that you will take to a Flyball event to hold things such as an extra leash, poop bags, treats, tug toys, balls, water (for two!) and a water bowl.
- You will be exploring different motivators for your dog — some dogs will work for food only. Different food treats to try are hot dogs, cooked chicken, string cheese, chopped dog food rolls, or any soft food. The key to all of these is to cut them into tiny pieces. Regardless of the dog's size, treats should be no larger than a Cheerio. They should be a taste only — you do not want to have to wait for your dog to finish chewing while you are working. Most of the time you will need treats that slide down the dog's throat quickly and easily; for a few exercises you will need biscuit-type treats that can be thrown without staining the floor.
- Other effective motivators can be a ball or a tug toy. And, some dogs like the combination of both food and toys. Your job will be to mix it up and make it fun and interesting for the dog. It is worth the effort at home to try to get your dog "hooked" on a tug. Your instructors will have homework for you to work on this.
- Be considerate of other handlers and their dogs. You are responsible for your dog's behavior, so please keep an eye on your dog at all times. Flyball is a very stimulating activity and you need to monitor your dog's level of arousal.
- The entire class time is your opportunity to learn and to bond with your potential teammates. Working with the instructor is only one way to improve your skills. Another is to watch how the other participants handle their dogs and then listen to any suggestions the instructor has. Many times, students in the same class will make the same mistakes; therefore, a suggestion for one person will also work for another.
- If your dog becomes injured or comes in season, you are encouraged to come to class without your dog. There will always be new information that you can benefit from — even without your dog.
- Flyball One and Advanced Flyball Policy: Dogs must be crated when not working. This will allow you to work with other teammates and assist with class drills. This is also a good time to teach your dog about the crate and about good crate manners, which will be necessary for Flyball tournaments. You may bring your own crate or use the crates in the building. This policy will reduce any unwanted interaction between dogs. Please remember that dog parks are for play and class time is for learning and bonding between you and your dog.

- Non-Negotiable Class Policy: EVERYONE is expected help with mats, jump set up and to adjust jump heights when needed — cooperation from all helps the class to run more smoothly and gives everyone extra time to work with their dogs. Be alert to what you can do to help.

Flyball lessons don't have to end when you leave class. You are encouraged to set up some jumps at home to practice and dead-ball retrieves are always appropriate. Working to get your dog "hooked" on the tug is another good exercise for home.

Position Descriptions

SARASOTA OBEDIENCE TRAINING CLUB

Title: Training Director
Revision Date: 09-06-2013, 01-2023

Position Overview

Volunteer position responsible for overseeing the instructors, training classes and general organization of the SOTC training program.

Reporting Structure

Reports to the SOTC Board of Directors

Requirements

- Active member in good standing of SOTC for at least one year
- Has previously acquired at least one title from a nationally recognized registry
- Familiar with all levels of competition
- Experience with trialing in a variety of registries
- Knowledge about the venue, experience in training his/her own dogs, has instructor experience, has trained under multiple trainers/instructors
- Knowledge of current pet training techniques
- Experience in/knowledge of the SOTC training program
- Familiar with equipment and equipment maintenance requirements
- Ability to prioritize and coordinate work efforts of volunteers, instructors and assistant instructors
- Ability to effectively communicate and interpret complex oral or written communications
- Ability to work with a variety of personalities and be respected/supported by the instructors and students
- Ability to delegate and be organized
- No conflict of interest, no self-serving interests or goals
- Be approachable, fair and objective
- Serve as a leader to their respective teams/programs
- Dedicated to the SOTC training program, involved in promoting SOTC and its programs
- Ability to attend at least 4 general membership meetings and board meetings as requested by the board
- Access to a computer, email, phone and voicemail

Essential Job Functions

- Classes, Curriculum & Students
 - Ensure that the current curriculum is followed by all instructors
 - Work with the registrar on planning class schedules
 - Work with Webmaster and Dog Biz Pro Administrator to ensure that classes are posted in the on-line registration software and registration is occurring
 - Follow up with instructors to make sure they have made contract with any student that drops out of a class and document the reason and attempt to resolve the issue
 - Review evaluations, looking for student suggestions that may improve the class experience

- Instructors & Assistants
 - Periodically observe a class at each level for each instructor
 - Maintain the apprenticeship training program to encourage members to become assistant instructors and eventually to become an instructor
 - Conduct at least two (2) trainer's meetings per calendar year
 - Ensure that the instructors turn in class attendance sheets, course evaluations and time sheets within a week of class end
- Training Techniques
 - Continue to explore new training
- Seminars & Events
 - Approve/advise on seminars
- Equipment
 - Report equipment repair needs to the board
 - Build/buy additional equipment as necessary with board approval
- Other

Make a report to the SOTC Board, no less than quarterly, the status of the classes

SARASOTA OBEDIENCE TRAINING CLUB

Title: Registrar
Revision Date: 11/2021

Position Overview

Position will provide specific registration services in regards to Agility, Obedience, Scutwork, Rally, Freestyle educational programs provided through SOTC.

