

SB85 ENROLLED



1 SB85
2 2JE9HIK-3
3 By Senators Stutts, Sessions, Butler
4 RFD: Healthcare
5 First Read: 13-Jan-26



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1 Enrolled, An Act,

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4 Relating to veterinary medicine; to amend Section

5 34-29-61, Code of Alabama 1975, to define the

6 veterinarian-client-patient relationship and other terms; to

7 add Section 34-29-77.1 to the Code of Alabama 1975, to

8 prohibit veterinarians from dispensing medication without a

9 veterinarian-client-patient relationship; to provide the

10 amount of time within which a prescription may be refilled; to

11 provide the veterinarian-client-patient relationship is shared

12 among all veterinarians at a location; to require a

13 veterinarian-client-patient relationship be reestablished

14 annually; and to make nonsubstantive, technical revisions to

15 update the existing code language to current style.

16 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

17 Section 1. Section 34-29-61, Code of Alabama 1975, is

18 amended to read as follows:

19 "§34-29-61

20 For the purposes of this article, the following terms

21 ~~shall~~ have the following meanings ~~ascribed by this section~~:

22 (1) ACCREDITED SCHOOL OF VETERINARY MEDICINE. Any

23 veterinary college or division of a university or college that

24 offers the degree of doctor of veterinary medicine or its

25 equivalent and is accredited by the American Veterinary

26 Medical Association (AVMA).

27 (2) ANIMAL. Any ~~animal or mammal other than man,~~

28 ~~including birds, fish, reptiles, wild or domestic~~ member of



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29 the Kingdom Animalia other than humans, living or dead.

30 (3) APPLICANT.—~~A person~~ An individual who files an
31 application to be licensed to practice veterinary medicine or
32 licensed as a veterinary technician.

33 (4) BOARD. Alabama State Board of Veterinary Medical
34 Examiners.

35 (5) CLIENT. A person who has entered into an agreement
36 with a licensed veterinarian in person for the purpose of
37 obtaining veterinary medicine services.

38 ~~(5)~~ (6) CONSULTING VETERINARIAN. A veterinarian licensed
39 in another state who gives advice or demonstrates techniques
40 to a licensed Alabama veterinarian or group of licensed
41 Alabama veterinarians. A consulting veterinarian ~~shall~~ may not
42 ~~utilize~~ use this privilege to circumvent the law.

43 ~~(6)~~ (7) DIRECT SUPERVISION.—~~The~~ A supervising
44 veterinarian has initially examined the animal and will
45 examine at other times as acceptable veterinary medical
46 practice requires, consistent with the particular delegated
47 animal health care task. The supervising veterinarian is on
48 the premises and is quickly and easily available.

49 ~~(7)~~ (8) EMERGENCY.—~~The animal has been placed in a life~~
50 ~~threatening condition and immediate treatment is necessary to~~
51 ~~sustain life~~ A medical condition as determined by a licensed
52 veterinarian to warrant immediate medical intervention. The
53 term includes life-threatening or life-altering conditions and
54 potential loss of or permanent damage to major bodily
55 functions.

56 ~~(8)~~ (9) FOREIGN VETERINARY GRADUATE, EXCLUDING CANADA.



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57 Any ~~person~~ individual, including a foreign national or an
58 American citizen, who has received a professional veterinarian
59 medical degree from an American Veterinary Medical Association
60 listed veterinary college that is not accredited by the
61 American Veterinary Medical Association.

62 ~~(9)~~ (10) IMMEDIATE SUPERVISION. ~~The~~ A supervising
63 veterinarian is on the premises and in audible or visual range
64 of the animal patient and the ~~person~~ individual treating the
65 patient.

66 ~~(10)~~ (11) INDIRECT SUPERVISION. ~~The~~ A supervising
67 veterinarian has examined the animal and has given written or
68 oral instructions for the treatment of the animal while the
69 supervising veterinarian is away from the premises.

70 ~~(11)~~ (12) LICENSE. Any permit, approval, registration,
71 or certificate of qualification issued by the board.

72 ~~(12)~~ (13) LICENSED VETERINARIAN. ~~A person~~ An individual
73 who is validly and currently licensed to practice veterinary
74 medicine in Alabama.

75 ~~(13)~~ (14) LICENSED VETERINARY TECHNICIAN. ~~A person~~ An
76 individual who is validly and currently licensed to practice
77 as a veterinary technician in Alabama.

78 (15) LIVESTOCK. Food-producing animals, including
79 cattle, elk, reindeer, bison, horses, deer, sheep, goats,
80 swine, egg- and meat-producing poultry, llamas, alpacas,
81 honeybees, rabbits, live fish, crawfish, and other animals
82 that are a part of a herd.

