

**21 NCAC 66 .0207            MINIMUM FACILITY AND PRACTICE STANDARDS**

(a) All locations where veterinary medicine is practiced shall be adequate for the maintenance of good hygiene at all times. All areas of the premises shall be maintained in a clean, odor free, and orderly condition at all times.

(b) The minimum standards for all facilities where veterinary medicine is practiced shall be:

- (1) The facility shall provide heating, cooling and ventilation sufficient for the comfort and safety of the animals, the employees and clients.
- (2) All rooms utilized for the practice of veterinary medicine shall have lighting sufficient for the tasks and activities conducted in the rooms.
- (3) Hot and cold running water shall be provided along with toilets and lavatories for the personnel and for the clients.
- (4) The facility shall have an area dedicated for storage of equipment and supplies, which area shall be of a size commensurate with the nature of the practice and the size of the facility, and which storage area shall be clean and, as required by the nature of the products or materials stored, shall be sanitary.
- (5) The facility shall have interior and exterior receptacles for waste disposal which shall comply with state, county and municipal health laws, ordinances and regulations.
- (6) The facilities shall employ a procedure for the prompt and sanitary disposal of dead animals which complies with all state, county and municipal laws, ordinances, rules and regulations. Dead animals held on premises shall be refrigerated.
- (7) All interior spaces in the facility shall be clean and orderly.
- (8) The facilities' examination rooms shall have the following:
  - (A) lined waste receptacles or chutes;
  - (B) a sink with disposable towels either in the examination room, or adjacent or reasonably convenient to the examination room, so as to facilitate necessary and required use of the sink for maintaining sanitation and hygiene in connection with examinations; and
  - (C) a table with an impervious surface which shall be sanitized between patients.
- (9) Surgery shall be performed in a manner compatible with current veterinary medical practice with regard to anesthesia, asepsis, life support and monitoring procedures as well as recovery care. The minimum standards for surgery shall be:
  - (A) Surgery shall be performed in a room designated and reserved for surgery.
  - (B) The surgery room shall be clean, orderly and well lighted.
  - (C) Sterilization shall include a steam pressure sterilizer or autoclave equipment. Cold sterilization may be used for field or septic conditions.
  - (D) Instruments and equipment utilized in the surgery room shall be commensurate with the type of surgical service being provided.
  - (E) Storage in the surgery room shall be limited to only items and equipment normally related to surgery and surgical procedures.
  - (F) Emergency drugs shall be readily available to the surgery area.
  - (G) The operating table shall be constructed of a smooth and impervious material.
  - (H) There shall be a separate surgical preparation area.
  - (I) There shall be available for surgery sterilized instruments, gowns, towels, drapes, gloves, caps and masks.
  - (J) Regulated oxygen under positive pressure shall be available.
- (10) The facilities shall have the capability for use of either in-house or consultant laboratory service for blood chemistry, cultures and antibiotic sensitivity examinations, complete blood counts, histopathological examinations and complete necropsies. An in-house laboratory facility shall meet the following minimum standards:
  - (A) The laboratory room shall have storage space sufficient for the equipment and materials necessary for the laboratory room;
  - (B) The facility shall have refrigeration with a capacity sufficient for drugs and medicines required to be refrigerated, as well as capacity for the refrigeration of dead animals held on the premises prior to disposal;
  - (C) All facilities shall have, as a minimum, in-house capability for the following tests:
    - (i) urine tests,
    - (ii) micro-hematocrit determination,
    - (iii) flotation tests for ova of internal parasites,

