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Sommario/riassunto

"While the primary consideration of this book concerns the ethical questions facing the veterinary profession, it is important to be aware of the legal context and constraints on the profession. The world of law and ethics often overlap, but not always. The legal context is actually less intrusive, dealing with fewer issues than the ethical issues that veterinarians face. But when it does speak, it trumps personal or even group ethical policy. Some small points of clarification for the language used in this chapter. "The law" relates to adopted statutes or court decisions that set out rules of conduct and creates legal responsibilities. (For example, a law might require the reporting of suspected animal cruelty). A "regulation" is a rule adopted by an agency under the authority of legislatively adopted law (For example, a regulation adopted by a Board of Veterinary Medicine might require the keeping of specific records for all acts of euthanasia). "A Code" refers to a set of directions and constraints formally adopted by a professional organization. It is not a law, but if referenced in regulations, can be operational in investigations concerning unprofessional conduct. "Professional Ethics" exist when a group of veterinarians agree upon an expectation of conduct by the members of the group. This may be in writing or may not. (For example, it is acceptable to cut off a dog's tail only if there is medical reason for that specific animal). "Personal ethics" is when an individual veterinarian makes an ethical decision out of his or her own beliefs and experience independent of the law or existing codes"--