Reporting Structure

Reports to the SOTC Board of Directors

Requirements

- Active member in good standing of SOTC for at least one year
- Has previously acquired at least one title from a nationally recognized registry
- Familiar with all levels of competition
- Knowledge about the venue, experience in training his/her own dogs, has instructor experience, has trained under multiple trainers/instructors
- Experience in/knowledge of the SOTC training program
- Ability to work with a variety of personalities and be respected/supported by the instructors and students
- No conflict of interest, no self-serving interests or goals
- Be approachable, fair and objective
- Dedicated to the SOTC training program, involved in promoting SOTC and its programs
- Ability to attend at least 4 general membership meetings and board meetings as requested by the board
- Access to a computer, email, phone and voicemail

Essential Job Functions

- Respond to email and phone inquiries (including phone system messages) about classes/educational programs within 24 hours.
- Work with the instructors and Training Director to develop class schedules.
- Communicate with Training Director and Webmaster on changes in dates, times and instructors of classes.
- Notify Webmaster of all new classes and class changes for the DogBiz Pro registration system OR take responsibility to make changes as required.
- Maintain obedience, scentwork, rally and freestyle class schedules on the SOTC building calendar. Update within 24 hours as needed.

SARASOTA OBEDIENCE TRAINING CLUB

Title: Online Registration/Dog Biz Pro Administrator
Date: January 2023

Position Overview

Volunteer position responsible for all aspects of the online event and class registration system for the SOTC training program. (Approximately 10 hours per week)

Reporting Structure

Reports to the SOTC Board of Directors

Requirements

- Active member in good standing of SOTC for at least one year
- Experience in/knowledge of the SOTC training program
- Prior experience and knowledge working with websites and vendor software
- Ability to work with the instructors and the public and provide customer service
- Ability to delegate and be organized
- Ability to attend at least 4 general membership meetings and board meetings as requested
- Access to a secure computer, email, phone and voicemail

Essential Job Functions

- Communicate with Training Director and instructors on new classes
- Create new classes for each session on SOTC class registration software (DogBizPro)
- Provide the new classes to the SOTC calendar volunteers for posting on the Club calendar
- Send all class, event and trial information, including times, dates, etc. to the Webmaster for posting
- Send invoices to students who do not pay automatically upon registration
- Follow up with unpaid registrations for classes
- Receive and record all mail in checks for classes, including amount, check number
- Send reminders out weekly to students with class beginning dates and reminders for payment
- Record coupon numbers for discount coupons in the software
- Send class rosters to instructors before session begins and upon request
- Respond to emailed student questions or refer to appropriate sources
- Answer phone messages from students
- Send out reminders about Rabies shots due
- Create and edit Online Registrations forms for Obedience, Puppy, Agility, Scentwork, and Flyball
- Create multiple events for seminars and set up payment, discounts, etc.
- Monitor class enrollments for too few students or mark classes full upon maximum number of students
- Manage wait lists for all classes including communicate with potential students when and if classes become available.
- Make a report to the SOTC Board, no less than quarterly. Issues and concerns beyond the scope of this position description should be brought to the attention of the Board.

SARASOTA OBEDIENCE TRAINING CLUB

Title: Webmaster
Date: January 2023

Position Overview

Volunteer position responsible for handling a range of tasks and functions that may include web design and development, routine site and content maintenance, and various updates to the website, which serves as a communication resource for both the public and Club members, and a portal for class registration.

