

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. [No More Homeless Pets Program](#) (PDF)
2. **How do I obtain my drug license(s)?**
  - South Carolina requires both a DEA and a state drug license. You may apply for both licenses through the Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC), Bureau of Drug Control, by calling (803) 896-0634 or use [www.scdhec.gov](http://www.scdhec.gov) .
3. **Where do I obtain my accreditation/certification?**
  - Accreditation to sign health certificates may be obtained through the U.S. Department of Agriculture - APHIS. International Health certificates are mailed to the U.S.D.A. Telephone (803) 788-1919 or use [www.aphis.usda.gov/animalhealth](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animalhealth) .
4. **Where do I mail interstate health certificates? What are phone number for inquiring about interstate health certificates and overseas health certificates?**
  - Mail interstate health certificates to: Clemson LPHD, Post Office Box 102406, Columbia, S.C. 29224-2406. Telephone is (803) 788-2260 or use [www.clemson.edu/LPH/Lab.htm](http://www.clemson.edu/LPH/Lab.htm) .
  - Call about overseas health certificates at (803) 462-2910.
5. **How do I join the South Carolina Veterinary Association?**
  - You may contact the Association's offices by calling (803) 254-1027 or use [www.scav.org](http://www.scav.org) .
6. **Who serves on the Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners?**

There are 10 members on the Board who are all appointed by the Governor. There are seven veterinarians - one each from each congressional district, one veterinarian at large from the state, one veterinary technician at large from the state, and one consumer member. Members must also have advice and consent of the Senate.
7. [Consumer Rights to Reimbursement from Pet Dealers, Pet Shop, or Pet Breeders](#)
8. [Pet Loss](#)
9. [Pets and Candy](#)

**10. How many days of clinical practice, postgraduate (internship) are required to complete South Carolina's requirement? Who needs a New Graduate Temporary License?**

- A new graduate needs to complete **sixty (60)** days of clinical practice, postgraduate before a license is issued. **S.C. Code of Laws 40-69-240 (C)(2)**
- If you have not completed sixty days of postgraduate clinical practice and you wish to complete your clinical practice in South Carolina, you must apply for a **Veterinary New Graduate Temporary License** through the Board's office. 1. You must have supervising licensed veterinarian who is in good standing as a supervisor. 2. The fee is \$50.00 for this license. 3. It expires in three (3) months.

**11. Can a veterinarian dispense pharmaceuticals without a VCPR?**

- In accordance with Regulation 120-10 (D), a veterinarian is prohibited from prescribing, dispensing, or administering a legend drug in the absence of an established veterinary-client-patient-relationship (VCPR). The Board has interpreted this to mean that a veterinarian may prescribe and dispense from his or her own pharmacy for qualifying clients/patients, and may prescribe to a licensed pharmacy but may not act as a pharmacy for non clients/patients.

**12. What is the correct use of Rabies Vaccinations when they are labeled one year and three years?**

- Rabies vaccinations are administered to dogs and cats based on principles of immunology. When an animal is vaccinated for rabies for the first time, it **must** be revaccinated one year later. This is true of animals vaccinated as youngsters and animals with unknown vaccination history. This second vaccination is designed to boost the immune system's immunity against rabies.
- Rabies vaccinations for dogs and cats are labeled based upon their duration of immunity (DOI). The duration of immunity is the length of time that vaccination should provide immunity from disease. Manufacturers market rabies vaccinations with DOI of 1 year or 3 years. The primary and secondary vaccinations can be labeled with a DOI of 1 year or 3 years. However, regardless of the label, the secondary vaccination **must** be given one year later. After the secondary vaccination, the schedule can be followed based on the DOI label.

