

# North Carolina Veterinary Medical Board

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*Regulatory  
Bulletin*

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## Verifying Veterinary Licenses (It is essential for employers to verify the license/registration of new hires)

In 2022 there have been two instances of individuals working as Veterinarians in facilities without a valid North Carolina License. **Be aware that the only official verification of a Veterinary License or Veterinary Technician Registration can be found on the NCVMB's website.** You can access this information via this link: <https://portal.ncvmb.org/verification/search.aspx>

A printed license is not considered official since it is possible to alter the name, number, or date. It is important that all Veterinary facilities verify the license or registration of any new hire prior to the start of employment. An unlicensed Veterinarian employed at your facility can place you at serious legal liability.



***NCVMB License and Registration Renewal Opens November 1<sup>st</sup> 2022***



### **Renewal Requirements for this renewal cycle 2023**

In response to the on-going COVID situation, the NCVMB suspended the requirement that only 10 hours of CE may be obtained via online learning. Therefore, for the year **2023 (2022 Renewal)** Veterinarians and Registered Veterinary Technicians may obtain their CE completely online/virtually (both interactive and non-interactive) if necessary, to complete their requirement. It is important to remember that you are still required to complete 2 CE hours of opioid training each renewal

### **Renewal Requirements for the next renewal cycle 2024**

- **VETERINARIANS: CE to be obtained prior to licensee's expiration date.** A total of 20 CE hours required per renewal cycle. Ten (10) hours of computer based training will be accepted during each renewal, however, five (5) of those hours will need to be 'interactive'; this is in accordance with [Administrative Code .0206 \(7\)](#). **Beginning in 2020**, renewals will require two (2) hours of CE on the 'abuse of controlled substances'; these 2 hours are included in the total number of CE hours.
- **TECHNICIANS: CE to be obtained prior to licensee's expiration date.** A total of 12 CE hours required per renewal cycle. Six (6) hours of computer based training will be accepted during each renewal, however, three (3) of those hours will need to be 'interactive'; this is in accordance with [Administrative Code .0206 \(7\)](#). **Beginning in 2020**, renewals require two (2) hours of CE on the 'abuse of controlled substances'; these 2 hours are included in the total number of CE hours.

#### **Opioid controlled substance CE should include one (1) of the following:**

1. Controlled substances prescribing practices
  2. Recognizing signs of the abuse or misuse of controlled substances
  3. Controlled substance prescribing for chronic pain management
- The Board does not accept attendance in exhibit halls as credits.
  - Credits may be earned by completion of independent self-study courses.
  - Credits not obtained during the appropriate calendar year (years for technicians) **(Faculty: Credits not obtained during the appropriate fiscal year)** will incur a \$50.00 penalty.
  - University/College Internship programs need prior Board approval before being used as CE credit. Written documentation on the University/College program is recommended and should be kept on file should you be randomly selected for a CE audit.
  - **CE AUDIT:** Random CE audits will be conducted per renewal cycle.
    - Each veterinarian and veterinary technician shall keep a record (certificate of attendance) for the three (3) most recent renewal periods of the content of courses submitted to the Board for continuing education credit hours.
    - CE records (certificate of attendance) must be provided to the Board upon request.
    - If evidence of Board approved CE completion cannot be provided during an audit, the license cannot be renewed and faces revocation.

## Emergency Veterinary Regulations in the NC Veterinary Practice Act

The Board has recently received inquiries from emergency clinics regarding their affirmative obligations in emergency situations when their facility is overwhelmed with patients. Accordingly, the emergency veterinary regulations in the NC Veterinary Practice Act are listed below:

### **90-181.1. Practice facility names and levels of service.**

(2) **"Emergency facility"** means a veterinary medical facility whose primary function is the receiving, treatment, and monitoring of emergency patients during its specified hours of operation. At this veterinary practice facility, a veterinarian is in attendance at all hours of operation and sufficient staff is available to provide timely and appropriate emergency care. An emergency facility may be an independent veterinary medical after-hours facility, an independent veterinary medical 24-hour facility, or part of a full-service hospital or large teaching institution.

