

Client Drug Consultation Requirement for Veterinarians

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California Business and Professions Code section 4829.5 requires that each time a veterinarian initially prescribes or dispenses a prescription medication in an outpatient setting, they must offer to provide a drug consultation to the client or the client's agent.

The law specifies that:

- The veterinarian is required to offer consultation the first time they prescribe or dispense medication to a client or client's agent in an outpatient setting.
- This only applies to written prescriptions or to prescription drugs dispensed from practice stock for clients to take home. Medication refills or drugs being dispensed on a repeat basis do not require subsequent consultations.
- The consultation does not apply to drugs administered to animal patients.
- Non-prescription products do not require consultation.
- The consultation may be conducted either in person or through electronic means.

The consultation must include at a minimum the following information:

1. *The name and description of the prescription (also referred to as "dangerous") drug.* The description must include the type of drug and what it is used to treat. For instance: "Carprofen is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug that is being used to treat musculoskeletal inflammation."
2. *Route of administration, dosage form, dosage, duration of drug therapy, the duration of the effects of the drug, and the common severe adverse effects associated with the use of a short-acting or long-acting drug.* Continuing with the carprofen example: "The medication consists of a 75 mg tablet that is given



orally twice daily for 10 days. The drug has about a 12-hour duration of effect when treating musculoskeletal inflammation." Only common, severe, adverse effects need to be mentioned.

3. *Any special directions for proper use and storage.* Examples include if the drug requires reconstitution prior to use or if it should be stored in darkness or in a refrigerator.
4. *Actions to be taken in the event of a missed dose.* Because no information on this topic exists on product labels or in literature, it is up to each veterinarian providing the consultation to determine how to advise a client on what to do if an animal patient misses a dose.
5. *If available, precautions and relevant warnings provided by the drug's manufacturer, including common severe adverse effects of the drug.*

If the client requests written documentation about the drug, the veterinarian must provide it, if available. Sources could include drug information provided by the manufacturer, information found in a veterinary drug compendium, or

information compiled by the veterinarian. If written information is unavailable, then a veterinarian is not required to provide written documentation.

A veterinarian may delegate to a registered veterinary technician or veterinary assistant the task of providing the required consultation and, if applicable, drug documentation.

The law also requires the patient medical record to state whether the consultation is provided or declined by the client or client agent. As a safeguard, it is recommended that the name of the client or client's agent be included in the record as part of the entry describing the drug consultation offer. The name or initials of the person responsible for documenting the consultation in the record should also be included in the entry. ■

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