

Facility Director – Accreditation Definition and Responsibilities

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Introduction

In Ontario, a veterinarian providing clinical care to animals is required to work from an accredited facility. The profession, through Facility Accreditation, ensures access to quality veterinary care in a safe and professional environment through regular inspections of veterinary facilities conducted by trained inspectors.

The accreditation process supports public confidence in the veterinary facility and enhances the quality of veterinary care by requiring that veterinarians review their facilities regularly to ensure they continually meet facility accreditation standards for quality and safety.

All accredited veterinary facilities are under the oversight of a licensed veterinarian who is the facility director. Facility directors are responsible for ensuring that veterinary facilities are operated in accordance with the facility accreditation standards established by the College Council.

Purpose

This policy statement has been developed to clarify the obligations and responsibilities of a facility director with respect to ensuring that an accredited veterinary facility is operating in accordance with the Veterinarians Act, its Regulations, and facility accreditation standards as established by the Council under section 8 of the Act.



Definitions

Accredited Veterinary Facility: A veterinary facility that has been granted a certificate of accreditation by the College which signifies that the veterinary facility is operating in accordance with facility accreditation standards.

Facility Director: The licensed veterinarian who applies for the certificate(s) of accreditation for a veterinary facility and declares to the College that they are responsible for the facility. The facility director may be an owner of the veterinary facility or a partner in the practice conducted in or from the facility, or a licensed veterinarian designated by the owner(s) or partner(s). The facility director must be engaged in the practice of veterinary medicine conducted in or from the facility.

Holder of a Certificate of Accreditation: The holder of a certificate of accreditation is the facility director who has obtained a certificate of accreditation that is not expired or revoked.

Facility Director Accountability

The facility director signs an undertaking which is submitted to the College and by doing so, the facility director is accepting the obligations, as outlined in this document, for the oversight of the accreditation of the veterinary facility.

Under a facility director's oversight, a facility is expected to meet all relevant facility accreditation standards for the duration of its certificate of accreditation.

Responsibilities of the Holder of a Certificate of Accreditation

The holder of a certificate of accreditation must ensure the certificate of accreditation is posted visibly in the veterinary facility; or in the case of a mobile facility, makes the certificate of accreditation available for review upon request.

The holder of a certificate of accreditation is required to immediately notify the College, in writing, if any of the following events occur:

1. A change to the name of the veterinary facility.
2. A change in the type of species treated in or from the facility.
3. A change in the scope of veterinary services offered in or from the facility.
4. The relocation of the veterinary facility or of a stationary element of a facility with a mobile element.
5. A change in the identity of the facility director.



6. The facility no longer has any licensed veterinarian who would satisfy the requirements of a facility director as set out in paragraph 3 of subsection 11 (2) of Regulation 1093.

The College expects that the facility director will assist the holder of the certificate of accreditation in fulfilling these responsibilities.

Responsibilities of the Facility Director

The facility director will ensure only licensed members will have responsibility for and control over all of the clinical and professional aspects of the provision of services through the facility including maintaining the standards of practice of the profession.

A facility director is expected to be employed or contracted at the accredited facility they oversee, and to practice veterinary medicine onsite at the accredited facility not less than 4 days a month. There is flexibility when these days occur, for example, one day a week, two days every other week, or 4 days in one week.

When they are not onsite, the facility director must be available to be contacted during operating hours and respond within a reasonable timeframe to provide oversight, and this may be provided remotely (e.g., by phone).

Coverage by another responsible veterinarian who is employed or contracted at the accredited facility is permitted for short-term absences (e.g., vacation) of the facility director.

The facility director can delegate some responsibilities to capable licensed veterinarian(s) and/or veterinary team members. Having a facility accreditation team will help ensure that everyone is aware of how the veterinary facility is meeting the College's standards. Team involvement also encourages strong communication and collaboration throughout the accreditation process.

The facility director must be present at the veterinary facility to discuss the outcome of the accreditation inspection with the College's inspector.

In addition to any other duty set out in the Act, Regulations and facility accreditation standards, the responsibilities of a facility director in relation to facility accreditation include, but are not limited to:

1. ensuring the name of the facility director and their contact information are clearly and publicly displayed at the veterinary facility;
2. making all necessary applications for facility accreditation in a timely manner;
3. paying the facility accreditation fee and/or any other fees set out in the College by-laws;



4. facilitating the scheduling of an inspection and ensuring all veterinary team members and licensed veterinarians at the facility fully cooperate with and respond to all reasonable requests of an inspector;
5. being onsite and participating as needed in inspections;
6. promptly providing any records when requested by the College;
7. undertaking to correct any deficiencies noted at the time of an inspection within the specified timeline provided;
8. complying with any terms, conditions and limitations placed on the certificate of accreditation by the Accreditation Committee; and
9. ensuring that all veterinarians employed in the veterinary facility are appropriately licensed.

Facility Director Ceases to Meet Accreditation Standards for the Certificate of Accreditation

Should the College receive information that indicates that a veterinary facility director (inclusive of the holder of the certificate of accreditation, or the veterinary facility) has ceased to meet the qualifications, requirements and standards under the Act for a certificate of accreditation, the Registrar can cause an inspection of the veterinary facility (O.Reg.1093 section 50).

The Registrar may refer the certificate of accreditation to the Accreditation Committee for a hearing if the Registrar is of the opinion that there are reasonable grounds to believe that,

1. The holder of the certificate of accreditation, the veterinary facility director or the veterinary facility in respect of which the certificate of accreditation was issued has ceased to meet the qualifications, requirements and standards under the Act,
2. The veterinary facility in respect of which the certificate of accreditation was issued, is being used, or has been used in contravention of a term, condition or limitation of the certificate of accreditation, or
3. The veterinary facility in respect of which the certificate of accreditation was issued is being used or has been used as a veterinary facility of a class other than the class for which the certificate of accreditation was issued or renewed.

After holding a hearing, the Accreditation Committee may direct the Registrar to,

1. Revoke the certificate of accreditation
2. Suspend the certificate of accreditation pending the demonstration, in such manner as the Accreditation Committee specifies, of compliance with such standards as are specified by the Accreditation Committee
3. Change the class of veterinary facility
4. Impose such new or further terms, conditions and limitations on the certification of accreditation as are specified by the Accreditation Committee, or
5. Take no further action.



Legislative Authority

Veterinarians Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. V.3, s. 15, 18 and 36

R.R.O 1990, Reg, 1093: General, s. 10-15, and 50 (Veterinarians Act)

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.