

By the Committee on Regulated Industries; and Senator Bradley

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1 A bill to be entitled  
2 An act relating to veterinary practices; amending s.  
3 474.202, F.S.; defining the term "veterinary  
4 telehealth"; creating s. 474.2021, F.S.; providing a  
5 short title; authorizing licensed veterinarians to  
6 practice veterinary telehealth in accordance with  
7 specified criteria; specifying the powers of the Board  
8 of Veterinary Medicine related to the practice of  
9 telehealth; specifying the conditions under which a  
10 veterinarian may practice veterinary telehealth;  
11 specifying the drugs a veterinarian practicing  
12 telehealth may not provide under specified  
13 circumstances; providing specific authorizations for  
14 cases where a patient is a food-producing species;  
15 amending s. 474.2165, F.S.; conforming a provision to  
16 changes made by the act; amending s. 828.30, F.S.;  
17 authorizing certain persons to administer rabies  
18 vaccinations to certain animals under indirect  
19 supervision of a veterinarian; providing that a  
20 supervising veterinarian assumes responsibility for  
21 specified people who provide vaccinations; defining  
22 the term "indirect supervision"; amending ss. 474.203,  
23 767.16, and 828.29, F.S.; conforming provisions to  
24 changes made by the act; providing an effective date.

25  
26 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

27  
28 Section 1. Subsection (14) is added to section 474.202,  
29 Florida Statutes, to read:

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30 474.202 Definitions.—As used in this chapter:

31 (14) "Veterinary telehealth" means the use of synchronous  
32 or asynchronous telecommunications technology by a telehealth  
33 provider to provide health care services, including, but not  
34 limited to, assessment, diagnosis, consultation, treatment, and  
35 monitoring of a patient; transfer of medical data; patient and  
36 professional health-related education; public health services;  
37 and health administration. The term does not include e-mail  
38 messages or facsimile transmissions.

39 Section 2. Section 474.2021, Florida Statutes, is created  
40 to read:

41 474.2021 Veterinary telehealth.—

42 (1) This section may be cited as the "Providing Equity in  
43 Telehealth Services Act."

44 (2) A veterinarian who holds a current license to practice  
45 veterinary medicine in this state may practice veterinary  
46 telehealth.

47 (3) The board has jurisdiction over a veterinarian  
48 practicing veterinary telehealth, regardless of where the  
49 veterinarian's physical office is located. The practice of  
50 veterinary medicine is deemed to occur at the premises where the  
51 patient is located at the time the veterinarian practices  
52 veterinary telehealth.

53 (4) A veterinarian practicing veterinary telehealth:

54 (a) May not engage in the practice of veterinary telehealth  
55 unless it is within the context of a veterinarian/client/patient  
56 relationship;

57 (b) Must practice in a manner consistent with his or her  
58 scope of practice and the prevailing professional standard of

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59 practice for a veterinarian who provides in-person veterinary  
60 services to patients in this state;

61 (c) May use veterinary telehealth to perform a patient  
62 evaluation if the evaluation is conducted using synchronous,  
63 audiovisual communication. If a veterinarian practicing  
64 telehealth conducts a patient evaluation sufficient to diagnose  
65 and treat the patient, the veterinarian is not required to  
66 research a patient's medical history or conduct a physical  
67 examination of the patient before using veterinary telehealth to  
68 provide a veterinary health care service to the patient;

69 (d) Shall provide the client with a statement containing  
70 the veterinarian's name, license number, and contact information  
71 and the contact information for at least one physical veterinary  
72 clinic in the vicinity of the pet's location and instructions  
73 for how to receive patient follow-up care or assistance if the  
74 veterinarian and client are unable to communicate because of a  
75 technological or equipment failure or if there is an adverse  
76 reaction to treatment. The veterinarian shall obtain from the  
77 client a signed and dated statement indicating the client has  
78 received the required information;

79 (e) Shall prescribe all drugs and medications in accordance  
80 with all federal and state laws and the following requirements:

81 1. A veterinarian practicing veterinary telehealth may  
82 order, prescribe, or make available medicinal drugs or drugs  
83 specifically approved for use in animals by the United States  
84 Food and Drug Administration, the use of which conforms to the  
85 approved labeling. Prescriptions based solely on a telehealth  
86 evaluation may be issued for up to 1 month for parasite  
87 treatment and prevention medications and up to 14 days for other

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88 animal drugs.

89 2. A veterinarian practicing veterinary telehealth may not  
90 order, prescribe, or make available medicinal drugs or drugs as  
91 defined in s. 465.003 approved by the United States Food and  
92 Drug Administration for human use, including compounded  
93 antibacterial, antifungal, antiviral, or antiparasitic  
94 medications, unless the veterinarian has conducted an in-person  
95 physical examination of the animal or made medically appropriate  
96 and timely visits to the premises where the animal is kept.