### **.0207 MINIMUM FACILITY AND PRACTICE STANDARDS**

(19) **The following minimum standards shall apply to after-hours emergency services.** The veterinarian who is the owner, as well as the veterinarian who is in charge of the facility, shall provide after-hours emergency service by one or more of the methods listed below in Parts (b)(19)(A) through (D) of this Rule. If after hours emergency services shall be provided other than by the veterinarian who is the owner or who is the veterinarian in charge of the facility, the name, address and telephone numbers of the provider of the after-hours emergency service shall be posted prominently at the facility in areas where this information is likely to be seen by persons coming to the entrances of the facility.

(A) Availability by telephone, pager or answering machine; or

(B) Membership in an after-hours emergency services facility or organization that agrees with the veterinarian to assume the responsibility for this care; or

(C) An agreement for this care with another facility located in the same general community, area or region served by the primary facility and which provides after hours emergency service; or

(D) Notification of the name, address and telephone numbers of an emergency veterinary service facility, open to the public, which provides after hours emergency service, located in the same general community, area or region served by the primary facility.

As noted above, the North Carolina Veterinary Practice Act imposes affirmative obligations on "emergency facilities." Importantly, the Act requires emergency facilities to make "sufficient staff" available to provide "timely and appropriate emergency care." The Board is mindful that the analysis of whether "sufficient staff" is available at an emergency facility will depend on a host of factors, including the facility's location. Ideally, an emergency clinic is able to provide emergency care to every patient, or at the very least, provide triage, stabilization and a referral to a different facility. However, the unfortunate reality is that circumstances do not always ideal. Accordingly, if your facility is overwhelmed and cannot see additional patients, the Board suggests:

1. Have the receptionist inform people that you are unable to see additional patients and/or place notification on your answering machine and web page.
2. Place an easily visible notice on your front door stating that you are unable to see additional patients and list alternative veterinary practices.
3. Offer a list of alternative veterinary practices, listing addresses and phone numbers, where the owner can seek care. It is advisable for your receptionist to have a printed sheet of this information that can be handed out, emailed, and/or texted.

## DEA Requirement-Employee Screening:

It is the position of DEA that the obtaining of certain information is a matter of business necessity for any employee who will have access to controlled substances. It is believed that conviction of crimes and unauthorized use of controlled substances are activities that are proper subjects for inquiry. In this regard, the DEA assumes that the following questions will become a part of an employer's comprehensive employee screening program (21 CFR §1301.90):

**Question:** *Within the past five years, have you been convicted of a felony, or within the past two years, of any misdemeanor or are you presently formally charged with committing any criminal offense? (Do not include any traffic violations, juvenile offenses or military convictions, except by general court martial.) If the answer is yes, furnish details of conviction, offense, location, date and sentence.*

**Question:** *In the past three years, have you ever knowingly used any narcotics, amphetamines or barbiturates, other than those prescribed to you by a physician? If the answer is yes, furnish details.*

Note: The stated intent is to prevent a DEA registrant from hiring anyone with access to controlled substances who probably would be denied a DEA registration due to risk of diversion. DEA can revoke DEA registration if such registration is inconsistent with the public interest (21 USC 823(f) & 824(a)(4)). Conduct that has led to consideration of criminal charges, as well as misdemeanor or felony drug convictions are sufficient to deny or revoke registration (Federal Register Vol. 56, No. 148, August 1, 1991).



The State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) has a dedicated prescription drug unit referred to as the Diversion and Environmental Crimes Unit (DECU). DECU consists of 12 Special Agent's tasked with the responsibility of investigating criminal violations of North Carolina's Controlled Substances Act involving licit drugs. These agents are positioned all across the state in various geographical areas.

DECU specializes in facility-based diversion embezzlements that can unfortunately occur within veterinarian clinical settings. Additionally, DECU investigates prescription fraud/forgery incidents/attempts where a providers DEA Number has been illegally compromised. Please do not hesitate to contact DECU to report any diversion you may suspect; we will be glad to offer any assistance or simply just to answer questions you may have regarding prevention.

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