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# SOUTH AFRICAN VETERINARY COUNCIL

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## LEGAL SECTION: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q1: How do I go about lodging a complaint against a veterinarian?**

A1: The aggrieved client (who must have first-hand [personal] knowledge of the facts and who can attest to those facts) can lodge a complaint by submitting a completed complaint form, an affidavit containing the full facts relating to the complaint as well as the substantiating documents, if any. The complaint form and pro forma affidavit is available from the SAVC website ([www.savc.co.za](http://www.savc.co.za)) or they can be sent by e-mail to the prospective complainant upon request.

Alternatively any prima facie evidence will be investigated.

**Q2: When does the Council investigate complaints?**

A2: The Council will investigate complaints once the following conditions are satisfied:

1. The affidavit containing the facts in respect of the complaint is received.
2. The affidavit is properly commissioned, i.e. every page of the affidavit is initialled by both the deponent (person making the affidavit) and the Commissioner of Oaths.
3. The affidavit must be dated and signed in full where indicated by the deponent and the Commissioner of Oaths.
4. The facts which gave rise to the complaint (event) should not have occurred more than a year ago, unless the delay can be fully motivated).
5. The veterinarian's account must be paid in full.
6. The records relating to the matter were received from the respondent.

**Q3: May a complaint be investigated when a criminal or civil case is pending?**

A3: The Council will postpone the investigation pending the outcome of a criminal or civil case.

**Q4: Can a complaint of professional misconduct be investigated should the professional be acquitted in a criminal court or if no negligence or liability was found in a civil matter?**

A4: Yes, even if acquitted by a criminal court or if no negligence or liability was found in a civil matter, professional misconduct can be investigated and the professional can be found guilty of misconduct by an inquiry body.

**Q5: Can an Inquiry Body award damages to a complainant or order the veterinarian to repay the account to the complainant, if a finding of professional misconduct is made?**

A5: No, the Council does not have the power (authority) to award damages to a complainant.

The Council may find that a veterinarian over-services a client and may make a ruling in that regard.