

**SB85 INTRODUCED**



1 SB85  
2 6YCQU31-1  
3 By Senators Stutts, Sessions, Butler  
4 RFD: Healthcare  
5 First Read: 13-Jan-26



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## 4 SYNOPSIS:

5 Under existing law, the Alabama State Board of  
6 Veterinary Medical Examiners is authorized to regulate  
7 the practice of veterinary medicine in this state.

8 This bill would prohibit a veterinarian from  
9 prescribing or dispensing any medication without a  
10 valid veterinarian-client-patient relationship.

11 This bill would provide a maximum amount of time  
12 within which a veterinarian may refill a prescription.

13 This bill would provide that a  
14 veterinarian-client-patient relationship created with  
15 one veterinarian exists among all other veterinarians  
16 practicing at the same location.

17 This bill would provide that a  
18 veterinarian-client-patient relationship must be  
19 reestablished annually to remain valid.

20 This bill would further define what  
21 circumstances create a new veterinarian-client-patient  
22 relationship and would define certain terms, including  
23 "client" and "patient."

24 This bill would also make nonsubstantive,  
25 technical revisions to update the existing code  
language to current style.

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29 A BILL  
30 TO BE ENTITLED  
31 AN ACT

33 Relating to veterinary medicine; to amend Section  
34 34-29-61, Code of Alabama 1975, to define the  
35 veterinarian-client-patient relationship and other terms; to  
36 add Section 34-29-77.1 to the Code of Alabama 1975, to  
37 prohibit veterinarians from dispensing medication without a  
38 veterinarian-client-patient relationship; to provide the  
39 amount of time within which a prescription may be refilled; to  
40 provide the veterinarian-client-patient relationship is shared  
41 among all veterinarians at a location; to require a  
42 veterinarian-client-patient relationship be reestablished  
43 annually; and to make nonsubstantive, technical revisions to  
44 update the existing code language to current style.

45 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

46                   Section 1. Section 34-29-61, Code of Alabama 1975, is  
47                   amended to read as follows:

48 "§34-29-61

49 For the purposes of this article, the following terms  
50 shall have the following meanings ~~ascribed by this section~~:

56 (2) ANIMAL. Any animal or mammal other than man.



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57 including birds, fish, reptiles, wild or domestic, living or  
58 dead.

59 (3) APPLICANT. ~~A person~~ An individual who files an  
60 application to be licensed to practice veterinary medicine or  
61 licensed as a veterinary technician.

62 (4) BOARD. Alabama State Board of Veterinary Medical  
63 Examiners.

64 (5) CLIENT. A person who has entered into an agreement  
65 with a licensed veterinarian for the purpose of obtaining  
66 veterinary medicine services in-person.

67 (5) CONSULTING VETERINARIAN. A veterinarian licensed  
68 in another state who gives advice or demonstrates techniques  
69 to a licensed Alabama veterinarian or group of licensed  
70 Alabama veterinarians. A consulting veterinarian ~~shall~~ may not  
71 ~~utilize~~ use this privilege to circumvent the law.

72 (6) DIRECT SUPERVISION. ~~The~~ A supervising  
73 veterinarian has initially examined the animal and will  
74 examine at other times as acceptable veterinary medical  
75 practice requires, consistent with the particular delegated  
76 animal health care task. The supervising veterinarian is on  
77 the premises and is quickly and easily available.

78 (7) EMERGENCY. ~~The~~ An animal has been placed in a  
79 life threatening condition and immediate treatment is  
80 necessary to sustain life.

81 (8) FOREIGN VETERINARY GRADUATE, EXCLUDING CANADA.  
82 Any ~~person~~ individual, including a foreign national or an  
83 American citizen, who has received a professional veterinarian  
84 medical degree from an American Veterinary Medical Association

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85 listed veterinary college that is not accredited by the  
86 American Veterinary Medical Association.

87 ~~(9)~~(10) IMMEDIATE SUPERVISION. ~~The~~ A supervising  
88 veterinarian is on the premises and in audible or visual range  
89 of the animal patient and the ~~person~~ individual treating the  
90 patient.

91 ~~(10)~~(11) INDIRECT SUPERVISION. ~~The~~ A supervising  
92 veterinarian has examined the animal and has given written or  
93 oral instructions for the treatment of the animal while the  
94 supervising veterinarian is away from the premises.

95 ~~(11)~~(12) LICENSE. Any permit, approval, registration,  
96 or certificate of qualification issued by the board.

97 ~~(12)~~(13) LICENSED VETERINARIAN. ~~A person~~ An individual  
98 who is validly and currently licensed to practice veterinary  
99 medicine in Alabama.

100 ~~(13)~~(14) LICENSED VETERINARY TECHNICIAN. ~~A person~~ An  
101 individual who is validly and currently licensed to practice  
102 as a veterinary technician in Alabama.

103 (15) PATIENT. Any single animal or representative  
104 segment of a consignment, herd, or flock.

105 ~~(14)~~(16) PERSON. Any individual, firm, partnership,  
106 association, joint venture, cooperative, or corporation or any  
107 other group or combination acting in concert; and whether or  
108 not acting as a principal, trustee, fiduciary, receiver, or as  
109 any kind of legal or personal representative, or as the  
110 successor in interest, assigning agent, factor, servant,  
111 employee, director, officer, or any other representative of  
112 ~~such~~ the person.



