

Safe Harbor Regarding Request for Records

Consistent with the AVMA position, it is the position of the South Carolina Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners that it is unethical practice to release patient records containing information about diagnosis and treatment except to another veterinarian or in certain legal settings. The release of a list of patients who have or have not had a certain treatment or medication would be considered the release of records containing medical information.

Regarding the release of a client list generally for marketing purposes, because the AVMA and Veterinary practice act and regulations do not directly address this issue, the Board is of the opinion that this is a business decision not directly within the Board's jurisdiction. The Board would however strongly caution its licensees to avoid the release of confidential patient information and to take into consideration the client's reasonable expectations of privacy.

There are legal risks associated that may require advice from an attorney who represents the licensee(s) in question; to more completely avoid exposure of the licensee to a board complaint resulting from conduct outside the safe harbor position expressed above.