- (iv) skin scrapings for external parasite diagnosis, and
  - (v) exams for circulating blood microfilaria or heartworm antigen assays.
- (11) The minimum standards for drug procedures shall be:
  - (A) All controlled substances shall be stored, maintained, administered, dispensed and prescribed in compliance with federal and state laws, rules and regulations.
  - (B) Except for labeled manufactured drugs with instructions, all drugs dispensed shall be labeled with:
    - (i) name, address and telephone number of the facility,
    - (ii) name of client,
    - (iii) animal identification,
    - (iv) date dispensed,
    - (v) directions for use,
    - (vi) name and strength of the drug, and
    - (vii) name of prescribing veterinarian.
  - (C) A record of all drugs administered or dispensed shall be kept in the records of the individual animal, if the animal is a companion animal, or in the client's record, if the animal is an economic animal.
- (12) The following minimum standards shall apply to recordkeeping:
  - (A) Every veterinarian shall keep written records or records stored via computer/word processing and easily retrievable of the animals treated. These records shall include but not be limited to pertinent medical data such as dates and type of vaccinations and all medical and surgical procedures on a daily basis, radiographs and laboratory data.
  - (B) Records shall be kept for a period of three years following the last office visit or discharge of such animal from a veterinary facility.
  - (C) Records shall be maintained by individual animal for companion pet animals examined or treated.
  - (D) The recordkeeping requirement shall not apply to the treatment of economic animals except as provided in Paragraph (11)(C) of this Rule.
- (13) The following minimum standards shall apply to radiography:
  - (A) The facility shall have the capability of obtaining diagnostic quality radiographs through radiology equipment at the facility or through consultant services;
  - (B) The facility shall use and maintain radiology equipment in accordance with all federal and state laws, rules and regulations;
  - (C) all personnel using radiology equipment shall wear radiation badges.
- (14) Cages, exercise areas, pens and stalls shall be kept in a clean and orderly condition, in a well-lighted area, and in good repair to prevent injury to animals and to promote physical comfort.
- (15) All new veterinary facilities and all existing facilities changing ownership shall be inspected and approved by the Board prior to the practice of veterinary medicine within the facility.
- (16) The Board shall make periodic inspections of veterinary premises. Such inspection shall include, but not be limited to, verification of compliance with this Rule. The Board shall make reinspections as necessary to ensure compliance with this Rule.
- (17) Violation of the standards for all veterinary facilities covered by this Rule shall be grounds for disciplinary action as provided in G.S. 90-186, 90-187.8 and these Rules.
- (18) The facility shall comply with all federal, state and municipal laws, rules and regulations regarding disposal of medical wastes.
- (19) The following minimum standards shall apply to after hours emergency services. The veterinarian who is the owner, as well as the veterinarian who is in charge of the facility, shall provide after hours emergency service by one or more of the methods listed below in Parts (b)(19)(A) through (D) of this Rule. If after hours emergency services shall be provided other than by the veterinarian who is the owner or who is the veterinarian in charge of the facility, the name, address and telephone numbers of the provider of the after hours emergency service shall be posted prominently at the facility in areas where this information is likely to be seen by persons coming to the entrances of the facility, and the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the provider shall be accessible through a telephone answering machine or similar device.
  - (A) Availability by telephone, pager or answering machine; or

- (B) Membership in an after hours emergency services facility or organization that agrees with the veterinarian to assume the responsibility for this care; or
  - (C) An agreement for this care with another facility located in the same general community, area or region served by the primary facility and which provides after hours emergency service; or
  - (D) Notification of the name, address and telephone numbers of an emergency veterinary service facility, open to the public, which provides after hours emergency service, located in the same general community, area or region served by the primary facility.
- (20) All facilities where veterinary medicine is practiced other than facilities providing limited veterinary services shall maintain the minimum standards as required by this Rule, unless specifically exempted by statute or Board rule in facilities providing limited veterinary services.

*History Note:* Authority G.S. 90-185(6); 90-186(2);  
Eff. February 1, 1976;  
Readopted Eff. September 30, 1977;  
Amended Eff. May 1, 1996; May 1, 1989; October 1, 1982;  
Pursuant to G.S. 150B-21.3A, rule is necessary without substantive public interest Eff. January 9, 2018.