

SAMPLE PRESCRIPTION POLICY/CLIENT LETTER

_____ (*Name of Premise*) _____

POLICY ON THE DISPENSING OF HEARTWORM PREVENTIVES

PURPOSE: The following policy is provided to help answer questions regarding the dispensing of a heartworm preventive for your pet.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS: All heartworm preventives are labeled prescription drugs, requiring veterinarians to follow federal and state regulations for prescribing and dispensing them. These regulations require a valid veterinarian-client-patient relationship, which necessitates a patient record and a recent physical examination.

MEDICAL GUIDELINES: Heartworm blood tests are performed in all dogs over six months of age. The test results are useful in minimizing the risk of adverse reactions and in assessing the patient's infection status. If heartworm embryos (microfilariae) are present in the blood, daily heartworm preventives can cause a potentially life-threatening reaction at the start of treatment or when treatment is resumed, even after only a 4-day lapse. Adverse reactions, although less critical, can also occur when monthly preventives are given to patients with microfilariae. A Short lapse (15 days or less) in administering monthly preventives does not present an undue risk in resuming their use. Heartworm preventives are very effective, however, each year we detect infection in dogs that have been receiving preventive therapy. These infections are usually due to known or suspected non-compliance in administering the preventive or to the incomplete consumption of the preventive.

GOAL: Our primary concern is to dispense heartworm prevention medication in a manner that ensures your pet's safety and protection while complying with State and Federal laws. To achieve that goal, we have adopted the following guidelines for pets receiving heartworm preventives:

1. A current patient record must be on file.
2. The pet must be examined at least every two years.
3. If a visiting client elects not to have his or her pet examined, we require oral authorization of a written prescription from the client's attending veterinarian or copies of the patient's medical record.
4. A current annual heartworm test is required before preventive therapy can be initiated or refilled.
5. Any deviation from these guidelines must occur within the context of a veterinarian-client-patient relationship.

A staff veterinarian will be happy to discuss this policy with you.

Alabama Statutes 930-X-1-11, Code of Alabama, 1986, Alabama State Board of Veterinary Medicine.

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Date: _____

Dear Mr. or Ms. _____

At our veterinary premise we strive to maintain the lowest price on medications and products for our patients. We utilize numerous vendors and sales groups to receive bids for prescription drugs, medications, and products so that your cost is the lowest possible. Often the cost depends upon the time of year or the seasonal specials a particular vendor or drug company is advertising. Our pricing is based on the market cost at the time of the purchase and our prices reflect that market. When you purchase a prescription drug from this premise it includes the cost of the doctor's time to prescribe and complete a legal prescription (one that conforms to Federal and State drug enforcement laws) for the desired medication. Your pet's doctors must take time to review your pet's medical history, evaluate all other oral and topical medications and products currently being administered, know long-term complications of the prescription medication, review your pet's current weight for drug dosage, re-evaluate the latest blood work results, and the potential serious contraindication for your specific pet. Additionally, the doctors and staff must update your pet's written and computer medical records, print a prescription label, fill and dispense the drug in an approved container, and of course, inventory and stock our pharmacy.

When you request us to write a prescription for drugs or medications to be filled by another source, most of the same processes are required of our doctors and staff. To cover these costs a prescription/medical records fee of \$ _____ will be charged for each prescription written. This fee must be paid when the written prescription is obtained. For your pet's continued health and safety, lab work is current before we will be able to complete a written prescription. It is your responsibility to fill this prescription by presenting it to the supplying pharmacy. We will not be responsible for calling, faxing, or corresponding with the supplier.

The Doctors and Staff of _____ (*Name of Premise*) _____

DISCLAIMER

_____ (*Name of Premise*) _____ will not be held liable for any prescription drugs or medications purchased from other sources, packaging, efficacy, adverse reactions, administration, expired and/or short dated expiration dates, improperly handled as to environmental inactivation, or drugs/medications acquired from foreign countries or acquired through unlawful and/or unethical methods.

ACCEPTED BY: _____ DATE: _____