

Zero Tolerance Policy

At Severn Edge Equine we are passionate about animal care and our staff are dedicated to providing the highest quality care for your animals.

Our staff come to work because they both love and deeply care for animals. They work hard to provide a high quality service to their clients and patients. We aim to treat our clients courteously at all times and expect our clients to treat our staff in a similarly respectful way.

We believe that the relationship between a client and a Veterinary Practice is one that must be founded on the basis of mutual trust and confidence. We take a zero tolerance approach to any threatening, abusive or violent behaviour against any of our staff. Not being able to get an appointment at a convenient time for you, should not result in abuse towards our staff.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of types and examples of behaviour are unacceptable and may result in the termination of veterinary services by us:

- Using violent, threatening, or abusive language or behaviours towards our staff, our clients or animals in our care
- Any attempted or actual physical violence towards staff, other clients or animals in our care such as pushing or shoving or the threat of causing physical harm
- Any attempted or actual damage to any CVS property and/or equipment, and/or any personal property or belongings of our staff
- Verbal abuse of staff in any form whether in person or over the phone
- Making racial, sexual or any other kind of discriminatory remarks, implications or gestures
- Persistent or unrealistic demands that cause stress or intimidation to our staff. We endeavour to respond to requests where possible and will provide explanations when requests cannot be met
- Making malicious allegations about our staff or other clients, whether in person or online
- Theft and other criminal activity, including fraud and obtaining veterinary medications or veterinary services fraudulently
- Non-compliance with our health and safety requirements

We have a three-stage process to dealing with unacceptable client behaviour in our practice:

Stage One: The client will be asked to stop and if necessary, to leave the premises. The practice will issue a written warning regarding the unacceptable behaviour. A record of this written warning will be kept on the client's records.

Stage Two: If a client's unacceptable behaviour persists following receipt of the written warning, we will terminate our client-practice relationship and Terms and Conditions resulting in the termination of all veterinary services to the client. The practice will issue a written notice of this termination of services. A record of the notice will be kept on the client's records for a period of up to 7 years from the date of the written notice.

Please note, we reserve the right to issue our Stage One written warning and Stage Two written notice of service termination simultaneously in instances where the unacceptable behaviour is deemed excessive by the practice staff.

Stage Three: In the event that unacceptable behaviour persists after the termination of veterinary services, a final written notice will be issued. Incidents of threatening, abusive or

violent behaviour will be reported to the local Police Service and we will pursue appropriate legal action as needed.

We reserve the right to immediately terminate the provision of all veterinary services without following the above three-stage process in certain instances. Examples of such instances are as follows (please note that this is a non-exhaustive list):

- (i) there is a threat to the physical safety of our staff, other clients or animals within our care;
- (ii) the unacceptable client behaviour is wilfully discriminatory in nature; or
- (iii) the relationship between the client and the vet has been irreparably damaged.

In such instances, we may involve the police or other applicable law enforcement, as needed.

We hope that you will understand and welcome this Zero Tolerance Policy, which is in place for the best interests of our hard-working staff as well as the clients and animals who we care for.

This policy applies throughout our practice, including any car park and grounds. It also applies to any member of staff away from the practice but only in so far as it relates to the provision of veterinary services.