

Veterinary-Client-Patient-Relationship

A Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship (or VCPR), exists when your veterinarian knows your pet well enough to be able to diagnose and treat medical conditions they may develop. Your part of the VCPR is allowing your veterinarian to take responsibility for making clinical judgments about your pet's health, asking questions to make sure you understand, and following your veterinarian's instructions. Your veterinarian's part of the VCPR involves making those judgments, accepting the responsibility for providing your pet with medical care, keeping a written record of your pet's medical care, advising you about the benefits and risks of different treatment options, providing oversight of treatment, compliance (your follow-through on their recommendations) and outcome, and helping you know how to get emergency care for your pet if the need should arise.

A VCPR is established only when your veterinarian examines your animal in person, and is maintained by regular veterinary visits as needed to monitor your animal's health. If a VCPR is established, but your veterinarian does not regularly see your pet afterward, the VCPR is no longer valid; and it would be illegal and unethical for your veterinarian to dispense or prescribe medications or recommend treatment without recently examining your pet.

A valid VCPR cannot be established online, via email, or over the phone. However, once a VCPR is established, it may be able to be maintained between medically necessary examinations by these means of communication; but it's up to your veterinarian's discretion to determine if this is appropriate and in the best interest of your animal's health.

Your veterinarian knows you and knows your animal(s), and this is critical to keeping your animal(s) healthy.