

State Board of VETERINARY Medical Examiners

consumer**brief**

The State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners was established on March 17, 1902. The Board consists of eight members - five veterinarians, two public members and one State government member.

THE PURPOSE OF THE BOARD IS TO:

- supervise the practice of veterinary medicine, surgery and dentistry;
- ensure that veterinary medicine is performed in a manner consistent with acceptable medical and ethical standards; and
- adjudicate consumer complaints against licensees.

HOW DOES THE BOARD ACCOMPLISH ITS PURPOSE?

- by ensuring that all veterinarians have met the educational requirements, passed accredited clinical competency and jurisprudence examinations, and are of good moral character;
- by investigating and prosecuting veterinarians who have deviated from acceptable standards of practice; and
- by requiring all veterinarians practicing in New Jersey to be licensed and registered by the State and to renew their registrations every two years.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE A COMPLAINT AGAINST A VETERINARIAN?

Every consumer has a right to file a complaint against a veterinarian. You may request a complaint form by contacting:

State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners
P.O. Box 45020
Newark, NJ 07101 • 973-504-6500
or download our complaint form at
NJConsumerAffairs.gov/Pages/File-a-Complaint.aspx .

CONSUMER TIPS

- Call the Board office at 973-504-6500 to make sure the veterinarian you are considering is licensed and that his or her license is in good standing.
- Be sure to tell the veterinarian about any medications or drugs that your pet has taken and about all of the symptoms that you have observed.
- You are entitled to a copy of your pet's medical records within 30 days of a written request (or sooner, if needed for treatment) upon payment of a reasonable fee for copying costs.

Continued



800-242-5846 › New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs
www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov



- All patient records shall include at least the following information:
 - ◆ the name of the facility and veterinarian treating your animal;
 - ◆ the name, address and telephone number of the owner of the animal;
 - ◆ sufficient information to clearly identify the animal;
 - ◆ a medical history;
 - ◆ all pertinent symptoms and signs observed;
 - ◆ tests ordered or performed and their results;
 - ◆ conclusions and/or diagnosis;
 - ◆ treatment or treatment plan prescribed, including medications;
 - ◆ notes or information which provide a clear statement of the condition of the animal and the veterinary evaluation and response;
 - ◆ name, initials or other identifying information to indicate the identity of the person making the entry into the record; and
 - ◆ copies of any consent forms signed by the owner or the owner's representative.
- A veterinarian must, upon request, provide a written prescription to a consumer who does not wish to purchase a prescription item directly from that veterinarian.
- All prescriptions must bear a label containing the following information:
 - ◆ name or species of the animal or identification of the herd or flock;
 - ◆ name of the drug or device;
 - ◆ strength per unit;
 - ◆ number of units dispensed;
 - ◆ directions for use;
 - ◆ precautionary statements including withdrawal time, where applicable; and
 - ◆ the date it was dispensed.
- All prescriptions must bear a label containing the name and license number of the licensee and the name of the facility dispensing the medication.
- A veterinarian may only prescribe, sell, dispense or distribute a prescription item if there is a bona fide veterinarian-client-patient relationship or on the basis of a prescription issued by another licensed veterinarian.
- All licensed veterinarians must provide emergency care.
- Veterinary facilities must be clean and sanitary.
- Any veterinary facility advertising that it provides emergency service must have at least one licensed veterinarian and one supporting staff member on the premises during the hours the facility is open for service.
- All advertisements for emergency service facilities must include a statement of the days of the week and the hours the facility is open and that a New Jersey licensed veterinarian and a supporting staff member are on the premises during these times.
- A veterinarian may not pay, offer to pay, or receive from any person any fee or other form of compensation for the referral of an animal.
- Any animal not retrieved within 72 hours of the owner being notified that treatment is completed or within 72 hours of the last day the animal was boarded is considered an "unretrieved animal" and is subject to humane disposal.

