

**At the 2005 National Specialty in Hutto, Texas, the IGCA membership voted to send a copy of the Code of Ethics to each member along with the annual dues mailing. Each member is required to return a signed signature page as a condition of membership.**

## **ITALIAN GREYHOUND CLUB OF AMERICA**

### **Code of Ethics and Breeding Practices**

**Approved December 3, 2001**

Updated September 2018

#### **Goal**

These recommendations were established and approved by the membership of the Italian Greyhound Club of America (IGCA) as a voluntary standard for members, and as a guide for non-members. The goal of these recommendations is to protect, preserve, and improve the breed and its future, as well as protect individual dogs. All members of the IGCA have an obligation to put the welfare of the breed above personal gain and refrain from activities that would be detrimental to the best interests of the breed or IGCA. These guidelines are presented with the realization that ethics are difficult to regulate and that most individuals desire and intend to do what is right. Education and communication are the preferred methods of obtaining compliance to these practices.

#### **General Conduct**

Members shall provide all dogs in their care with the highest possible standards of nutrition, shelter, cleanliness, veterinary care, exercise, training, socialization and individual attention so that all the dogs may become well-adjusted companions. No member shall engage in false or misleading advertising or other misrepresentation of his/her Italian Greyhounds. Breeders shall not malign other breeder's Italian Greyhounds or breeding practices, but are encouraged to provide pertinent information about their own dogs or those of others, providing such information is accurate and verifiable.

Breeders should be straightforward and honest about their stud's or bitch's strong and weak points as well as about results of past breedings and family history. Breeders should refuse to allow their dogs to participate in matings that, in their judgment, are not in the best interest of the breed.

Breeders should seek the best possible environment for each Italian Greyhound. No member of IGCA shall sell, consign, or donate Italian Greyhounds to wholesalers. Italian Greyhounds may not be offered to events such as raffles, auctions, drawing, lotteries, contests, or laboratory experiments. It is expected that every breeder of Italian Greyhounds will act ethically, be forthright and honest in their dealings and will be a credit to the breed and the Italian Greyhound Club of America.

Breeders must comply with all record keeping requirements of the AKC publications Procedures for Registration Matters, Chapter VII: Regulations for Record Keeping and Identification of Dogs and Rules Applying to Registration and Discipline.

#### **Health Issues**

the breeding of purebred dogs is not an exact science. It is not always possible to prevent the occurrence of inherited diseases, as there are not yet definitive tests to identify carriers of genetic diseases. A breeder's obligation with regard to genetic diseases is to make every effort to prevent their occurrence and to share openly and honestly all information available regarding the genetic health status of his/her dogs. While elimination of genetic diseases is a worthy goal, the converse is that excessive culling of animals from the gene pool may have the equally deleterious effect of limiting the gene pool in the breed. Breeders should be cautious about removing animals from the breeding pool solely because they are distantly related to an affected individual.

The IGCA recommends waiting until a dog is at least two years of age prior to breeding it. All prospective breeding animals should be carefully observed and evaluated for any health problems that might develop as the animal matures. Breeders should research the pedigrees of all animals to be bred and provide or require documented health testing as listed in *Appendix II*. Breeders or owners of dogs identified (by testing or clinical signs) as being affected by an inherited disease, should make every effort to notify owners or breeders of closely related dogs. Such notification should include copies of test results and diagnosis so that others will have more complete information when planning future breedings or monitoring their dogs for potential problems.

A dog or bitch that has produced offspring with an inheritable disease, or that has a sire or dam affected by an inheritable disease is considered a carrier of that condition. Breeding of a carrier is generally discouraged and should be considered only if a) the individual is considered to be of excellent quality in all other respects, b) owners of prospective mates are clearly notified of the carrier's status, c) pedigrees of prospective mates are carefully evaluated in an effort to find a mate that is not a carrier of the condition and d) prospective purchasers of puppies are clearly notified of the carrier's status. Due to the pervasive nature of autoimmune disorders, every effort should be made to eliminate using affected dogs in a breeding program.

### **Responsibilities of Breeders and Stud Dog Owners**

Each member who contemplates breeding a litter, or who allows the use of their stud dog to the same end, shall direct their efforts toward producing Italian Greyhounds of exceptional quality. The breeding of Italian Greyhounds should never be offered or taken lightly. All breeders should refrain from breeding until they understand the official AKC standard sufficiently to distinguish between correct and incorrect conformation. Such ability presupposes the knowledge of basic genetic principles. Breeding arrangements are often confusing; they are best written and agreed upon by both seller and buyer.

Breeders should research the pedigrees of all animals to be bred and provide or require documented health tests as recommended in *Appendix II* of these animals. Known health or temperament problems in any animals used for breeding, or found in litters they have produced, should be disclosed to the owners of any prospective mates.

Breeding should be undertaken only when the breeder is in a position to properly care for the bitch and litter, and with the plan of keeping at least one puppy to hopefully advance and improve the breed. Breeders are responsible for all puppies they breed and must be willing to accept the return of puppies for the entire lifetime of the dog. Each member should be assured that a reasonable portion of an anticipated litter (the member's breeding or resulting from use of member's stud) is suitably spoken for before a breeding takes place.

No bitch shall be bred more often than 2 out of 3 seasons, then only if in robust health. The physical and mental well-being of the bitch is the prime consideration at any time. Breeders should remain in contact with puppy buyers to monitor the puppies' progress and to keep a health record for each puppy. Puppy buyers should be encouraged to have health tests done even if the dog will never be bred; as such information is essential in evaluating the overall genetic health of a litter.

Although the breeder has the greatest share of responsibility for puppies they breed, the owner of the sire should also have enough interest in the dog's offspring to be willing to help in the rescue and placement of said offspring if necessary.

