

DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE
OF THE COLLEGE OF VETERINARIANS OF ONTARIO

Indexed as: Ontario (College of Veterinarians) v Allossery, 2026 ONCVO 1

Decision Date: 2026-02-02

BETWEEN:

THE COLLEGE OF VETERINARIANS OF ONTARIO

-and-

DR. MATTHEW ALLOSSERY

PANEL:	Dr. Lena Levison	Chairperson
	Dr. Sami Qureshi	Member
	Dr. Paula Menzies	Member
	Dr. Ravi Sankar	Member
	Mr. Douglas Reynolds	Public Member

Appearances Bernard LeBlanc and Justine Wong, Counsel for the College of Veterinarians of Ontario (the “College”)
Alexi Wood and Abby Deshman, Counsel for Dr. Matthew Allossery, (the “Member”)
Luisa Ritacca, Independent Legal Counsel to the Panel

Heard: September 11, September 29, November 28, 2025

DECISION AND REASONS

Introduction

- [1] This Panel released its Decision and Reasons on the Merits in this matter on December 2, 2024, finding that Dr. Matthew Allossery (the “Member”) committed professional misconduct in relation to his treatment of the horse Sapphire, his failure to communicate clinical findings to the owner RAD, and his disclosure of confidential information on social media (“Merits Decision”). The Panel did not make findings on the allegations concerning the horses, Brodie, Haarlem, and Peaches, and did not find a records-retention breach. The hearing on penalty and costs took place over three days in Fall 2025. These are our reasons for and order on penalty and costs.

Jurisdiction

- [2] Section 30 of the *Veterinarians Act* authorizes the Discipline Committee, upon findings of professional misconduct, to suspend a member’s license, impose conditions and limitations, and reprimand the member.
- [3] Costs may be ordered in an appropriate case under section 30(6.1). We rely on this statutory authority for our orders below.

Position of the Parties

The College

- [4] The College sought a reprimand, a suspension of the Member’s license to practice for a period of fifteen months, or such longer period until he complies with certain remedial provisions, and practice monitoring.
- [5] In support of its request for a fifteen-month suspension, the College submitted that the sanction must be sufficiently severe to meet the governing purposes of penalty, namely public protection, general and specific deterrence, maintenance of public confidence and rehabilitation. The lengthy suspension, according to the College, will denounce Dr. Allossery’s misconduct and deter repetition of such behaviour by him or other members of the College.
- [6] The College argued that while this Panel did not make finding on all of the allegations brought against the Member, it did find that he engaged in unjustified physical contact with the horse, Sapphire, failed to report to his client, and breached his client’s confidentiality in a social media post. The College submitted that the seriousness and scope of the misconduct, coupled with the Member’s attitude at the hearing, as evidenced by his evasiveness in testifying and his unwillingness to make reasonable admissions, call for a sterner penalty that reinforces professional accountability.
- [7] Further, the College argued that while several of the precedent cases available to the Panel offered a lower range for suspension time, the Panel should recognize shifting societal values regarding animal welfare and heightened public concern in cases involving the mistreatment of animals, including the significant public attention

generated by the video evidence in this case. The College submitted that this shift in values justifies moving “up” the penalty range, in order to maintain public confidence in the profession’s ability to self-regulate.

The Member

- [8] The Member submitted that the appropriate penalty should reflect the particular facts as found by the Panel and that in all of the circumstances a shorter suspension than proposed by the College is warranted. The Member also agreed that remedial terms and conditions were appropriate.
- [9] The Member argued that his misconduct in relation to Sapphire was an isolated incident, not part of a pattern of behaviour. The misconduct occurred during a single appointment with Sapphire and was markedly out of character relative to his usual practice and professional conduct.
- [10] Further, the Member submitted that there was no evidence before this Panel of lasting injury or harm to Sapphire, which should militate in favour of a suspension on the lower range than the College has proposed.
- [11] The Member argued that he has shown consistent remorse and insight, including immediate private apologies to Sapphire’s owners, his other clients, his family, and a public apology, wherein he specifically acknowledged his conduct as “atrocious”.
- [12] The Panel heard and received character evidence from several individuals, including past and current clients of the Member. Most had read the Panel’s decision and were aware of the misconduct in this case, but nonetheless described the Member as dedicated and an excellent veterinarian.
- [13] Finally, the Member stressed that the misconduct occurred amid exceptional personal and professional stressors, including pandemic-related pressures and fatigue from demanding on-call duties at the relevant times.
- [14] In all the circumstances, the Member urged the Panel to impose a suspension of much less duration (3 months) than the one sought by the College.

Decision on Penalty

- [15] In the Merits Decision, we found that the Member kicked Sapphire and repeatedly struck him; that he failed to communicate clinical findings to the owner; and that he disclosed confidential information in a social media post. We concluded this conduct failed to maintain the standards of practice, revealed confidential information contrary to regulation, and amounted to disgraceful, dishonourable, or unprofessional conduct and conduct unbecoming. We did not find misconduct with regard to his records and did not find the broader allegations respecting Brodie, Haarlem and Peaches proven.

