

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

AMIE CARRIER, DVM
LICENSE NO. 6120

DOCKET NO. 22-124

* * * * *

CONSENT AGREEMENT AND ORDER

This Consent Agreement and Order ("Consent Agreement"), dated this 19th day of April, 2023, is between the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners ("SBVME" or "Board") and Amie Carrier, DVM ("Dr. Carrier"), License No. 6120. This Consent Agreement resolves a case arising from a complaint filed on June 13, 2022, with the SBVME, assigned Docket No. 22-124, alleging that Dr. Carrier did not satisfy the Veterinary Practice Act, Md. Code Ann., Agric. §§ 2-301 – 2-316 and related Code of Maryland Regulations ("COMAR") 15.14.01 – 15.14.17, as set forth herein.

On April 11, 2023, during a telephone conversation with Board counsel, Dr. Carrier, having been advised in writing regarding her due process rights and acting through counsel, agreed to resolve this case under the terms and conditions of this Consent Agreement. By signing this Consent Agreement, Dr. Carrier agrees to waive her right to formal proceedings in this case, including the issuance of charges and a hearing, and further agrees to the terms and conditions of this Consent Agreement.

Under Maryland law, the SBVME is the licensing authority responsible for regulating the practice of veterinary medicine in this State, which includes filing disciplinary actions against veterinarians charged with violating the provisions of the Veterinary Practice Act and related COMAR regulations adopted pursuant to this law. As part of its authority, the SBVME "may refuse, suspend, or revoke any application or license, and censure or place on probation any licensee ... if the veterinarian ... [f]ails to comply with Board rules and regulations after receiving a license." Md. Code Ann., Agric. § 2-310(8). The Board may also 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 or revoking 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 any 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

Amie Carrier, DVM, License Number 6120, by entering into and signing this Consent Agreement after having had the opportunity to seek the advice of legal counsel, agrees to the provisions of this Consent Agreement, acknowledging that the SBVME has sufficient evidence to find as fact, and to conclude as a matter of law that Dr. Carrier did not satisfy COMAR 15.14.01.07 (Professional Judgment and Practice) as described below:

1. Dr. Carrier is a veterinarian licensed to practice in Maryland, where she has been licensed since 2007. At the time of the events described herein, Dr. Carrier was a veterinarian at Goshen Animal Clinic ("Goshen" or "Hospital") (License No. 15-055), located at 8357 Snouffers School Road, Gaithersburg, MD 20879. Dr. Carrier has no history of formal discipline by the Board.
2. This case involves care and treatment provided to Arnold, a 12-year-old domestic shorthaired cat owned by Sarah Curry ("Ms. Curry" or "Owner").
3. According to Ms. Curry, on December 13, 2021, she found Arnold in her neighbor's yard, weak and unable to walk. At that time, Arnold had allegedly been missing for a few days. The following morning, December 14, 2021, Ms. Curry took Arnold to Goshen, where Dr. Carrier was his attending veterinarian.

Dr. Carrier performed a complete and thorough examination of Arnold and noted in the medical record that Arnold was bright, alert, and responsive. She found no signs or indications of any injury. Dr. Carrier's notes from the exam reflect that Ms. Curry believed Arnold's hips were painful. Dr. Carrier recommended radiographs and bloodwork. According to Dr. Carrier, the cat was fractious, so Dr. Carrier also recommended sedation. Ms. Curry consented to the plan.

