ALABAMA STATE BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINERS
ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

CHAPTER 930-X-1
GENERAL RULES

930-X-1-.31.01 Minimum Standards For Veterinary Facilities.

All locations in which veterinary medicine is practiced shall be adequate for the maintenance of good hygiene and the practice of veterinary medicine. All areas of a veterinary facility shall be maintained in a clean, inoffensive, odor free condition at all times. The minimum standards for all facilities in which veterinary medicine is practiced shall be:

(a) General facility requirements:

1. adequate space and safeguards for each patient

2. kept clean and in good repair

3. grounds clean and well maintained

4. parking area sufficient for clients and staff

5. facilities for the separation of inpatients

6. signs and exterior lighting in good taste and useful in identifying the hospital

7. hospital names not confusing to hospital identification

8. adequate heating, cooling and ventilation necessary to maintain a state of relative comfort for patients and staff

9. proper lighting in rooms used for the practice of veterinary medicine, increased lighting in the surgery area, and available emergency lighting

10. hot and cold running water

11. adequate sanitary storage relative to building size

12. floors and walls must be easily cleaned and sanitized

13. small animals (example: dogs) housed outside must have adequate shelter and bedding

(b) Records must be:

1. maintained on every animal and be legibly documented in an accurate and timely manner.

Exception: Herd or flock animal records may be kept on a per client rather than a per animal basis.

2. readily accessible and permit prompt retrieval of information.

3. kept for a minimum of three years following the last office visit or discharge of the animal from the veterinary facility.

4. identify the patient's problem and condition as specifically as possible.

5. filed in an adequate filing system.

6. Paperless recordkeeping should meet all recording criteria and proof of periodic backup must be provided.

(c) Examination Facilities:

The following must be provided:

1. Table constructed of impervious and smooth material which can be sanitized between patients

2. Waste receptacle or chute

3. Adequate lighting and space to include available emergency lighting

4. Laboratory aides and diagnostic equipment (including an otoscope, ophthalmoscope, stethoscope, thermometer, and microscope)

5. Adequate equipment for administration of oxygen

(d) Pharmacy: The following must be provided:

1. Administration in accordance with ethical practice

2.. Storage, safekeeping and preparation of drugs in accordance with all state and federal laws

3. Labels on all dispensed drugs (with the exception of pre-labeled manufactured drugs with proper instructions) which include:

(i) Name, address and telephone number of the prescribing and dispensing facility

(ii) Name of client

(iii) Name of animal

(iv) Date dispensed

(v) Direction for use

(vi) Name and strength of drugs

(vii) Name of prescribing veterinarian

(viii) The Following Warnings

(I) Veterinary Use Only!

(II) Keep Away From Children!

4. Records of all drugs administered or dispensed shall be kept on the client's records and shall include dispensation reports made to the Public Health Department's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program. (if for a companion animal, such record shall be on the individual patient's record)

5. Distribution and administration of controlled drugs must be adequately documented and placed in childproof packaging or special packaging in accordance with all state and federal codes

6. Periodic Controlled substance inventory must be performed and the DEA Biennial Inventory report must be readily accessible for inspection by both state and federal representatives.

7. Blood storage or blood donor availability

(e) Clinical Pathology: The following must be provided:

1. Either available on premise when the animal is brought in the hospital for treatment or provided by a pathology service outside the hospital within a reasonable time:

(i) Blood chemistry

(ii) Culture and antibiotic sensitivity

(iii) Complete blood count

(iv) Histopathology

(v) Complete necropsy

2. Within the hospital:

(i) Refrigeration

(ii) Urinalysis (Dipstick is adequate but specific gravity determination must be provided)

(iii) Mechanical method of determination of anemia

(iv) Flotation tests for internal parasite ova

(v) Adequate test to diagnose heartworm infestation

(vi) Skin scrapings for external parasites

3. Instrumentation for in hospital tests must be adequate.

(f) Radiology must provide:

1. Functioning radiographic equipment adequate to produce diagnostic radiographs which are appropriate to conventional practice needs.

2. Compliance with all State Health Department regulations including the use of a film badge service, the posting of safety regulations, and the use of leaded aprons and gloves.

