



OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL
STATE OF OKLAHOMA

ATTORNEY GENERAL OPINION
2017-812A

Cathy Kirkpatrick, Executive Director
State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners
2920 N. Lincoln Blvd., Suite C
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105

November 28, 2017

Dear Executive Director Kirkpatrick:

This office has received your request for a written Attorney General Opinion regarding action the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners proposes to take against J.L.P., a licensed veterinarian, in the following cases: C-16-050, C-16-076, C-17-007, C-17-020, and C-17-030. Since 2009, the Board has received twenty-seven previous complaints against the licensee for, among other things, improper billing practices, mistreatment of animals, allowing employees to practice veterinary medicine without a license, failure to guard against diversion and maintain adequate records of Controlled Dangerous Substances (“CDS”), and taking clients’ pets in lieu of payment. The Board proposes to suspend the licensee’s license for six months, impose ten years of probation to include a \$50 per month probation fee, impose a \$30,000 fine, and require payment of \$500 to one of licensee’s customers who was charged for services not provided.

The Oklahoma Veterinary Practice Act authorizes the Board to “regulate the practice of veterinary medicine.” 59 O.S.2011, § 698.7. This includes the authority to revoke or suspend licenses, to “determin[e] a person’s . . . continuing qualification and fitness for the practice of veterinary medicine,” and to impose “administrative penalt[ies]” against people who violate the Act. *Id.* §§ 698.14a(A)(1-2), (Q), 698.3(B)(1). The Board may impose disciplinary action for unprofessional or dishonorable conduct including “[c]onduct likely to deceive, defraud, or harm the public,” “[n]egligence in the practice of veterinary medicine,” “[a]iding or abetting the practice of veterinary medicine by an unlicensed . . . person,” “[v]iolation of any laws relating to the administration, prescribing or dispensing of [CDS],” or “[o]btaining a fee by fraud or misrepresentation.” *Id.* § 698.14a(E)(4), (7), (11), (13), (14). The Board may reasonably believe that the proposed action is necessary to uphold professional standards among veterinarians.

It is, therefore, the official opinion of the Attorney General that the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners has adequate support for the conclusion that this action advances the State's policy to require veterinarians to meet minimum professional standards.



MIKE HUNTER
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF OKLAHOMA



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