



VETERINARY SURGEONS BOARD OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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NOTIFICATIONS ABOUT VETERINARY SURGEONS

The Veterinary Surgeons Board of South Australia (the Board) administers the *Veterinary Practice Act 2003* (the Act). One of the roles of the Board is to regulate the professional conduct of veterinary surgeons, in order to maintain a high standard of service for the community.

If you wish to notify the Registrar of any matter of concern regarding the conduct of a veterinary surgeon, please complete the form provided and set out the relevant facts in chronological order. If you were not the person presenting the animal to the veterinary surgeon, please provide the name and address of that person. If possible, please include a signed statement by the person who dealt with the veterinary surgeon.

The steps involved in processing and investigating a notification are as follows:

1. The Registrar will receive the notification and consider its level of seriousness.
2. The Registrar will confirm receipt of the notification in writing.
3. The veterinary surgeon will be sent a copy of the completed notification form and will be asked to respond to the issues arising from the notification. If other veterinary surgeons are involved in the matter, the Registrar will request a report from those veterinary surgeons. Copies of patient records will be requested.
4. If required you may be contacted to provide further information or relevant documentation.
5. The Registrar will present the notification to the Board's Notifications Committee. The committee will consider all the information and provide advice to the Registrar.
6. If the Registrar determines that the matter constitutes proper cause for disciplinary action against the veterinary surgeon, the Registrar may lay a complaint before the Board alleging unprofessional conduct pursuant to section 62(1)(a) of the Act.
7. If the Registrar lays a formal complaint before the Board, you will be notified and may be asked to attend a hearing to give evidence. If the Board finds that the veterinary surgeon has engaged in unprofessional conduct, a range of sanctions may apply, from imposition of a fine to cancellation of registration.

Unprofessional conduct includes:

- (a) *improper or unethical conduct in relation to professional practice; and*
- (b) *incompetence or negligence in relation to the provision of veterinary treatment; and*



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a contravention of or failure to comply with -

- (i) a provision of the Act; or*
- (ii) a code of conduct or professional standards prepared or endorsed by the Board under the Act;*
and
- (c) conduct that constitutes an offence punishable by imprisonment for one year or more under some other Act or law.*

8. If the Registrar determines not to lay a complaint before the Board, the Registrar may attempt to resolve the matter with the veterinary surgeon(s) through such methods as correspondence or the provision of undertakings.

Irrespective of the Registrar's determination about the notification, a person who is aggrieved by the conduct of a veterinary surgeon has the right, pursuant to section 62(1)(c) of the Act, to lay a complaint setting out matters that are alleged to constitute grounds for disciplinary action against a veterinary surgeon before the Board. If you lay a disciplinary complaint against a veterinary surgeon before the Board, the Board will inquire into the subject matter of your complaint unless the Board considers it to be frivolous or vexatious. A disciplinary hearing would be held at which you would be required to present evidence in support of your complaint.

Please note that the Board has no power under the Act to deal with notifications relating to fees and is not able to order veterinary surgeons to pay compensation to any party.

Please also note that due to the confidentiality provision of the Act, the Registrar will not be able to disclose information to you about the progress of assessment of a notification, details of and reasons for the outcome of assessment, information about any subsequent investigation into the matter or the details or contents of any disciplinary action taken against a veterinary surgeon. However, if conditions are imposed on a veterinary surgeon's registration or a veterinary surgeon is removed from the register(s), that information will be disclosed to you as a matter of public record.

PLEASE RETURN THE ATTACHED FORM COMPLETED, SIGNED AND DATED.

The Board will only use and disclose personal information about you for the purpose of assessing and conducting an investigation into the matters raised by the notification, unless consent has been obtained from you to use the information for other purposes.



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NOTIFICATION FORM

This form allows the Registrar to gather as much information as possible about the incident and relevant circumstances. It is important that you complete **BOTH** pages of this form and sign the declaration.

PERSON MAKING THE NOTIFICATION

Name:

Owner of animal: Yes No

Address:

Telephone Number:

Email (if applicable):

Name of Owner (if not person making the notification):

PERSON WHO PRESENTED THE ANIMAL TO THE VETERINARY SURGEON

Tick the box if same as above Yes No (if not, please provide details)

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Email (if applicable):

ABOUT THE ANIMAL

Name:

Age: Sex:

Type of animal: (dog, cat, bird etc) Breed:

Markings: Colour:

ABOUT THE VETERINARY SURGEON(S)

Name of Vet(s):

Name of Clinic/Hospital:

Address:

Date(s) on which the incident occurred:

Have you attempted to resolve the matter directly with the veterinary surgeon(s)? Yes No

If not, please provide a brief explanation:

DECLARATION

I understand that a copy of this notification form will be sent to the veterinary surgeon(s). I give permission for the release of clinical records relating to the animal to the Board.

Signature Date



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If a second veterinary surgeon was involved in the subsequent care of my animal, I give permission for that veterinary surgeon to comment on the case, and provide clinical records to the Board.

Name of Second Veterinary Surgeon.....

Clinic/Hospital.....

Signature Date

Please outline the basis of the notification below including all relevant facts in chronological order.

If there is insufficient space, please attach a separate sheet.

*** Please note the Veterinary Surgeons Board of South Australia is not able to enquire into the fees charged by veterinary surgeons, except in circumstances where the fees charged significantly exceed the quoted price.**

*** Please also note that the Board is not empowered by the *Veterinary Practice Act 2003* to order a veterinary surgeon to issue a refund of fees charged for veterinary treatment.**