4. After radiographs and bloodwork were obtained, Dr. Carrier noted a calcified disc in Arnold's lumbar area, which she diagnosed as possible intervertebral disc disease. Dr. Carrier recommended Onsor and gabapentin (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs), Buprenex (a narcotic pain reliever), Dasuquin (a joint supplement), as well as performing laser treatment on Arnold's spine. Ms. Curry initially consented to the treatment plan but later declined the treatment and medication recommended by Dr. Carrier. After this December 14, 2021 visit, Dr. Carrier had no further involvement with Arnold's care and treatment.
5. According to Ms. Curry, Arnold was so weak within hours after his discharge from Goshen that he could barely move, eat, or drink.
6. According to Ms. Curry, over the next few days, Ms. Curry did not observe improvement in Arnold's condition. Ms. Curry contends that Arnold could barely lift his head to eat or drink and that he had a foul odor and swelling on his right front leg.
7. On December 17, 2021, Ms. Curry took Arnold to another veterinary hospital, BluePearl Operations, LLC ("Blue Pearl") (License No. 15-159). According to Blue Pearl's medical records, Arnold was laterally recumbent, and his right forelimb was swollen and painful. After sedating Arnold to further assess his right forelimb, the Blue Pearl veterinarian observed necrotic tissue present from proximal to the right carpus to the dorsal aspect of the scapula, with two draining tracts and purulent material draining. Further, Arnold's bloodwork was rechecked and showed he was leukopenic with marked toxic changes, hypoproteinemia, and hypoalbuminemia.
8. The Blue Pearl veterinarian suspected that Arnold's necrotic leg injury was from an abscess, possibly from a cat bite, and suspected that he was in early sepsis. The Blue Pearl veterinarian consulted with a Blue Pearl surgeon, and a right forelimb amputation was strongly recommended. Ms. Curry elected not to pursue further treatment for Arnold and consented to have Arnold humanely euthanized.
9. Ms. Curry subsequently filed a complaint with the SBVME against Dr. Carrier arising from the care provided to Arnold.

10. The Board opened a case, investigated, and reviewed the materials gathered, including the medical records for Arnold's treatment. After considering the evidence, the Board determined that Dr. Carrier's care and treatment recommendations were appropriate. However, the Board concluded that the technique used for the radiographs taken by Dr. Carrier did not meet the professional standards applicable to veterinarians in this State.

11. COMAR 15.14.01.07A (Professional Judgment and Practice) provides that: "[a] veterinarian, when caring for and treating a patient, shall conform to those minimum standards of care and treatment which are customary among veterinarians in this State." Dr. Carrier did not satisfy the applicable standard while taking Arnold's radiographs for two reasons. First, the positioning of the animal did not result in clear images, rendering them of questionable diagnostic value. In addition, an unprotected human arm is present in the images, which is a safety issue for Dr. Carrier or whatever staff member was involved.

Considering the facts and circumstances, including the nature of the violation(s), the veterinarian's lack of disciplinary history, and her acceptance of responsibility and good faith cooperation in resolving this matter, the Board concluded that the most reasonable and appropriate resolution includes the sanctions set forth below.

ORDER

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, it is this 19th day of April, 2023, by the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners, ORDFRED that:

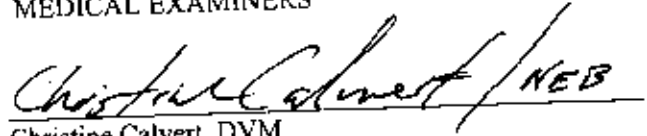
- (a) For not satisfying COMAR 15.14.01.07 (Professional Judgment) in the care and treatment provided to Arnold, a 12-year-old domestic shorthaired cat owned by Sarah Curry, by not using satisfactory technique while taking radiographs, as evidenced by an unprotected human arm in the images and poor quality images of limited diagnostic value, Dr. Carrier is assessed a civil penalty of \$300;
- (b) Dr. Carrier shall pay the civil penalty (\$300) within sixty (60) days from the date of this Consent Agreement by check payable to the Maryland Department of Agriculture ("MDA") with the notation "SBVME - 22-124" sent to the MDA at 50

Harry S. Truman Parkway, Room 102, Annapolis, MD 21401 – Attn: Nathaniel
Boan;

(c) This Consent Agreement is a public document.

WITNESS the hand of the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners, State of Maryland, this
19th day of April, 2023.

STATE BOARD OF VETERINARY
MEDICAL EXAMINERS

 NEB

Christine Calvert, DVM

Member

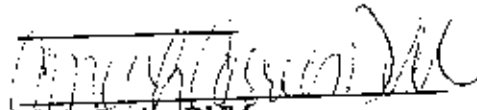
State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners
Maryland Department of Agriculture

CONSENT

I, Amie Carrier, DVM, acknowledge that I have had an opportunity to consult with counsel before entering into this Consent Agreement. By this Consent, I acknowledge the Board's legal authority and jurisdiction over this matter to issue and enforce this Consent Agreement. To resolve this matter, I agree to accept and submit to the foregoing Consent Agreement, consisting of six (6) pages, including this Consent. I sign this Consent Agreement without reservation as my voluntary act and deed after having had an opportunity to consult with counsel. I acknowledge that I fully understand and comprehend the language, meaning, and terms of this Consent Agreement.

Date:

04/17/2023


Amie Carrier, DVM