83 (16) PATIENT. Any single animal or representative
84 segment of a consignment, herd, or flock.



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85 ~~(14)~~(17) PERSON. Any individual, firm, partnership,
86 association, joint venture, cooperative, or corporation or any
87 other group or combination acting in concert; and whether or
88 not acting as a principal, trustee, fiduciary, receiver, or as
89 any kind of legal or personal representative, or as the
90 successor in interest, assigning agent, factor, servant,
91 employee, director, officer, or any other representative of
92 ~~such~~ the person.

93 ~~(15)~~(18) PRACTICE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE:

94 a. To diagnose, treat, correct, change, relieve, or
95 prevent animal disease, deformity, defect, injury, or other
96 physical or mental condition; including the prescription or
97 administration of any drug, medicine, biologic, apparatus,
98 application, anesthesia, or other therapeutic or diagnostic
99 substance or technique on any animal including ~~but not limited~~
100 ~~to~~ acupuncture, dentistry, animal psychology, animal
101 chiropractic, theriogenology, surgery, including cosmetic
102 surgery, any manual, mechanical, biological, or chemical
103 procedure for testing for pregnancy or for correcting
104 sterility or infertility, or to render service or
105 recommendations with regard to any of the above.

106 b. To represent directly or indirectly, publicly or
107 privately, an ability and willingness to do any act described
108 in paragraph a.

109 c. To use any title, words, abbreviations, or letters
110 in a manner or under circumstances which induce the belief
111 that the ~~person~~ individual using them is qualified to do any
112 act described in paragraph a. Such use shall be prima facie



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113 evidence of the intention to represent oneself as engaged in
114 the practice of veterinary medicine.

115 ~~d. Collects~~ To collect blood or other samples for the
116 purpose of diagnosing disease or other conditions. This
117 paragraph shall not apply to unlicensed personnel employed by
118 the United States Department of Agriculture or the Alabama
119 Department of Agriculture and Industries ~~who are engaged in~~
120 ~~the Brucellosis eradication program or external parasite~~
121 ~~control program pursuant to Section 2-15-192.~~

122 e. To remove any embryo from a food animal or companion
123 animal for the purpose of transplanting the embryo into
124 another female animal ~~or for the purpose of,~~ cryopreserving
125 the embryo, ~~or to implant~~ implanting the embryo into a food or
126 companion animal. It shall not be considered the practice of
127 veterinary medicine ~~for a person~~ an individual or his or her
128 full-time employees to remove an embryo from the food or
129 companion animal of the ~~person~~ individual for the purpose of
130 transplanting or cryopreserving the embryo, or to implant an
131 embryo into the food or companion animal of the ~~person~~
132 individual, provided ownership of the food or companion animal
133 shall not be transferred or employment of the ~~person~~
134 individual shall not be changed for the purpose of
135 circumventing this article.

136 f. To provide veterinary medical services to a client
137 or patient in this state, including through ~~telephonic,~~
138 ~~electronic, or other means~~ telemedicine, regardless of the
139 location of the veterinarian, shall constitute the practice of
140 veterinary medicine in this state and shall require licensure



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141 within this state and a veterinarian-client-patient
142 relationship must ~~be~~ have been previously established.

143 (19) SMALL ANIMAL. Animals other than livestock. The
144 term includes companion pets, exotic pets, and birds. The term
145 does not include poultry.

146 ~~(16)~~ (20) SUPERVISING VETERINARIAN. A veterinarian who
147 assumes responsibility for the professional care given to an
148 animal by ~~a person~~ an individual working under his or her
149 direction.

150 (21) TELEMEDICINE. In conjunction with a valid VCPR,
151 the use of electronic communication to exchange information
152 between a client and a licensed veterinarian about a patient's
153 health status from one site to another.

154 (22) TELETRIAGE. In the absence of a valid VCPR, the
155 safe, appropriate, and timely assessment and management of a
156 patient by electronic communication to render a good and safe
157 decision regarding a patient's condition based on a client's
158 or responsible party's report of the patient's history,
159 clinical signs, and photos or videos. The term includes the
160 determination of the immediate need of a patient to be
161 presented for an in-person physical examination due to
162 conditions of uncertainty and urgency. The term does not
163 include diagnosis treatment.

164 ~~(17)~~ (23) TEMPORARY LICENSE. Temporary permission to
165 practice veterinary medicine issued by the board pursuant to
166 this article.

167 ~~(18)~~ (24) UNLICENSED ASSISTANT. Any individual who is
168 not a licensed veterinary technician or veterinarian and is



169 employed by a licensed veterinarian.

