

811—12.1(169) Veterinarian/client/patient relationships.

12.1(1) The board shall determine, on a case-by-case basis, if a valid veterinarian/client/patient relationship exists. This relationship shall be deemed to exist when all of the following criteria have been met:

a. The licensed veterinarian has assumed the responsibility for making medical judgments regarding the health of the patient and the need for medical treatment, and the client has agreed to follow the instructions of the licensed veterinarian;

b. The licensed veterinarian has sufficient knowledge of the patient to initiate at least a general or preliminary diagnosis of the medical condition of the patient. Sufficient knowledge means that the licensed veterinarian has recently seen or is personally acquainted with the care of the patient by virtue of an examination of the patient or by medically appropriate and timely visits to the premises where the patient is kept; and

c. The licensed veterinarian is readily available or provides for follow-up in case of adverse reactions or failure of the regimen of therapy.

12.1(2) A valid veterinarian/client/patient relationship cannot be established by contact solely based on a telephonic or electronic communication.

12.1(3) Both the licensed veterinarian and the client have the right to establish or decline a valid veterinarian/client/patient relationship. Once the licensed veterinarian and the client have agreed and entered into a relationship, and the licensed veterinarian has begun patient care, the licensed veterinarian may not neglect the patient and must continue to provide professional services related to the patient's injury or illness within the previously agreed limits. As subsequent needs and costs for patient care are identified, the licensed veterinarian and the client must confer and reach agreement on the continued care and responsibility for fees. If the informed client declines future care or declines to assume responsibility for the fees, the relationship may be terminated by either party.

12.1(4) If no ongoing medical condition exists, a licensed veterinarian may terminate a valid veterinarian/client/patient relationship by notifying the client that the licensed veterinarian no longer wishes to serve that patient and client. However, if an ongoing medical or surgical condition exists, the patient should be referred to another licensed veterinarian for diagnosis, care, and treatment and the former attending licensed veterinarian should continue to provide care as needed during the transition.

12.1(5) Concerns about licensed veterinarian or staff safety may result in immediate termination of the veterinarian/client/patient relationship.

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