



VETERINARY PRACTITIONERS BOARD
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Responsibilities of a Veterinary Superintendent

Introduction

The *Veterinary Practice Act 2018* (s 88) requires the holder of a registered veterinary premises to appoint a registered veterinary practitioner as superintendent of the premises. The ACT Veterinary Practitioners Board (the Board) must be notified of the name of the person before he or she assumes the duties of the superintendent by completing and submitting the [Appointment of a Superintendent of a Veterinary Premises](#) form.

The holder of registered veterinary premises must notify the Board if the superintendent leaves the registered premises or is permanently replaced by completing and submitting the above form.

Responsibilities

The specific responsibilities of the superintendent include ensuring that:

1. He or she attends the registered premises at least once per week and organises a replacement superintendent when taking leave for more than one week. For formal leave of more than a month, the superintendent must inform the Board of who will be acting in the role.
2. A sign is displayed at the registered veterinary premises displaying registration information about the premises.
3. He or she performs a stock check of all S8 drugs (drugs of addiction) at the time of appointment irrespective of the time of year and ensures that further stock checks are performed in March and September each year and that the results of these stock checks are recorded in the S8 register.

The Board considers the superintendent's management duties to include: the development of protocols and procedures to assist veterinarians working at the registered premises to comply with relevant legislation; to act as a central point of contact with clients if required; to provide a central point of contact with the Board; and to assist with assessments of the premises by the Board appointed Inspector.

Accordingly, the superintendent should assist with the development of protocols and procedures to ensure that:

1. Veterinary practitioners employed by the registered premises are registered in the ACT or another State or Territory of Australia. Ensure that any conditions on the registration of employed veterinary practitioners are abided by.
2. Veterinary practitioners working at the registered premises are familiar with the [Veterinary Practitioner Code of Professional Conduct 2018](#).

3. Veterinary practitioners employed by the registered premises are adequately supervised and assistance is available when required either through consultation with colleagues or referral where appropriate.
4. Any veterinary practitioner who assumes control of the registered premises for one month or more (i.e. replaces the current superintendent either temporarily or permanently) immediately performs a stock check of all drugs of addiction irrespective of the time of year and records the results of this stock check in the S8 register.
5. There is a sufficient number of competent staff available when elective surgery is being performed.
6. Informed consent has been provided by the person responsible for the care of the animal regarding any treatment, diagnostic test or procedure performed at the registered premises. Informed consent includes:
 - a. The likely extent and outcome of the veterinary services
 - b. An estimate of cost of any proposed treatment, test or procedure performed at the registered premises
 - c. Evidence is maintained for the obtaining of informed consent either through a written document signed by the client or through the recording of a contemporaneous note in the medical record.
7. A relevant record of any consultation, procedure, diagnostic test (including imaging) or treatment is made as soon as practicable and stored in a way that enables easy retrieval for at least four years, as outlined in the [Record Keeping Guidelines](#).
8. The registered premises has the appropriate personal protective equipment and other equipment necessary to perform clinical examinations, treatments and surgery to current standards of practice and that this equipment is maintained in accordance with the recommendations of the manufacturer.
9. The registered premises has a written infection control plan which is reviewed at least annually to help people in the premises reduce their risk of acquiring a zoonotic disease.
10. Animals suffering from a suspected contagious disease are isolated from other patients and that all reasonable measures are taken to prevent the spread of disease.
11. Animals admitted to the registered premises are identified and treated in accordance with the informed consent that has been provided by the person responsible for the care of the animal or as required if this is not practicable.
12. The registered premises has a sufficient amount of medication appropriate for the needs of the premises and that this medication is acquired, stored, dispensed and details recorded in accordance with relevant legislation.
13. Non-veterinary practitioners employed at the registered premises understand the importance of client to veterinary practitioner communication and always communicate with the veterinary practitioner if they are not able to answer enquiries from clients.

14. The registered premises does not refuse to provide relief of pain or suffering to an animal that is in the presence of a veterinary practitioner where relief of pain means either first aid treatment, timely referral to another veterinary practitioner or euthanasia.
15. A veterinary practitioner is available for the ongoing care of those animals accepted for diagnosis or treatment and if one is not available arrangements have been made with another veterinary practitioner to take over the care of those animals.