[16] Having considered the submissions, the evidentiary record, our merits findings, and the principles governing sanction, we make the following order:

1. Reprimand. The Member shall appear before this Panel (or a subset) to receive a reprimand.
2. Suspension. The Member's license to practice veterinary medicine is suspended for six (6) months, or such longer period until the Member successfully completes the conditions in paragraph 3(a) below, with the suspension to commence on the date this order takes effect.
3. Conditions and limitations (at the Member's expense and to the Registrar's satisfaction):
 - a. Education and training (pre-approved by the Registrar), with written proof of successful completion:
 - i. Anger management and stress management training, including work-life balance.
 - ii. A course, or sufficient training, on equine restraint and management techniques, including horse behaviour and chemical restraint protocols relevant to dental procedures.
 - iii. Client confidentiality and professional social media use training, including CVO expectations and guidelines.
 - iv. Acknowledgement: If the Registrar determines that any substantially equivalent courses already completed by the Member are sufficient and there is clear proof of successful completion under appropriate oversight, additional coursework in that area will not be required.
 - b. Practice monitoring. Following completion of the suspension, the Member shall permit a College-approved practice monitor to attend his practice once per month for one year on short notice, to observe client interactions and the physical management of patients. The monitor shall provide a report to the Registrar within two weeks of each attendance and a final summary report within one month of the final visit. The monitor will be provided with the Executive Committee's and this Discipline Committee's Decisions and Reasons. The Member shall implement any reasonable recommendations of the monitor.

Principles and Purposes

[17] In setting penalty, we are guided by the objectives of denunciation of misconduct, specific deterrence, general deterrence, remediation, and the maintenance of public

confidence in the profession's ability to regulate. The College's proposed structure and our adopted terms serve these purposes.

Nature and seriousness of misconduct

- [18] Our findings on the merits reflect serious departures from professional standards. The Member's striking of Sapphire, his failure to communicate clinical findings to the owner, and his breach of confidentiality in a social media response undermine public trust and professional norms.
- [19] The conduct toward Sapphire, though not prolonged, involved repeated striking, and our experts agreed that several blows fell below the standard of practice; the confidentiality breach, while framed as a reply to a public post, nonetheless disclosed information "in the strictest of terms" contrary to standards. These features call for a meaningful suspension and clear remedial measures.

Mitigating and Aggravating Factors

- [20] Dr. Allossery's treatment of Sapphire as shown in the extensive video evidence is a significant aggravating factor in this case. Sapphire's owner stated that as she watched the procedure, she could tell that Sapphire was struggling to keep his head in place and to maintain his balance. As we found in the Merits Decision, the conduct was unacceptable.
- [21] In addition, Dr. Allossery's misconduct had a significant impact on public confidence. Veterinarians must maintain composure and adhere to standards even under stress, and that abuse and breaches of confidentiality on social media erode trust in professional competence and judgment.
- [22] With regard to mitigating facts, we have considered the fact that the Member does not have any discipline history, that he continues to be a valued veterinarian for many of his clients and colleagues, and that he has taken steps that illustrate insight into his behaviour and his mental health.
- [23] While none of these mitigating considerations can excuse the Member's misconduct, they support a penalty calibrated to both accountability and rehabilitation.

Proportionality and range

- [24] We considered the penalty range indicated in submissions and analogous regulatory decisions. We accept that a lengthy suspension must be justified by the facts and purposes of sanction. In light of the remedial steps contemplated, and the particular features of the misconduct as found, we determined that a six-month suspension, coupled with targeted education, confidentiality/social-media training, and robust

post-suspension monitoring, is proportionate and sufficient to meet the sanctioning objectives.

Specific and general deterrence; remediation; public confidence

- [25] The reprimand and suspension denounce the misconduct and deter its repetition by the Member and the profession. Mandatory remediation (anger/stress management; equine restraint/behaviour; confidentiality/social media) addresses the risk factors evidenced in this matter and supports safe practice upon return. Post-suspension monitoring further protects the public and embeds learning into practice. Taken together, these measures reassure reasonable members of the public that the College takes misconduct of this kind seriously and responds proportionately.

Costs

- [26] The College seeks an order that the Member pay one-third of the College's total investigative, hearing, and legal costs, in the amount of \$115, 220.42.
- [27] The College submits that an order for the payment of part of its costs is appropriate given its success on the "main issues" (Sapphire physical abuse, failure to report back to the client, and breach of confidentiality), even though other allegations were not proven. It relies on subsection 30(6.1) of the *Veterinarians Act* and the factors commonly applied when determining costs, including the nature of findings, the College's relative success, the conduct of the defence, the length of the hearing and reasons for it, and any failure to comply with College requirements.
- [28] The College's total costs are stated to be \$345,661.25, comprising hearing costs of \$104,701.29 and legal costs of approximately \$240,959.96 (including estimates for the penalty and costs phases), from which it seeks one-third. The College submits that, while the Member was entitled to a full defence, his approach prolonged the hearing through unfocused or irrelevant evidence and resistance to straightforward points, necessitating the College to call its full case; it also points to successful motions at the penalty phase that were required due to material the College considered clearly inadmissible. The College proposes that any award include a reasonable timetable for payment, with provision for immediate enforceability upon default.
- [29] The Member submits that this is not an "appropriate" case for a costs award because, in his submission, the College chose to proceed with a fully contested hearing notwithstanding his pre hearing factual admissions, offers to enter into an agreed statement of facts, and willingness to plead guilty to multiple counts, and because the College was not substantially successful on many fully contested allegations. He notes the College's prehearing position of revocation and says the College's later move to seek a 15 month suspension further underscores that a fully contested course was not necessary.

