



Guidance Notes on Completing the 2008/09 Annual Practising Certificate (APC) Application and Workforce Survey

Who should complete the APC application form?

You need to complete the relevant sections of this APC application form and return it to the Council by the due date, with the relevant fee, if you are seeking to:

- practise as a veterinarian in New Zealand during the period 1 April 2008 – 31 March 2009 (fee required)
- remain on the Register of Veterinarians in a non practising capacity (fee required)
- have your registration put on hold (no fee required)

Contact details and Register of Veterinarians information

The Veterinary Council collects personal information from you to administer the provisions of the Veterinarians Act 2005 and to undertake an Annual Workforce Survey. In collecting and handling personal information the Council will comply with the Veterinarians Act 2005 and the Privacy Act 1993.

The Council, after consulting with the NZVA and MAF, has prescribed by notice in the New Zealand Gazette the contents of the register of veterinarians. Under this notice and under the provisions of the Act certain information including a veterinarian's name, registration status and qualifications must be included on the Register and made publicly available. In addition the Act requires veterinarians to provide the Veterinary Council with current contact and practice details.

Please carefully check all of the information on the first page of the APC application form and mark changes where required.

The Council will only publish your contact address, the name of your practice or employing organisation, your phone, and e-mail details if you agree. Thus the APC application form includes questions seeking your permission to publish these details in the public register or instruction not to.

Only one address can be shown on the public register. Many veterinarians choose to use their practice address as their contact address.

To this time the Council has published two public registers – the online register on the Council's website and the register published in the Veterinary Council handbook. The content of these registers soon differs and the information contained in the handbook is out of date even before it is printed. By contrast the information contained in the online register is never more than one week from being current.

The Veterinary Council has decided that the content of the public register should be the same, regardless of the format in which it is published.

It is understood that the profession values the register information contained in the Handbook and it is hoped that the majority of veterinarians will continue to give permission for their contact details to be published in the public register.

Veterinarians Act 2005 requirements for the issue of a practising certificate

It is an offence for registered veterinarians to practise without holding a current practising certificate. The Veterinarians Act 2005 provides that registered veterinarians who practise without holding a current practising certificate commit an offence and are liable on summary conviction to a fine up to \$10,000. Other consequences of not holding a current practising certificate are that you may not be covered by your indemnity insurer or eligible to carry out certification and prescribing activities.

The issue of a practising certificate is no longer automatic upon payment of the required fee. Under the Veterinarians Act 2005, the Council must be satisfied, in the public's interest, that you meet the practising requirements of the Act.

The Council has prescribed by notice in the NZ Gazette the minimum practising requirements that applicants for a practising certificate must meet. These relate to:

- **Fitness to Practise.** Matters that may bring a practitioner's fitness to practise into question include mental or physical conditions (such as neurological, psychiatric or addictive disorders and physical deterioration due to injury, disease or degeneration); adverse disciplinary findings; formal competence enquiries; criminal convictions and any investigations that may result in disciplinary or criminal proceedings.
- **Competence to Practice.** Non recency of practice and/or lack of evidence of professional development activities may bring a practitioner's competence to practise into question. Therefore Council will individually examine the practising certificate applications of veterinarians who have not practised for five consecutive years or are seeking to practise in an area they have not worked in for five consecutive years. In addition Council requires veterinarians to record and report on their professional development activities.

If you wish to practise in New Zealand during the 2008/09 practising year you **must answer all questions** in the application form. **Failure to do so could jeopardise the issuing of your practising certificate.**

If you have any questions about the fitness or competence to practise declarations please feel free to contact the Council office to discuss them.

Do not return forms by email,
as your original signature is required.

Incentive rebate for early payment

The fee for renewal of your annual practising certificate (APC) is \$275.62 (inc GST) and must be paid by 31 March 2008 to ensure your legal right to practise after this date. This payment can be **rebated to \$250.00** (inc GST) **ONLY** if the amount has been banked into the Council's bank account or has been deposited in the Council's post office box by the end of the business day on **29 February 2008**. Full payment (\$275.62) will be required (no negotiation) if payment arrives at any point after 29 February 2008.

Non-practising status and fee

The fee for those wishing to remain on the register as non practising is \$56.25 (inc GST). A person with non-practising status is not entitled to practise as a veterinarian in New Zealand. This includes not being entitled to treat or prescribe animal remedies. This category allows practitioners who are retired, overseas, on parental leave or working in a position that does not require them to undertake veterinary practice, to retain their name on the register, to remain in touch with the profession and to receive Council information. Please refer to the definition of practice on page 221 of the *VCNZ Handbook and Code of Professional Conduct 2007*. There is no rebate option for the non-practising fee.

Veterinary Council Processes

- Subject to receipt of payment and provided there are no fitness or competence to practise concerns, Annual Practising Certificates will be dispatched in batches, the first being in March.
- A receipt will be incorporated with your practising certificate.
- Direct Payment – The Council's bank account number is: BNZ 02-0506-0072992-000. Include your registration number so that we know whose fee is being paid. Where payment is made for several veterinarians, please email the details to vet@vetcouncil.org.nz or fax 04 473 8869

Workforce Survey

The Council appreciates your co-operation and values your contribution in completing this survey. Do not complete the survey if you were not practising in New Zealand during the year ended 31 December 2007. The information gained will be used to monitor workforce trends and provide a valuable contribution to workforce development and planning. It will not be published in a form that can identify individual respondents.

Applicant's Checklist

Please use the checklist below to ensure you have provided all the information we require. **Incomplete applications will jeopardise the issue of your practising certificate.**

I have:

- checked my register details and marked any changes
- (if applicable) provided evidence of name changes
- (if applicable) provided certified evidence of honours and additional qualifications
- (if applicable) provided the additional information requested in Section 3
- (if applicable) arranged for a letter of good standing to be sent directly to the Council
- (if applicable) provided the additional information requested in Section 5
- filled in the continuing professional development record sheet
- signed the Declaration
- enclosed the correct fee
- (if applicable) completed the workforce survey questionnaire

Please return the completed form with payment by 29 February 2008 to be eligible for the rebated fee. The deadline for renewal at the full fee rate is 31 March 2008.