

Checklist

- *Confirm the Technician's Name*
- *Confirm they have R.V.T. status*
- *Confirm dates of all events*
- *Provide the names of other witnesses*
- *Confirm the name of the supervising veterinarian*
- *Submit copies of any invoices or other records relevant to the complaint*
- *Describe the events as you remember them*
- *Include the name or identity of your animal(s)*
- *Be specific about the behaviour or event that is the subject of your complaint*

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*Ontario Association of
Veterinary Technicians*

Filing a Complaint with the O.A.V.T.

**A Guide
for the
Public**

An Open & Transparent Process

Under the authority of the OAVT Act, the Ontario Association of Veterinary Technicians is mandated to promote, maintain and regulate the professional standards of its members. This mandate includes the establishment of a complaints committee to screen complaints made against members of the Association. This pamphlet is designed to assist you as a member of the public wishing to file a complaint against a member of the OAVT.

Veterinary Technology

Members of the OAVT are either *Registered Veterinary Technicians* or *Registered Veterinary Technologists* (RVT for both). All veterinary practices are staffed by one or more veterinarians and most have one or more support staff with the title RVT. You may be aware that other individuals participate in the operation of a veterinary practice including receptionists and other support staff who may not have the RVT designation. A RVT is distinguishable from these other support staff in that, like veterinarians, they are regulated professionals. If you have a concern with the conduct of any RVT you may file a complaint with the OAVT. If you have a concern with any other individual who is not a RVT, you may wish to file a complaint with the College of Veterinarians of Ontario (CVO). The CVO regulates the professional standards of veterinarians and the individuals they supervise. In summary, complaints directed against a RVT should be forwarded to the OAVT. Complaints against all other individuals should be forwarded to the CVO.

Complaints Process

Your complaint to the OAVT must be submitted in writing. Your letter of complaint will be copied to the RVT, but the RVT is asked not to respond until OAVT staff have confirmed with you the specific list of issues or concerns arising from your letter. It is not enough to suggest that a RVT behaved unprofessionally. You need to describe their specific actions or specific events which led you to this conclusion. Once the issues have been clarified and confirmed with you, the RVT will be asked to provide a written response to the complaint which will be forwarded to you for final comment. You may wish to provide names of other witnesses from whom the OAVT may request further submissions. Third party witness accounts are more valuable to the committee when those witnesses are seen as neutral. The accounts of friends or family members may not be viewed by the committee as independent. Once the OAVT complaint file is complete and includes all the required submissions it is presented to the complaints committee for review.

Materials to Submit

It is helpful to the committee's investigation if you can provide any additional evidence that substantiates your story. This might include copies of medical records, invoices, vaccination certificates, diagnostic images or perhaps other items to assist in the investigation. Before doing this however, you should determine the necessity of making such submissions. If the complaint relates to the quality of care provided by the RVT and the medical record describes the care provided, it seems logical to submit copies of the records in question for the

committee to review. If you need copies of your animal's medical record, you should be aware that your veterinarian is obligated to provide you with copies. They may charge a reasonable fee for their duplication.

Possible Outcomes

It is natural to want to know what consequences might arise from the investigation of a complaint. The complaints committee is a screening committee and its principle mandate is to determine whether or not any given complaint should be referred to the discipline committee or the fitness to practice committee. The complaints committee may decide to:

- Take no further action;
- Require the RVT to receive a caution; or,
- Take some other action that is appropriate under the circumstances and permissible under the OAVT by-laws.

The committee may also decide that a complaint is frivolous, vexatious or an abuse of process.

The committee is composed of five individuals; one is a Director of the OAVT, two are RVT members of the Association who are not Directors and two more are members of the public who are not members of the profession.

At the conclusion of its investigation, the committee will produce a written decision with reasons that is provided to you and the RVT.

If you have further questions about the OAVT complaint process you should contact the Registrar.