

Wisconsin Veterinary Examining Board

Regulatory Flexibility Analysis

Rule Subject: Veterinarians and Veterinary Technicians
Adm. Code Reference: VE 1 to 11
Rules Clearinghouse#: 21-062
DATCP Docket #: 19-R-07

Rule Summary

The proposed rule makes structural changes, minor language changes, and telehealth changes as described below.

Structural Changes

- Consolidates the eleven existing rule chapters into three chapters: one for veterinarians, one for veterinary technicians, and one for the professional assistance program. Consolidation makes the rules easier to access quickly.
- Adds a chapter for relevant complaint procedures that did not transfer in the previous rules from DSPS to DATCP.
- States the current fee amounts in rule. Fee amounts do not change.

Minor Language Changes

- Makes changes regarding procedures and processes.
 - o Removes the word annual from references to the review of colleges and technical schools.
 - o Expands the temporary veterinary permit process to include applicants who are scheduled to take or are awaiting results from the examination on state laws and rules.
 - o Clarifies that applicants for licensure who have previously been licensed in Wisconsin or another jurisdiction must apply by endorsement.
 - o Adds for clarity and consistency a section identifying common situations in which the board may require additional information from an applicant when reviewing an application.
 - o States more clearly that the board may reprimand the licensee or deny, suspend, limit or revoke a credential for cause, including filing an incomplete or fraudulent application, misrepresenting information on an application, or violating the rule chapter or ch. Wis. Stat. 89.
- Makes technical changes and updates.

- Adds the denial of a license to the list of reasons for a temporary veterinary permit to expire.
 - Allows applicants to provide proof of graduation through the American Association of Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB), which allows for electronic submissions using the AAVSB online system.
 - Adds direction in the rules to assure the requirements for access to health care records required in Wis. Stat. s. 89.075 are clear and consistently applied.
 - Removes an obsolete provision regarding continuing education auditing of journal articles read. The Board previously eliminated the ability to self-study journal articles and mistakenly did not also eliminate this provision regarding auditing.
 - Clarifies the continuing education requirements for persons who have not been credentialed for more than 5 years.
 - Adds language to clearly state license exemptions.
- Allows veterinarians to delegate additional veterinary medical acts to certified veterinary technicians and unlicensed assistants.
 - Allows veterinarians to delegate the placement of intravenous catheters to unlicensed assistants under the direct supervision of the veterinarian present on the premises, per requests from stakeholders.
 - Additional changes to the delegation of veterinary medical acts are included in the telehealth section of this summary.
- Makes changes for consistency and ease of use the places in which rule requirements repeat, or refer to requirements in statute.
 - Modifies language regarding unprofessional conduct so that it also refers to Wis. Stat. s. 89.07 (1).
 - Modifies language regarding prescribing and dispensing a veterinary drug to refer to Wis. Stat. s. 89.068 (1) (c).
 - Makes a correction to the delegation of rabies vaccinations to reflect Wis. Stat. s. 95.21 (2) (a).
- Modifies terminology for clarity and consistency.
 - Adds additional definitions and updates existing definitions language for clarity.
 - Renames “temporary permit” to “temporary veterinary permit” and renamed “temporary consulting permit” to “veterinary consulting permit.”
 - Changes language to use the word “dispense” rather than “sell” to be more consistent with statutory language and definitions to make the language clearer and easier to understand.
 - Adds a note clarifying that the board accepts “veterinary nurse” as equivalent to “veterinary technician.”

Telehealth Changes

- Adds definitions related to telehealth.

- Adds definitions related to veterinary consulting and clarifies that a consulting veterinarian or other consultant may not do any of the following:
 - o Visit the patient or client or communicate directly with the client without the knowledge of the attending veterinarian.
 - o Take charge of a case or problem without the consent of the attending veterinarian and the client.

- Clarifies that the practice of veterinary medicine takes place where the animal is located at the time of practice, in alignment with Wis. Stat. ss. 89.05 (1) and 89.02 (6).

- Clarifies that in order to practice veterinary medicine in Wisconsin a veterinarian must be licensed in Wisconsin and have an established veterinary-client-patient relationship (VCPR) with the client. A VCPR must be established via an in person physical exam, or timely medically appropriate visits to the premises on which the patient is kept. It may not be established by telehealth technologies.