(Approximately 3 hours per week)

Reporting Structure

Reports to the SOTC Board of Directors

Requirements

- Active member in good standing of SOTC for at least one year
- Experience in/knowledge of SOTC programs and activities
- Knowledge and prior experience with website management, design, standards and best practices.
- Ability to delegate and be organized
- Be approachable, fair and objective
- Ability to attend at least 4 general membership meetings and board meetings as requested by the board
- Access to a secure computer, email, phone and voicemail

Essential Job Functions

- Obtain and renew the specific domain for SOTC, www.sotcdogtraining.org
- Choose an appropriate software for creating and maintaining SOTC pages and renew that software in a timely manner
- Select an appropriate hosting company and renew subscription in a timely manner
- Create and maintain pages with all necessary SOTC information for the public to understand the mission of the organization, the classes available for training, seminars available at SOTC, trial information and premiums, and other related activities
- Create pages specifically for "Members Only" that provides information and resources to Club members
- Promptly remove outdated or unnecessary information from the site. Debug pages and fixes broken links or images.
- Assist Online Registration Administrator with web related issues and concerns as required.
- Advise the Board on all website related issues and concerns and provides necessary information for decision-making.
- Make a report to the SOTC Board, not less than quarterly. Issues and concerns beyond the scope of this position description should be brought to the attention of the Board.

Agreement Templates

Volunteer Agreement, Release & Waiver of Liability

This is a Volunteer Agreement, Release and Waiver of Liability ("Release") executed on _____, 20____ by _____ (the "Volunteer") in favor of Sarasota Obedience Training Club, Inc., a nonprofit corporation incorporated in the State of Florida, its directors, officers, employees and agents collectively known as "SOTC".

The Volunteer desires to work as a volunteer for SOTC and engage in the activities related to being a volunteer. The Volunteer understands the activities may include but are not limited to Dog Training and other duties and activities as the need arises. The Volunteer shall abide by the rules and regulations of SOTC.

The Volunteer hereby freely, voluntarily and without duress executes this Release under the terms below.

1. Volunteer Relationship

The Volunteer understands and agrees that his/her services being provided are strictly in a voluntary capacity and without any express or implied promise of salary, compensation, employee benefits, or other payment of any kind whatsoever. Volunteer acknowledges that there is no employment relationship between Volunteer and SOTC.

2. Release and Waiver

Volunteer (for his or herself, his or her assignees, heirs, guardians and legal representatives) does hereby release and forever discharge and hold harmless SOTC and its successors and assigns from any and all liability, claims, and demands of whatever kind of nature, either in law or in equity, which arise or may hereinafter arise from Volunteer's activities with SOTC however caused.

3. Assumption of Risk

The Volunteer understands that the activities include work that may be hazardous to the Volunteer, including but not limited to Dog Training. Volunteer hereby expressly and specifically assumes the risk of injury or harm in the activities and releases SOTC from all liability of injury, illness, death, or property damage or loss resulting from the activities directly or indirectly.

4. Photographic Release

Volunteer does hereby grant and convey unto SOTC all right, title, and interest in any and all photographs, images, and video, audio recordings made by SOTC during the Volunteer's activities with SOTC, including but not limited to any royalties, donations, proceeds, or other benefits derived from such photographs or recordings. Volunteer further permits SOTC to publish said images, recordings, and videos, at will on the website and in other media for advertising and other use as SOTC deem appropriate.

5. Other

Volunteer expressly agrees that this Release is intended to be as broad and inclusive as permitted by the laws of the State of Florida and that this Release shall be governed by and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of Florida. Volunteer agrees that in the event that any clause or provision of this Release shall be held to be invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, the invalidity of such clause or provision shall not otherwise affect the remaining provisions of the Release which shall continue to be enforceable. The exclusive venue for any dispute between the parties shall be Manatee County, Florida.

Volunteer's Signature



INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR AGREEMENT

This agreement is made between Sarasota Obedience Training Club, Inc. (referred to as "SOTC"), and _____ (referred to as "Independent Contractor").

SECTION 1. Scope of Work

SOTC is a non-profit organization dedicated to the training of dogs and improving Canine/Human relationships. SOTC engages the Independent Contractor to provide dog training classes at its facility.

SECTION 2. Term of Agreement

This agreement will become effective on the date of the last signature and may be terminated without cause by either party by providing two weeks' notice to the other party.

SECTION 3. Compensation

The Independent Contractor will be paid on a fee basis, as established by Exhibit A attached hereto and incorporated by reference, for teaching dog training classes. The Independent Contractor is required to pay any and all federal and state taxes related to his/her compensation earned for services provided to SOTC and SOTC is not responsible for paying any taxes related to the compensation earned by the Independent Contractor. Neither the Independent Contractor, nor his/her agents, servants, partners or subcontractors, shall be entitled to workers' compensation, unemployment benefits compensation, overtime compensation, medical insurance, life insurance, paid vacations, paid holiday, pensions, Social Security or any other benefits from SOTC for any reason whatsoever.

