

T-1.1 CODE OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

General Considerations

1. The veterinarian must defend the honour, dignity and noble tradition of his profession through exemplary conduct in his professional life, to achieve the highest possible esteem of society.
2. It is considered a primary obligation of a member of the World Veterinary Association to act in accordance with, the spirit and standards of this Code.
3. The Code shall be a guide to the attitude of the professional veterinarian, be a guideline of rights and duties, unify the existing ethical standards and offer basic rules to veterinarians all over the world. Basically, it shall be a guarantee of the services offered to society. it intends to achieve a correct evaluation of the animals' place in society, both in regard to its utility and its use in sports and as a companion, with the aim of achieving the best possible conditions for man and for the animal.
4. The following are also basic duties of the veterinarian:
 - a. To act with highest social sensibility when practising his profession.
 - b. To contribute to the development of animal production in all its aspect as long as it does not harm the welfare of the animals.
 - c. To protect the health of man against zoonoses, by supplying food and products of animal origin of the highest quality.
 - d. To promote animal welfare, by ensuring that the animals are living in the best possible conditions and by preventing and curing their diseases, avoiding unnecessary suffering and improving the ecological conditions.
 - e. To take part in the progress of science, particularly in veterinary and related fields.
 - f. To divulge without restrictions his knowledge and techniques, making use of his studies, education and information in general, applying his skills particularly to the type of work carried out by him.
 - g. To support any measures capable of improving the quality and extent of professional services.
 - h. To belong to and support professional, national and international associations and participate actively in scientific, technical and professional meetings.
 - i. To promote initiatives in favour of moral and

- material interests of members of the profession, always taking into consideration the higher interests of society.
- j. To abide the national laws governing the activities of a veterinarian.
5. The Rules of this code are intended for those who fulfil the following requirements:
- a. Possess an adequate title with the professional designation of "veterinarian" (or other similar) in accordance with the standards fixed by the World Veterinary Association.
 - b. Participate in any of the fields of professional activity either exclusively reserved for veterinarians or shared with other professions.
 - c. Be a member of national or international associations affiliated with the WVA.
6. In line with the present Code, the veterinary profession may be exercised in the following fields, either exclusively or shared with other learned professions, in accordance with the rules and practice of each nation:
- a. Animal production and nutrition.
 - b. Veterinary public health.
 - c. Preventive and therapeutic veterinary medicine.
 - d. Animal reproduction.
 - e. Hygiene, sanitation and control of products of animal origin.
 - f. Techno-industrial assistance in the production of food, products of animal origin and animal health products.
 - g. Transport of animals, embryos and derived products.
 - h. Laboratory diagnostic techniques, evaluation.
 - i. Participation in the development of socioeconomic policies relating to the husbandry of production animals and the related industries.
 - j. Applied genetics.
 - k. Animal research and biological disciplines.
 - l. Ecology, biology, protection of wild animals and control of contamination and pollution.
 - m. Pisciculture, marine biology and fishing.
 - n. Teaching, extension and basic sciences.
 - o. The issue of certificates and expert reports relating to the above mentioned fields.
 - p. Direction, planning, administration, statistics and informatics in the above fields.

Professional Conduct

7. The veterinarian shall keep himself fully abreast of the

latest advances in science and the profession, whilst updating his relevant knowledge and general education; this obligation also refers to national and international associations of veterinarians which should ensure that all their members are given the opportunity of exercising their profession with competence, responsibility and application of up-to-date knowledge.

8. The veterinary specialist may only use titles which have been granted by institutions recognised by the national association of the country of his Practice.
9. The veterinarian may not support, occult or become associated with persons or procedures of doubtful commercial reputation, illegal procedures contrary to ethical standards or scientific methods which counteract animal welfare, damage animal production, the ecological balance or are subject to other interests which are not the noble ones pursued by the profession.
10. In order to derive real benefit from his work, the professional veterinarian must necessarily apply all available knowledge, the most advanced techniques and the most adequate medication possible. He shall be exempted from performing duties that may expose him to physical dangers or infection or would be detrimental to the quality of his services, or be illegal. In all circumstances he should, therefore, evaluate the correct relationship between his acts and their possible consequences,
11. The performance of the activities of the veterinarian shall be personal and direct, based on technical and scientific standards.
12. The veterinarian shall give the necessary care to animals entrusted to him for attention, custody, production, reproduction or research, using them exclusively for these purposes and shall not perform unnecessary operations.
13. The veterinarian shall prescribe only officially registered medicines, providing them in what he believes to be the most convenient and beneficial form and dosage. He shall especially take into consideration the risks to human and animal health if they are used differently or if the instructions given by him are modified.
14. It is an obligation to inform the client of the prospects

of success, the dangers and other circumstances that may alter the outcome of work to be carried out. An ethical responsibility exists for the results of professional errors, but not as far as the result of the operation is concerned.

15. The Veterinarian must recognise the right of a client to consult another colleague or a specialist of another profession at any time in accordance with the subject matter.
16. Documents must be authenticated or signed in a strict ranking order and be expressed in a true, concrete, serious and impartial way. Important facts may not be omitted. The certified services must have been performed by the undersigned in his presence or under his responsibility.
17. Professional secrecy is a duty and a right basic to the very essence of the veterinary profession. Secrecy of performance, if it does not affect public property, does not violate legal regulations and does not damage third parties, is a basis of the honour and responsibility of the veterinarian. Technological secrecy must also be included in the obligations of the professional veterinarian.
18. The publication or presentation of scientific papers merits a maximum amount of respect and professional interest. It is the author's obligation to draw the attention to original work which is not his own. Plagiarism is considered to be a serious infringement of professional ethics.
19. The veterinarian has a right to collect a fee for his services which must be honest, fair, reasonable and based on the very important role of his profession. The fees must be those used in the country where he works, adapted to the legislation and the standards fixed by the professional associations in this respect. It is not ethical to offer competitive prices in order to obtain professional work.
20. Promotion of services with moderation and sincerity is allowed but the principles governing this activity must be respected, especially as far as colleagues are concerned.

21. In his relationship with other professions and individuals, the veterinarian shall respect and have the highest regard for the professional criteria and fields of interest of others and may expect the same from other professionals with respect to this professional criteria and fields of activity.

Conduct between the individual veterinarians

22. Professional relations shall be based on dignity, loyalty and respect, and be strictly ethical and scientific. Within these standards colleagues must express between themselves their mutual consideration, esteem, willingness to co-operate professionally and give moral support. Any document bearing the signature of a colleague should be treated with respect.
23. Any form of assistance between colleagues, including specialist assistance, consultation, replacement and companionship, shall be promoted in strict compliance with the Code, in the spirit of brotherhood.

Juries, Committees and Deontological Rules

24. The WVA shall set up an ethics committee which shall act as a final adjudicator in interpreting the present code. On the national level, each association shall elaborate their rules and constitute their committee and their own panel consisting of members with the highest professional and moral standards.
25. Notwithstanding the present rules, the veterinarians will remain subject to the standards of the professional codes, laws and rules effective in the countries where they practise until such time as these standards have been adapted to the stipulations of the present rules.