



497168

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate	.	House
Comm: RCS	.	
01/12/2026	.	
	.	
	.	
	.	

---

The Committee on Regulated Industries (Bradley) recommended the following:

**Senate Amendment (with title amendment)**

Delete everything after the enacting clause  
and insert:

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

Section 2. Section 474.201, Florida Statutes, is amended to  
read:

474.201 Legislative findings, intent, and purpose.—

(1) The Legislature finds that the practice of veterinary



497168

11 medicine is potentially dangerous to the public health and  
12 safety if conducted by incompetent and unlicensed practitioners.  
13 The legislative purpose in enacting this chapter is to ensure  
14 that every veterinarian practicing in this state meet minimum  
15 requirements for safe practice. It is the legislative intent  
16 that veterinarians who are not normally competent or who  
17 otherwise present a danger to the public ~~shall~~ be disciplined or  
18 prohibited from practicing in this state.

19 (2) The Legislature finds that the practice of educated,  
20 trained, and experienced veterinary professional associates will  
21 increase consumer access to high-quality veterinary medical  
22 services at a reasonable cost to consumers, while also  
23 increasing the efficiency of the practice of veterinary medicine  
24 in this state.

25 Section 3. Present subsection (14) of section 474.202,  
26 Florida Statutes, is redesignated as subsection (15), and a new  
27 subsection (14) is added to that section, to read:

28 474.202 Definitions.—As used in this chapter:

29 (14) "Veterinary professional associate" means an  
30 individual who has graduated with a master's degree or the  
31 equivalent in veterinary clinical care from an accredited  
32 institution and who meets the requirements to be registered by  
33 the department.

34 Section 4. Subsection (4) of section 474.2021, Florida  
35 Statutes, is amended to read:

36 474.2021 Veterinary telehealth.—

37 (4) A veterinarian practicing veterinary telehealth:

38 (a) May not engage in the practice of veterinary telehealth  
39 unless it is within the context of a veterinarian/client/patient



497168

relationship;

(b) Shall practice in a manner consistent with his or her scope of practice and the prevailing professional standard of practice for a veterinarian who provides in-person veterinary services to patients in this state and shall employ sound, professional judgment to determine whether using veterinary telehealth is an appropriate method for delivering medical advice or treatment to the patient;

(c) May use veterinary telehealth to perform an initial patient evaluation to establish the veterinarian/client/patient relationship if the evaluation is conducted using synchronous, audiovisual communication. The evaluation may not be performed using audio-only communications, text messaging, questionnaires, chatbots, or other similar means. If a veterinarian practicing telehealth conducts a patient evaluation sufficient to diagnose and treat the patient, the veterinarian is not required to research a patient's medical history or conduct a physical examination of the patient before using veterinary telehealth to provide a veterinary health care service to the patient;

(d) If the initial patient evaluation is performed using veterinary telehealth, must provide the client with a statement containing the veterinarian's name, license number, and contact information and the contact information for at least one physical veterinary clinic in the vicinity of the patient's location and instructions for how to receive patient follow-up care or assistance if the veterinarian and client are unable to communicate because of a technological or equipment failure or if there is an adverse reaction to treatment, and inform the client that, if medication is prescribed, the client may obtain



497168

a prescription that may be filled at the pharmacy of his or her choice. The veterinarian shall obtain from the client a signed and dated statement indicating the client has received the required information before practicing veterinary telehealth;

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

1. A veterinarian practicing veterinary telehealth may order, prescribe, or make available medicinal drugs or drugs specifically approved for use in animals by the United States Food and Drug Administration, the use of which conforms to the approved labeling. Prescriptions based solely on a telehealth evaluation may be issued for up to 6 months ~~1-month~~ for products labeled solely for flea and tick control and up to 30 ~~14~~ days of treatment for other animal drugs. Prescriptions based solely on a telehealth evaluation may not be renewed without an in-person examination.

2. A veterinarian practicing veterinary telehealth may not order, prescribe, or make available medicinal drugs or drugs as defined in s. 465.003 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 to the premises where the animal is kept.

3. A veterinarian may not use veterinary telehealth to prescribe a controlled substance as defined in chapter 893 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



497168

animal is kept.

4. A veterinarian practicing veterinary telehealth 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.;

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

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

(h) May not use veterinary telehealth to issue an international or interstate travel certificate or a certificate of veterinary inspection.

Section 5. Paragraph (a) of subsection (5) and subsection (7) of section 474.203, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

474.203 Exemptions.—This chapter does not apply to:

(5)(a) Any person, or the person's regular employee, administering to the ills or injuries of her or his own animals, including, but not limited to, castration, spaying, and dehorning of herd animals, unless title is transferred or employment provided for the purpose of circumventing this law. This exemption does not apply to any person licensed as a veterinarian in another state or foreign jurisdiction and practicing temporarily in this state. However, except as provided in s. 474.2126 or s. 828.30, only a veterinarian may



497168

immunize or treat an animal for diseases that are communicable to humans and that are of public health significance.

