



Guidelines on Minimum Standards for Veterinary Premises

For the purpose of this Guideline the definition of veterinary premises is any building, where veterinary procedures are performed. This includes all fixed premises from large hospitals to consulting rooms, and includes rooms embedded in other business premises.

Whilst veterinary premises may be owned by any person or company, the Veterinary Board of the Northern Territory determines that it is the responsibility of registered veterinarians employed in or by the practice to ensure that the premises meet certain minimum standards.

General standards

Veterinary practitioners should ensure that all veterinary premises including consulting rooms, clinics and hospitals:

- (A) be clean and hygienic at all times;
- (B) have on prominent display, the telephone number and days and hours of attendance and arrangements for obtaining after hours services;
- (C) have a separate area for use as a waiting room and for the purpose of client reception;
- (D) have internal floors and walls constructed from easily cleaned material in any area or room that is used for animal accommodation, surgical procedures, medical treatment and other procedures, and in the client waiting rooms;
- (E) provide facilities to weigh small animal patients;
- (F) provide for the maintenance of thorough patient records;
- (G) provide in the consulting area:
 - (i) an examination table with impervious surfaces; and provide either in or immediately adjacent to the consulting area;
 - (ii) have hot and cold running water and fixed drainage;
- (H) have lockable storage for drugs as required by the *Medicines, Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act* and Regulations and the *Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Control of Use) Act* and Regulations (or any subsequent amendment to these regulations);
- (I) have appropriate facilities for disposal of sharps and clinical waste;
- (J) have facilities for any excreta, putrescible waste, soiled bedding and carcasses to be stored in such a way and disposed of at intervals sufficient to avoid:
 - (i) the generation of offensive odours;
 - (ii) offensive appearance; and
 - (iii) those materials becoming a hazard to health;
- (K) provide facilities that allow for the prevention of the spread of contagious disease between patients;
- (L) where general anaesthetics are administered, provide facilities and equipment for inhalation anaesthesia and resuscitation of patients (e.g. an emergency drug kit and the ability to give

- positive pressure ventilation) and, for routine procedures within business hours, have a trained assistant present for the purpose of anaesthetic monitoring and to assist in maintaining sterility;
- (M) where surgical services are offered there should be facilities for adequate storage and sterilisation of appropriate surgical instruments;
 - (N) comply with safety standards, local authority by-laws or other applicable to veterinary practices;
 - (O) provide facilities for correct collection and disposal of sharps;
 - (P) if radiographic services are offered then the services should comply with Occupational Health and Safety requirements and any other regulations as may be in force;
 - (Q) provide adequate cooling or heating and ventilation of any area in which any kennel, cage, or stall is situated – individual cage heating is acceptable;
 - (R) provide kennels or cages that comply with current veterinary standard. The cages or kennels should be made from non-porous material, be with appropriate size for the patient, have no sharp edges or points on which a patient can injure itself, and have an adequate latching device so as to hold the patient securely;
 - (S) provide appropriate isolation facilities for:
 - i) animals with suspected infectious diseases
 - ii) animals treated with chemical or radioactive substances that may be harmful to staff

Additional standards for shared premises

Where consultations are routinely conducted within buildings that are not dedicated veterinary clinics or hospitals (e.g. within pet shops or small branch practices or remote locations), veterinary practitioners should not use the same room for the purpose of surgical procedures other than minor surgery as for the hospitalisation of animals. Minor surgery does not include procedures involving the opening of body cavities or orthopaedic procedures. The general standards, which apply to all veterinary premises, should be met.

Version Control	V 1
Approved By	Veterinary Board
Last Reviewed	July 2020
Next Review Date	July 2023