

**VETERINARY SURGEONS (DISCIPLINARY TRIBUNAL AND
ASSESSORS) RULES**

[L.N. 5 of 1970.]

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SCHEDULE

VETERINARY SURGEONS (DISCIPLINARY TRIBUNAL AND ASSESSORS) RULES

[L.N. 5 of 1970.]

under paragraphs 2 and 4 (2) of the Second Schedule

[22nd December, 1969]

[Commencement.]

1. Composition of Tribunal

(1) Whenever any case of professional misconduct against a veterinary surgeon is referred to the Tribunal by the Panel, such a case shall be heard by a division of not more than five members comprising fully registered veterinary surgeons appointed by the Veterinary Council of Nigeria of whom at least two shall be elected members of the Council.

(2) The President of the Council, or in his absence anyone appointed in that behalf, shall be the chairman of the Tribunal.

2. Reference of case to Tribunal

(1) In any case where in pursuance of section 13 (3) of the Act the Panel is of the opinion that a *prima facie* case is made against a veterinary surgeon, the Panel shall prepare a report of the case and formulate any appropriate charge or charges and forward them to the Secretary together with all the documents considered by the Panel.

[Cap. V3.]

(2) The Secretary shall refer the report and charges to the President of the Council who shall convene a meeting of the Tribunal as set up in accordance with rule 1 above.

3. Parties and appearances

(1) Parties to proceedings before the Tribunal shall be-

- (a) the complainant;
- (b) the respondent;
- (c) any other person required by the Tribunal to be joined or joined by leave of the Tribunal.

(2) Any party to the proceedings may appear in person or be represented by a legal practitioner, so however that the Tribunal may order a party to the proceedings to appear in person if of opinion that it is necessary in the interest of justice but without prejudice to his right to counsel.

4. Notice of hearing and service

(1) On the direction of the chairman, the Secretary shall fix a day for the hearing of the case and forthwith thereafter shall, in the form in the Schedule to these Rules, serve notice thereof on each party to the proceedings.

[Schedule. Form.]

(2) The Secretary shall serve on each party, other than the complainant, copies of the report and all the charges prepared by the Panel and all documents considered by the Panel.

(3) It shall be sufficient compliance with this rule if, any process required to be served is handed to the party concerned or effected personally or is sent by registered post to the last known place of residence or abode of the party.

5. Hearing in absence of parties

(1) Subject to the next succeeding paragraph, the Tribunal may hear and determine a case in the absence or any party.

(2) Any party to the proceedings before a Tribunal who fails to appear or be represented may apply, within thirty days after the date when the pronouncement of the findings and directions of the tribunal were given, for a re-hearing on the ground of want of notice or other good and sufficient reason; and the tribunal may, in appropriate cases, grant the application upon such terms as to costs or otherwise as it thinks fit.

6. Witness and evidence

The Tribunal may in the course of its proceedings hear such witnesses and receive such documentary evidence as in its opinion may assist in arriving at a conclusion as to the truth or otherwise of the charges referred to it by the Panel; and in the application of this rule, the provisions of the Evidence Act or Law in force in the State where the Tribunal holds its sitting shall apply to any such proceedings.

[Cap. EI4.]

7. Amendment of charges

If in the course of the proceedings it appears to the Tribunal that the charges referred to it by the Panel require to be amended in any respect, the Tribunal may permit such amendment as it thinks fit.

8. Proceedings to be in public

The proceedings of the Tribunal shall be held, and its findings and directions shall be pronounced, in public.

9. Adjournment of hearing

The Tribunal may, of its own motion, or upon application of any party, adjourn the hearing on such terms as to costs or otherwise as the Tribunal may think fit.

10. False evidence

If any person wilfully gives false evidence on oath before the Tribunal during the course of any proceedings, or wilfully makes a false statement in any affidavit sworn for the purpose of any such proceedings, the Tribunal may refer the matter to the Attorney-General of the Federation for any action he may deem fit.