### 13. Who can give rabies vaccination?

- On May 20, 2010 Senate Bill 328 passed to amend **S.C. Code of Laws, Section 47-5-60** relating to inoculating pets against rabies, so as to provide that these inoculations must be administered by a licensed veterinarian or someone under the “direct supervision” of a licensed veterinarian, as defined in **S.C. Code of Laws, Section 40-69-20 (3)**.
- “Direct supervision” means that the licensed veterinarian is on the premises and within immediate vocal communication of the supervisee.
- The veterinarian is required to sign a certificate of inoculation, keep a copy of it on file for not less than three years, furnish a serially numbered metal tag to match the certificate, and provide the owner of the pet one copy of the certificate of inoculation.
- Rabies vaccination records shall comply with all DHEC requirements, including, but not limited to record content, record retention, public health record retrieval request responses, location of records and ownership of records. Compliance with all DHEC requirements is the professional responsibility of the veterinarian performing the vaccination and signing the rabies certificate. **S.C. Code of Regulations Section 120-8 (B) (4)**

### 14. Internet Pharmacies

- The American Association of Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB) and the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding announcing their intent to develop a Veterinary Internet Pharmacy Practice Sites Program (VIPPS). The NABP developed the program in 1999 in response to public concern for the safety of Internet pharmacy practices.
- VIPPS-certified pharmacies have been determined to meet and must follow stringent criteria developed by a broad-based coalition of regulatory agencies, professional associations and consumer-advocacy groups.
- The program will not be expanded to offer VIPPS certification to legitimately operating Internet pharmacies and veterinarians who meet the criteria and offer veterinary drugs online.
- The program will give veterinarians a creditable source to refer clients when they seek to obtain prescription medications via the Internet.

**15. Are veterinarians required to release prescriptions to clients?**

- A veterinarian is not required to release a prescription to the client; however, the AVMA and the Board strongly encourage doctors to release a prescription unless there is a “legitimate medical reason.”

**16. Who owns the patient’s medical records?**

- It is well established that the veterinarian is the owner of the patient records. While the veterinarian owns the records, the client has a right to see the records and to have a copy of them.
- The doctor may charge a reasonable fee for copying the records, including administrative costs if the file is very large; and the doctor may collect those fees prior to releasing the records.
- Records may not be withheld for non-payment of a bill.
- There are other means of collecting bad debts. A signed release for records is always recommended, whether or not the original or copies of the records are released.

**17. How long should a veterinarian retain patient records? What is best practice with communications notations in records?**

- South Carolina requires that records be maintained for a minimum of three (3) years after the last entry or as otherwise provided by law. **Regulation Section 120-8 (C)(1)**
- It is considered "**best practice**" to make detailed notations in every patient's record per all client communication. It is advised to note the mode of the contact (email, text, telephone call, face to face), the time, and the content of the information. See Question #48 for what should be in a medical record.

**18. (A) Are there specifics in the amount of continuing education hours a veterinarian should earn? Can hours of CE acquired in the current renewal period be applied toward the next renewal period?**

- Thirty (30) hours of continuing education hours are required biennially.
- Of the thirty required hours, no more than eight (8) hours may be taken in practice management or practice building and the remaining twenty-two (22) hours must be in clinical medical courses.
- Of the thirty hours, fifteen (15) hours may be obtained in distance learning programs.
- Of the fifteen hours allowable, a maximum of three (3) hours from an audio program.
- No CE hours can be carried over from one renewal period into another. For the 2015-2017 renewal period, hours must be earned between April 1, 2013 thru March 31, 2015.

**(B) Are there specifics in the amount of continuing education hours a veterinary technician should earn? Can hours of CE acquired in the current renewal period be applied toward the next renewal period?**

- Ten (10) hours of continuing education hours are required biennially.
- No CE hours can be carried over from one renewal period into another. For the 2015-2017 renewal period, hours must be earned between April 1, 2013 thru March 31, 2015.

**19. What is the law for abandoned animals?**

- An animal is considered abandoned when the animal has been placed in the custody of a licensed veterinarian for boarding, treatment, or other care and is unclaimed by its owner or the owner's agent and the owner or the owner's agent has not paid the charges for the boarding, treatment, or other care within ten days of notice of these charges being provided to the owner or the owner's agent in accordance and no other payment agreement with the owner or the owner's agent has been reached.
- The notice required must be given to the owner of the animal or the owner's agent at his last known address by registered mail or by certified mail, return receipt requested, and must contain a statement that if the animal is not claimed and if the charges are not paid within ten days after receipt of the notice, the animal may be sold, donated, turned over to the nearest humane society or animal shelter or otherwise disposed of as the person having custody of the animal considers proper.
- The owner of an abandoned animal is deemed to have relinquished all rights and claims to the animal by virtue of the abandonment.
- Providing notice to the owner or the owner's agent relieves the custodian of the animal of any liability for the sale, donation, euthanasia, or other disposal of the animal. **S.C. Code of Laws, Section 40-69-280 and 40-69-285**

