

PET AMBULANCES – INFORMATION FOR PET OWNERS AND THE PROFESSION

- Pet ambulance services in California are regulated by the existing California Code of Regulations (CCR) and any applicable local jurisdictional business licenses.
- These services fall under the Business and Professions Code (BPC) section 4853, which requires all premises where veterinary care is practiced to be registered with the Veterinary Medical Board (VMB), which is part of the California Department of Consumer Affairs. The public has access to look up the status of licenses and permits through the VMB's website.
- BPC 4826 defines the practice of veterinary medicine as a person practicing veterinary medicine, surgery, and dentistry, and the various branches thereof, when he or she engages in any of the activities described in the section.
- A veterinarian-client-patient-relationship must be established as defined in CCR 2032.1 through physical examination of the animal and cannot be established solely by telephonic or electronic means.
- The supervising veterinarian is responsible for determining the competency of the RVT, permit holders and veterinary assistants performing tasks as described in CCR 2035. The veterinarian is also responsible for examining the patient prior to delegating any tasks to the RVT, permit holders or veterinary assistants, as defined in 2035 (c).
- BPC section 4853, CCR 2030.05 and 2030.2 address premises, minimum standards for small animal mobile clinics, and licensee managers. Mobile units or vehicles are exempt from additional licensing, as long as the vehicle is associated with an existing premises permit. If no relationship exists and veterinary medicine is being practiced as defined in BPC 4826, the vehicle must comply with regulations as described in CCR 2030.2 and apply for a premises permit.
- Pet ambulances ~~may~~ must also ~~be~~ meet the standards set forth for small animal mobile clinics regulated by CCR 2030.2, which addresses minimum standards for any trailer or mobile facility that focuses on care of domestic household pets and are required to be registered by the VMB.
- Should the ambulance care be provided by a Registered Veterinary Technician (RVT), that care will fall under the license of the supervising veterinarian and is subject to practice supervision guidelines outside of an emergency as defined under CCR section 2036.
- Should the transported animal require life-sustaining care without direct supervision of a veterinarian, that care will be covered under BPC section 4840.5. Emergency care is defined as life-sustaining care where immediate treatment is necessary, and CCR section 2069 provides a list of those services which an RVT is able to provide in an emergency.
- In addition to RVTs, emergency medical services (EMS/EMT) providers who are already certified or licensed to perform medical services on humans (under the Health and Safety Code) will also be able to provide basic first aid and ambulance transportation of animals in emergency situations. This is/will be governed by California Senate Bill (SB 1303 *currently in the legislative process-vetoed by Governor?*).
- As with any other veterinary care facility or provider, pet ambulances should provide consumers visible access to their respective licenses—or identify where their license is on record.
- It is the recommendation of the subcommittee to remove areas of focus in regards to the California Highway Patrol. The less involvement for the CHP, the less concern they possibly

may have. If the transporting vehicles are called ambulettes, they are not regulated by the CHP and are allowed flashing amber lights. However, this may bring other regulation concerns.

- Vehicle Identification: the subcommittee recognizes the interest in naming and identifying vehicles utilized for transporting animals in emergency situations. If either of these are essential, it is our understanding that we would need regulation. To require anyone to have specific vehicle markings or identify their vehicle by name, would be writing regulation. This was not the assignment of the subcommittee nor do we think we are at a stage where this seems to be necessary.