

16-701.

(a) (1) [A] IF A qualified veterinarian, as defined in the Agriculture Article, OR A KENNEL COMMERCIAL BOARDING KENNEL OPERATOR [who] gives care or custody to any animal or [who] performs medical or other services necessary and incidental to [his profession] THEIR PROFESSIONS to any animal [in his] UNDER care or custody, THE VETERINARIAN OR KENNEL COMMERCIAL BOARDING KENNEL OPERATOR may notify the owner after the animal is ready for delivery that [it] THE ANIMAL is ready.

(2) Notice may be given in person or by registered or certified mail or, if the owner's address is unknown, by posting the notice for [30] 10 days on the door of the courthouse or on a bulletin board in the immediate vicinity of the courthouse of the county where the animal is located.

(b) If the animal is not claimed within [30] 10 days of the date the notice is given or posted, the owner forfeits his title to the animal and the veterinarian OR THE KENNEL COMMERCIAL BOARDING KENNEL OPERATOR may:

(1) Sell the animal at public sale, except for purposes of experimentation or vivisection; ~~or~~

(2) Turn the animal over to an animal welfare agency serving the county in which the animal is located or, if there is no animal welfare agency in that county, to the nearest animal welfare agency----; OR

(3) TURN THE ANIMAL OVER TO A RESPONSIBLE PRIVATE INDIVIDUAL IN THE COUNTY.

(C) IF THE VETERINARIAN OR KENNEL COMMERCIAL BOARDING KENNEL OPERATOR GIVES NOTICE TO THE OWNER OF THE ANIMAL AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION, THE VETERINARIAN, KENNEL COMMERCIAL BOARDING KENNEL OPERATOR, AND ANY CUSTODIAN TO WHOM THE ANIMAL MAY BE GIVEN ARE RELIEVED OF ANY FURTHER LIABILITY FOR DISPOSAL.

[(c) Notice of any sale under subsection (b)(1) of this section shall be published once a week for two successive weeks in one or more newspapers of general circulation in the county in which the animal is located.]

(d) (1) The proceeds of any sale under subsection (b)(1) of this section shall be applied, in the following order, to:

(i) The expenses of the sale; and

(ii) The amount of the indebtedness of the owner of the animal.