- 20. What are the responsibilities of a veterinarian in emergency care?**
- During non-business hours, veterinarians are required to provide emergency service for their patients or refer them to an emergency clinic. Alternatively, the veterinarian may make arrangements to work with another veterinarian in his or her area to provide emergency care.
- 21. When practicing under a temporary license that requires “direct supervision”, is the licensed supervising veterinarian required to be on the premises at all times?**
- Yes, direct supervision means that a veterinarian currently licensed to practice veterinary medicine in the state of South Carolina is available on the premises and within immediate vocal communication of the supervisee. **See S.C. Code of Laws, Section 40-69-20 (3)**
- 22. When practicing under a temporary license that requires “immediate supervision”, is the licensed supervising veterinarian required to be on the premises at all times?**
- Yes, immediate supervision means that a licensed veterinarian is within direct eyesight and hearing range. **See S.C. Code of Laws, Section 40-69-20 (6)**
- 23. Are distance learning courses for veterinary technician’s acceptable courses for an animal health science degree?**
- Yes, as long as long the distance learning courses are offered by an AVMA accredited school.
- 24. Foreign Graduates**
- A foreign graduate must have received an Education Commission of Foreign Veterinary Graduates (ECFVG) Certificate from the AVMA.
  - For applicants who have not received their certificate but are applying to take the NAVLE exam, a letter from the National Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners must be submitted directly to the Board’s office attesting to the applicant’s enrollment and eligibility to take the NAVLE exam.

**25. Is it a state law that a veterinarian has to test for heartworms when a dog has consistently been on heart guard?**

- No, it up to the discretion of the veterinarian.

**26. Is there a Heartworm Preventive Medicine law?**

- There is not a specific state law regarding heartworm medication. The veterinarian is responsible for making sure the animal is in proper health to receive the medication.

**27. Who regulates boarding kennels and breeders?**

- Boarding kennels and breeders are not regulated in S.C. by a specific state statute. In order to operate a boarding kennel, you must obtain a business license from the Counties and Municipalities offices in your area.
- If the facility is owned and operated by a veterinarian, he/she would be subject to the laws of veterinary medicine.

**28. Who handles animal cruelty and abandonment?**

- The Board would refer you to the police department in the area where the crime is believed to have been committed. It may also be helpful to contact the local animal organization handling animal control issues.
- Only a law enforcement officer may seize an animal and charge a citizen with a crime. Local animal organizations like the S.P.C.As and The Humane Societies may be able to provide some support in various ways in cases of animal cruelty and abandonment; however, they are not able to remove animals from property or charge someone with a crime.
- In some cases, animal shelters are operated by city and county animal control officers. In this case, shelter workers may indeed be able to respond to suspected animal cruelty, but only if they are law enforcement officers.
- In South Carolina, animal cruelty includes acts of commission, omission, or abandonment.

**29. Musculoskeletal Manipulation (MSM)**

- Musculoskeletal manipulation (MSM) may be performed only by a veterinarian who has examined the animal patient and has sufficient knowledge to make a diagnosis of the medical condition of the animal and/or a licensed chiropractor working under the “direct supervision” of a veterinarian.

“Direct supervision” means that a veterinarian currently licensed to practice veterinary medicine in this state is available on the premises and within immediate vocal communication of the supervisee. **Section 40-69-20 (3)**

- It is the responsibility of the treating veterinarian to determine that MSM will not be harmful to the animal patient and to discuss a course of treatment with the owner of the animal.
- Since MSM is considered to be an alternative (nonstandard) veterinary therapy, the veterinarian shall obtain a signed acknowledgement from the owner of the patient or his/her authorized representative and retain it as part of the patient’s permanent record.
- When the supervising veterinarian has ceased the relationship with the chiropractor who is performing the MSM treatment, the chiropractor shall immediately terminate such treatment. A chiropractor who fails to conform to the provisions of this policy, and in turn **S.C. Code 40-69-10, et seq.**, when performing MSM upon an animal shall be deemed to be engaged in the unlicensed practice of veterinary medicine.

