

1 AN ACT relating to veterinarians.

2 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:*

3 ➔SECTION 1. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 321 IS CREATED TO  
4 READ AS FOLLOWS:

5 *If a veterinarian finds that an animal with which he or she has a veterinarian-client-*  
6 *patient relationship has been abused in violation of KRS 525.125, 525.130, 525.135, or*  
7 *525.137, the veterinarian may make a report to:*

- 8 *(1) The Office of the State Veterinarian for any animal for which an on-farm*  
9 *livestock or poultry care standard has been promulgated under KRS 257.196; or*  
10 *(2) Law enforcement for any other animal.*

11 ➔Section 2. KRS 321.185 is amended to read as follows:

12 (1) In order for a veterinarian to practice veterinary medicine, a relationship among the  
13 veterinarian, the client, and the patient shall be established and maintained.

14 "Veterinarian-client-patient relationship" means that:

15 (a) The veterinarian has assumed the responsibility for making judgments  
16 regarding the health of the animal and the need for veterinary treatment, and  
17 the client, whether owner or other caretaker, has agreed to follow the  
18 instructions of the veterinarian;

19 (b) There is sufficient knowledge of the animal by the veterinarian to initiate at  
20 least a general or preliminary diagnosis of the medical condition of the animal.  
21 This means that the veterinarian has recently seen and is personally acquainted  
22 with the keeping and care of the animal by virtue of an examination of the  
23 animal or by medically appropriate and timely visits to the premises where the  
24 animal is kept; and

25 (c) The practicing veterinarian is readily available or shall provide medical  
26 service for follow-up in case of adverse reactions or failure of the regimen of  
27 therapy. A new regimen of therapy shall be contingent only upon cooperation

1 of the client and availability of the subject animal.

2 (2) The veterinarian shall maintain records which document patient visits, diagnosis,  
3 treatment, and other relevant information.

4 (3) (a) A veterinarian shall not violate the confidential relationship between the  
5 veterinarian and the veterinarian's client.

6 (b) A veterinarian shall not release information concerning a client or care of a  
7 client's animal, except~~[on the veterinarian's receipt of]~~:

8 1. **On the veterinarian's receipt of:**

9 **a.** A written authorization or other form of waiver executed by the  
10 client; or

11 **b.**~~[2.]~~ An appropriate court order or subpoena; **or**

12 **2. In cases of animal abuse, pursuant to Section 1 of this Act.**

13 (c) A veterinarian who releases information under paragraph (b) of this  
14 subsection shall not be liable to any person, including the client, for an action  
15 resulting from the disclosure.

16 (d) The privilege provided by this subsection is waived by the client or the owner  
17 of an animal treated by the veterinarian to the extent the client or owner places  
18 at issue in a civil or criminal proceeding:

19 1. The nature and extent of the animal's injuries; or

20 2. The care and treatment of the animal provided by the veterinarian.

21 (e) This subsection shall not apply to:

22 1. An inspection or investigation conducted by the board or an agent of the  
23 board; or

24 2. The veterinary reporting requirements and regulatory authority of the  
25 Kentucky Horse Racing Commission to inspect, investigate, and  
26 supervise horses and other participants in horse racing as provided by  
27 KRS Chapter 230 and the administrative regulations promulgated under

1                   KRS Chapter 230, or any other law applicable to the regulation of horse  
2                   racing in the Commonwealth.

3 (4) Veterinarians providing copies of records under this section may charge no more  
4                   than the actual cost of copying, including reasonable staff time.