3. Film which is adequately and permanently identified with the premise name, name of the owner, patient name, and date. Case identifier is recommended.

(g) Surgery must:

1. Be performed in a manner compatible with current veterinary medical practice with regard to anesthesia, asepsis, life support and monitoring procedures as well as recovery care, while always maintaining a level of safe humane care to patients.

2. Be performed in a room designed and reserved for surgery which is clean, orderly, well lighted and have available emergency lighting.

3. Provide and use gas anesthesia and a positive pressure oxygen delivery system for small animal patients where medically indicated. Large animal anesthesia may be performed compatible with current local veterinary practice.

4. Provide sterilization of instruments with steam pressure sterilization or autoclave. Gas sterilization is

acceptable only for those instruments which cannot be autoclaved. Cold sterilization is acceptable under field conditions.

5. Provide instruments and equipment commensurate with the type of surgical services being provided.

6. Provide emergency drugs readily available to the surgical area.

7. Provide a table constructed of impervious and smooth material.

8. Provide a separate prep area outside the surgical suite.

9. Sterilize and use for surgery; instruments, gowns, towels, drapes, gloves, caps, and masks. Surgical packs should be routinely sterilized and dated and re-sterilized at a minimum of every forty-five (45) days.

(h) Housekeeping must provide:

1. A safe, functional, pleasant environment for clients, patients, and staff.

2. Clean, sanitary living quarters for patients. Bedding must be changed often to keep patients clean and dry and to minimize odors.

3. Daily cleaning and disinfecting of feeding bowls, instruments, cages, runs, etc.

4. Waste collection and removal in a safe, sanitary manner, utilizing interior and exterior waste receptacles which are removed often.

5. Prompt, sanitary and esthetic disposal of dead animals, biological waste, and medical waste (including sharps) which comply with all federal, state, county and municipal laws, ordinances and regulations. Those dead animals not claimed within five calendar days by the owner or agent, shall be disposed of at the discretion of the veterinarian.

6. Elimination or control of vermin and insect pests.

7. Adequate and daily feedings of wholesome, nutritional, and palatable food (except where medically contra-indicated).

8. Adequate and daily fresh water within easy reach of all patients (except where medically contra-indicated).

9. Adequate storage of animal foodstuffs to avoid contamination and spoilage.

(i) Maintenance must provide:

1. Constant upkeep of grounds and facilities to provide a safe, functional and pleasant environment for clients, patients and staff.

2. Constant upkeep of patient cages and other housing to maintain a safe, sanitary environment for inpatients.

3. Fire protection equipment within easy access.

(j) A library shall be provided with basic textbooks and periodicals as necessary to remain updated and accessible.

(k) Emergency service must be provided and readily available. After hours and emergency information provided by answering machines should be clear and concise as to whom will be responding or what facility will be accepting the referral.

(l) Use of sterilization to be per manufacturer's recommendations including use of protective eye, outerwear and posting of hazard warning signs.

(m) New facilities must pass evaluation before opening.

(n) A practice must be inspected and approved immediately following a change in ownership and before any further operation of the facility.

(o) A premise permit may be revoked, suspended or denied if evaluation reveals that the premises do not meet the standards set by administrative code or if the license of the responsible veterinarian has been suspended or revoked.

(p) Failure to pass evaluation will constitute a warning and a period of fourteen days will be given before reevaluation. Failure to pass the second evaluation will result in suspension of the premise permit and closure of the facility until the necessary changes are made. The veterinarian in such a facility can request reevaluation no sooner than seven days after the closure. If significant progress towards correction of deficiencies are noted during the requested evaluation, a request for extension to correct deficiencies can be made to the Board. A detailed plan for compliance must accompany this request for extension and approved by the Board.

(q) The Board may, after notice and a hearing, impose a penalty against any owner, operator or responsible veterinarian of any premises operating without a premise permit in violation of this section or any rule promulgated by

the Board. No penalty so imposed shall exceed $1,000.00 for each count or separate offense.

(r) Imposition of penalties under this Rule shall not prohibit other disciplinary proceedings by the Board.

Author: Alabama State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners
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