11. Findings and costs

If after the hearing, the Tribunal adjudges that the charge of professional misconduct has not been proved, the Tribunal-

- (a) shall record a finding that the respondent is not guilty of such conduct in respect of the matters to which the charge relates;
- (b) may, without any misconduct proved against the respondent, nevertheless order any party (except the complainant) to pay the costs of the proceedings if, having regard to his conduct and to all the circumstances of the case, the Tribunal thinks fit so to order.

12. Publication of Tribunal's findings

Subject to section 14 (4) of the Act (which relates to appeals), any direction given by the Tribunal shall be published in the Federal *Gazette* as soon as may be after the direction takes effect.

13. Record of proceedings

(1) Shorthand notes of proceedings may be taken by a person appointed by the tribunal and any party who appeared at the proceedings shall be entitled to inspect the transcript thereof.

(2) The Secretary shall supply to any person entitled to be heard upon an appeal against the direction of the Tribunal, and to the Veterinary Council of Nigeria, but to no other person, a copy of the transcript of such notes on payment of such charges as may be determined by the Secretary.

(3) If no shorthand notes are taken, the chairman shall take a note of the proceedings and, accordingly, the provisions of these Rules as to inspection and taking of copies shall apply to such notes.

14. Dispensing with certain provisions

The Tribunal may dispense with any requirement of these Rules respecting notices, affidavits, documents, service or time in any case where it appears to the Tribunal to be just to do so; and the Tribunal may in any appropriate case extend the time to do anything under these Rules.

15. Power to retain exhibits pending appeal

The Tribunal may order that any documents or other exhibits produced or used at the hearing shall be retained by the Secretary until the time within which an appeal may be entered has expired, and if notice of appeal is given, until the appeal is heard or otherwise disposed of.

16. Appointment and duties of assessors

(1) An assessor, when nominated in accordance with paragraph 4 (1) of the Second Schedule to the Act, shall be appointed by the Council by instrument, and the assessor shall hold and vacate office as provided in the instrument; and where the appointment is not a general one, it shall have effect only in respect of a particular meeting of the Tribunal.

[Second Schedule of Cap. V3.]

(2) Subject to the terms of his appointment, an assessor shall attend any meeting of the Tribunal as and when requested to do so by notice in writing given to him by the Secretary not later than three clear days before the date appointed for the meeting; and he shall there advise the Tribunal on questions of law arising in proceedings before it.

(3) Except where the Tribunal is deliberating in private, the advice of the assessor on questions of law as to evidence, procedure and as to compliance with the Act shall be tendered in the presence of every party or of his counsel.

(4) If the advice by the assessor to the Tribunal is given otherwise than in the presence of all parties, or as the case may be of their counsel, the assessor shall, as soon as may be thereafter, inform all the parties as to the nature of the advice given and the reaction thereto of the Tribunal.

(5) Fees to be paid to the assessor shall be such as may be determined by the Council from time to time with the consent of the assessor.

17. Interpretation

In these Rules unless the context otherwise requires-

"**chairman**" means the chairman of the Veterinary Surgeons Disciplinary Tribunal;

"**complainant**" means the Veterinary Surgeons Investigating Panel or any member thereof;

"respondent" means the person required to answer any charge of professional misconduct;

"Secretary" means a person appointed to act as the Registrar under section 1 (5) of the Act.

[Cap. V3.]

18. Short title

These Rules may be cited as the Veterinary Surgeons (Disciplinary Tribunal and Assessors) Rules.

SCHEDULE

[Rule 4 (1).]

Notice of hearing by the Veterinary Surgeons Disciplinary Tribunal

In the Matter of the Veterinary Surgeons Act; and

In the Matter of A.B., a Veterinary Surgeon

TAKE NOTICE that the report and charges prepared by the Veterinary Surgeons Investigating Panel in the above matter are fixed for hearing by the Veterinary Surgeons Disciplinary Tribunal

at

on the day of 20

COPIES of -

(a) the report;

(b) the charges; and

(c)
are annexed hereto.

DATED atthis day20

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Secretary of the Tribunal