170 ~~(19)~~ (25) VETERINARIAN-CLIENT-PATIENT RELATIONSHIP
171 (VCPR). A relationship in which a licensed veterinarian
172 satisfies all of the following:

173 ~~a. when the veterinarian has~~ Has assumed responsibility
174 for making medical judgments regarding the health of ~~the~~
175 ~~animal or animals~~ a patient and the need for medical
176 treatment, ~~and is created by actual examination by the~~
177 ~~veterinarian of the animal or a representative segment of a~~
178 ~~consignment or herd~~ the client has agreed to comply with the
179 veterinarian's instructions.

180 b. Has physically examined a patient within the
181 previous 12 months or more frequently as dictated by the age
182 of the patient, medical condition of the patient, treatment
183 therapy, or use of controlled substances.

184 c. Has sufficient knowledge of the patient to initiate
185 a general or preliminary diagnosis of the patient's medical
186 condition.

187 d. Is acquainted with the keeping and care of the
188 patient or the operation where the patient is managed.

189 e. Is readily available for ongoing or follow-up
190 evaluation and care of the patient or has arranged for
191 emergency veterinary care or continuing care and treatment of
192 the patient by an appropriate veterinary professional.

193 f. Oversees treatment of the patient, compliance with
194 the treatment, and the outcome.

195 g. Maintains complete and legible medical records
196 regarding the patient, including an assessment and treatment



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197 plan, in a manner that another veterinarian may proceed with
198 continuity of care and treatment of the patient.

199 ~~(20)~~ (26) VETERINARIAN, DOCTOR OF VETERINARY MEDICINE,
200 DVM, VMD, or EQUIVALENT TITLE. ~~A person~~ An individual who has
201 received a doctor's degree in veterinary medicine from an
202 accredited school of veterinary medicine or holds an
203 Educational Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates
204 (ECFVG) certificate issued by the American Veterinary Medical
205 Association (AVMA).

206 ~~(21)~~ (27) VETERINARY FACILITIES. Any place or unit from
207 which the practice of veterinary medicine is conducted. The
208 following are types of veterinary facilities:

209 a. Veterinary or Animal Hospital or Clinic. Meets or
210 exceeds all mandatory requirements as listed in the
211 administrative code of the board for veterinary facilities. In
212 doing so, it provides quality examination, diagnostic, and
213 health maintenance services for medical and surgical treatment
214 of animals and is equipped to provide housing and nursing care
215 for the animals during illness or convalescence.

216 b. Specialty Practice or Clinic. Provides complete
217 specialty service by a veterinarian who has advanced training
218 in that specialty and is a diplomat of an approved specialty
219 college. It meets all minimum standards that are applicable to
220 that specialty.

221 c. Central Hospital. ~~Shall meet~~ Meets all requirements
222 of paragraph a., ~~as well as provide~~ and provides specialized
223 care including 24-hour nursing care and specialty consultation
224 on a permanent or on-call basis. It is mainly utilized on



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225 referral from area veterinary hospitals or clinics.

226 d. Satellite, Outpatient, or Mobile Small Animal
227 ~~Clinics~~ Clinic. A supportive facility owned by or associated
228 with, or both, and has ready access to, within a reasonable
229 distance, a full-service veterinary hospital or clinic or a
230 central hospital providing all mandatory services and meeting
231 all minimum standards. The public shall be informed of the
232 limitation of services by way of a posted notice in plain view
233 and easily readable or by notice provided to the client by
234 flyer or card which clearly specifies those mandatory
235 veterinary medical services ~~which~~ that are not provided. In
236 addition, the main location and telephone number of the
237 veterinary hospital or clinic providing the required service,
238 as well as the signed agreement with the veterinary hospital
239 or clinic shall also be posted in plain view and be easily
240 readable. A veterinarian associated with this veterinary
241 hospital or clinic shall be on call during and after operation
242 of the satellite, outpatient, or mobile clinic to render aid
243 if necessary. The personnel of satellite, outpatient, or
244 mobile clinics shall consist of one or more veterinarians and
245 auxiliary personnel necessary to provide adequate outpatient
246 service. Operation of any satellite, outpatient, or mobile
247 clinic shall be under the direct supervision of a licensed
248 veterinarian who remains on the premises during the entire
249 time of operation.

250 e. Large Animal Mobile Clinic. ~~Must provide~~ Provides
251 examination, diagnostic, and preventive medicine, and minor
252 surgical services for large animals not requiring confinement



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253 or hospitalization. Emergency service and radiology service
254 shall be provided by that veterinarian or by written agreement
255 with another veterinarian or group of veterinarians in
256 practice in that locale. These clinics shall provide a degree
257 of veterinary care compatible with the level of standards
258 considered adequate to the practice of veterinary medicine
259 currently available in the area. Complete hospital facilities
260 may be provided by the nearest large animal hospital or
261 veterinary school.