### **30. Massage Therapy**

- An animal massage therapist should be involved with a licensed veterinarian in some way. It is the responsibility of the veterinarian to determine that the therapy will not be harmful to the animal and to discuss a course of treatment with the owner of the animal.
- The veterinarian should be readily available or have made arrangements for follow-up evaluation in the event of adverse reactions.
- Since massage therapy is considered an alternative veterinary therapy, the veterinarian shall obtain a signed acknowledgement from the owner of the patient or his/her authorized representative and retain it as part of the patient’s permanent record.
- When the veterinarian has ceased the relationship with the massage therapist who is performing the massage treatment, the therapist shall immediately terminate such treatment.

### **31. Continuing Education Requirements for Military Deployed Licensees**

The S.C. Dept. of LLR has adopted policies and procedures regarding renewal of licensure that may be ordered to active military duty. The Department's goal is to avoid imposing the consequences of non-renewal upon the deployed licensee while ensuring that all statutory requirements for the health and safety of the public are reasonably satisfied.



Licenses are encouraged when possible, to advise the Board in writing before departing for active duty. Prior notice will allow staff to accept early renewal appropriately, note the active military duty of the licensee so as to avoid a break in licensure, and avoid the issuance of notices and other orders concerning lapsed licensure.

Upon written notice that the licensee has returned from active military duty and wish to resume practice, staff will make appropriate notation in the licensee's records and administratively reinstate the licensee to active practice upon receipt of the appropriate renewal fees.

No late fees or penalties will be assessed. Compliance with any delinquent continuing education or other applicable requirements shall be extended for not more than one (1) year from the date of return from active duty or practice under the license, whichever is earlier.

**32. Where is the American Veterinary Medical Association's Code of Ethics?**

You can use the American Veterinary Medical Association's Web site at <http://www.avma.org/issues/policy/ethics.asp>

**33. What are the rules for client records and radiographs?**

- Records shall be maintained for a minimum of three (3) years after the last entry, or as otherwise provided by law.  
**Regulation 120-8 (C) (1)**
- A radiograph is the property of the facility within which the original radiograph was exposed and it, or a copy, must be released upon the request of another veterinarian who has the written authorization of the owner of the animal to whom it pertains and such radiograph(s) shall be returned within thirty (30) days to the facility where the original exposure took place.  
**Regulation 120-8 (C) (2-4)**
- The record-keeping requirement in **Regulation 120-8 (B) (3)** shall not apply to the treatment of economic animals. Records for economic animals may be maintained on a per client basis.

**34. Is there a state exam? What are the dates for state exams?**

- The only state administered exam is the jurisprudence exam. The Board no longer administers in-house exams, the jurisprudence exams for veterinarians and veterinary technicians are now offered online.

- Once all documentation is received in the Board’s office to complete the applicant’s examination file, the applicant is mailed an exam acknowledgement letter, giving them a UserID and Password to access and take the exam online.
- Exams are open book and are available 24 hours a day.

**35. Do I need to display my license certificate and license renewal pocket card at my primary place of business?**

- Yes, all veterinarians licensed to practice in this state will conspicuously display (1) a valid South Carolina license and (2) a current license renewal certificate, at their primary place of business. **Section 40-69-250 (D).**

**36. How do I notify the Board of a name change? Do I need to notify the Board of a change in my practice name and location?**

- You must notify the Board in writing and send legal documentation of the names change such as a copy of your marriage or divorce decree certificate. **Section 40-69-250 (E)**
- Indicate how the name change should be listed.
- Fees are applicable for duplicate copies of your license certificate(s) and renewal cards.
- Changes in practice names and locations must be reported to the Board as it is the responsibility for licensees to keep all contact and practice information current with Board. (The Board does not approve names or changes in names of practices.) If the Board notices a duplicate name, you will be informed.

