Wags’n’Whiskers

Animal Welfare & Handling Policy

Effective Date: 10 November 2026

1. Purpose

Wags’n’Whiskers Pet Grooming Salon is committed to protecting the welfare, safety and comfort of every animal in our care. All animals will be treated humanely, with patience, kindness and respect.

2. Responsibilities

Salon management is responsible for ensuring appropriate welfare standards, safe handling practices, suitable supervision and compliance with relevant legislation.

All staff and students must follow this policy, recognise signs of distress and report any welfare concerns immediately.

3. Initial Assessment

Before grooming begins, the groomer must assess the animal’s general condition, coat, skin, behaviour and suitability for the requested service.

Clients must disclose relevant medical conditions, injuries, allergies, behavioural concerns and previous grooming difficulties.

Any concerns must be discussed with the client before proceeding. Grooming may be refused or modified where necessary to protect the animal’s welfare.

4. Safe Handling

Animals must be handled calmly and humanely at all times. Appropriate handling techniques and suitable restraint equipment may be used where necessary to maintain safety.

Animals must never be subjected to unnecessary force, intimidation or treatment that causes avoidable pain, fear or distress.

Animals must not be left unattended on grooming tables or in situations where they could fall, escape or injure themselves. Restraints must be used appropriately and monitored throughout the grooming process.

5. Monitoring Welfare

The groomer must continually monitor the animal's behaviour and physical condition throughout the appointment.

Signs of stress, fear, overheating, pain, fatigue or illness must be taken seriously. Grooming must be paused, adapted or stopped where continuing could compromise welfare.

Severely matted coats will not be groomed. Mild to moderate matting will be assessed and managed appropriately, with the animal's comfort taking priority.

6. Health Concerns and Emergencies

If an animal becomes unwell or is injured, grooming must stop and salon management must be informed immediately.

Where veterinary attention is required, the owner must be contacted as soon as possible and appropriate veterinary advice sought. In an emergency, action must not be delayed where this could place the animal at further risk.

All injuries, welfare concerns and incidents must be recorded.

7. Hygiene and Environment

Grooming areas, tools and equipment must be kept clean and maintained appropriately. Animals must have access to a safe, comfortable environment and must be protected from avoidable hazards.

Animals showing signs of infectious illness or active parasite infestation must be assessed and managed in accordance with salon procedures.

8. Student Groomers

Student groomers may carry out grooming activities only within their demonstrated competence and under the level of supervision required by the salon. The supervising professional remains responsible for overseeing the work and intervening where necessary.

9. Records and Review

Relevant health observations, behavioural concerns, incidents and actions taken must be recorded securely.

This policy will be reviewed regularly and following any significant welfare incident or relevant change in legislation or guidance.