

**Does the client have to participate in the mediation program?**

Yes. The client who initiated the grievance is expected to cooperate with the Peer Review Committee.

**Does the veterinarian mentioned in the grievance have to participate in the mediation program?**

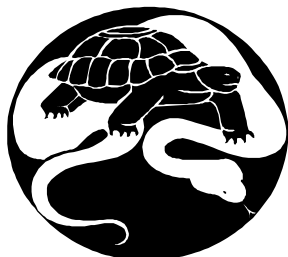
Veterinarians are strongly encouraged to participate. If they decide not to, the Peer Review Committee will meet and an advisory opinion will be issued based on the material provided by the client. That advisory opinion is not binding nor legally enforceable. The veterinarian will receive a copy of the grievance.

**Is the OVMA mediation process binding?**

Mediation is not binding. There is an assumption of good faith when the client and the veterinarian enter the mediation process.

**What you CAN expect from the OVMA mediation program.**

- Your grievance will receive prompt attention after the receipt of the Dispute Resolution Form.
- Every attempt will be made to handle the grievance in a manner which is fair both to you and to the veterinarian involved.
- Written notice of the final decision concerning your grievance will be sent to you and the veterinarian.



**What you should not expect from the OVMA mediation program.**

- You should not expect that your grievance will be decided solely on the basis of what you claim to have happened, just as, in fairness to you, the veterinarian about whom you complained cannot expect the matter will be decided solely on the basis of his or her version.
- You should not expect, as a result of your grievance, that you will receive money or reimbursement of loss.
- The OVMA does not have legal standing to impose any type of disciplinary action against a veterinarian.
- The results of mediation with the Peer Review Committee does not constitute a legal opinion or finding of fault.

**How can I avoid disputes in the future?**

Ask your veterinarian to provide you with an estimate of fees and services to be rendered. Make certain you understand what specific services are covered by the estimate, how you will be billed, and what additional services may be needed and necessarily charged for. If you have questions, bring these to the attention of your veterinarian before agreeing to the estimate. A clear understanding of the estimate will help prevent misunderstandings.

The brochure was supplied by the Ohio Veterinary Medical Association.

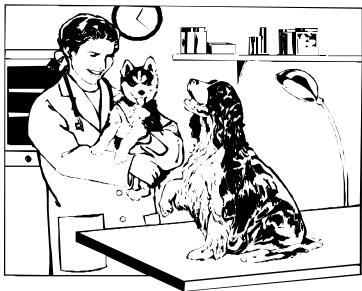
Additional copies of the Grievance brochure can be obtained by contacting:  
Ohio Veterinary Medical Association  
3168 Riverside Drive  
Columbus, OH 43221  
(614/486-7253)

**GRIEVANCES  
INVOLVING  
OHIO  
VETERINARIANS.....  
YOUR  
QUESTIONS  
ANSWERED**

**THINK FIRST** - Have you personally talked with your veterinarian about this problem? If not, we urge you to do so before proceeding. Most differences start with miscommunications, misunderstandings, and are often resolved by discussion.



**OHIO VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION**



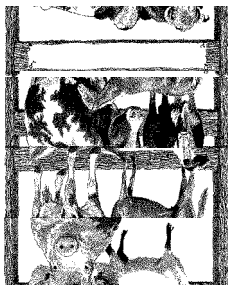
**Veterinarians  
must  
maintain  
high  
standards.**

The Ohio Veterinary Medical Association is the professional association of veterinarians in Ohio. The association has a Peer Review Committee one of the purposes of which is to review and mediate grievances between veterinarians and their clients. All inquiries are conducted on a confidential basis.

**Where do I file a grievance against a veterinarian?**

The first step in any dispute is to talk personally with the veterinarian involved. If the issue is still unresolved you can file a grievance against a veterinarian with: the Ohio Veterinary Medical Association (OVMA); or, the Ohio Veterinary Medical Licensing Board (OVMLB).

(1) **The Ohio Veterinary Medical Association** has a Peer Review Committee which hears grievances against veterinarians. This committee consists of veterinarians throughout the state. These veterinarians are not compensated for their time on this committee. They do not have the authority to discipline veterinarians. They review the grievances, talk with the client and the veterinarian, and attempt to come to a reasonable and mutually agreed upon solution. Call (614) 486-7253 for a Dispute Resolution form.



(2) **The Ohio Veterinary Medical Licensing Board** is the regulatory board for veterinarians. The OVMLB includes five veterinarians, a veterinary technician and a public member, each appointed by the governor. In addition to granting licenses, the board is charged with protecting the public by overseeing the veterinary medical profession. When a complaint is submitted to the OVMLB, it is reviewed to determine if a probable violation of Ohio Revised Code Section 4741.22 has occurred. If there appears to be a violation, the case will be assigned for investigation. Following investigation, the matter may be dismissed or formal charges may be filed and the matter may proceed to a hearing at which time the client and the veterinarian will have the opportunity to appear and present testimony. If grounds for disciplinary action are found, the veterinarian may be reprimanded or the veterinarian's license to practice may be suspended or revoked. To initiate a grievance against a veterinarian at the OVMLB, call (614) 644-5281.

**How do I decide if I should contact the OVMA or the OVMLB?**

The OVMLB reviews matters referred to it to determine if grounds for disciplinary action exist. These grounds include professional misconduct and "malpractice" cases. The OVMLB has the authority to discipline veterinarians. This is described in more detail in Ohio Revised Code Section 4741(the "Practice Act"). The principle purpose of the Peer Review Committee of the OVMA is to mediate disputes between veterinarians and their clients. The committee does not have the authority to impose discipline.

**What situations does the OVMA review?**

Questions regarding the appropriateness of services rendered, charges, communication problems, and other misunderstandings between the client and the veterinarian.



**How do I request a review by the OVMA?**

Complete a Dispute Resolution form obtained by writing the OVMA, 3168 Riverside Drive, Columbus, OH 43221. (Phone (614)486-7253, Fax (614)486-1325, E-mail ohiovma@ohiovma.org).



**What happens after a review is requested?**

This is an informal process. Once a Dispute Resolution form has been received at the OVMA, it is sent to the entire Peer Review Committee. One member will be assigned to investigate the grievance. The investigation consists of calling the complainant and veterinarian in question. The investigating veterinarian will either attempt to arrive at an equitable solution, mutually agreed upon by both parties, or will go to the full Peer Review Committee for an opinion. In some situations, we may not be able to mediate a resolution.

**How much do I pay for the mediation?**

Nothing. The OVMA mediation program is a free public service.

**How long does the OVMA mediation program take?**

The goal is to resolve most cases in a timely manner following the receipt of the Dispute Resolution form.