**37. What is the difference between an “emergency clinic” and an “emergency hospital”?**

- An emergency clinic or emergency hospital is a facility which advertises or otherwise purports to provide veterinary medical services during specified hours of operation or during periods when these services are not normally available through other facilities. **Section 40-69-290**
- “Emergency clinic” means a facility having as its primary function the receiving, treatment, and monitoring of emergency patients during its specified hours of operation. **Section 40-69-20 (4)**
- “Emergency hospital” means a facility whose primary function is the receiving, treatment, and monitoring of emergency patients during its specified hours of operation and includes the confinement of emergency patients. **Section 40-69-20 (5)**

**38. Are there any accredited schools of veterinary medicine in South Carolina?**

- No, the nearest accredited schools are: University of Georgia [www.vet.uga.edu](http://www.vet.uga.edu); North Carolina State University [www.cvm.ncsu.edu](http://www.cvm.ncsu.edu); Auburn University [www.vetmed.auburn.edu](http://www.vetmed.auburn.edu); and Tuskegee University [www.tuskegee.edu](http://www.tuskegee.edu).

**39. Are there any accredited schools of veterinary technology in South Carolina?**

- Yes, Tri-County Technical College, Pendleton, SC [www.tctc.edu](http://www.tctc.edu); and Trident Technical College, Moncks Corner, SC [www.tridenttech.edu](http://www.tridenttech.edu).

**40. How can I get help with a problem with alcohol or other drug problems and preserve my career?**

- Licensed Veterinarians and Licensed Veterinary Technicians who experience problems with alcohol or other drug problems can find help with the Recovering Professional Program (RPP). **RPP** is a confidential professional substance abuse program uniquely tailored to assist individual healthcare professionals in getting quality services and preserving their careers. Early identification, referral, and monitoring help assure good recovery from this progressive, deadly disease.
- Licensees who enroll with RPP before their substance abuse problems impact their practice are not disclosed to the licensing board while in compliance with RPP's requirements. RPP's team of specialized professionals identifies resources for each individual that best match their personal needs and situations. That individualized personal care from RPP builds strong relationships and provides tools to save or reactivate their careers.
- RPP's monitoring also provides employers, the licensing board, and patients with assurance of safe, effective practice. A solid record of participation with RPP certifies a licensee's personal commitment to professionalism today and in the future.
- If you or a colleague is experiencing a problem with substance abuse or dependence, you can find help by contacting RPP at 1-877-349-2094 (toll free). Learn more about RPP at <http://www.scrpp.org>.

**41. Is there a section in the Code of Law regarding information on animals, livestock, and poultry?**

**Code of Laws Title 47 - Animals, Livestock and Poultry**

CHAPTER 1 - CRUELTY TO ANIMALS	<a href="#">HTML</a>	<a href="#">Word</a>
CHAPTER 3 - DOGS AND OTHER DOMESTIC PETS	<a href="#">HTML</a>	<a href="#">Word</a>
CHAPTER 4 - STATE LIVESTOCK-POULTRY HEALTH COMMISSION	<a href="#">HTML</a>	<a href="#">Word</a>
CHAPTER 5 - RABIES CONTROL	<a href="#">HTML</a>	<a href="#">Word</a>
CHAPTER 6 - PSEUDORABIES CONTROL AND ERADICATION ACT	<a href="#">HTML</a>	<a href="#">Word</a>
CHAPTER 7 - ESTRAYS; LIVESTOCK TRESPASSING OR RUNNING AT LARGE	<a href="#">HTML</a>	<a href="#">Word</a>
CHAPTER 9 - LIVESTOCK GENERALLY	<a href="#">HTML</a>	<a href="#">Word</a>
CHAPTER 11 - SALE, GRADING AND INSPECTION OF LIVESTOCK	<a href="#">HTML</a>	<a href="#">Word</a>
CHAPTER 13 - DISEASES AND INFECTIONS	<a href="#">HTML</a>	<a href="#">Word</a>
CHAPTER 15 - FEEDING OF GARBAGE TO SWINE	<a href="#">HTML</a>	<a href="#">Word</a>
CHAPTER 17 - MEAT AND MEAT FOOD	<a href="#">HTML</a>	<a href="#">Word</a>
CHAPTER 19 - POULTRY PRODUCTS INSPECTION LAW	<a href="#">HTML</a>	<a href="#">Word</a>
CHAPTER 20 - CONFINED SWINE FEEDING OPERATIONS	<a href="#">HTML</a>	<a href="#">Word</a>
CHAPTER 21 - FARM ANIMAL AND RESEARCH FACILITIES PROTECTION ACT	<a href="#">HTML</a>	<a href="#">Word</a>
CHAPTER 22 - RENDERING OF LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY RAW MATERIAL	<a href="#">HTML</a>	<a href="#">Word</a>

