

Code of Ethics Self-Test

The following Self-Test was created by the VetPartners Ethics Committee as a tool to enable members to increase their familiarity with the VetPartners Code of Ethics. While this Self-Test takes only a few minutes to complete, its questions span each of the main subdivisions of the Code of Ethics. Further, the answers to those questions refer to the relevant sections of the Code of Ethics to assist members in understanding the Code and its application.

Please take a few minutes to test your knowledge of the VetPartners Code of Ethics!

1. Application of the Code of Ethics. Which of the following statements are true as applied to a VetPartners member?
 - A. Members are not bound by the Code of Ethics, but may voluntarily follow them.
 - B. Members are only bound by the Code of Ethics if they advertise that they are members of VetPartners.
 - C. By maintaining their membership in VetPartners, members assume responsibility for adhering to the VetPartners Code of Ethics.
 - D. None of the above.

2. Violations of the Code of Ethics. Which of the following circumstances justifies a violation of the VetPartners Code of Ethics?
 - A. When a consultant on the other side of the transaction is not being ethical.
 - B. When following the Code of Ethics will cost a lot of money.
 - C. When there is no chance of getting caught.
 - D. None of the above.

3. Purposes. Which of the following is not one of the stated purposes of the VetPartners Code of Ethics?
 - A. Lead members to recognize ethical issues and choices.
 - B. Guide members in making more informed ethical decisions.
 - C. Impose VetPartners' ethics on the veterinary profession at large.
 - D. Provide a standard for professional judgment and conduct.

4. Member Character Standards. VetPartners members agree to maintain honesty, objectivity, and competence. Which of the following actions does not exemplify these character standards?
 - A. Accepting all engagements, even if the member is not capable of performing such engagement, so that the member will always be expanding his or her expertise.
 - B. Assigning staff to client engagements in accord with their experience, knowledge and expertise.
 - C. Investigating and becoming fully aware of the client's needs and expectations before accepting work.
 - D. Informing clients of unrealistic expectations.

5. Professional Demeanor. Which of the following is not an example of the professional demeanor required of VetPartners members?

- A. Treating colleagues, clients, and team members with respect.
- B. Keeping up to date in veterinary practice management or their field of expertise.
- C. Informing clients within a few weeks when events arise that might affect delivery of services (content or time).
- D. Reporting violations of this Code of Ethics to the VetPartners Board of Directors or Ethics Committee.

6. Confidentiality. Which of the following is not an example of how VetPartners members are expected to maintain confidentiality?

- A. Safeguarding confidential information.
- B. Publishing clients' stories and information in the VetPartners E-bulletin for member education.
- C. Respecting the intellectual property rights of clients, other consulting firms, and practitioners.
- D. Keeping client information and records of client engagements confidential unless confidentiality is waived for personal or business uses.

7. Full Disclosure. Which of the following is not an example of how VetPartners members are expected to provide full disclosure to clients?

- A. Disclosing any use of subcontractors or team members who will be working on the project.
- B. Disclosing all fees.
- C. Disclosing a time frame in which the client can expect results.
- D. Disclosing clients from prior representations in similar engagements.

8. Conflicts of Interest. Which of the following is not an example of how VetPartners members are expected to avoid conflicts of interest?

- A. Preventing competitive advantage to one client through use of confidential information from another client, who is a direct competitor without that competitor's permission.
- B. Immediately disclosing and acknowledging any influences or perceived influences on the member's objectivity to clients.
- C. Continuing a consulting or advising engagement, even when objectivity or integrity may be impaired.
- D. Rendering impartial, independent advice.

9. Advertising. Which is true with respect to advertising by a VetPartners member?
- A. Members may not advertise.
 - B. Members may advertise, but are discouraged from doing so.
 - C. Members may advertise, but must have their advertisements reviewed and approved by an appropriate independent third party.
 - D. Members may advertise, but must uphold high integrity by preventing any deception in advertising and any misrepresentation of the consulting profession or consulting firms.
10. Management of Fees. Which of the following is not an example of how VetPartners members are expected to properly manage their fees?
- A. Detailing expense reimbursements before or after incurring those expenses.
 - B. Consulting with clients in advance about the basis for their fees and expenses.
 - C. Disclosing to their clients in advance any fees or commissions that they will receive for equipment, supplies, or services they recommend to their clients and obtaining their clients' prior written consent to any such fees or commissions.
 - D. Giving estimates of time and costs for all basic and supplemental services if possible.
11. Management of Client Expectations. Members agree that outcomes for specific consulting and advising results may vary so they must do all of the following except:
- A. Define outcomes or goals that each client can expect.
 - B. Make guarantees of success wherever possible.
 - C. Avoid making promises of a quick fix.
 - D. Avoid bait-and-switch tactics (promising one thing, then switching to another more expensive or complex option).
12. Medical Bioethical Principles. Which is true with respect to medical bioethical principles?
- A. Members shall follow accepted principles of veterinary medical ethics as outlined by the American Veterinary Medical Association.
 - B. Members shall develop expertise in bioethics, so as to best advise their clients.
 - C. Members shall police their clients' activities in bioethical matters.
 - D. Members shall develop their own bioethical code that is to be implemented by each of their clients.
13. Basis for Complaint. All members agree for any complaint or objection to be considered actionable, it must be based on and accompanied by:
- A. Witness statements.
 - B. A police report.
 - C. Verifiable facts.
 - D. No specific requirement; any action may be considered on any complaint or objection.

