

Hillside Veterinary Centre

Terms and Conditions of Business

Thank you for entrusting the care and attention of your pet to Hillside Veterinary Centre. This letter details our Practice Terms and Conditions. Some aspects of the Terms may not be relevant to you and we request that you ask for explanation/ clarification if required.

CONSULTATIONS

All consultations are by appointment only. Emergencies during normal opening hours will always be seen immediately, but please telephone us to warn us that you are on your way.

FEES

All fees, diets and drug charges are subject to VAT at the current rate. Fee levels are determined by the time spent on or allocated to a case and according to the drugs, materials, consumables and diets used. Our written fee list is available on request. You will receive an itemised fee note for every consultation, surgical procedure or transaction with us. Please note that you should expect to be charged a fee for all veterinary consultations.

METHODS OF PAYMENT

All accounts are due for settlement at the time of consultation, the discharge of your pet or upon collection of drugs/diets. You may settle this account using cash, cheque with current banker's card or credit/debit card (Switch, Solo, Mastercard, Visa or Delta). Please note that cheque or card transactions are subject to a minimum transaction of £10 due to bank charges.

ESTIMATES OF TREATMENT COSTS

We will happily provide a written estimate as to the probable costs of a course of treatment. Please bear in mind that any estimate given can only be approximate – often a pet's illness will not follow a conventional course. If costs are likely to exceed your estimate by more than 10% we will make every effort to contact you where appropriate before proceeding.

SETTLEMENT TERMS

Should an account not be settled within 14 days, then a reminder will be sent and an accounting fee in respect of administration costs incurred will be charged. Should it be necessary for further reminders to be sent, additional administration charges will be incurred. In addition, accounts more than 30 days overdue will also be subject to an interest charge of 5% per month on the outstanding balance. After due notice to you the client, overdue accounts will be referred to our Debt Collection Agency and further charges will be levied in respect of costs incurred in collecting the debt – for example: production of reports, correspondence, court fees, attendance at court, phone calls, home visits etc. Any cheque returned by our Bank as unpaid, any credit card payment not honoured and any cash tendered that is found to be counterfeit will result in the original account being restored to the original sum with further charges added in respect of bank charges and administrative costs, together with interest on the principle sum.

INABILITY TO PAY

If, for any reason, you are unable to settle your account as specified, we ask you to discuss this matter as soon as possible with a member of staff. Please note that instalments or part payments of an account may ONLY be sanctioned with the express permission of one of the Partners. In this instance accounts will be subject to a 5% interest charge for any balance outstanding over 28 days and monthly thereafter. You will be asked to complete a credit application form for accounts not paid in full at the time of treatment.

PET HEALTH INSURANCE

Hillside Veterinary Centre strongly supports the principle of insuring your pet against unexpected illness or accidents. Please ask for details about insurance from any member of staff. Please be aware that it is your responsibility to settle our account and then reclaim fees from your insurance company. By prior arrangement with one of the Partners and where the insurance company permit, it may be possible to arrange for the insurance company to settle your

account directly with Hillside Veterinary Centre in the event of a large bill. There will be an administration fee charged for every direct claim submitted and be aware that you will still be responsible for settling the insurance excess and any items not covered by your insurance.

PRESCRIPTION POLICY

Our current prescription policy is displayed in the waiting room. We ask for 48 hours notice for all prescriptions, including written prescriptions. Written prescriptions are available on request for up to 3 months medication at a time. We will dispense prescription only medication for up to 3 months for pets on continual medication, after which period your pet will need to see a veterinary surgeon.

SECOND OPINIONS

We are happy to see cases as a second opinion if you are dissatisfied with the veterinary treatment your pet has received elsewhere. For the sake of your pet, and as a matter of professional courtesy, we will need details of your previous Veterinary surgeon, so that we can obtain a detailed medical history for your pet prior to your appointment. Second opinions often take much longer than a standard appointment and so a special consultation fee will be charged for the first appointment to account for this.

REFERRALS

If your pet requires specialised treatment, which we are unable to offer at Hillside Veterinary Centre, you may be offered a referral to a Specialist Veterinary Surgeon. You are also welcome to request referral of your pet to a specialist. When cases are referred to a specialist, you will be charged a one-off referral fee to cover costs of administration and communication involved in referring a case.

OUT OF HOURS EMERGENCY SERVICE

Any emergencies arising outside of normal surgery hours* will be seen by Black Dragon Ltd – a dedicated Veterinary emergency service. Their contact number is 01202 859933 and they are located at the PDSA Pet Aid Hospital, Castle Lane West, Bournemouth. Please contact them by telephone in the first instance. Please see the separate leaflet about this service for further details.

* This currently means any time after 6.30pm weekdays (8.00pm Wednesdays), after 5.00pm Saturdays, all day Sunday and Bank Holidays.

COMPLAINTS AND STANDARDS

We hope that you never have recourse to complain about the standards of service received from Hillside Veterinary Centre. However if you feel that there is something you wish to complain about, please direct your comments in the first instance to any member of staff, who will ensure that the Partners are notified.

OWNERSHIP OF RECORDS

Case records including radiographs and similar documents are the property of, and will be retained by Hillside Veterinary Centre. Copies with a summary of the history will be passed on request to another veterinary surgeon taking over the case.

OWNERSHIP OF RADIOGRAPHS AND SIMILAR RECORDS

The care given to your animal may involve making some specific investigations, for example taking radiographs or performing ultrasound scans. Even though we make a charge for carrying out these investigations and interpreting their results, ownership of the resulting record, for example a radiograph remains with the practice.

No addition or variation of these conditions will bind the practice unless it is specifically agreed in writing and signed by one of the practice partners. No agent or person employed by, or under contract with, the practice has the authority to alter or vary these conditions in anyway.