

COMMITTEE/SUBCOMMITTEE AMENDMENT

Bill No. HB 805 (2026)

Amendment No.

COMMITTEE/SUBCOMMITTEE ACTION

ADOPTED	<u>      </u>	(Y/N)
ADOPTED AS AMENDED	<u>      </u>	(Y/N)
ADOPTED W/O OBJECTION	<u>      </u>	(Y/N)
FAILED TO ADOPT	<u>      </u>	(Y/N)
WITHDRAWN	<u>      </u>	(Y/N)
OTHER	<u>          </u>	

Committee/Subcommittee hearing bill: Industries & Professional  
Activities Subcommittee

Representative Melo offered the following:

**Amendment (with title amendment)**

Remove 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  
medicine is potentially dangerous to the public health and  
safety if conducted by incompetent and unlicensed practitioners.  
The legislative purpose in enacting this chapter is to ensure  
that every veterinarian practicing in this state meet minimum

666787 - h0805-strike.docx

Published On: 1/16/2026 1:16:39 PM

Amendment No.

17 requirements for safe practice. It is the legislative intent  
18 that veterinarians who are not normally competent or who  
19 otherwise present a danger to the public ~~shall~~ be disciplined or  
20 prohibited from practicing in this state.

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

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

30 474.202 Definitions.—As used in this chapter:

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

36 **Section 4. Subsection (4) of section 474.2021, Florida**  
37 **Statutes, is amended to read:**

38 474.2021 Veterinary telehealth.—

39 (4) A veterinarian practicing veterinary telehealth:

40 (a) May not engage in the practice of veterinary  
41 telehealth unless it is within the context of a

Amendment No.

42 veterinarian/client/patient relationship;

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

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

61 (d) If the initial patient evaluation is performed using  
62 veterinary telehealth, must provide the client with a statement  
63 containing the veterinarian's name, license number, and contact  
64 information and the contact information for at least one  
65 physical veterinary clinic in the vicinity of the patient's  
66 location and instructions for how to receive patient follow-up

666787 - h0805-strike.docx

Published On: 1/16/2026 1:16:39 PM

Amendment No.

67 care or assistance if the veterinarian and client are unable to  
68 communicate because of a technological or equipment failure or  
69 if there is an adverse reaction to treatment, and inform the  
70 client that, if medication is prescribed, the client may obtain  
71 a prescription that may be filled at the pharmacy of his or her  
72 choice. The veterinarian shall obtain from the client a signed  
73 and dated statement indicating the client has received the  
74 required information before practicing veterinary telehealth;

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

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

88 2. A veterinarian practicing veterinary telehealth may not  
89 order, prescribe, or make available medicinal drugs or drugs as  
90 defined in s. 465.003 approved by the United States Food and  
91 Drug Administration for human use or compounded antibacterial,

666787 - h0805-strike.docx

Published On: 1/16/2026 1:16:39 PM

Amendment No.

92 antifungal, antiviral, or antiparasitic medications, unless the  
93 veterinarian has conducted an in-person physical examination of  
94 the animal or made medically appropriate and timely visits to  
95 the premises where the animal is kept.

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

666787 - h0805-strike.docx

Published On: 1/16/2026 1:16:39 PM

Amendment No.

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 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.

666787 - h0805-strike.docx

Published On: 1/16/2026 1:16:39 PM

Amendment No.

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 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

666787 - h0805-strike.docx

Published On: 1/16/2026 1:16:39 PM

Amendment No.

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

666787 - h0805-strike.docx

Published On: 1/16/2026 1:16:39 PM



Amendment No.

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

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

200       2. Perform a surgical procedure, except that a veterinary  
201 professional associate may perform the following surgical  
202 procedures:

203       a. Orchiectomy;  
204       b. Veterinary dental surgery; or  
205       c. Veterinary suturing or stapling of skin lacerations,  
206 gingival incisions, or existing surgical incisions.

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

209       828.30 Rabies vaccination of dogs, cats, and ferrets.—

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

215       (3) Upon vaccination against rabies, the licensed  
216 veterinarian shall provide the animal's owner and the animal

666787 - h0805-strike.docx

Published On: 1/16/2026 1:16:39 PM

Amendment No.

control authority with a rabies vaccination certificate. Each 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.

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**T I T L E   A M E N D M E N T**

Remove 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,

666787 - h0805-strike.docx

Published On: 1/16/2026 1:16:39 PM

Amendment No.

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; 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.

666787 - h0805-strike.docx

Published On: 1/16/2026 1:16:39 PM

Page 11 of 11