

**STATE OF MARYLAND
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BEFORE THE STATE BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINERS**

IN THE MATTER OF:

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VETCOR OF MARYLAND LLC
141 Longwater Drive, Suite 108
Norwell, MA 02061
Owner

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DOCKET NO. 22-104

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GLEN BURNIE ANIMAL HOSPITAL
Hospital License No. 02-00518

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CIVIL PENALTY FINAL ORDER

This Civil Penalty Final Order (“Order”) dated this 28th day of June, 2022, is issued by the Maryland State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (“SBVME” or “Board”) against VetCor of Maryland LLC (“VetCor” or “Owner”), the owner of Glen Burnie Animal Hospital (new Hospital License No. 02-00518) (“GBAH” or “Hospital”), located at 408 North Crain Highway, Glen Burnie, MD 21061.

This Order confirms the intention of VetCor to waive the right to formal proceedings in this case, in which it is alleged that VetCor, as owner of GBAH, violated the Maryland Veterinary Practice Act, Md. Code Ann., Agric. §§ 2-301 - 2-316 (“the Act”) and related Code of Maryland Regulations (“COMAR”) 15.14.01 – 15.14.17. Before agreeing to this, the Owner's local representative was notified in writing of the available due process rights, including the right to receive formal notice of charges, request a hearing, retain legal counsel, and all other rights as set forth in Agric. § 2-311.

Under State law, the Board is the licensing authority responsible for regulating the practice of veterinary medicine in this State, which includes filing disciplinary actions against veterinarians and veterinary hospital owners charged with violating provisions of the Act. As part of its authority, the Board “may refuse, suspend, or revoke any application or license, and censure or place on probation any licensee . . . if the veterinarian [or hospital owner] . . . [f]ails to comply with Board rules and regulations after receiving a license.” Agric. § 2-310(8). In addition, the Board may impose a civil penalty of not more than \$5,000 for a first offense or \$10,000 for a second or subsequent offense in lieu of or in addition to suspending a veterinarian’s license, respectively. Agric. § 2-310.1. In setting the amount of a

civil penalty, the Board shall consider the severity of the violation, the good faith of the violator, and the history of prior violations, as well as the Board's civil penalty standards. Md. Code Ann., State Gov't § 10-1001(b); COMAR 15.14.11 (Civil Penalty Standards for Veterinarians).

FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

VetCor, after having the opportunity to seek the advice of legal counsel, voluntarily waived its right to formal charges and a hearing and agreed to pay the civil penalty of \$300. In so doing, VetCor, through its legal counsel, acknowledges that the Board has sufficient evidence to find, as fact, and conclude as a matter of law that VetCor violated COMAR 15.14.03.01-1 (Licensing Requirements), as follows:

1. On April 13, 2022, Ahmad Saeed A Shah, DVM (License No. 5266) ("Dr. Shah"), the owner and responsible veterinarian at Glen Burnie Animal Hospital (Old License No. 02-007) ("GBAH" or "Hospital"), sold his veterinary hospital to VetCor. The hospital continued to operate after the sale date.
2. The same day of the sale, Sarah Crispin, VetCor's staff member in charge of permits and its designated local representative, applied for a new license issued in VetCor's name. Later that day, the Board received Dr. Shah's confirmation that he would continue to be the responsible veterinarian at GBAH under its new ownership. However, because the hospital had been inspected more than a year before the application date, a new hospital license in VetCor's name could not be issued until an inspection of the physical premises was conducted.
3. The morning of April 15, 2022, Board Inspector, Pegeen Morgan, completed an inspection of the hospital and approved it.
4. Section 2-304.1 of the Agriculture Article requires that every veterinary hospital be licensed by the Board. COMAR 15.14.03.01-1 specifies the process and requirements for licensing and operation of veterinary hospitals. COMAR 15.14.03.01-1C provides that: "[a] person, including the owner, may not operate a veterinary facility unless it has a veterinary hospital license." COMAR 15.14.03.01-1E provides that: "[b]ecause a hospital license is issued in the name of a particular owner for a particular building or portion of it, **the owner may not transfer this license to either a new owner, including a person leasing or purchasing the owner's veterinary practice, or a different physical structure.**" (emphasis added).
5. VetCor violated this regulation by purchasing GBAH and operating it on April 13 and 14, 2022, without first

obtaining a new hospital license.

Taking all facts and circumstances into consideration, including the nature of the violation, the Owner's lack of prior disciplinary history with the Board, and its good faith effort to resolve this matter promptly, the Board concluded that the most reasonable and appropriate resolution in this matter was a civil penalty only.

ORDER

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, it is this 28th day of June 2022, by the Maryland State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners, **ORDERED** that for the violation of Md. Code Ann., Agric. § 2-304.1, and COMAR 15.14.03.01-1, VetCor of Maryland LLC, the owner of Glen Burnie Animal Hospital (License No. 02-00518), is assessed a civil penalty of \$300, due thirty (30) days from the date of this Order. The civil penalty should be paid by check payable to the Maryland Department of Agriculture ("MDA") with the notation "SBVME – 22-104" and mailed to MDA at the address below. This Civil Penalty Final Order is a public document.

STATE BOARD OF VETERINARY
MEDICAL EXAMINERS



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