

# NLA Code of Ethics: Wolfdog Breeding

NLA adopts and promotes the following “Breeder Code of Ethics” as the minimum requirements for the responsible breeding of wolfdogs. These ethics apply to all (members and non-members) who breed, even if it is only one litter.

## ***When responsibly breeding my own animals, I will***

1. Use only northern-breed or lupine-type dogs/wolfdogs (as are deemed acceptable) as breeding stock: German Shepherd, Malamute, Husky or a verifiable combination therein.
2. Breed non-aggressive animals of sound temperament. Aggressive or unsound (*e.g.*, extremely skittish, etc.) animals will be removed from breeding stock (even if purchased as a breeding animal) and spayed/neutered to ensure that no accidental breeding will take place.
3. Never breed animals with a known or debilitating/life-threatening genetic defect that would or could affect future offspring. Such animals will be removed from the breeding stock and spayed/neutered.
4. Provide the buyer with a written breeder-buyer contract that is inclusive of NLA’s Breeder Code of Ethics and covers, at a minimum but not limited to, the following:
  - a guarantee that the breeding pair and the offspring are free of any known genetic or debilitating/life-threatening defects;
  - an outline of proper husbandry requirements (*i.e.*, feeding, containment, housing, veterinary care, training, socialization, etc.);
  - a health guarantee and a veterinary-certified health certificate, verifying that the animal is healthy and free of illness/defect (as far as the breeder is aware) and that the animal is up to date on required vaccinations and wormings; the health certificate should accompany the contract at the time of sale/transfer of pup from breeder to buyer;
  - a return/replacement policy should the animal be diagnosed (by a licensed veterinarian) with a genetic or debilitating/life-threatening defect within two years of the whelp date;
  - a stipulation for the right of return (*i.e.*, the breeder is notified first if, for any reason, the owner cannot keep the animal);
  - a spay/neuter clause for pups sold that are obviously pet quality rather than breeding quality animals; and
  - an agreement that breeder and buyer maintain contact (buyer will make at least one annual check-up call; if buyer or breeder moves /changes numbers, he/she will notify the other party).
5. Perform basic health testing to determine the breeding animal is sound and carries no genetic issues that could affect offspring. (***NOTE: Test results should accompany—not be used in lieu of—a contract.***)
6. Provide accurate and verifiable pedigree information about their breeding animals: lineage, wolf and dog contents/percentages, etc. If verifiable information does not exist, the breeder will inform the buyer that the lineage and percentages of the parents are NOT verified. (***NOTE: A responsible wolfdog breeder will never engage in false or misleading advertising, including, but not limited to, providing a specific percentage for the animal when that percentage cannot be verified as outlined above.***)

## ***When responsibly breeding outside my own kennel, I will***

1. Abide by the aforementioned requirements, in addition to those outlined in this section.
2. Provide the other breeder with a breeder-breeder contract that outlines the conditions of the breeding: fees, placement of pups, pick of the litter, transportation, veterinarian treatments/fees, genetic testing, animal husbandry, etc. The breeder-breeder contract should also include information about a refund or a repeat service and the conditions for such a service if the breeding fails to yield viable offspring, viable offspring failed to make it to term or were stillborn, etc.

3. Verify that the other breeding animal (1) is a lupine-type animal or northern breed dog (as outlined in #1 in the first section) or a verified wolfdog (as outlined in #6 in the first section); (2) is of sound temperament (*e.g.*, is not aggressive/extremely shy); and (3) is genetically sound (through testing as outlined in #5 in the first section).
4. Refuse to engage in breeding services if (1) an animal fails to meet any of the items outlined in the NLA Breeder Code of Ethics or (2) a breeder is known to be a puppy miller, a wholesaler, an unethical breeder, a zoophile, or an individual convicted of animal abuse.

***When responsibly selling any animal (pup, yearling or adult), I will***

1. Refuse to sell to (or recommend) any of the following:
  - an unethical or irresponsible owner or breeder;
  - a wholesaler, puppy miller, collector, or broker;
  - a prospective owner who lacks proper containment; and/or
  - a prospective owner who is unable to provide the proper care (*e.g.*, the buyer doesn't have a stable income, already has too many animals to properly care for, etc.).
2. Provide the buyer with a breeder-buyer contract that includes, but is not limited to, the information outlined in #4 in the first section.
3. Reclaim, or assist in the placement of, any pup that the breeder produces and that the buyer must relinquish at any time during the animal's life.
4. Provide the buyer with the animal's lineage going back a minimum of three generations. If the pedigree is unverified, the buyer will be made aware of that fact.
5. Provide all necessary health care to the animal prior to selling it; maintain accurate health records of all animals and litters, disclosing all relevant health records, health/medical issues, and/or medical treatments of the litter, dam, and/or sire to all buyers.
6. Encourage buyers to have their new animals examined by a licensed veterinarian and continue with any necessary medical treatments (*i.e.*, continued vaccinations or other treatments). Buyers should make the results known to breeders for the mutual protection of all: buyers, breeders, and animals.

***In all cases, and in addition to the items above, as a responsible wolfdog breeder, I will***

1. Maintain excellence in the husbandry of my animals in accordance with the ethics set forth by NLA, including, but not limited to, providing appropriate shade, proper health care, clean water, sufficient companionship (human or canine), adequate exercise, healthy food, safe containment, etc. (*NOTE: Tethering and invisible fencing are neither safe nor humane forms of containment (1) because of the propensity to create aggression with the former and the high probability of escape with the latter, and (2) because, with both, there is an increased likelihood of people, especially children, gaining access to the animal and getting bitten.*)
2. Never exceed the number of animals that I can afford to maintain in accordance with the ethics set forth by NLA.
3. Ensure that I have sufficient time and resources to socialize the pups I produce and sell; if I do not have the time or the finances to socialize the pups, I will not breed.
4. Ensure that sufficient buyers are lined up before breeding any animals; if I do not have a sufficient or reasonable number of buyers lined up before the breeding takes place, I will delay breeding until the following year.
5. Verify that all buyers are able to obtain veterinary services from a qualified veterinarian that will treat wolfdogs.
6. Seek appropriate references from all prospective buyers.
7. Perform (or have someone perform) home checks on all buyers.
8. Never use the NLA name or claim NLA endorsement for any breeding or advertising purposes.