

**VETERINARY HEALTH CENTER at KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
OFFICIAL PROTOCOL**

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES FOR CLIENTS NOT ABLE TO PAY THE EMERGENCY FEE

Veterinarians have an ethical responsibility to relieve pain and suffering in animals based on the Veterinary Code of Ethics. This ethical responsibility does not imply that animals that are sick or injured must be treated despite the owner's ability to pay. Relief of pain and suffering can be accomplished through euthanasia.

What to do if a patient is presented on emergency and the client cannot pay the emergency fee:

If a patient is presented to the VHC on emergency and the client does not have the required emergency and examination fee, desk personnel should contact the intern on duty. The intern on duty should come to the emergency waiting room and examine the animal. If the patient has a life-threatening illness or injury and is suffering, the intern may offer euthanasia. The VHC will euthanize the patient regardless of the financial status of the client in order to relieve pain and suffering. The desk should create a record, have the client sign the authorization for euthanasia form and input the appropriate charges. A copy of the bill should be given to the client before they leave the VHC and desk personnel should tell the client that they will be responsible for paying the bill.

If the intern determines that the patient does not have a life-threatening illness or injury, the intern should give the client instructions for home care and recommend that the client take the patient to a veterinarian as soon as possible. The intern should not take the patient to an examination room and should not provide treatment. A medical record should not be created.

CATEGORY Business Office, Clinical Sections, Desks, House Officers and Students

APPROVED 5/15/12, VHC Administrator