



# Diversion Program



A confidential program for the rehabilitation of veterinary practitioners impaired due to chemical dependency.

## What is the diversion program?

The purpose of the Diversion Program is to identify and rehabilitate licensed veterinary professionals whose competency is impaired due to the abuse of drugs and/or alcohol.

The Diversion Program is designed so that impaired veterinary professionals can be counseled, guided to appropriate treatment, and returned to practice in a manner that will not endanger public health or safety.

Services provided include:

- » Confidential consultation with professionals in the field of chemical dependency.
- » Intervention services.
- » Assessment of treatment needs and referral to appropriate resources.
- » Assistance in the development of a recovery plan.
- » Monitoring of compliance.
- » Encouragement and peer support.



Veterinary Medical Board  
1747 North Market Blvd., Suite 230  
Sacramento, CA 95834-2987

[vmb.ca.gov](http://vmb.ca.gov)  
916.525.5220

[vmb.ca.gov](http://vmb.ca.gov)

**A program of help.**

**A program of hope.**

**A program of voluntary participation.**

### **Why this service?**

An alcohol or drug problem left untreated may cause a veterinary professional to risk her or his health or life and the safety of patients. The Diversion Program provides hope, help, and alternatives to veterinary professionals experiencing such problems.

### **There are places to turn to for help**

Veterinary professionals are not immune from the disease of chemical dependency. In fact, there may be an even greater risk of such problems among all medical professionals due to the availability and accessibility of drugs in the workplace and to work related stresses.

Not recognizing or dealing with chemical dependency problems can make them more serious and difficult to solve. Often, the impaired individual is too close to the problem to be objective and his or her individual efforts only result in more stress, increasing the severity of the situation.

The first step in dealing with a chemical dependency problem is for the individual to admit he or she has a substance abuse problem. Having trouble handling problems isn't an easy thing to admit to another person. Unfortunately, professionals often buy into the myth that as professionals, they should be able to handle their chemical dependency problems alone. What is a tremendous burden to one person can become a lighter load when shared with someone trained to counsel and help others with chemical dependency.



### **Who provides the service?**

The Veterinary Medical Board of California has contracted with MAXIMUS Inc. to provide confidential intervention, assessment referral, and monitoring services.

Founded in 1975 with the single mission of "Helping government serve the people" MAXIMUS has served thousands of local, state, and federal governmental clients with unwavering integrity and an unmatched commitment to quality. MAXIMUS is a team of dedicated, talented, and conscientious professionals, who, through their daily efforts in the support of the government, improve the lives of individuals and families across the country.

### **Who is eligible?**

This innovative program accepts referrals on a voluntary basis. Any State of California licensed veterinary professional who is experiencing a drug or alcohol problem can voluntarily seek assistance by calling MAXIMUS' 24-hour, toll-free number: 800.522.9198. All voluntary requests for information and assistance are strictly confidential.

The Veterinary Medical Board may refer eligible veterinary professionals, who are impaired by chemical dependency, from disciplinary proceedings to this voluntary program.

### **A confidential service for voluntary participation**

All information with the program is confidential by law and not subject to discovery or subpoena. Those who use the program are assured that their problem and its deposition will remain confidential.

### **Referral to the program**

Persons wanting to obtain information, arrange an intervention, or apply to the Diversion Program may call MAXIMUS at 800.522.9198.

Family, friends, employers, and colleagues are also encouraged to contact the program for information and assistance. MAXIMUS can provide consultive assistance to any concerned party in developing strategy or techniques for confronting and positively motivating a veterinary professional who they perceive as impaired to seek assistance.

If consultation is needed regarding the relationship of the program to the Veterinary Medical Board, the types of services available, confidentiality issues, and the benefits of participation in the program, contact the Board's Diversion Program Coordinator at 916.515.5220.

