

Oregon Veterinary Medical Board

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2014

NEW RULES

Definitions, Licenses, Minimum Requirements and CVTs

The Board adopted rule amendments on January 7th. The new rules are posted on our website.

Division 10 shows legislatively approved fee increases.

Please pay particular attention to Division 15 for new recordkeeping requirements.

Prescriptions: Veterinarians are now required to provide a prescription, if requested, for medication prescribed by the veterinarian under a valid VCPR. You may still require additional examinations, e.g., for medication refills.* ***This amendment does not require you to write a prescription for medication you do not recommend or prescribe, or to prescribe for a specific pharmacy. If you want it filled exactly as written, inscribe 'NS' (no substitution) on the prescription. Pharmacists are not permitted to change a prescription marked 'NS.'*** The amendment simply gives clients a choice in how a prescription is filled—your practice or elsewhere.

CVTs: (Division 30) Graduation from an accredited vet tech program is now required for licensure in Oregon as a Certified Veterinary Technician. On-the-job training and/or alternative education are no longer accepted. Division 30 now also allows CVTs to perform home-health care duties under 'indirect' supervision in a client's home or wherever the animal is kept. Home care duties are limited to those permitted of a CVT in a practice.

Rule review of Division 11 (Discipline) and further consideration of Division 15 (Dentistry) will resume with establishment of a task force.

**The VCPR exam, exams for new health issues, and exams prior to anesthesia or euthanasia are mandatory. Additional optional exams may be required or waived at the veterinarian's discretion.*

► CHANGES

Board member Dr. Mark McConnell was appointed in 2005 and served for more than eight years. He was both vice-chair and chair, and represented the Board at professional conferences, affiliated health meetings, and legislative hearings. He plans to continue service to the profession through active involvement in the American Association of Veterinary State Boards and membership in the Oregon Veterinary Medical Association. It has been an honor and a pleasure knowing Dr. McConnell, and he will be greatly missed.

The Senate has confirmed the appointment of Dr. Patricia Mayfield to the Board. She practices emergency medicine in Bend. Growing up, Dr. Mayfield had horses, ponies, goats, 4-H steers, cats and dogs, and helped out on her grandfather's cattle ranch, where her favorite chore was bottle-feeding the calves. Later, she participated in rodeo, ultimately competing at the professional level. The Board will formally welcome Dr. Mayfield at its April meeting in Bend.

The Board mourns the September, 2013 death of investigator Yvonne Osredkar, who was hit and killed by a MAX train on her way to work. The Board's new investigator is Douglas Snyder, an attorney with litigation and business experience.

Office assistant Mariann Brusco resigned in December. She has been ably replaced by Ms. Charissa Butler who has worked in television, banking and finance.

Board Members

- Robert Lester, DVM, Portland (Chair)
- Marla McGeorge, DVM, Portland (Vice-Chair)
- Randi Golub, DVM, Portland
- Lynn Larsen, Public Member, Portland
- Kimberli Maltman, DVM, Sandy
- Patti Mayfield, DVM, Bend
- Mark Reed, Public Member, Portland
- Colleen Robertson, DVM, John Day

Staff

- Lori Makinen, Director
- Charissa Butler, Admin. Assistant
- Douglas Snyder, Investigator

► FINAL RENEWAL DEADLINE: MARCH 31ST.

By November 1st each year, renewal notices in envelopes with 'renewal notice' printed in red ink are sent by USPS to each licensee at their address of record. This year, almost 200 notices were returned undeliverable. Licensees must notify the Board within 30 days of home or business address changes. Licensees who do not, and consequently do not receive notices, are subject to late fees if they fail to meet the December 31st deadline. It is the licensee's professional responsibility to renew the license, regardless of whether or not a notice is received.

Late fee waivers would be considered only if failure to timely renew were beyond the licensee's control, e.g., extreme incapacity or abduction by aliens. This year's favorite: "My wife messed up and didn't renew my license on time." Entertaining? Yes. Fee waived? No.

Tumultuous personnel changes resulted in delays and errors during the 2014 license renewal process, and for that we sincerely apologize and thank you for your patience.

► DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

The Board spends an entire meeting day reviewing complaints and interviewing licensees. Here are three recent cases that resulted in disciplinary action:

1. A pet was brought to a clinic after hours and left with a non-licensed individual who practices a form of complementary care. The pet died. The complaint alleged neglectful conduct. The record did not support the veterinarian's version of events. The veterinarian was disciplined for insufficient records and failing to obtain written consent for unorthodox treatment.

2. A practice offers clients the option to decline pain management and mischaracterizes the effects of a therapy. Though not the owner of the facility, the treating veterinarian was disciplined for failing to meet minimum standards for pain management. Management policy does not indemnify an individual licensee from accountability under the VPA.

3. A veterinarian provided only what the client wanted to pay for, which did not include pain management. Result: discipline for failing to meet minimum standards for pain management.

While the Board recognizes that employees may not have control over facility or practice protocols, each veterinarian's conduct must meet minimum standards. If you believe that a policy or protocol falls below minimum standards (which, after all, exist to ensure patient welfare, safety and comfort) feel free to contact the Board for clarification and/or refer to the Veterinary Practice Act (on the website at www.oregon.gov/ovmeb.)

Many complaints are not jurisdictional or deemed valid, such as:

 Client noticed lump on cat's paw, vet examines and recommends costly surgery. Another vet performs the surgery for less. Client objects to paying for first vet's 'five-minute' exam.

 Client brings trained tracking cat to vet to be neutered. The complementary nail trim traumatizes and makes him (cat) unfit for hunting and intolerant of ladies.

 Client who fosters dogs complains that veterinarian endangers their health by refusing to diagnose, treat and prescribe over the phone.

 Client is offended by veterinarian's 'inappropriate' Facebook photo.

 Client believes veterinarian has implanted tracking devices in her dog's teeth to monitor and report on client's activities.

 Client takes cat to five different vets, who collude in providing the same incorrect diagnosis and over-priced treatment recommendations.

Finally, please

....Review new rules, especially record requirements, on our website.

....Review and stay within CVT scope of practice.

....Post all vet and CVT licenses in a place in the facility where the public can see them. Posting licenses in exam rooms is not compliant.

....Do not characterize any employee as an 'unlicensed technician.' Only a CVT may be called a 'technician.'

....Notify the Board within 30 days of any change in your home or business contact info.