262 f. Emergency Clinic. ~~A facility established to receive~~
263 Receives patients and ~~to treat~~ treats illnesses and injuries
264 of an emergency nature requiring treatment. The clinic shall
265 provide professional diagnostic and emergency treatment during
266 hours when local veterinary hospitals are normally closed.
267 Emergency clinics shall meet all mandatory requirements of a
268 veterinary hospital or clinic.

269 ~~(22)~~ (28) VETERINARY INTERN. ~~A person~~ An individual who
270 is working ~~towards~~ toward completion of an ECFVG certificate
271 and who is working under the direct or indirect supervision of
272 a board approved licensed veterinarian in any state to
273 complete the practical experience internship required for
274 licensing in Alabama.

275 ~~(23)~~ (29) VETERINARY MEDICINE. Includes veterinary
276 surgery, theriogenology, dentistry, acupuncture, animal
277 psychology, chiropractic, and all other branches or
278 specialties of veterinary practice.

279 ~~(24)~~ (30) VETERINARY STUDENT PRECEPTEE. ~~A person~~ An
280 individual who is pursuing a veterinary degree in an



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281 accredited school of veterinary medicine which has a preceptor
282 or extern program and who has completed the academic
283 requirements of the program.

284 ~~(25)~~ (31) VETERINARY TECHNICIAN STUDENT. ~~Any person~~ An
285 individual enrolled in an AVMA accredited veterinary
286 technology program, gaining clinical experience under the
287 supervision of a licensed veterinarian or licensed veterinary
288 technician in a clinical setting.

289 ~~(26)~~ (32) VETERINARY TECHNOLOGY. The skills and
290 knowledge accrued in a post-high school course of study,
291 accredited by the AVMA Committee on Education (COE) or the
292 board, in the area of care and treatment of animals. It
293 embodies limited skills, responsibility, and minimal exercise
294 of independent judgment in the treatment of patients of
295 veterinarians while under direct, indirect, or immediate
296 supervision of a veterinarian.

297 ~~(27)~~ (33) WHOLESALE VETERINARY DRUG DISTRIBUTOR. A
298 person engaged in the business of distributing veterinary
299 drugs and medicines for resale to veterinary practitioners and
300 other veterinary wholesalers and possesses a current permit
301 issued by the Alabama State Board of Pharmacy to engage in the
302 selling of veterinary drugs or medicines in the State of
303 Alabama."

304 Section 2. Section 34-29-77.1 is added to the Code of
305 Alabama 1975, to read as follows:

306 §34-29-77.1

307 (a) A VCPR remains with the licensed veterinarian who
308 established the initial VCPR and remains valid with other



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309 licensed veterinarians within the practice premises where the
310 written or electronic medical records of the patient are kept.

311 (b) (1) A licensed veterinarian may not prescribe or
312 dispense drugs without a VCPR.

313 (2) A VCPR may not be established for the sole purpose
314 of drug sales.

315 (3) Telemedicine may not be used to establish a VCPR.

316 (c) With a VCPR, a prescription may be refilled for not
317 more than one year from the initial prescription date unless
318 medically prohibited or restricted or prohibited by state or
319 federal law, rule, or regulation.

320 (d) A new VCPR shall be reestablished annually by the
321 date that the previous VCPR was established. If not
322 reestablished annually, a VCPR is not valid.

323 (f) (1) A licensed veterinarian may communicate by means
324 of teletriage with an individual if:

325 a. An emergency occurs outside of a valid VCPR;

326 b. The individual has not had a valid VCPR established
327 in the previous 12 months; or

328 c. The individual contacting the licensed veterinarian
329 is not a client.

330 (2) In teletriage, a diagnosis or treatment may not be
331 rendered. The individual and licensed veterinarian may arrange
332 an in-person visit or the licensed veterinarian may refer the
333 patient and individual to another licensed veterinarian for
334 assessment and treatment.

335 (g) If an emergency occurs within a valid VCPR and the
336 veterinarian who established the original VCPR is not



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337 available to examine the patient, the veterinarian may
338 communicate the changes in protocol to the client by means of
339 telemedicine and provide consultation, issue recommendations,
340 or refer the client to another licensed veterinarian.

341 Section 3. This act shall become effective on October
342 1, 2026.



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President and Presiding Officer of the Senate

Speaker of the House of Representatives

SB85

Senate 25-Feb-26

I hereby certify that the within Act originated in and passed the Senate, as amended.

Patrick Harris,
Secretary.

House of Representatives

Passed: 08-Apr-26

By: Senator Stutts