

**The Florida Senate**  
**BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

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Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment, and General Government

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BILL: SB 1050

INTRODUCER: Senator Calatayud

SUBJECT: Veterinary Prescription Disclosure

DATE: February 3, 2026

REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Baird</u>	<u>Imhof</u>	<u>RI</u>	<u>Favorable</u>
2.	<u>Davis</u>	<u>Betta</u>	<u>AEG</u>	<u>Favorable</u>
3.	_____	_____	<u>RC</u>	_____

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**I. Summary:**

SB 1050 creates s. 474.224, F.S., to require a licensed veterinarian or an authorized member of his or her staff to inform clients of their right to receive a written prescription that can be filled at the pharmacy of the client's choice, or the option to have the veterinarian fill the prescription, if the veterinarian is able.

The bill requires either verbal or electronic disclosures, requires a one-time signed acknowledgment from the client, and necessitates the posting of a conspicuous sign within veterinary establishments informing clients of their right to have prescriptions filled elsewhere.

The bill provides exceptions for emergency situations and for prescriptions for controlled substances that are restricted by federal and state law.

The bill has no fiscal impact on state revenues or expenditures. See Section V., Fiscal Impact Statement.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

**II. Present Situation:**

**Veterinarians in Florida**

The Board of Veterinary Medicine (board) within the Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) implements the provisions of ch. 474, F.S., relating to veterinary medical practice (practice act). The purpose of the practice act is to ensure that every veterinarian

practicing in this state meets minimum requirements for safe practices to protect public health and safety.<sup>1</sup>

A “veterinarian” is a health care practitioner licensed by the board to engage in the practice of veterinary medicine in Florida<sup>2</sup> and is subject to disciplinary action from the board for various violations of the practice act.<sup>3</sup>

The practice of “veterinary medicine” is the diagnosis of medical conditions of animals, and the prescribing or administering of medicine and treatment to animals for the prevention, cure, or relief of a wound, fracture, bodily injury, or disease, or holding oneself out as performing any of these functions.<sup>4</sup>

Veterinary medicine includes, with respect to animals,<sup>5</sup> all of the following:

- Surgery.
- Acupuncture.
- Obstetrics.
- Dentistry.
- Physical therapy.
- Radiology.
- Theriogenology (reproductive medicine).
- Other branches or specialties of veterinary medicine.<sup>6</sup>

The practice act defines a “veterinarian/client/patient relationship” (VCPR) as one in which a veterinarian has assumed responsibility for making medical judgments regarding the health of an animal and its need for medical treatment.<sup>7</sup>

Any permanent or mobile establishment where a licensed veterinarian practices must have a premises permit issued by the DBPR.<sup>8</sup> Each person to whom a veterinary license or premises permit is issued must conspicuously display such document in her or his office, place of business, or place of employment in a permanent or mobile veterinary establishment or clinic.<sup>9</sup>

By virtue of accepting a license to practice veterinary medicine in Florida, a veterinarian consents to:

- Render a handwriting sample to an agent of the DBPR and, further, to have waived any objections to its use as evidence against her or him.

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<sup>1</sup> Section 474.201, F.S.

<sup>2</sup> Section 474.202(11), F.S.

<sup>3</sup> Sections 474.213 and 474.214, F.S.

<sup>4</sup> Section 474.202(9), F.S. Also included is the determination of the health, fitness, or soundness of an animal, and the performance of any manual procedure for the diagnosis or treatment of pregnancy or fertility or infertility of animals.

<sup>5</sup> Section 474.202(1), F.S., defines “animal” as “any mammal other than a human being or any bird, amphibian, fish, or reptile, wild or domestic, living or dead.”

<sup>6</sup> Section 474.202(13), F.S.

<sup>7</sup> Section 474.202(12), F.S.

<sup>8</sup> Section 474.215(1), F.S.

<sup>9</sup> Section 474.216, F.S.

- Waive the confidentiality and authorize the preparation and release of medical reports pertaining to the mental or physical condition of the licensee when the DBPR has reason to believe that a violation of this chapter has occurred and when the DBPR issues an order, based on the need for additional information, to produce such medical reports for the time period relevant to the complaint.<sup>10</sup>

For Fiscal Year 2023-2024, there were 13,392 actively licensed veterinarians in Florida. The DBPR received 611 complaints, which resulted in 44 disciplinary actions.<sup>11</sup>

### **Veterinarians Prescribing and Dispensing Drugs**

Veterinarians have broad authority to prescribe, as well as dispense, drugs and medicine to patients.<sup>12</sup> There are no laws prohibiting a veterinarian from maintaining their own on-site pharmacy and directly prescribing and then dispensing the drug or medication directly at the veterinarians' practice.

According to the American Veterinary Medical Association, "veterinarians are ethically bound to have a VCPR in place in order to prescribe medication for the patient and to provide a written prescription when requested."<sup>13</sup>

### ***Federal Regulations***

Federal law plays an important role in regulating what controlled substances a veterinarian is allowed to prescribe, administer and dispense. In order to purchase, prescribe, administer or dispense controlled substances, veterinarians must obtain a registration from the Drug and Enforcement Agency (DEA). According to the federal Controlled Substances Act, a veterinarian is considered a "practitioner," and is authorized to "distribute, dispense, conduct research with respect to, administer, or use in teaching or chemical analysis, a controlled substance in the course of professional practice or research."<sup>14</sup>

Unless otherwise exempted, every practitioner who dispenses, which includes administering and prescribing, controlled substances in schedules II through V, must be registered with the DEA,<sup>15</sup> and must comply with applicable state and local laws.<sup>16</sup>

A practitioner's registration must be renewed every three years.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Section 474.2185, F.S.