**42. What is “immediate supervision?”**

“Immediate supervision” means that a licensed veterinarian is within direct eyesight and hearing range. **Section 40-69-20 (6)**

**43. What is “direct supervision?” What is “indirect supervision?”**

- a. “Direct supervision” means that a veterinarian currently licensed to practice veterinary medicine in this state is available on the premises and within immediate vocal communication of the supervisee. **Section 40-69-20 (3)**
- b. “Indirect supervision” means that the supervising licensed veterinarian is available for immediate voice contact by telephone, radio, or other means, and shall provide consultation and review of cases at the veterinary facility. **Section 40-69-20 (7)**

**44. Is there a requirement that a veterinarian must own or be a part owner in a veterinary facility or practice in South Carolina?**

No, that is not a requirement in the statutes or regulations governing the practice of veterinary medicine.

**45. Is it a must to renew on-line?**

No. The renewal application is provided on-line on the Board's web site for the licensee to print, complete, and mail to the Board's office.

**46. If I wish to not renew, do I need to contact the Board's office?**

As a courtesy, it would be appreciated; and it would keep the licensee from getting unnecessary mail about non-renewal.

**47. How long does it take to process an initial application for licensure?**

Applications are processed on a daily basis. It really depends on how long it takes for all required documentation to be received in the board's office. Once all requirements have been met; the jurisprudence exam has been passed; and there are no "yes" answers in Personal History Section requiring a Board appearance then an application will be approved within 10 business days.

**48. When querying Licensee Lookup, how do I know if a licensee has been disciplined? Can I see the discipline?**

If the licensee has incurred any disciplinary action, it will be indicated that there is discipline. Board Orders on licensees are on the Board's web site for the public to review. [www.llr.state.sc.us/pol/veterinary](http://www.llr.state.sc.us/pol/veterinary)

**49. Can I use the term Veterinary Nurse?**

Board had an Advisory Opinion written on April 3, 2014 that states: The SC Board of Veterinary medical Examiners recommends and advises that its veterinary aides or other employees of a licensed veterinarian not use the term 'nurse' to avoid possible confusion.

History: The South Carolina Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners has received inquiries concerning the use of the term 'veterinary nurse' by those licensed by the Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners. In response to these inquiries, the Board advises that it does not endorse use of the term 'nurse' by its licensees unless they are duly licensed by the South Carolina Board of Nursing. While the Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners practice act defines 'veterinary aide' to include a nurse, attendant, intern, technician, or other employee of a veterinarian, other

*than a licensed veterinary technician*, the term ‘nurse’ itself is a protected term according to the statutory language of the nurse practice act.

#### **50. What needs to be in a medical record?**

The Board feels it is good practice to have these items in an animal’s medical record in accordance with 120-8 B:

1. Name, address and telephone number of the owner
2. Name and identification of animal including age, sex, species and breed
3. Medical History:
  - i) Treatment dates: Beginning and ending dates of each animal’s treatment. If the animal was hospitalized for a period of time, include periodic notes of the status. If the animal was seen on one date only, that date should be recorded.
  - ii) Diagnosis or condition at the beginning of animal care: The animal’s weight and temperature should be recorded. Additionally, physical examination notes should be recorded. What is the animal’s overall demeanor, medical condition, etc.? As is reasonable, note abnormalities in specific body systems.
  - iii) Medication and treatment, including amount, route, and frequency of administration
  - iv) Progress and disposition of the case: Treatment notes should be recorded, progressive status of the animal should be noted, client communication should be noted, and treatments or diagnostics that have been done or declined, should be noted.
  - v) Surgery, radiology, laboratory information: Surgery progress notes, monitoring information, etc. should be noted. Descriptions of X-rays, and copies of laboratory values, notes, etc. should be noted.

Revised 02-11-16