

# AVMA Social Media Community Guidelines

This is a discussion venue for the AVMA, members of the veterinary profession and members of the general public interested in veterinary medicine and animal health and welfare.

## Keep it Civil and Respectful

While this is an open forum and we welcome discussion, it's also a family-friendly one, so please keep your comments and wall posts clean, civil and constructive. In addition to keeping it family-friendly, we ask that you respect the Facebook terms of use (<http://www.facebook.com/terms.php>).

Personal attacks will not be tolerated. Public statements about public figures are acceptable, as long as they do not violate our moderation policy (see below) - however, please keep all comments civil and constructive. Insults and personal attacks aimed at others who have posted on the page are not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

## No bullying

We will not tolerate graphic, obscene or explicit comments or hate speech. This includes derogatory comments about race, age, sexual orientation, gender, religion, or mental or physical disabilities (such as use of the words "retard" and "retarded"). If you can't make your opinion known without using this kind of speech, then don't comment at all.

## No trolls

Unfortunately, it seems some people prefer to spend their energy and time posting hurtful, hateful comments on social media solely to spark negative emotional responses and stir controversy. Sure, the First Amendment protects your right to free speech, but there's no law that says we have to tolerate hateful statements on our social media channels. Don't feed the trolls by responding to them. And if you don't have something constructive to say, don't say it. It's totally OK to disagree with others (including us), but please remain civil and constructive. Those who repeatedly come on our social media only to post nasty, unconstructive comments will likely be banned because they contribute no value to the conversations.

## Agree to disagree

We fully understand that many of the issues we address on this page can spark significant and genuine passion, and we appreciate and respect the diverse views of the members of this community. However, we ask that all participants keep their comments constructive and respect that others' opinions may differ from their own. We're all allowed to have our own opinions, so let's respect each other enough to have constructive dialog and agree to disagree in a civil manner.

## No endorsements implied

Our sharing of links, images or videos provided/maintained by others does not constitute endorsement: the AVMA does not endorse products or companies.

With very few exceptions, we don't post (or allow to be posted) notices for lost pets, non-AVMA-affiliated contests, requests to sign petitions, requests for monetary assistance, or requests for attention by other Facebook pages. We do allow notifications of non-AVMA-affiliated webinars or educational sessions for veterinary professionals to be posted to our page, but we'd ask that you post about your webinar or educational session only once. This is not a statement of the quality or value of these efforts, but is intended to prevent our page from becoming nothing more than a billboard.

When we share something that was posted by another page, we include an acknowledgment of that page in the post; by doing so, we are not accepting responsibility for the content of that page, only our part in sharing that piece of content that we felt would be relevant or appealing to this community.

## Be upfront

Please disclose your relationship (employee, owner, etc.), if any, with any companies you are mentioning in your post.

## No playing vet

This forum is not intended for providing diagnosis or treatment recommendations regarding animal health problems. We are unable to provide health advice for your pet over the internet - it is unethical and often not legal for us to do so. An online resource is not a substitute for veterinary examination and care, and online interaction is not a valid Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship (VCPR).

On occasion, we post (or allow to be posted) questions from veterinarians asking for input from our Facebook audience. The veterinarian who made the request is responsible for his/her own diagnostic/treatment decisions.

## Moderation Policy:

While it is our intention to never ban individuals from our page, if content violates our policy, we reserve the right to remove that content and may block the offending user. The following types of posts may be removed, and the offending user may be given a warning or may be banned, depending on the severity of the offense:

- 1) Personal attacks;
- 2) Graphic, obscene, explicit comments or hate speech (including derogatory comments about race, age, sexual orientation, gender, religion, or mental or physical disabilities).
- 3) Spam, solicitations and advertisements. This includes requests to vote in a contest so the poster will win something, or solicitations for monetary contributions. This also includes veterinary hospitals looking for vets, vet techs or other staff, as well as veterinarians seeking employment - if you are seeking personnel or employment, please go to our Veterinary Career Center (<https://www.avma.org/education/veterinary-career-center>). Requests to sign petitions will be addressed on a case-by-case basis, and we reserve the right to remove the posts. This also includes "lost pet" posts (we hope you get your pet back, but our page isn't a clearinghouse for lost pet posts) and "sign up for our webinar" posts;
- 4) "Bumping" content by repeatedly bringing existing or past issues to the top of the wall;
- 5) Posts that are blatantly off-topic.