- [30] In the alternative, if costs are awarded, the Member submits that the quantum should be \$26,694.26, on the basis that: (i) costs must be grounded in proven, actually incurred expenses rather than speculative estimates, which he says inflate the College's claim; and (ii) any award should be substantially reduced to reflect the College's lack of success on several allegations (notably Brodie, Haarlem, Peaches, and record keeping) and the unnecessary calling of witnesses on matters he had admitted or was willing to resolve, as well as to account for financial hardship and the risk to practice viability from any significant order combined with any suspension.

Panel's Decision on Costs

- [31] The Panel orders that the Member pay thirty percent (30%) of the College's proven and reasonable investigative, legal, and hearing costs and expenses, inclusive of proven estimates for the penalty and costs phases, fixed in the amount of \$103,698.38.
- [32] Payment schedule: The Member shall pay the above amount in equal monthly instalments over twelve (12) months, commencing on the first day of the month immediately following the completion of the Member's suspension. If a monthly payment is missed, the full outstanding amount becomes immediately due and payable.

Statutory Authority and Factors

- [33] Section 30(6.1) permits an order for all or part of the College's investigative, legal, and hearing costs in an appropriate case. In determining appropriateness and quantum, we considered the nature of the professional misconduct, relative success on the allegations, the conduct of the defence, the length of the hearing and reasons for it, and any failure to comply with College requirements (the "Reid factors").

Appropriateness

- [34] This is an appropriate case for a costs order. The College succeeded on serious allegations concerning Sapphire and confidentiality. The hearing spanned multiple days and required expert and fact evidence, with corresponding expenditures for panel per diems, court reporting, independent legal counsel, and College counsel, supported by affidavit evidence. While some allegations were not proven, the core allegations were established and warranted a contested hearing to a reasoned outcome.

Quantum

- [35] The College presented total investigative, legal, and hearing costs of \$345,661.25, supported by a breakdown of elements including court reporter fees, panel per diems, independent legal counsel, and College counsel, with some prospective estimates for the penalty/costs phase. The College sought one-third, a ratio within the range endorsed in analogous proceedings. The Member challenged reliance on outdated

estimates and urged significant reductions for time devoted to unproven allegations, proposing \$26,694.26.

- [36] We accept that costs should reflect proven or reasonably updated estimates and should be sensitive to relative success. We have therefore fixed costs at 30% of the proven and reasonable total, resulting in \$103,698.38. In our view, this strikes a fair balance between compensating the College for a substantial portion of its reasonably incurred costs in a case with serious, proven misconduct, while recognizing mixed success and estimate concerns by setting the percentage below the one-third request.

Time to pay

- [37] We considered the Member's ability to pay during and immediately after a six-month suspension and the public interest in realistic recovery. Commencing instalments after the suspension provides a rational and fair schedule aligned with recent panel practice and promotes compliance without undermining the compensatory purpose of costs. A missed-payment acceleration clause ensures diligence in repayment.

Order

- [38] For the reasons above, the Panel orders:

- The Member shall appear to receive a reprimand.
- The Member's license is suspended for six (6) months, or such longer period until the Member completes the conditions in paragraph 3(a).
- Conditions and limitations are imposed:
 - Pre-approved and successfully completed courses in anger and stress management (including work-life balance); equine restraint/behaviour including chemical restraint for dental procedures; and client confidentiality/professional social media usage in line with CVO expectations. Equivalency credit may be granted by the Registrar where appropriate proof exists.
 - Post-suspension practice monitoring once monthly for one year, with short-notice attendances, written reports to the Registrar after each visit and a final report, and provision of the merits and penalty decisions to the monitor. The Member shall implement reasonable recommendations.
 - Costs fixed at \$103,698.38, being 30% of the College's proven and reasonable investigative, legal and hearing costs and expenses.

- Payment by equal monthly instalments over twelve (12) months, commencing the first day of the month following completion of the suspension; on default of any monthly payment, the full outstanding balance becomes immediately due.

[39] We are satisfied that this order is proportionate to the misconduct found, advances denunciation and deterrence, supports remediation, and maintains public confidence in the profession's capacity to regulate.

I, Dr. Lena Levison, sign this decision and reasons for the decision as Chairperson of this Discipline Panel and on behalf of the members of the Discipline panel as listed below:



February 2, 2026

Chairperson

Date

Dr. Sami Qureshi, Professional Member

Dr. Paula Menzies, Professional Member

Dr. Ravi Sankar, Professional Member

Mr. Douglas Reynolds, Public Representative