SECTION 4. Independent Contractor Relationship

It is the express intention of the parties that the Independent Contractor is not an employee, agent, joint venture or partner of SOTC but is an independent contractor. Nothing in this agreement shall be interpreted as creating or establishing the relationship of employer and employee between the Independent Contractor and SOTC.

The Independent Contractor shall conduct dog training classes at SOTC's facility. The Independent Contractor shall determine the manner and means by which he/she performs the work. The hours worked by the Independent Contractor will be entirely within his/her control, and SOTC will rely upon the Independent Contractor to put in such hours as are reasonably necessary to fulfill the purpose of this agreement. The Independent Contractor's obligation under this agreement is to perform services in a competent professional, safe and satisfactory manner.

SECTION 5. Services for Others

The parties understand and agree that nothing in this agreement restricts the Independent Contractor from providing services, including dog training services, to individuals or organizations other than SOTC.

SECTION 6. Liability

The Independent Contractor represents that he/she has the expertise and training necessary to perform dog training services.

The Independent Contractor shall be solely responsible and liable for any injury or damage to the person or property of any person in any way related to performing services under this agreement. The work to be performed under this agreement will be done entirely at the Independent Contractor's risk, and the Independent Contractor assumes all responsibility for the condition of, materials and equipment used in the performance of this agreement with SOTC. The Independent Contractor will be entirely and solely responsible for all acts of the Independent Contractor or his/her agents, while engaged in the performance work under this agreement.

The Independent Contractor, personally and for all successors or assigns, covenants to indemnify and hold harmless SOTC against all claims, demands, suits, or judgments, including attorneys' fees and other legal expenses, made or recovered by any and all persons, on account of the acts or omissions of the Independent Contractor, his/her agents, employees, or subcontractors during the performance of the work contracted for herein. Similarly, the Independent Contractor agrees to indemnify the SOTC for loss or damage to any of SOTC's property or equipment used or obtained in connection with the work described herein.

The Independent Contractor further promises to hold SOTC harmless for any and all liability for withholding Social Security, or state or federal income tax, or for making unemployment insurance or disability insurance contributions, or for obtaining workers compensation insurance, or for any other employer's tax liability, now or in the future.

SECTION 7. Insurance

For the duration of the agreement and for any time following the termination of this agreement by either party for any reason, the Independent Contractor will maintain any insurance required by law and any insurance necessary to protect the interest of the SOTC. This includes, but is not limited to general liability insurance, professional liability insurance naming SOTC as an additional insured. All such insurance will cover events and carry policy limits and deductibles acceptable to SOTC. The Independent Contractor will also carry worker's compensation insurance on him/herself and on any of his/her employees to the extent required by the law.

SECTION 8. Termination of Agreement

Upon termination of this agreement by either party, all fees shall be paid within ten (10) business days after the effective date of the termination of the agreement.

SECTION 9. Entire Agreement of the Parties

Each party to this agreement acknowledges that no representations, inducement, promises, or agreements, orally or otherwise, have been made by any party, or anyone acting on behalf of any party, with respect to this agreement which are not embodied herein. Any modification of this agreement will be effective only if it is in writing signed by both parties.

SECTION 10. Partial Invalidity of Agreement

If any provision of this agreement is held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, void or unenforceable, the remaining provision will nevertheless continue in full force being impaired or invalidated in any way.

SECTION 11. Attorney Fees

If any action at law or in equity, including an action for declaratory relief, is brought to enforce interpret the provision of this agreement, the prevailing party will be entitled to responsible attorney’s fees, including appellate attorneys’ fees, which may be set by the court in the same action or in a separate action brought for that purpose, in addition to any other relief to which that party may be entitled.

SECTION 12. Governing Law

This agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Florida.

SECTION 13. Venue

The parties agree that the exclusive venue of any action concerning the breach or enforcement of any provision of this agreement shall be Manatee County, Florida, in which the agreement was made.

**SARASOTA OBEDIENCE
TRAINING CLUB**

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR

Signature

Signature

Printed Name/Title

Printed Name

Date

Date



EXHIBIT A

FEE SCHEDULE BETWEEN INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR AND SOTC

EXAMPLE

FACILITIES RENTAL AGREEMENT

This agreement is made between Sarasota Obedience Training Club, Inc. (referred to as "SOTC"), and _____. The parties agree as follows:

SECTION 1. Scope of Facility Rental

1. SOTC shall rent its building facility located at 7505 County Road 675, Myakka City, FL 34251 to _____ to hold a _____ on the dates of _____, 20__.
2. The _____ will be working with a seminar presenter who is considered a professional expert in the type of training to be conducted. (OPTIONAL)
3. _____ shall pay the amount of \$XXX per day, totaling \$XXX. The money shall be due and payable five (5) business days prior to the activity.
4. The facility shall be open and accessible to this training group from XXXX am to XXXX pm on the dates noted in Section 1, Item 1.
5. SOTC shall provide the use of the building, adjacent dog walking areas, and the parking lot.
6. The _____ shall provide a certificate of insurance which shows liability coverage for the participants on the dates of the training seminar.
7. _____ shall be responsible for removing all trash daily and cleaning and re-setting the building at the end of the event.

