



THE COLLEGE OF
VETERINARIANS
OF ONTARIO

REPORT ON CONSULTATION

Topic:	Code of Ethics
Consultation Period:	October 16 – November 16, 2015
Submissions:	43 submissions from licensed members 1 written submission from a stakeholder

Background on the Consultation

The draft Code of Ethics was presented to Council in June 2015. Following discussion and feedback, the draft document was returned to the Quality Assurance Committee for further revisions. The revised draft Code of Ethics returned to Council in October 2015 and was approved for distribution for consultation.

General questions were posed as part of the consultation process:

- Is the Code of Ethics clear and understandable?
- Does the Code of Ethics capture the values and ethical principles of Ontario veterinarians?
- Will the Code of Ethics be useful to the profession?
- Does the Code of Ethics inspire public confidence in the profession?

The majority of respondents indicated the draft Code of Ethics was clear, understandable, and captured the values and ethical principles of Ontario veterinarians. A letter from the Ontario Veterinary Medical Association also indicated general support for the intent and content of the draft Code of Ethics.

Overview of Feedback

Responses to questions were recorded on a five-point rating scale with one being a low score and five being a positive response.

Clear and understandable

81% of respondents scored the draft Code of Ethics as clear and understandable with a 4 or 5 in the rating scale.

Captures the values and ethical principles of Ontario veterinarians

79% of respondents scored the draft Code of Ethics as capturing veterinarians' values and ethical principles with a 4 or 5 on the rating scale.

Useful to the profession

63% of respondents scored the draft Code of Ethics as useful to the profession with a 4 or 5 on the rating scale.

Inspiring public confidence

61% of respondents scored the draft Code of Ethics as inspiring public confidence with a 4 or 5 on the rating scale.

Additional Comments

The following quotes, summarized from comments received, reflect issues raised during the consultation:

- *I see no role for the College in adopting a Code of Ethics.*
- *Under “respect” would it be useful to add a third bullet listing “demonstrates respect for colleagues and employers”?*
- *The Code of Ethics is very good at stating general principles and providing framework for conduct expected of veterinarians.*
- *This is concise without omitting anything critical.*
- *I am concerned as to the impetus for this Code of Ethics. I am very much a proponent of its ideals, but I wonder if this is where the CVO should be focusing its energies.*
- *I would like to see a clear link/definition between our professional ethics and our business ethics.*
- *Hopefully it is all common sense.*
- *Just finishing doing our Values and Code of Ethics with our staff. We have the same words as our Core Values.*
- *The Code of Ethics clearly expresses the things I believe we as a profession should be living up to.*
- *I think it’s great but I wonder why it doesn’t address our obligation to animal welfare.*
- *Although what the Code states is clear and I agree with it, there is so little specific detail and it is written in such a broad sense that I doubt it will act as a guide to anyone faced with an ethical dilemma.*
- *The document is vague and there is no way to actually uphold anything that is being said in the document.*
- *I fail to see how the Code of Ethics could be mandated nor how it would be of use in generating good relations with the public.*
- *Well-worded, concise and complete.*
- *It’s definitely easy to follow, short and to the point.*
- *Very clear and I like the simple language that gives good guidelines but flexibility for the individual practitioner.*
- *This Code is long overdue.*

Council December 2015 Discussion and Decision

In response to the feedback received, the College expanded on the core value of “respect” to include a stated principle regarding the demonstration of respect for colleagues and staff. The College also responded to comments which indicated it was likely impossible for a veterinarian to fully “ensure” any client understands information presented to them and replaced “ensure” with “striving to ensure.” Other minor edits were made to the draft document with consideration to comments received during the consultation.

Council approved the draft Code of Ethics as amended.