

SERENITY PAWS

CODE OF ETHICS & PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Our Standard

Serenity Paws is built on **integrity, accountability, safety, education, compassion, and professional excellence.**

Working with animals is a position of trust. Our clients place members of their family in our care, often without being able to observe that care themselves. That responsibility demands a standard greater than simply completing a grooming service.

Every member of Serenity Paws is expected to protect the **animal, the client, the team, and the reputation of this company** through sound judgment, ethical conduct, strict adherence to established policies and procedures, and personal accountability.

Our standards are an expression of compassion.

1. ANIMAL WELFARE COMES FIRST

The physical and emotional welfare of every animal entrusted to Serenity Paws is our highest operational priority.

We will:

- Handle every animal with patience, respect, compassion, and appropriate restraint.
- Never prioritize speed, convenience, production, appearance, or revenue over an animal's safety.
- Recognize and appropriately respond to signs of pain, fear, stress, illness, injury, behavioral escalation, or physical limitation.
- Modify, discontinue, or escalate a service when continuing would create an unreasonable risk to the animal.
- Follow established sanitation, handling, equipment, kennel, drying, and safety procedures without shortcuts.
- Immediately and accurately report injuries, incidents, abnormalities, behavioral concerns, or mistakes.
- Never conceal an incident or knowingly provide false or incomplete information regarding an animal's care.
- Work within our professional scope and collaborate appropriately with veterinary professionals when medical evaluation or treatment is indicated.

We are grooming and canine-care professionals—not veterinarians—and we respect the expertise and authority of our veterinary partners.

2. SAFETY IS A PROFESSIONAL OBLIGATION

Serenity Paws operates in an environment where animals, people, equipment, chemicals, water, electricity, sharp instruments, dryers, and unpredictable behavior are present every day.

For that reason, we are ALL in a Safety Sensitive Position.

Every team member is expected to:

- Report **Fit for Duty** and remain Fit for Duty throughout the workday.
- Comply with Serenity Paws' safety-sensitive workplace, drug-testing, and impairment policies.
- Follow established policies, procedures, sanitation protocols, equipment requirements, and safety directives.
- Immediately report hazards, injuries, near misses, unsafe behavior, or suspected impairment.
- Accept immediate correction when animal or human safety is involved.
- Never allow pride, defensiveness, familiarity, production pressure, or convenience to override established safety practices.

No employee's experience, seniority, title, or production level places them above a safety standard.

3. INTEGRITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

Integrity means doing the right thing even when no one is watching.

At Serenity Paws, accountability means taking responsibility for our actions, decisions, communication, performance, and mistakes.

We:

- Tell the truth.
- Document accurately.
- Admit mistakes promptly.
- Correct problems rather than conceal them.
- Accept appropriate coaching and correction.
- Follow through on commitments.

- Ask for assistance when we do not know or are not capable of safely completing a task.
- Never falsify records, omit material information, or intentionally misrepresent an event.
- Never retaliate against someone for appropriately reporting a legitimate safety, ethical, animal-welfare, or workplace concern.

Mistakes can often be taught through. **Dishonesty destroys trust.**

4. PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE & EDUCATION

Serenity Paws expects its team to continually develop its knowledge, judgment, technical ability, and professionalism.

We believe expertise requires both education and humility.

Team members are expected to:

- Remain teachable regardless of experience level.
- Participate in required training and continuing education.
- Understand the reasoning behind established procedures.
- Ask questions rather than make unsafe assumptions.
- Maintain professional competence appropriate to their position.
- Share knowledge responsibly and help develop others.
- Recognize the limits of their training and professional scope.
- Understand that experience never eliminates the need for continued learning.

We do not simply strive to perform a service. We strive to understand the animals entrusted to us and continually improve the care we provide.

5. OUR COMMITMENT TO CLIENTS

Our clients trust us with animals they love. We honor that trust through transparency, professionalism, consistency, and knowledgeable care.

