



College of Veterinary Medicine

Policies and Procedures

Subject: ***Medical Records: Patient Information***

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MEDICAL RECORDS – PATIENT INFORMATION

The Mississippi State University Animal Health Center recognizes that clients often have a need for the information contained in their pet's medical records. The goal of this protocol is to ensure that clients have timely and complete access to their pet's medical records. Additionally, all members of the Animal Health Center team recognize that confidentiality of medical records must be maintained and their responsibility is to protect that confidentiality. By adhering to the following principles and guidelines, we will be able to consistently and effectively meet our clients' needs.

The basic principle the Animal Health Center follows is that the provision of the medical information is the responsibility of the Animal Health Center. As such, any request for medical record information will be taken seriously and addressed promptly. Any request for medical records, whether in person or by phone, fax, mail, or e-mail will be accepted. Most requests for medical records are made to the medical records staff, veterinary students, clinicians, interns, or residents. If medical records are requested of any other staff member, they will direct such requests to a medical record staff member, veterinary student, clinician, intern, or resident. The final responsibility for oversight of medical records information will reside with the medical records staff, Animal Health Center Director, and Chief of Staff- Animal Health Center.

Due to the potentially sensitive nature of medical records, they are to be reviewed by a clinician, intern, or resident prior to being released. The exceptions to this are status of the patient as (or has been) a patient of the Animal Health Center and the vaccination record. Any member of the AHC Staff may release this information.

Medical records will be released only when authorized by the client or an appropriately designated representative of the client. An appropriate representative is considered to be anyone the client specifically authorizes (verbally or in writing), anyone who has been routinely involved in communication with the clinic about the patient, and any veterinarian who is currently treating the patient. Additionally, records may be released as required by law (i.e. public health department, courts, etc.).

Once the medical record has been reviewed, the information will be delivered as soon as possible and in an appropriate manner. This may take the form of a veterinarian summarizing the record over the phone in cases where immediate communication is needed. In other cases, this may be faxing,

emailing or mailing a copy of the record. The original medical record will not leave the Animal Health Center. The medical record contains information about any diagnostic tests (radiographs, ultrasound, etc.) performed and their results. The client can request copies of the diagnostic tests (radiographs, ultrasound, etc.) with the understanding that additional fees may apply and possible time delays may be involved in making such copies.

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