

Satellite Location – Shelter Medicine

Published: October 2015

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Introduction

In November 2012, Council established a Shelter Medicine Task Force (SMTF) to examine animal welfare issues related to shelter care in Ontario and to make policy recommendations

The SMTF Report was published in September 2013, and one of its recommendations was to permit accredited Companion Animal Hospitals or Offices to seek, for the purpose of establishing an accredited satellite location at a shelter, an exemption to the “self- contained facility requirement” (as required by the Accreditation Standards for Veterinary Facilities in Ontario) through the authority of the Accreditation Committee.

The public interest rationale for this recommendation is to remove any unnecessary regulatory barriers to improve access to veterinary services, inclusive of spay-neuter procedures, to shelter animals in Ontario.

The establishment of a satellite location for shelter medicine is intended to mitigate the risks associated with the transportation of shelter animals to and from accredited veterinary facilities for treatment by:

- Reducing the associated costs to the shelter, which ultimately would allow more animals to receive necessary veterinary care.
- Eliminating the chance of contagions being introduced to the companion animal hospital – which reduces the risk to animal and public health.
- Reducing transport stress on animals.



Purpose and Scope

This Policy Statement applies to all veterinarians who are considering overseeing a satellite location that is linked with their Companion Animal Hospital or Companion Animal Office for the purpose of providing veterinary medicine to animals housed in shelters¹.

A veterinarian seeking to add a satellite location for the purposes of providing shelter medicine must apply to the Accreditation Committee for an exemption. An approved exemption will be accompanied by a signed acknowledgement and undertaking (sample attached).

An approved satellite location for the purposes of shelter medicine will be noted on the public register.

Legislative Authority

Veterinarians Act, R.S.O. 1990, s. 17(3), 17(4)

College publications contain practice parameters and standards which should be considered by all Ontario veterinarians in the care of their patients and in the practice of the profession. College publications are developed in consultation with the profession and describe current professional expectations. It is important to note that these College publications may be used by the College or other bodies in determining whether appropriate standards of practice and professional responsibilities have been maintained. The College encourages you to refer to the website (www.cvo.org) to ensure you are referring to the most recent version of any document.

¹ Examples of acceptable satellite locations include satellite facilities located in shelters, charitable organization (Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides), and centers housing animals that are not individually owned by the public.



SAMPLE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND UNDERTAKING

College of Veterinarians of Ontario
("CVO")

-And-

DR. First and Last Name

I, DR. (First and Last Name), acknowledge that the Accreditation Standards for Veterinary Facilities in Ontario normally require that a Companion Animal Hospital or Office be located in a self-contained facility. In exchange for the Accreditation Committee of the CVO providing me with an exemption from that usual requirement, I acknowledge and undertake as follows:

1. I undertake to:
 - a. Provide veterinary services at the satellite facility only to the animals owned by the shelter.
 - b. Only provide those services and care that is permitted with this arrangement.
 - c. Refrain from offering to provide to the public veterinary services at the satellite facility.
 - d. Refrain from naming or advertising the satellite facility.
 - e. Establish and maintain a valid VCPR with shelter clients.
 - f. Implement standard operating procedures for properly trained shelter staff to follow in my absence.
 - g. Have available at the satellite facility, equipment and pharmaceuticals appropriate for the veterinary services being provided to shelter animals.
 - h. Refrain from keeping controlled drugs at the satellite facility.
 - i. Contact the College if my arrangement with the shelter has changed and the satellite facility is no longer operating.
 - j. Comply with the Veterinarians Act, O. Reg. 1093 (including maintaining medical records in accordance thereof), and CVO By-laws.
2. I acknowledge that The College has exclusive discretion to revoke this arrangement at any time.
3. I further acknowledge that failure to comply with this Undertaking, once signed, may be viewed as an act of professional misconduct for which the CVO may take action against me as set out in the Veterinarians Act.

I acknowledge that I have signed this Undertaking freely and voluntarily and have been informed of my right to obtain legal counsel in advance of signing this Undertaking.

Date

Signature, Veterinarian