

# Culture Agreement

We are drawn to RCACP because of its mission to help animals in our community. We choose to create a humane and healthy workplace for animals, staff, and volunteers. And, we agree to:

## **Support a united RCACP**

- Honor and respect differences among staff and volunteers
- Minimize competition between different teams
- Practice “we” thinking
- Seek to understand different needs of the departments
- We are all responsible for the whole
- Include, rather than exclude

## **Practice collaboration, cooperation, and coordination**

- Provide access to information about decisions, decision-making processes, and what’s going on
- Encourage inter- and intra-department collaboration between staff and volunteers
- If you must interrupt someone, give them a chance to say if it’s a good time or not, and schedule a later time if need be
- Promote harmony—begin by giving the benefit of do

## **Embrace diversity and practice open-mindedness**

- Expect differences
- Different is not wrong
- Look for the contribution that each person is trying to make to help the animals
- See commonalities and seek to understand differences
- Disagreements are not necessarily a hindrance—it keeps us dynamic

## **Practice open, direct, prompt communications**

- Take a stand to stop gossip
- Practice proactive listening and seek to understand
- Deliver and receive complaints, suggestions and other communications in an open and positive manner
- Hear someone out before responding
- Take time to check for understanding before proceeding
- Practice honesty
- Use phone or face-to-face conversations when topics merit such communications; emails can be misinterpreted or impersonal

## **Deal with conflict responsibly**

- Agree to resolve conflict NOW
- Be proactive in resolving conflicts
- Deal with conflict directly—with the persons involved  
Show respect—keep your voice calm and your language clean

- Promote healthy disagreement—view it as an opportunity to explore differences and increase understanding
- Opinions are subjective—respect other people’s right to their own perspective

### **Promote trust**

- Everyone takes responsibility for themselves in continuing to build trust and is accountable for their actions
- Commit to working toward a healthier future
- Lend support to build trust individual-to-individual, intra- and inter-department, and organization-wide
- Trust that everyone at IACC is making decisions for the animals in good faith—or check it out if you have any questions
- Practice integrity
- Be accountable for what you say and what you do

### **Address problems proactively and constructively**

- Treat complaints, suggestions, and ideas with respect and good manners
- Take responsibility to bring issues needing attention to someone who can take action
- Think constructively, look for positive solutions
- Encourage people to work things out between themselves
- Give up the grudges, or let grudges be a signal to you that you need to go talk with the person

### **Demonstrate respect**

- Acknowledge people’s rights to different opinions
- Support the administrative decisions that are made
- Respect the right to disagree
- Extend compassion to your coworkers
- Practice courtesy and consideration of others
- Value each other regardless of job title, seniority, position or opinion

### **Acknowledge feelings and the emotional aspects of our work**

- Recognize the importance of having a sense of humor—lighten up
- Identify healthy ways to reduce or release stress—ask for help if you need it
- Find ways appropriate to the setting to express sadness, grief and anger when those feelings arise
- Respect others’ responses to emotions—help them find creative and appropriate outlets to express their feelings
- Keep things in perspective—help yourself and others maintain a positive outlook
- Have fun!

### **Create and maintain a safe workplace**

- Find safe ways to accomplish your task
- Commit to following safety procedures even when you’re in a hurry
- Know your limitations and seek out others to help when needed
- Bring safety concerns to the attention of your supervisor or to the appropriate part

### **Show appreciation**

- Remember why we have chosen to be here

- Practice appreciation at all levels of the organization
- Acknowledge people across the organization when they're really fabulous
- Model appreciation interdependently as well as inter- and intra-departmentally