- Clarifies that the VCPR, once established, extends to other veterinarians within the practice, or relief veterinarians within the practice, that have access to, and have reviewed, the medical history and records of the animal.

- Clarifies that records must be kept, regardless of the encounter type.

- Clarifies, in accordance with Wis. Stat. s. 89.02 (8) (c), that an animal owner must be able to easily seek follow-up care or information from the veterinarian who conducts an encounter while using telehealth technologies.

- Expands the delegation of medical services to allow a veterinarian to delegate the following items to a certified veterinary technician (CVT) if the veterinarian is available to communicate via telehealth technologies within five minutes. Under current rules, these items may only be delegated to a CVT if the veterinarian is personally present on the premises.
 - o Performing diagnostic radiographic awake contrast studies not requiring general anesthesia.
 - o Sample collection via a cystocentesis procedure.
 - o Placement of intravenous catheters.
 - o Suturing of tubes and catheters.
 - o Fine needle aspirate of a mass.

Small Businesses Affected

The proposed rule will directly affect Wisconsin licensed veterinarians and certified veterinary technicians. Most veterinary practices are small businesses. Current fee amounts would not change. Adjustments to make rule language and structure clearer, and to simplify processes where possible, may reduce the burden to each of these affected entities, by making the rules easier to access and understand quickly.

The Board convened a Telehealth Advisory Committee (Committee) to advise the Board in relation to the veterinary telehealth. The Committee was comprised of 13 representatives: 10 veterinarians and 3 certified veterinary technicians. Of the veterinarians, 1 works in large and small animal practice, 3 work in large animal practice, 1 works in equine and small animal practice, and 5 work in small animal practice. The veterinarians included representatives from the Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association, Sexing Technologies, and the Dairy Business Association.

Reporting, Bookkeeping and other Procedures

The proposed rule does not create any new reporting or bookkeeping requirements. The proposed rule adds a chapter for relevant complaint procedures that did not transfer in the previous rules from DSPS to DATCP. The proposed rule also makes minor language changes regarding the following procedures and processes:

- Removes the word annual from references to the review of colleges and technical schools.
- Expands the temporary veterinary permit process to include applicants who are scheduled to take or are awaiting results from the examination on state laws and rules.
- Clarifies that applicants for licensure who have previously been licensed in Wisconsin or another jurisdiction must apply by endorsement.
- Adds for clarity and consistency a section identifying common situations in which the board may require additional information from an applicant when reviewing an application.
- States more clearly that the board may reprimand the licensee or deny, suspend, limit or revoke a credential for cause, including filing an incomplete or fraudulent application, misrepresenting information on an application, or violating the rule chapter or ch. Wis. Stat. 89.

Professional Skills Required

The proposed rule does not create any new professional skills requirements.

Accommodation for Small Business

No accommodation for small business will be necessary for the proposed rule. The Board expects the proposed rule to have minimal to no economic impact. No fee amounts will be changed in the proposed rule.

Most veterinary practices are small businesses. The proposed rule's structural changes and minor language changes may reduce the burden to veterinarians, veterinary technicians, and consumers of veterinary services, as the rules may become easier to access and understand quickly.

The proposed rule also allows for more use of telehealth technologies than the existing rule. New language regarding telehealth may reduce the economic burden to veterinarians and animal owners, especially in rural areas. The proposed rule expands the delegation of medical services to allow a veterinarian to delegate the following items to a CVT if the veterinarian is available to communicate via telehealth technologies within five minutes. Under current rules, these items may only be delegated to a CVT if the veterinarian is personally present on the premises.

- Performing diagnostic radiographic awake contrast studies not requiring general anesthesia.
- Sample collection via a cystocentesis procedure.
- Placement of intravenous catheters.
- Suturing of tubes and catheters.
- Fine needle aspirate of a mass.

Conclusion

The Board expects the proposed rule to have minimal to no economic impact. No fee amounts will be changed in the proposed rule.

Dated this _____ day of _____, 2021.

WISCONSIN VETERINARY EXAMINING BOARD

By _____
Hunter Lang, DVM
Chair
Veterinary Examining Board