14. Complaint Against a Member of the Ethics Committee. Any member of the Ethics Committee who is the object of a complaint, shall:

- A. Step down from the Ethics Committee while the complaint is processed.
- B. Remain on the Ethics Committee, but abstain from any Ethics Committee action relating to the complaint against such member.
- C. Appoint a temporary substitute to replace such member on the Ethics Committee.
- D. Not worry, because complaints can't be filed against members of the Ethics Committee.

15. Ethics Committee Recommendation. In the event of a complaint or objection, the Ethics Committee shall review all submitted materials, including any reply or rebuttal, and make a final recommendation to:

- A. The Board of Directors.
- B. The Membership Committee.
- C. The members of VetPartners.
- D. All of the above.

16. Disciplinary Actions. Upon review of a complaint against a current member, the Ethics Committee may make which of the following recommendations to the Board:

- A. No action.
- B. Temporary or permanent suspension of membership.
- C. Directive for corrective action.
- D. All of the above.

17. Initiation of Complaint. Once a complaint is received, the Association Administrator provides the complainant with a written complaint form and instructions regarding the complainant's option(s) to:

- A. File a formal ethics complaint.
- B. Petition for the member's removal from VetPartners.
- C. Select a facilitation.
- D. Either A or C.

18. Facilitation. Which of the following is true with respect to a facilitation proceeding under the Code of Ethics?

- A. The facilitator will be selected by the Ethics Committee.
- B. The decision of the facilitator will be binding on the parties.
- C. Neither the complainant nor the member who is the subject of the complaint is obligated to accept the recommendations of the facilitator or participate further in the facilitation.
- D. None of the above.

19. Termination of Facilitation by Facilitator. The facilitator may end the facilitation at any time, if the facilitator decides that:

- A. The complainant is not being honest with the facilitator.
- B. The facilitator decides that a facilitated resolution is not likely.
- C. The Ethics Committee has an interest in the complaint.
- D. The Board of Directors intervene to decide the outcome.

20. Formal Ethics Complaint. A formal ethics complaint can be brought:

- A. Only after a facilitation has been completed.
- B. After the parties achieve a resolution to the matter through a facilitation.
- C. At any time prior to the parties achieving a resolution to the matter through a facilitation.
- D. At any time.

VetPartners Code of Ethics Self-Test Answers

1. **Answer: C** - See Introduction Section I.C.
2. **Answer: D** - There is never a justification for violating the VetPartners Code of Ethics.
3. **Answer: C** - See Code of Ethics Introduction Section II.C.
4. **Answer: A** - See Code of Ethics Member Character Standards Section III.A.2 - A member shall only accept those engagements for which the member is qualified by the member's experience and training.
5. **Answer: C** – See Code of Ethics Section III.B - Members are required to inform clients immediately when events arise that might affect delivery of services (content or time).
6. **Answer: B** – See Code of Ethics Section IV.B – Although continuing education is a component of the VetPartners' mission, it does not relieve any member of the member's confidentiality obligations to his or her clients.
7. **Answer: D** – See Code of Ethics Section IV.B&C.
8. **Answer: C** – See Code of Ethics Section IV.D – Members are required to offer to withdraw from a consulting or advising engagement when their objectivity or integrity may be impaired.
9. **Answer: D** – See Code of Ethics Section IV.E.
10. **Answer: A** – See Code of Ethics Section IV.F – Members must detail expense reimbursements expected prior to incurring those expenses.
11. **Answer: B** – See Code of Ethics Section IV.G – Members are to avoid making guarantees of success or overstating results not possible with a practice's actual resources.
12. **Answer: A** – See Code of Ethics Section V.
13. **Answer: C** – See Code of Ethics Section VI.C.
14. **Answer: A** – See Code of Ethics Section VI.D.2.
15. **Answer: A** – See Code of Ethics Section VI.D.8.
16. **Answer: D** – See Code of Ethics Section VI.D.8.
17. **Answer: D** – See Code of Ethics Exhibit A, Section 2.
18. **Answer: C** – See Code of Ethics Exhibit A, Section 6 – Facilitation is a completely voluntary process for both the complainant and the member who is the subject of the complaint.
19. **Answer: B** – See Code of Ethics Exhibit A, Section 9.
20. **Answer: C** – See Code of Ethics Exhibit A, Sections 7 and 10.