

CODE of PRACTICE

Welfare Without Compromise

**"It requires very little knowledge to care passionately about animals.
It requires a great deal of understanding to care properly for them."**

John Webster, Emeritus Professor of Animal Husbandry,
Department of Clinical Veterinary Science, University of Bristol.

Our ferrets are extremely important to us, and **The Working Ferret Company** is committed to providing a quality service to clients, while ensuring the wellbeing of our ferrets is of prime importance. The following **Code of Practice**, to which all Company operatives adhere, encapsulates Company policy with relation to the use of ferrets in our work.

As the underpinning husbandry and welfare principles for our ferrets, we have adopted "**THE FIVE FREEDOMS**", formulated by John Webster (Professor of Animal Husbandry at Bristol University); these principles are internationally accepted as best husbandry practice, viz:

- **Freedom from Hunger and Thirst** - by ready access to fresh water, and an appropriate diet to maintain full health and vigour.
- **Freedom from Discomfort** - by providing an appropriate environment, including shelter and a comfortable resting area.
- **Freedom from Pain, Injury or Disease** - by prevention, or rapid diagnosis and treatment.
- **Freedom to Express Normal Behaviour** - by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and appropriate company of other animals.
- **Freedom from Fear and Distress** - by ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering.

In order to ensure the proper usage of our animals, full and proper records of Company ferrets are kept and maintained by management.

In addition, Company ferrets are:

- Bred in captivity and cared for to the highest standards of welfare, placing the ferrets' needs above those of the business.
- Properly trained and habituated.
- Housed in clean accommodation, with access to food, water and shelter.
- Provided with items to enrich their environment and allow them to express normal behaviour.
- Exercised on a daily basis for their fitness, health and general wellbeing.
- Properly housed, fed, equipped and trained.
- Transported in suitable caging.
- Given veterinary treatment and/or vaccinations, as necessary.

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The WORKING FERRET COMPANY

- Marked with a unique identification mark (micro-chip) to facilitate the identification of each ferret, and thus its restoration to us in the event of its loss.
- Used with equipment which will not endanger the ferret's survival in the wild.
- Used with radio tracking equipment, to aid in recovery in the event of an animal not returning to the handler.
- Kept and used in accordance with all current UK and international legislation and best practice procedures.

Company operatives;

- Adhere strictly to all UK animal welfare legislation.
- Adhere strictly to all UK Transport of Animals Orders.
- Ensure adequate temperature regulation throughout the transport of the ferrets.

Company management and staff;

- Make every endeavour to recover a lost ferret, and to cure a sick or injured ferret belonging to the company.
- Take all necessary precautions and actions to ensure that Company ferrets are fit and healthy.
- Adhere strictly to Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA), and Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidelines and practices.

Company management recognises there are hazards in living things, materials and physical processes, assesses risks, and takes action to reduce threats to staff, ferrets, clients and others.

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