

**HEALTH REGULATION AND LICENSING ADMINISTRATION
&
HEALTH PROFESSIONAL BOARDS**

BOARD OF VETERINARY EXAMINERS
AUTHORITY FOR GUIDANCE

February 2010
DATE OF POLICY

1
POLICY NO.

POLICY STATEMENT

**HUMANE TERMINATION OF THE LIFE OF AN ANIMAL WITHOUT THE
CONSENT OF THE OWNER**

Policy:

The Board of Veterinary Examiners will not deem it a violation of its regulations if a veterinarian terminates the life of abandoned animals without the consent of the owner if a second veterinarian, not associated, concurs in writing with the determination of the first veterinarian that the animal should be euthanized after an on-site examination. The current regulations do not address what is required in order to consider a veterinarian not associated and this policy statement is intended to clarify the matter. The second veterinarian should not be associated with the animal's case, but may be in the same hospital or practice as the first veterinarian.

Analysis:

District of Columbia Municipal Regulation, Title 17, §2817 addresses the humane termination of the life of an abandoned animal. Section 2817.4 indicates that a veterinarian "shall be authorized to terminate the life of an animal humanely without the consent of the owner" if the animal is suffering with no reasonable hope of relief, the owner is unreachable after reasonable effort was made to do so, and that a second veterinarian, "not associated" with the first, concurs in writing with the determination of the first veterinarian after an on-site examination of the animal. The Board wanted to clarify that this second veterinarian does not have to be a veterinarian from a different hospital in order to be "not associated." The second veterinarian may be from within the same hospital or practice, as long as that veterinarian is independent and has not been involved in the case in question.