97 3. A veterinarian may not use veterinary telehealth to  
98 prescribe a controlled substance as defined in chapter 893  
99 unless the veterinarian has conducted an in-person physical  
100 examination of the animal or made medically appropriate and  
101 timely visits to the premises where the animal is kept.

102 4. A veterinarian practicing veterinary telehealth may not  
103 prescribe a drug or other medication for use on a horse engaged  
104 in racing or training at a facility under the jurisdiction of  
105 the Florida Gaming Control Commission or on a horse that is a  
106 covered horse as defined in the federal Horseracing Integrity  
107 and Safety Act, 15 U.S.C. ss. 3051 et seq.;

108 (f) Shall be familiar with available veterinary resources,  
109 including emergency resources, near the patient's location and  
110 be able to provide the client with a list of nearby  
111 veterinarians who may be able to see the patient in person upon  
112 the request of the client;

113 (g) Shall keep, maintain, and make available a summary of  
114 the patient record as provided in s. 474.2165; and

115 (h) May not use veterinary telehealth to issue an  
116 international or interstate travel certificate or a certificate

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117 of veterinary inspection.

118 (5) A veterinarian personally acquainted with the caring  
119 and keeping of an animal or group of animals on food-producing  
120 animal operations on land classified as agricultural pursuant to  
121 s. 193.461 who has recently seen the animal or group of animals  
122 or has made medically appropriate and timely visits to the  
123 premises where the animal or group of animals is kept may  
124 practice veterinary telehealth for animals on such operations.

125 Section 3. Subsection (1) of section 474.2165, Florida  
126 Statutes, is amended to read:

127 474.2165 Ownership and control of veterinary medical  
128 patient records; report or copies of records to be furnished.—

129 (1) As used in this section, the term "records owner" means  
130 any veterinarian who generates a medical record after making an  
131 ~~a physical~~ examination of, or administering treatment or  
132 dispensing legend drugs to, any patient; any veterinarian to  
133 whom records are transferred by a previous records owner; or any  
134 veterinarian's employer, provided the employment contract or  
135 agreement between the employer and the veterinarian designates  
136 the employer as the records owner.

137 Section 4. Subsections (1) and (3) of section 828.30,  
138 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

139 828.30 Rabies vaccination of dogs, cats, and ferrets.—

140 (1) (a) All dogs, cats, and ferrets 4 months of age or older  
141 must be vaccinated by a licensed veterinarian or a person  
142 authorized under paragraph (b) against rabies with a vaccine  
143 that is licensed by the United States Department of Agriculture  
144 for use in those species.

145 (b) Acting under the indirect supervision of a

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146 veterinarian, an employee, an agent, or a contractor of a county  
147 or municipal animal control authority or sheriff may vaccinate  
148 against rabies dogs, cats, and ferrets in the custody of an  
149 animal control authority or a sheriff that will be transferred,  
150 rescued, fostered, adopted, or reclaimed by the owner. The  
151 supervising veterinarian assumes responsibility for any person  
152 vaccinating animals at his or her direction or under his or her  
153 direct or indirect supervision. As used in this paragraph, the  
154 term "indirect supervision" means that the supervising  
155 veterinarian is required to be available for consultation  
156 through telecommunications but is not required to be physically  
157 present during such consultation.

158 (c) The owner of every dog, cat, and ferret shall have the  
159 animal revaccinated 12 months after the initial vaccination.  
160 Thereafter, the interval between vaccinations shall conform to  
161 the vaccine manufacturer's directions. The cost of vaccination  
162 must be borne by the animal's owner. Evidence of circulating  
163 rabies virus neutralizing antibodies may ~~shall~~ not be used as a  
164 substitute for current vaccination in managing rabies exposure  
165 or determining the need for booster vaccinations.

166 (3) Upon vaccination against rabies, the licensed  
167 veterinarian shall provide the animal's owner and the animal  
168 control authority with a rabies vaccination certificate. Each  
169 animal control authority and veterinarian shall use the "Rabies  
170 Vaccination Certificate" of the National Association of State  
171 Public Health Veterinarians (NASPHV) or an equivalent form  
172 approved by the local government that contains all the  
173 information required by the NASPHV Rabies Vaccination  
174 Certificate. The veterinarian who administers the rabies

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175 vaccination or who supervises the administration of the rabies  
176 vaccination as provided in paragraph (1)(b) ~~vaccine~~ to an animal  
177 as authorized ~~required~~ under this section may affix his or her  
178 signature stamp in lieu of an actual signature.