<sup>11</sup> Department of Business and Professional Regulation, *Division of Professions Annual Report Fiscal Year 2023-2024*, <https://www2.myfloralicense.com/os/documents/Division%20Annual%20Report%20FY%2023-24.pdf>, (last visited January 16, 2026).

<sup>12</sup> Section 474.202(8), F.S. "Patient" means any animal for which the veterinarian practices veterinary medicine.

<sup>13</sup> American Veterinary Medical Association, *Pharmacy and prescription issues*, <https://www.avma.org/resources-tools/animal-healthand-welfare/animal-health/pharmacy> (last visited January 16, 2026).

<sup>14</sup> 21 U.S.C. s. 802(21).

<sup>15</sup> 21 U.S.C. s. 822(a)(2), and 21 C.F.R. 1301.11(a).

<sup>16</sup> 21 U.S.C. s. 822(f).

<sup>17</sup> 21 C.F.R. s. 1301.13(e)(1)(iv).

## Veterinary Telehealth

In 2024, the Legislature enacted the Providing Equity in Telehealth Services Act (PETS Act), establishing a framework for the practice of veterinary telehealth.<sup>18</sup> The PETS Act allows veterinarians who hold current licenses to practice veterinary telehealth.<sup>19</sup>

### *Limitations*

The PETS Act puts certain limitations on what veterinarians can do via telehealth. The PETS Act requires a veterinarian:

- Provide certain information to the client, including the veterinarian's name, license number and contact information;
- Must prescribe all drugs and medications in accordance with federal and state laws;
- May not order or prescribe medicinal drugs or drugs as defined in s. 465.003, F.S., approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for human use, or compounded antibacterial, antifungal, antiviral, or antiparasitic medications, unless the veterinarian has conducted an in-person physical examination of the animal or made medically appropriate and timely visits within the past year to the premises where the animal is kept;
- May not use veterinary telehealth to prescribe a controlled substance as defined in ch. 893, F.S. (Drug Abuse Preventions and Control), unless the veterinarian has conducted an in-person physical examination of the animal or made medically appropriate and timely visits to the premises where the animal is kept; and
- May not prescribe a drug or other medication for use on a horse engaged in racing or training at a facility under the jurisdiction of the Florida Gaming Control Commission or on a horse that is a covered horse, as defined in the federal Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act, 15 U.S.C., ss. 3051 et seq.

### Telehealth Prescriptions

Prescriptions based solely on a telehealth evaluation may be issued for up to one month for products labeled solely for flea and tick control and up to 14 days of treatment for other animal drugs.<sup>20</sup> Prescriptions based solely on a telehealth evaluation may not be renewed without an in-person examination.<sup>21</sup>

## III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The bill creates s. 474.224, F.S., to provide requirements for a veterinary prescription disclosure. Before a licensed veterinarian or an authorized member of the veterinary staff prescribes a medication, a client must be clearly informed of the following:

- The client's right to receive a written prescription for the medication that can be filled at the pharmacy of the client's choice; and

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<sup>18</sup> Chapter 2024-260, Laws of Fla. (codified at s. 474.2021, F.S., effective July 1, 2024).

<sup>19</sup> *Id.* Florida law requires the practice of telehealth to be consistent with a veterinarian's scope of practice and the prevailing professional standard of practice for a veterinarian who provides in-person veterinary services to patients in Florida, and who must employ sound, professional judgment to determine whether using veterinary telehealth is an appropriate method for delivering medical advice or treatment to the patient.

<sup>20</sup> Section 474.2021, F.S.

<sup>21</sup> *Id.*

- If the veterinarian establishment is able to fill the prescription, the option to have the prescription filled at the veterinary establishment.

The bill provides that “written prescription” includes paper prescriptions delivered via manual transmission or electronic prescriptions delivered via direct transmission to a pharmacy.

The bill requires each disclosure to be made:

- Verbally, if the consultation with the client is in person; or
- Electronically, if the consultation with the client is through veterinary telehealth.

Whichever option the client chooses (either to have medication filled at a pharmacy of their choosing or having the medication filled by the veterinary establishment) the veterinarian must document with a one-time acknowledgment that is signed by the client and that states the client is aware of the options. The bill provides specific language a veterinarian must have signed.

The acknowledgment signed by the client must be documented in the patient’s medical record. The bill prohibits the signed acknowledgment from making any statement, notification, warning, or assumption regarding the efficacy or safety of filling prescriptions through an outside pharmacy.

The bill also requires that a veterinary establishment to post a clear and conspicuous sign near the point of sale or where checkout occurs to clearly inform the client of their right to “receive a written prescription for medication that can be filled at the pharmacy of your choice; or have your prescription filled at the veterinary establishment, if the veterinary establishment is able to fill the prescription.”

Finally, the bill provides an exception that the required disclosures are not required if immediate dispensing of medication is required to preserve life or prevent suffering; or the prescription is for a controlled substance of which is restricted by federal or state law.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

#### **IV. Constitutional Issues:**

##### **A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:**

None.

##### **B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:**

None.

##### **C. Trust Funds Restrictions:**

None.

**D. State Tax or Fee Increases:**

None.

**E. Other Constitutional Issues:**

None.

**V. Fiscal Impact Statement:****A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

**B. Private Sector Impact:**

The bill may increase access and provide additional options for obtaining necessary medications for animal owners and may reduce the cost of such medications.

**C. Government Sector Impact:**

This bill does not affect state government revenues or expenditures.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Statutes Affected:**

This bill creates section 474.224 of the Florida Statutes.

**IX. Additional Information:****A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

**B. Amendments:**

None.