SECTION 2. Term of Agreement

This agreement will become effective on the date of the last signature and may be terminated without cause by either party by providing one week notice to the other party.

SECTION 3. Liability

The _____ via its representative, _____, represents that the group has the expertise necessary to conduct this training seminar.

The _____ shall be solely responsible and liable for any injury or damage to the person or property of any person in any way related to performing services under this agreement. The _____ assumes all responsibility for the condition of materials and equipment belonging to SOTC that is used in the performance of this training seminar. The _____ via its representative will be entirely and solely responsible for all acts of the training seminar presenter or his/her agents, while engaged in the performance of training under this agreement.

The _____ and its representative, _____, covenants to indemnify

and hold harmless SOTC against all claims, demands, suits, or judgements including attorneys' fees and other legal expenses, made or recovered by any and all persons, on account of the acts or omissions of the seminar presenter, his/her agents, employees or subcontractors during the performance of the training seminar and facility rental contracted for herein. Similarly, the _____ agrees to indemnify the SOTC for loss or damage to any of SOTC's property or equipment used in connection with the training and facility rental described herein.

SECTION 4. Insurance

For the duration of the agreement and for any time following the termination of this agreement by either party for any reason, the training seminar presenter will maintain any insurance required by law and any insurance necessary to protect the interest of SOTC. This includes, but is not limited to general liability insurance, and professional liability insurance, covering all activities that will be conducted in the facility.

SECTION 5. Termination of Agreement

Upon termination of this agreement by either party, all fees shall be paid within ten (10) business days after the effective date of the termination of the agreement.

SECTION 6. Entire Agreement of the Parties

Each party to this agreement acknowledges that no representations, inducement, promises, or agreements, orally or otherwise, have been made by any party, or anyone acting on behalf of any party, with respect to this agreement which are not embodied herein. Any modification of this agreement will be effective ONLY if it is in writing signed by both parties.

SECTION 7. Governing Law

This agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Florida.

SECTION 8. Partial Invalidity of Agreement

If any provision of this agreement is held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, void or unenforceable, the remaining provision will nevertheless continue in full force being impaired or invalidated in any way.

SECTION 9. Venue

The parties agree that the exclusive venue of any action concerning the breach or enforcement of any provision of this agreement shall be Manatee County, Florida, in which the agreement was made.

**SARASOTA OBEDIENCE
TRAINING CLUB**

REPRESENTATIVE

Signature of Board President

Signature

Printed Name/Title

Printed Name

Date

Date

Miscellaneous

Seminar Planning Guide

Gaining Approval

- Seminar planning should begin at a minimum of 3 months prior to the anticipated date(s) of the seminar(s)
- Work with the Training Director to determine if there is enough interest in the seminar
- The Training Director will take the proposal to the Board of Directors
- Confirm date(s) and fees with the speaker

Determining Costs and Fees

- Add estimated speaker fee, transportation, lodging, meals (including those hosting speaker for meals), seminar meals (if necessary)
- Estimate attendance
- Establish registration fees. Members should be charged approximately 20% less than non-members (rounded to the nearest \$5 increment)

After Approval

- Establish contract with the speaker as necessary. Speakers must fill out a W9 form (Treasurer has form)
- Work with the Treasurer for any deposits and expenses
- Design flyer and registration form. Both should be proofread by the Training Director. Arrange for posting on the website and in the newsletter
- Make hotel reservations in cooperation with the Treasurer
- Determine and arrange speaker needs for the building/presentation (i.e., ring set up, sound system, etc.)
- Notify members if classes or open training need to be canceled
- Determine if refreshments/meals are required for attendees and make arrangements

Other Considerations

- Copy handouts?
- Are name tags needed?
- Payment for speaker arranged on last day of seminar
- Members for building set-up and clean-up
- Are paper products on hand for bathrooms?
- Confirmation and/or email to participants
- Announcements and introductions
- Parking