We will:

- Treat clients with dignity and respect.
- Provide clear and consistent information regarding services, policies, pricing, scheduling, and recommendations.
- Educate clients about grooming, coat maintenance, behavior, routine care, and observations within our professional scope.
- Communicate concerns honestly without unnecessary fear or exaggeration.

- Protect confidential client and business information.
- Respond appropriately to questions, concerns, complaints, and service issues.
- Never intentionally mislead a client to secure a sale or avoid responsibility.
- Build relationships based on trust rather than transactions.

Putting the customer first does **not** mean compromising animal welfare, employee safety, professional boundaries, or company standards to satisfy a request.

6. RESPECT WITHIN THE TEAM

Every position at Serenity Paws contributes to the safety, quality, and success of the organization.

Every team member will be treated with dignity and is expected to extend that same respect to others.

We:

- Communicate directly, professionally, and constructively.
- Help one another when assistance is needed.
- Teach with patience and correct with clarity.
- Address problems rather than allowing resentment or dysfunction to grow.
- Respect appropriate authority, roles, responsibilities, and chains of communication.
- Do not tolerate harassment, discrimination, bullying, intimidation, retaliation, threats, or deliberately disruptive behavior.
- Do not use gossip, hostility, manipulation, or personal conflict to undermine coworkers or operations.

Respect does not mean avoiding difficult conversations. **Professional correction, accountability, and enforcement of legitimate policy are necessary parts of a safe workplace.**

7. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT & CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Employees represent Serenity Paws through their conduct both inside the facility and whenever they are acting on behalf of the company.

Team members are expected to:

- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with clients, coworkers, vendors, partners, and program participants.
 - Avoid actual or reasonably perceived conflicts of interest.
 - Disclose outside employment, relationships, or activities when they may interfere with job responsibilities or create a legitimate conflict.
 - Protect confidential, proprietary, employee, and client information.
 - Use company property, systems, records, equipment, and resources responsibly.
 - Exercise appropriate judgment when discussing Serenity Paws or workplace matters online or in public.
 - Never use their position for exploitation, retaliation, personal gain, or inappropriate influence.
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8. PROTECTING THE REPUTATION WE HAVE BUILT

Serenity Paws' reputation has been built through years of consistent work, education, difficult decisions, client trust, and commitment to animal welfare.

Every employee becomes a steward of that reputation.

Team members are expected to demonstrate personal investment in Serenity Paws':

Mission. Standards. Values. Safety. Clients. Animals. Team. Community.

Our reputation is not protected through image alone. It is protected by what happens behind closed doors, during difficult grooms, when mistakes occur, when leadership is absent, and when doing the right thing is inconvenient.

9. SERVICE & LEADERSHIP

Leadership at Serenity Paws is not limited to a job title.

We expect every team member to contribute to an environment that:

- Develops individual talent.
- Encourages initiative and responsible leadership.
- Welcomes appropriate ideas and different perspectives.
- Values service to animals, clients, coworkers, and the community.
- Holds people accountable for their decisions and actions.
- Recognizes effort while still requiring performance.
- Provides support without enabling unsafe, unethical, or irresponsible behavior.
- Gives people opportunities to learn, improve, and rise.

We believe strong teams are created when **compassion and accountability exist together.**

10. THE SERENITY PAWS STANDARD

Our policies and procedures exist because experience has taught us that consistency protects animals, employees, clients, and the organization.

We therefore expect every employee to understand:

Policy is not personal.

Correction is not punishment.

Accountability is not disrespect.

Safety is not negotiable.

Compassion does not mean lowering the standard.

We will teach.

We will support.

We will communicate.

We will continue learning.

We will correct what needs to be corrected.

We will take responsibility when we are wrong.

And we will expect every person entrusted with the Serenity Paws name to do the same.

Our Commitment

When we live this Code of Ethics, we create an organization where animals are protected, clients can trust us, employees can rely on one another, professionals can confidently partner with us, and our reputation reflects what happens inside our walls every day.

We do what is right—even when it is difficult, inconvenient, or unseen.

That is the Serenity Paws standard.