179 Section 5. Paragraph (a) of subsection (5) of section  
180 474.203, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

181 474.203 Exemptions.—This chapter does not apply to:

182 (5) (a) Any person, or the person's regular employee,  
183 administering to the ills or injuries of her or his own animals,  
184 including, but not limited to, castration, spaying, and  
185 dehorning of herd animals, unless title is transferred or  
186 employment provided for the purpose of circumventing this law.  
187 This exemption does not apply to any person licensed as a  
188 veterinarian in another state or foreign jurisdiction and  
189 practicing temporarily in this state. However, except as  
190 provided in s. 828.30, only a veterinarian may immunize or treat  
191 an animal for diseases that are communicable to humans and that  
192 are of public health significance.

193  
194 For the purposes of chapters 465 and 893, persons exempt  
195 pursuant to subsection (1), subsection (2), or subsection (4)  
196 are deemed to be duly licensed practitioners authorized by the  
197 laws of this state to prescribe drugs or medicinal supplies.

198 Section 6. Subsection (2) of section 767.16, Florida  
199 Statutes, is amended to read:

200 767.16 Police canine or service dog; exemption.—

201 (2) Any dog used as a service dog for blind, hearing  
202 impaired, or disabled persons that bites another animal or a  
203 human is exempt from any quarantine requirement following such

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204 bite if the dog has a current rabies vaccination that was  
205 administered as provided in s. 828.30 ~~by a licensed~~  
206 ~~veterinarian.~~

207 Section 7. Paragraph (b) of subsection (1) and paragraph  
208 (b) of subsection (2) of section 828.29, Florida Statutes, are  
209 amended to read:

210 828.29 Dogs and cats transported or offered for sale;  
211 health requirements; consumer guarantee.—

212 (1)

213 (b) For each dog offered for sale within the state, the  
214 tests, vaccines, and anthelmintics required by this section must  
215 be administered by or under the direction of a veterinarian,  
216 licensed by the state and accredited by the United States  
217 Department of Agriculture, who issues the official certificate  
218 of veterinary inspection. The tests, vaccines, and anthelmintics  
219 must be administered before the dog is offered for sale in the  
220 state, unless the licensed, accredited veterinarian certifies on  
221 the official certificate of veterinary inspection that to  
222 inoculate or deworm the dog is not in the best medical interest  
223 of the dog, in which case the vaccine or anthelmintic may not be  
224 administered to that particular dog. Each dog must receive  
225 vaccines and anthelmintics against the following diseases and  
226 internal parasites:

227 1. Canine distemper.

228 2. Leptospirosis.

229 3. Bordetella (by intranasal inoculation or by an  
230 alternative method of administration if deemed necessary by the  
231 attending veterinarian and noted on the health certificate,  
232 which must be administered in this state once before sale).



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- 233 4. Parainfluenza.  
234 5. Hepatitis.  
235 6. Canine parvo.  
236 7. Rabies, provided the dog is over 3 months of age and the  
237 inoculation is administered as provided in s. 828.30 ~~by a~~  
238 ~~licensed veterinarian~~.  
239 8. Roundworms.  
240 9. Hookworms.

241

242 If the dog is under 4 months of age, the tests, vaccines, and  
243 anthelmintics required by this section must be administered no  
244 more than 21 days before sale within the state. If the dog is 4  
245 months of age or older, the tests, vaccines, and anthelmintics  
246 required by this section must be administered at or after 3  
247 months of age, but no more than 1 year before sale within the  
248 state.

249 (2)

250 (b) For each cat offered for sale within the state, the  
251 tests, vaccines, and anthelmintics required by this section must  
252 be administered by or under the direction of a veterinarian,  
253 licensed by the state and accredited by the United States  
254 Department of Agriculture, who issues the official certificate  
255 of veterinary inspection. The tests, vaccines, and anthelmintics  
256 must be administered before the cat is offered for sale in the  
257 state, unless the licensed, accredited veterinarian certifies on  
258 the official certificate of veterinary inspection that to  
259 inoculate or deworm the cat is not in the best medical interest  
260 of the cat, in which case the vaccine or anthelmintic may not be  
261 administered to that particular cat. Each cat must receive

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262 vaccines and anthelmintics against the following diseases and  
263 internal parasites:

- 264 1. Panleukopenia.
- 265 2. Feline viral rhinotracheitis.
- 266 3. Calici virus.
- 267 4. Rabies, if the cat is over 3 months of age and the  
268 inoculation is administered as provided in s. 828.30 ~~by a~~  
269 ~~licensed veterinarian.~~
- 270 5. Hookworms.
- 271 6. Roundworms.

272

273 If the cat is under 4 months of age, the tests, vaccines, and  
274 anthelmintics required by this section must be administered no  
275 more than 21 days before sale within the state. If the cat is 4  
276 months of age or older, the tests, vaccines, and anthelmintics  
277 required by this section must be administered at or after 3  
278 months of age, but no more than 1 year before sale within the  
279 state.

280 Section 8. This act shall take effect July 1, 2024.