

ACT Wildlife – Conditions of Membership

Purpose

This policy outlines the conditions of membership for ACT Wildlife and the expectations of all members involved in the rescue, rehabilitation, transport, and care of wildlife in the ACT. It is based on WIRES' conditions of membership and aligned with ACT legislation, including the *Nature Conservation Act 2014 (ACT)*, the *Animal Welfare Act 1992 (ACT)* and the *Animal Welfare (Welfare of Native Wildlife – Rescue, Rehabilitation and Release) Mandatory Code of Practice 2023*.

1. Membership Eligibility

- Members must be **18 years or older**.
- Members must **not have been convicted** of offences under wildlife protection or animal welfare legislation, or any offence punishable by imprisonment of 12 months or more.
- Members must **not have had membership suspended or terminated** by ACT Wildlife or another wildlife organisation.
- **Members must be of good character and a fit and proper person, suitable for membership of ACT Wildlife.**
 - This includes being able to participate safely and responsibly in wildlife rescue and care activities.
 - Members are expected to manage their own physical and mental health needs and ensure they are fit to undertake volunteer activities safely. ACT Wildlife will provide reasonable support within the scope of its volunteer program but is not equipped to provide healthcare, counselling, or ongoing management of individual health conditions.
 - ACT Wildlife may decline or revoke membership if a person's behaviour, conduct, or health circumstances pose a risk to wildlife, members, or the organisation.

2. Compliance with Legislation and Policies

Members must:

- Comply with the *Nature Conservation Act 2014 (ACT)*, *Animal Welfare Act 1992 (ACT)*, *Animal Welfare (Welfare of Native Wildlife – Rescue, Rehabilitation and Release) Mandatory Code of Practice 2023* and all other relevant laws.
- Follow ACT Wildlife's **Codes, Policies and Guidelines**.
- Complete required training and maintain competency for any authorised wildlife care activities.

3. Member Responsibilities

Members agree to:

- Follow all instructions from ACT Wildlife Coordinators regarding rescue, transport, care, transfer, and release of wildlife.
- Register all rescues and animals in care within required timeframes and maintain accurate records.
- Seek veterinary advice promptly when required and follow all veterinary instructions.
- Use ACT Wildlife property, equipment, records and access credentials responsibly and promptly return such items to the organisation if membership or authorisation ends.
- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety and the health and safety of others while undertaking ACT Wildlife activities, and must follow all safety procedures, training, and directions.
- Promptly report hazards, injuries, incidents, animal welfare concerns, member conduct concerns, safety risks, or suspected breaches of legislation or ACT Wildlife policies to the relevant Coordinator or to the Committee.
 - WHS-related hazards, injuries and incidents are to be reported in accordance with the to the WHS How to Report a Workplace Injury, Incident or Hazard Procedure.
- Must notify the relevant Coordinator or the Committee if there is a change of circumstances that impacts your volunteering.
- Not enter into agreements, make commitments, or represent that they are authorised to act on behalf of ACT Wildlife unless expressly authorised to do so.

- Not make public statements or publish content on behalf of ACT Wildlife unless authorised to do so.

4. Conduct and Behaviour

Members must:

- Treat wildlife, fellow members, staff, and members of the public with **respect, professionalism, and compassion.**
- Contribute to a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment free from bullying, harassment, discrimination, or unsafe behaviour.
- Represent ACT Wildlife positively and avoid conduct that may bring the organisation into disrepute.

Members are expected to raise concerns respectfully and in good faith. Repeated vexatious, malicious, or unreasonable complaints or conduct that disrupts the effective operation of the organisation may constitute grounds for disciplinary action.

5. Privacy and Information Handling

Members must:

- Provide accurate personal information and keep it up to date.
- Protect confidential information, including rescue locations, member details, and sensitive wildlife data.
- Consent to ACT Wildlife sharing relevant information with Coordinators, authorised members, and government agencies when required by law.

6. Authorisation to Rescue and Rehabilitate Wildlife

Membership does not automatically grant authorisation to rescue or rehabilitate wildlife. Authorisation is granted only after:

- Completing required training
- Demonstrating competency
- Meeting facility and equipment standards
- Approval by ACT Wildlife's Committee

Authorisation may be revoked if standards are not maintained.

7. Suspension or Termination of Membership

Membership authorisation may be suspended or terminated if a member:

- Breaches ACT Wildlife Conditions of Membership, codes, policies, procedures or guidelines
- Fails to comply with Coordinator or Committee instructions
- Engages in unsafe, unethical, or unlawful behaviour
- Brings ACT Wildlife into disrepute
- Misuses ACT Wildlife equipment or information
- Demonstrates ongoing vexatious, malicious and disruptive behaviour

8. Appeals

Members may request a review of any decision relating to the refusal, suspension, or termination of membership.

Requests for review must be submitted in writing to secretary@actwildlife.net and should include:

- details of the decision being appealed;
- the reasons the member believes the decision should be reviewed; and
- any relevant information or evidence the member wishes the Committee to consider.

The appeal will be considered by the ACT Wildlife Committee, which may seek additional information where necessary. The Committee's decision will be communicated to the member in writing and will be final.