

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to veterinary professional associates;
 3 providing a short title; creating s. 474.2126, F.S.;
 4 providing legislative findings; defining terms;
 5 authorizing certain individuals to use the title
 6 "veterinary professional associate"; authorizing
 7 veterinary professional associates to perform certain
 8 duties only while under the responsible supervision of
 9 a licensed veterinarian; specifying certain education
 10 requirements; prohibiting such associates from
 11 prescribing certain drugs or controlled substances or
 12 performing certain surgical procedures; providing
 13 exceptions; providing that supervising veterinarians
 14 are liable for the acts or omissions of veterinary
 15 professional associates under their supervision;
 16 providing an effective date.

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 18 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 20 **Section 1.** This act may be cited as the "Veterinary
 21 Workforce Innovation Act."

22 **Section 2.** **Section 474.2126, Florida Statutes, is created**
 23 **to read:**

24 474.2126 Veterinary professional associate.—

25 (1) The Legislature finds that the practice of educated,

26 trained, and experienced veterinary professional associates will
27 increase consumers' access to high-quality veterinary medical
28 services, at a reasonable cost to consumers, while also
29 increasing the efficiency of the practice of veterinary medicine
30 in this state.

31 (2) As used in this section, the term:

32 (a) "Approved program" means a master's program in
33 veterinary clinical care, or the equivalent, from a school of
34 veterinary medicine in the United States or in its territories
35 or possessions.

36 (b) "Veterinary professional associate" means a person who
37 has earned a master's degree from an approved program and is
38 authorized to perform veterinary medical services delegated by a
39 supervising veterinarian.

40 (3) The title "veterinary professional associate" may be
41 used only by an individual who has successfully completed an
42 approved program and passed a national competency examination.

43 (4) Unless otherwise prohibited by federal or state law, a
44 veterinary professional associate may perform duties or actions,
45 including duties or actions in s. 474.202(9) and (13), in which
46 he or she possesses the competence, necessary training, current
47 knowledge, and experience to perform the assigned duties. The
48 veterinary professional associate may perform only the duties
49 assigned to him or her while under the responsible supervision,
50 as defined in s. 474.202, of a licensed veterinarian, except

51 when immediate supervision is required as provided in paragraph
52 (6) (b) .

53 (5) To ensure competency in clinical practice, all
54 candidates for the veterinary professional associate designation
55 must complete a minimum of 100 hours of in-person clinical
56 skills training, focusing on fundamental hands-on procedures,
57 patient handling, diagnostic techniques, and treatment protocols
58 under direct supervision. Additionally, candidates must complete
59 a minimum of 200 hours of clinical rotations in approved
60 veterinary settings. The rotations must provide practical
61 experience in real-world veterinary care environments, allowing
62 candidates to develop proficiency in case management, client
63 communication, and interdisciplinary collaboration. Compliance
64 with the requirements of this subsection shall be verified
65 through documented assessments conducted by licensed veterinary
66 professionals.

67 (6) A veterinary professional associate may not:

68 (a) Unless otherwise authorized by state or federal law,
69 prescribe medicinal drugs or drugs, as defined in s. 465.003, or
70 a controlled substance listed in chapter 893; or

71 (b) Perform surgical procedures that enter a body cavity,
72 except for veterinary sterilizations. Such surgical procedures
73 must be performed under immediate supervision, as defined in s.
74 474.202, of a licensed veterinarian.

75 (7) A licensed veterinarian who assigns duties or actions

76 | to a veterinary professional associate is liable for any act or
77 | omission of the veterinary professional associate acting under
78 | the licensed veterinarian's supervision.

79 | **Section 3.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2025.