

Complaint about a veterinary practitioner

Veterinary Practitioners Registration Board of Victoria



About making a complaint

The Veterinary Practitioners Registration Board of Victoria (the Board) can investigate complaints about the professional conduct of registered veterinary practitioners in accordance with section 21 of the *Veterinary Practice Act 1997* (the Act).

Unprofessional conduct is defined in section 3 of the Act. Examples of unprofessional conduct include:

- ‘professional conduct which is of a lesser standard than that which the public might reasonably expect of a registered veterinary practitioner’
- ‘professional conduct which is of a lesser standard than that which might reasonably be expected of a veterinary practitioner by his or her peers’
- ‘providing veterinary services of a kind that are excessive, unnecessary or not reasonably required for an animal’s well-being’.

More information about appropriate standards of professional conduct for veterinary practitioners is in the Board’s Guidelines at www.vetboard.vic.gov.au

Taking action on your complaint:

- If you are not satisfied with the services provided by a veterinary practitioner, speaking directly with the veterinary practitioner may help you understand the services they provided and the fees they charged. **Note that the Board does not have any power to award refunds or compensation.**
- If you still wish to lodge a complaint about the veterinary practitioner’s professional conduct, please complete a complaint form.
- If your complaint is about more than one veterinary practitioner, you must complete a separate complaint form about each veterinary practitioner.

Assistance with completing the complaint form

Please call us 03 9620 7444 during business hours if you have a question or are not able to complete the complaint form.

Complaint privacy

Completed complaint forms are permanently retained in the Board’s secure document storage facility. Material relating to a complaint, including correspondence with the Board, is subject to the provisions of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* and the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*.

If a complaint proceeds to a Formal Hearing, these hearings are open to the public. Please be aware that in such circumstances your details may be made public unless you have asked for them to remain private

More information: VPRBV Privacy and Data Protection Policy at www.vetboard.vic.gov.au

COMPLAINT FORM ON NEXT PAGE

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PART 1 – COMPLAINANT, OWNER, AND ANIMAL DETAILS

Name and contact information of the person making the complaint (the complainant):

Title		Family name		Given names	
Mailing address					
Suburb / town			State		Postcode
Email address					
Mobile telephone			Other telephone		
If we need to speak with you, will you need an interpreter?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	If yes, what language do you need interpreted?		

Complainant's role in this complaint:

Role	<input type="checkbox"/> The animal owner <input type="checkbox"/> A relative of the animal owner <input type="checkbox"/> A friend of the animal owner <input type="checkbox"/> The agent of the animal owner <input type="checkbox"/> A veterinary practitioner
	<i>If you selected other, please describe the role</i> _____ _____ _____

The owner of the animal/s:

➔ Leave this section blank if the owner is the complainant					
Title		Family name		Given names	
Owner's address					
Owner suburb / town			State		Postcode
Owner email address					
Owner mobile telephone			Other telephone		

The animal/s:

Name					
Species		Breed		Colour	
Age					
Sex	Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Female <input type="checkbox"/>	Desexed?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

PART 2 – THE VETERINARY PRACTITIONER

➔ **If the complaint is about more than 1 veterinary practitioner, please complete a separate complaint form for each veterinary practitioner.**

Name of veterinary practitioner				
Name of practice				
Street address				
Suburb / town		State		Postcode
Have any other veterinary practitioners or practices (that you do NOT have a complaint about) been involved with this complaint?				
No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Names of other veterinary practitioners			
	Name of other practices			

PART 3 – THE COMPLAINT

Date veterinary services provided

Date of services	From		To	
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If there has been a lapse in time between the complaint event and you making this complaint, please explain why you did not lodge a complaint earlier. _____

Summary of your concerns

What is your main concern about the professional conduct of the veterinary practitioner?

Treatment of the animal

Communication from and/or behaviour of the veterinary practitioner

Other issue

Summarise in a few main points what the veterinary practitioner did (or did not do) that caused you to complain about their professional conduct:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

PART 4 – DOCUMENTS AND WITNESSES

Do you have supporting documents about this event?
e.g. veterinary reports, photos, clinical records

Yes No

If yes, write a list of the documents here.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

➔ Please remember to include all supporting documents with your complaint

Did anyone witness the events?

Yes No

Name of witness 1

Phone

How was the first witness involved?

Name of witness 2

Phone

How was the second witness involved?

Name of witness 3

Phone

How was the third witness involved?

➔ Please attach a separate signed statement from each witness

Have you made a complaint to another organisation or initiated legal proceedings against the veterinary practitioner, or has the veterinary practitioner initiated legal proceedings against you? e.g. Consumer Affairs Victoria, Victorian Civil & Administrative Tribunal (VCAT)

No Yes If yes, what is the organisation's name, what process is underway or completed (e.g. investigation, hearing), and what was the outcome?

SIGN COMPLAINT DECLARATIONS AND PERMISSIONS

If you are both the complainant *and* the animal owner you must sign both declarations below.

Complainant declaration

➔ Before you sign below, make sure you read and understand this declaration	
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am aware that the Board may provide some or all the information I have provided to the veterinary practitioner and other persons approved by the Board for the purposes of investigating my complaint.
<input type="checkbox"/>	If the Board considers that another regulatory body may find this complaint relevant to their activities (e.g. under the <i>Drugs and Poisons Controlled Substances Act 1981</i> , the <i>Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986</i> etc.), I consent to the Board referring my information to that other body. Note: The Board will notify you if it refers information to another body for a different regulatory purpose.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I declare that all the information provided on and with this form is true and correct.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I understand that if this complaint proceeds to a Formal Hearing, the hearing will be open to the public to attend.
Name of complainant	
Signature	
Date	

Owner declaration

➔ Before you sign below, make sure you read and understand this declaration	
<input type="checkbox"/>	I declare that I am the animal's owner or duly authorised agent.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I declare that I have read the complaint form and accompanying documentation, and all the information I have provided about this complaint is true and correct.
Name of owner or agent	
Signature	
Date	

Owner/agent consent

➔ The owner or agent must give their consent for veterinary practitioners to disclose information	
<input type="checkbox"/>	I give my consent for the veterinary practitioner to release clinical records and disclose information to the Board and other persons approved by the Board.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I give my consent for other veterinary practitioners who have treated the animal to release clinical records and disclose information to the Board and other persons approved by the Board.
This consent is for the animal/s whose name is/are	
Name of owner or agent	
Signature	
Date	

Checklist

- I have completed all relevant sections of this form.
- I have attached all supporting documents, e.g. clinical records, vet reports, photos, witness statements.
- The declarations on this form have been completed and signed.
- The animal's owner or agent has given their consent for clinical records and information about this complaint to be released and disclosed to the Board and other persons approved by the Board.

How to return forms and other documents

You can either email or post the Complaint form, complaint declaration and consent form, and supporting documents to:

Email communications@vetboard.vic.gov.au

Post to Vetboard Victoria
 PO Box 247
 Collins Street West
 Melbourne VIC 8007

Next steps

After you submit your complaint:

1. an Investigation Officer may contact you if we need more information from you.
2. an Investigation Officer will keep you informed about the progress of your complaint.

Note that it can take several months to finalise a complaint.

See the Board's website for information about the Board's complaint handling process: www.vetboard.vic.gov.au

Feedback on this form

This is a new form and we would like your feedback on how easy it was to complete. Please circle a number in the scale below, with 1 meaning easy and 5 meaning difficult.

EASY

1

–

2

–

3

–

4

–

5

DIFFICULT

What is one thing we could do to improve this form **or** one thing you like about this form?