(7) Any veterinary aide, nurse, laboratory technician, preceptor, person registered pursuant to s. 474.2126, or other employee of a licensed veterinarian who administers medication or who renders auxiliary or supporting assistance under the responsible supervision of a licensed veterinarian, including those tasks identified by rule of the board requiring immediate supervision, provided that a registered veterinary professional associate is subject to s. 474.2126. However, the licensed veterinarian is responsible for all such acts performed under this subsection by persons under her or his supervision.

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

Section 6. Section 474.2126, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

474.2126 Veterinary professional associates; registration.—

(1) REGISTRATION.—

(a) A veterinary professional associate may apply to the department for registration by submitting a form prescribed by the board. The department shall consider for registration each qualified veterinary professional associate whom the department verifies has submitted a completed application and meets the applicable requirements of this subsection.

(b) The department shall issue a certificate of registration to each veterinary professional associate applicant



497168

whom the department verifies has graduated from the relevant accredited program and received a passing score on the relevant professional national competency examination approved by the board.

(c) The department shall make a list of registrants available to the public on the department's website.

(d) The department may suspend the registration of any veterinary professional associate whom the board determines has caused serious harm to an animal due to negligence, incompetence, or misconduct related to duties performed under this section and in a manner inconsistent with the supervising veterinarian's specific direction, until such time as the registrant has completed remedial training or education directed by the board.

(e) The department may rescind the registration of any veterinary professional associate who is convicted of animal cruelty under s. 828.12 or animal fighting under s. 828.122.

(2) PROHIBITION.—An individual may not hold himself or herself out as a registered veterinary professional associate or in any other way represent himself or herself as a veterinary professional associate unless he or she has a valid certificate of registration from the department.

(3) DUTIES AND ACTIONS OF A REGISTERED VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE.—

(a) Unless otherwise prohibited by federal law, a registered veterinary professional associate may engage in the practice of veterinary medicine as defined in s. 474.202 or veterinary medicine as defined in s. 474.202, to the extent that he or she is competent and has the necessary training, current



497168

185 knowledge, and experience to provide such care, as delegated  
186 under the responsible supervision, as defined in s. 474.202, of  
187 a licensed veterinarian.

188 (b) A registered veterinary professional associate may not  
189 do any of the following:

190 1. Prescribe a controlled substance listed in s. 893.03,  
191 except that a registered veterinary professional associate may  
192 perform humane euthanasia and prepare, log, and administer  
193 controlled substances for the purpose of analgesia, anesthesia,  
194 or humane euthanasia, as delegated by a licensed veterinarian  
195 and performed under responsible supervision.

196 2. Perform a surgical procedure, except that a veterinary  
197 professional associate may perform the following surgical  
198 procedures:

199 a. Orchiectomy;  
200 b. Veterinary dental surgery; or  
201 c. Veterinary suturing or stapling of skin lacerations,  
202 gingival incisions, or existing surgical incisions.

203 Section 7. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) and subsection  
204 (3) of section 828.30, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

205 828.30 Rabies vaccination of dogs, cats, and ferrets.—

206 (1)(a) All dogs, cats, and ferrets 4 months of age or older  
207 must be vaccinated by a licensed veterinarian or a person  
208 authorized under paragraph (b) or s. 474.2126 against rabies  
209 with a vaccine that is licensed by the United States Department  
210 of Agriculture for use in those species.

211 (3) Upon vaccination against rabies, the licensed  
212 veterinarian shall provide the animal's owner and the animal  
213 control authority with a rabies vaccination certificate. Each





497168

animal control authority and veterinarian shall use the "Rabies Vaccination Certificate" of the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians (NASPHV) or an equivalent form approved by the local government that contains all the information required by the NASPHV Rabies Vaccination Certificate. The veterinarian who administers the rabies vaccination or who supervises the administration of the rabies vaccination as provided in paragraph (1)(b) or s. 474.2126 to an animal as authorized under this section may affix his or her signature stamp in lieu of an actual signature.

Section 8. This act shall take effect January 1, 2027.

===== T I T L E   A M E N D M E N T =====  
And the title is amended as follows:

Delete everything before the enacting clause  
and insert:

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to veterinary medicine; providing a short title; amending s. 474.201, F.S.; revising legislative findings, intent, and purpose; amending s. 474.202, F.S.; defining the term "veterinary professional associate"; amending s. 474.2021, F.S.; increasing the amount of time for which prescriptions based solely on a veterinary telehealth evaluation may be issued for certain drugs; amending s. 474.203, F.S.; revising the applicability of certain exemptions; creating s. 474.2126, F.S.; providing requirements for veterinary professional associates to receive certificates of registration from the Department of Business and Professional Regulation;



497168

requiring the department to make a list of veterinary professional associate registrants publicly available on its website; authorizing the department to suspend the registration of a veterinary professional associate upon a certain determination by the Board of Veterinary Medicine; authorizing the department to rescind the registration of a veterinary professional associate under certain circumstances; prohibiting a person from holding himself or herself out as a veterinary professional associate under certain circumstances; authorizing a registered veterinary professional associate to engage in the practice of veterinary medicine under certain circumstances; prohibiting a registered veterinary professional associate from taking certain actions; providing exceptions; amending s. 828.30, F.S.; conforming provisions to changes made by the act; providing an effective date.