Stud dogs or bitches that produce offspring of consistently poor quality in their first two breedings have no value as breeding stock and should not be bred again. No individual showing a serious inherited defect in type, structure or temperament shall be offered at stud. Likewise, owners of stud dogs shall not accept for breeding any bitch showing these same defects. The stud dog should be bred selectively. The owner should discourage the individual who wants to breed a bitch lacking in quality or one unsuitable for the stud, and explain why. The stud dog owner should be certain the owner of the bitch has the necessary knowledge and facilities to care for

the puppies for as long as is necessary.

Substitution of an alternate stud for an unable or unwilling one, or the use of hormone injections or artificial insemination should not be practiced unless sufficient cause exists and all parties are in full agreement; and then only in accordance with AKC recommendations. Such practices should not be adopted merely to fulfill the stud dog's duty or to avoid the loss of a breeding season.

## **Sales**

All puppies and adults shall be sold in a clean and healthy condition. All agreements and stipulations should be recorded either in a sales contract or by simple written exchange of mutual expectations. For the protection of the puppy it is recommended that a written agreement be obtained from the buyer stating that should the buyer ever be unable to keep the dog, the dog cannot be sold to a third party, but must be returned to the breeder. No adult or puppy shall be sold without adequate protection against disease. Concerning any puppy or adult showing a serious deviation from the standard which renders it unsuitable for breeding, puppies shall be sold with limited registration papers, puppies and adults shall be spayed/neutered prior to the sale, or with a contract requiring spay/neuter at an appropriate age. This shall be clearly understood by the buyer and the breeder shall have a signed statement to that effect.

Breeding arrangements in lieu of, or in addition to, cash payment, should be held to an absolute minimum and confined to the knowledgeable purchaser desirous of becoming a breeder. Such arrangements should be made only on a dog of breeding quality and only when the breeder/seller desire to retain said animal as part of a well-planned breeding program. Breeding arrangements should never be established which encourage or demand the "pet" buyer to undertake a breeding or a breeding program. No sales contract should compel any buyer to breed a dog or bitch; therefore, any sales contract should provide remunerative release options as an alternative to breeding arrangements.

Encouragement to breed, such as might be implied by advertisements offering "breeding stock" for sale or lease should not be made. In discussions with prospective purchasers the seller should be extremely cautious regarding show prospects of any dog, lest he/she imply that success will be automatic. The term "guarantee" if used, should clearly mean replacement of one dog with another or return for a refund, rather than positive analysis of the dog at hand. Breeders are strongly encouraged to tattoo or microchip their dogs and register this permanent identification with the proper registry, and/or encourage puppy buyers to do the same.

## **Information provided to buyer**

The breeder should always provide the new owner with the following:

1. AKC registrations paper or other identification as described in Procedures for Registration Matters, Chapter VII : Regulations for Record Keeping, C. Identifying Dogs at the Time of Delivery, and a 3 generation pedigree.
2. Immunization schedule and veterinary health records.
3. Written information concerning care, feeding, training, socialization and accident prevention.
4. A recommended reading list that includes the Italian Greyhound books and magazine.
5. A copy of the sales contract or agreement, containing any and all stipulations agreed to by either buyer or seller.
6. A copy of these Code of Ethics and Recommended Breeding Practices.

## **Appendices**

The IGCA Board of Directors, in consultation with the IGRF Board of Directors will periodically update these appendices.

### *Appendix I: Genetic Diseases in Italian Greyhounds*

Research into the canine genome is proceeding at an explosive pace and information about genetic diseases in dogs is becoming more readily available every day. However, we do not yet have definitive information about every disease that has a genetic component, or what its method of inheritance is. Nonetheless, the following is a list of conditions known, or highly suspected, to be inheritable in the Italian Greyhound.

1. Color Dilute Alopecia
2. Cryptorchidism (monorchidism)
3. Deafness (associated with the white gene in the homozygous state)
4. Hypothyroidism
5. Idiopathic Epilepsy (seizures)
6. Juvenile Cataracts
7. Legg-Calve-Perthes Disease (LCP)
8. Luxating Patellas (slipped stifles)
9. Portosystemic Shunts (liver shunts)
10. Progressive Retinal Atrophy (IG- PRA-1)
11. Von Willebrand's Disease (VWD)
12. Familial Enamel Hypoplasia
13. Autoimmune diseases (IMHA, ITP, Addison's, pemphigus, polyarthritis, encephalitis, etc.)
14. Glaucoma (acute narrow angle)
15. Congenital megaesophagus
16. Vitreous Degeneration

### *Appendix II: Recommended Health Testing*

1. Brucellosis. While brucellosis is not an inherited disease, it is a contagious disease caused by the bacterium *Brucella Canis*. It is one of the leading causes of infertility in breeding stock. It occurs worldwide, affects all kinds of dogs, and can potentially be transmitted from dogs to humans. Therefore, the IGCA recommends brucellosis testing of all breeding pairs prior to each breeding.
2. OFA (Orthopedic Foundation for Animals) eye exams annually until age 10.
3. OFA (Orthopedic Foundation for Animals) hip x-rays and patella evaluation once after age two.
4. OFA thyroid testing annually from ages two to four and then bi-annually until age eight.
5. UC Davis (University of California, Davis) DNA testing for Familial Enamel Hypoplasia, Susceptibility to PRA, Susceptibility to Glaucoma, and other DNA testing as it becomes available.

### **Conclusion:**

Nothing in this Code of Ethics should be construed to be in violation of the rules and regulations of the American Kennel Club or the Constitution and By Laws of the Italian Greyhound Club of America.

Each member must accept the responsibility to protect the interests of our breed by conducting him/herself in a manner designed to reflect credit on the Italian Greyhound breed and the Italian Greyhound Club of America.