WV Board of Veterinary Medicine
Certified Animal Euthanasia Technician
Clarification of Protocols for Cat Euthanasia

March 30, 2026

It has come to the WV Board of Veterinary Medicine's "Board" attention that there is a misunderstanding in the protocols for when a Certified Animal Euthanasia Technicians is euthanatizing cats.

To clarify, here is the breakdown of when and how these procedures should be used:

The Primary Standard (The Goal)

The standard of care is a two-step process designed to minimize stress for the cat and the handler.

- **Step One:** CAETs must first administer an approved sedative to reduce the cat's mobility and stress. The Board-approved drugs for this step include:
    - **Acepromazine**
    - **Dexdomitor**
    - **Telazol**
- **Step Two: IV Injection.** The lethal solution should be administered via a peripheral vein, specifically the **medial femoral vein** (located on the inside of the hind leg).

The "Last Resort" Exception

The information clearly states that **intraperitoneal injections** or **cardiac puncture ARE NOT** an alternative "option" for general use. It is a fallback reserved strictly for cases where the standard approach is **unachievable**.

When to use intraperitoneal injection or cardiac puncture:

- **ONLY** when a peripheral vein (like the femoral vein) cannot be accessed.
- **ONLY** after the animal is heavily sedated or unconscious.