

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

REFAT SAAD, DVM
LICENSE NO. 2222
Owner and Responsible Veterinarian

FOREST HILL VETERINARY CLINIC
HOSPITAL LICENSE NO. 12-014

DOCKET NO. 24-70

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CIVIL PENALTY FINAL ORDER

This Civil Penalty Final Order ("Order"), dated this 7th day of March 2024, is issued by the Maryland State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners ("Board" or "SBVME") against Refat Saad, DVM ("Dr. Saad"), License No. 2222, the owner and responsible veterinarian at Forest Hill Veterinary Clinic ("MVC") or "Hospital"), License No. 12-014, located at 6 W. Jarrettsville Road, Forest Hill, MD 21050.

This Order confirms Dr. Saad's agreement to resolve Docket No. 24-70 without the issuance of formal charges. By email to Board counsel on March 7, 2024, Dr. Saad accepted the terms and conditions of this Order, including the finding(s) that he violated the Maryland Veterinary Practice Act, Md. Code Ann., Agric. §§ 2-301 - 2-316 ("Veterinary Practice Act") and related Code of Maryland Regulations ("COMAR") 15.14.01 – 15.14.17 as set forth herein. Before agreeing to this Order, Dr. Saad was advised in writing regarding his due process rights, including the right to receive formal notice of charges, request a hearing, retain legal counsel, and all other rights under Section 2-311 of the Veterinary Practice Act.

Under State law, the Board is the licensing body responsible for regulating the practice of veterinary medicine in this State. Its authority includes filing disciplinary actions against veterinarians charged with violating provisions of the Veterinary Practice Act and related COMAR regulations. 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 veterinary practitioner . . . [f]ails to comply with Board rules and regulations after receiving a license [.]" Md. Code Ann., 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 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 these violations, 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 Art., § 10-1001(b); COMAR 15.14.11 (Civil Penalty Standards for Veterinarians).

FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Dr. Saad, after having the opportunity to seek the advice of legal counsel, voluntarily waived his right to formal charges and a hearing and agreed to pay the civil penalty of \$300. In so doing, Dr. Saad acknowledged that the Board has sufficient evidence to find, as fact, and conclude as a matter of law that he violated COMAR 15.14.01.12-3C (Expired Medications) as follows:

1. Dr. Saad is a veterinarian licensed to practice in Maryland since 1980. Dr. Saad has no history of formal disciplinary action involving expired medications. Dr. Saad is the owner and responsible veterinarian at Forest Hill Veterinary Clinic ("FHVC" or "Hospital"), License No. 12-014, located at 6 W. Jarrettsville Road, Forest Hill, MD 21050.
2. On January 11, 2024, Board Inspector Ellen James ("Ms. James") inspected FHVC. During the inspection, she identified fourteen feline vaccines (in a tray) that expired on December 17, 2023, located in an area with non-expired vaccines.
3. Ms. James prepared a Veterinary Hospital Inspection Report reflecting her findings and issued a COMAR Violation Sheet noting that expired medications were found.
4. COMAR 15.14.01.12-3A prohibits veterinarians from administering expired medications to an animal, and COMAR 15.14.01.12-3C requires that expired medications be packaged and kept separate and apart from unexpired medications until disposal of such medications to prevent such administration. While there is no evidence that expired medications were administered to patients, Dr. Saad violated COMAR 15.14.01.12-3C by allowing expired medications to be stored with non-expired medications in the working stock of the hospital where he serves as the responsible veterinarian.

Taking all the facts and circumstances into consideration, including the nature of the violation, the veterinarian's lack of prior discipline for expired medications, and the veterinarian's 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 7th day of March 2024, by the Maryland State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners, hereby **ORDERED** that:

- (a) For the violation of Md. Code Ann., Agric. § 2-310(8) and COMAR 15.14.01.12-3C, Refat Saad, DVM (License No. 2222), the responsible veterinarian at Forest Hill Veterinary Clinic (License No. 12-014), is assessed a civil penalty of \$300;
- (b) The civil penalty shall be paid within thirty (30) days from the date of this Order by check payable to the Maryland Department of Agriculture ("MDA") with the notation "SBVME 24-70" and mailed to MDA at the address below to the attention of Nathaniel Boan, Executive Director; and
- (c) This Civil Penalty Final Order is a public document.

STATE BOARD OF VETERINARY
MEDICAL EXAMINERS



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