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### (15) (17) PRACTICE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE:

113                   a. To diagnose, treat, correct, change, relieve, or  
114 prevent animal disease, deformity, defect, injury, or other  
115 physical or mental condition; including the prescription or  
116 administration of any drug, medicine, biologic, apparatus,  
117 application, anesthesia, or other therapeutic or diagnostic  
118 substance or technique on any animal including ~~but not limited~~  
119 ~~to~~ acupuncture, dentistry, animal psychology, animal  
120 chiropractic, theriogenology, surgery, including cosmetic  
121 surgery, any manual, mechanical, biological, or chemical  
122 procedure for testing for pregnancy or for correcting  
123 sterility or infertility, or to render service or  
124 recommendations with regard to any of the above.

125                   b. To represent directly or indirectly, publicly or  
126 privately, an ability and willingness to do any act described  
127 in paragraph a.

128                   c. To use any title, words, abbreviations, or letters  
129 in a manner or under circumstances which induce the belief  
130 that the ~~person~~ individual using them is qualified to do any  
131 act described in paragraph a. Such use shall be *prima facie*  
132 evidence of the intention to represent oneself as engaged in  
133 the practice of veterinary medicine.

134                   d. ~~Collects~~ To collect blood or other samples for the  
135 purpose of diagnosing disease or other conditions. This  
136 paragraph shall not apply to unlicensed personnel employed by  
137 the United States Department of Agriculture or the Alabama  
138 Department of Agriculture and Industries who are engaged in  
139 the Brucellosis eradication program or external parasite



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141 control program pursuant to Section 2-15-192.

142       e. To remove any embryo from a food animal or companion  
143 animal for the purpose of transplanting the embryo into  
144 another female animal ~~or for the purpose of~~, cryopreserving  
145 the embryo, or ~~to implant~~ implanting the embryo into a food or  
146 companion animal. It shall not be considered the practice of  
147 veterinary medicine for ~~a person~~ an individual or his or her  
148 full-time employees to remove an embryo from the food or  
149 companion animal of the ~~person~~ individual for the purpose of  
150 transplanting or cryopreserving the embryo, or to implant an  
151 embryo into the food or companion animal of the ~~person~~  
152 individual, provided ownership of the food or companion animal  
153 shall not be transferred or employment of the ~~person~~  
154 individual shall not be changed for the purpose of  
155 circumventing this article.

156       f. To provide veterinary medical services to a client  
157 or patient in this state, through telephonic, electronic, or  
158 other means, regardless of the location of the veterinarian,  
159 shall constitute the practice of veterinary medicine in this  
160 state and shall require licensure within this state and a  
161 veterinarian-client-patient relationship must be established.

162       (16) (18) SUPERVISING VETERINARIAN. A veterinarian who  
163 assumes responsibility for the professional care given to an  
164 animal by ~~a person~~ an individual working under his or her  
165 direction.

166       (17) (19) TEMPORARY LICENSE. Temporary permission to  
167 practice veterinary medicine issued by the board pursuant to  
168 this article.



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169        ~~(18)~~ (20) UNLICENSED ASSISTANT. Any individual who is  
170        not a licensed veterinary technician or veterinarian and is  
171        employed by a licensed veterinarian.

172        ~~(19)~~ (21) VETERINARIAN-CLIENT-PATIENT RELATIONSHIP  
173        (VCPR). A relationship in which a licensed veterinarian  
174        satisfies all of the following:

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

182        b. Has sufficient knowledge of the patient to initiate  
183        a general or preliminary diagnosis of the patient's medical  
184        condition.

185        c. Is acquainted with the keeping and care of the  
186        patient or the operation where the patient is managed.

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

191        e. Oversees treatment of the patient, compliance with  
192        the treatment, and the outcome.

193        f. Maintains complete and legible medical records  
194        regarding the patient, including an assessment and treatment  
195        plan, in a manner that another veterinarian may proceed with  
196        continuity of care and treatment of the patient.



197        ~~(20)~~ (22) VETERINARIAN, DOCTOR OF VETERINARY MEDICINE,  
198 DVM, VMD, or EQUIVALENT TITLE. ~~A person~~ An individual who has  
199 received a doctor's degree in veterinary medicine from an  
200 accredited school of veterinary medicine or holds an  
201 Educational Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates  
202 (ECFVG) certificate issued by the American Veterinary Medical  
203 Association (AVMA) .

204        ~~(21)~~ (23) VETERINARY FACILITIES. Any place or unit from  
205 which the practice of veterinary medicine is conducted. The  
206 following are types of veterinary facilities:

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

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

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

224        d. Satellite, Outpatient, or Mobile Small Animal



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

248           e. Large Animal Mobile Clinic. ~~Must provide~~ Provides  
249 examination, diagnostic, and preventive medicine, and minor  
250 surgical services for large animals not requiring confinement  
251 or hospitalization. Emergency service and radiology service  
252 shall be provided by that veterinarian or by written agreement



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

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

267 ~~(22)~~ (24) VETERINARY INTERN. ~~A person~~ An individual who  
268 is working ~~towards~~ toward completion of an ECFVG certificate  
269 and who is working under the direct or indirect supervision of  
270 a board approved licensed veterinarian in any state to  
271 complete the practical experience internship required for  
272 licensing in Alabama.

273 ~~(23)~~ (25) VETERINARY MEDICINE. Includes veterinary  
274 surgery, theriogenology, dentistry, acupuncture, animal  
275 psychology, chiropractic, and all other branches or  
276 specialties of veterinary practice.

277 ~~(24)~~ (26) VETERINARY STUDENT PRECEPTEE. ~~A person~~ An  
278 individual who is pursuing a veterinary degree in an  
279 accredited school of veterinary medicine which has a preceptor  
280 or extern program and who has completed the academic

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281 requirements of the program.

282 ~~(25)~~ (27) VETERINARY TECHNICIAN STUDENT. ~~Any person~~ An  
283 individual enrolled in an AVMA accredited veterinary  
284 technology program~~not~~ gaining clinical experience under the  
285 supervision of a licensed veterinarian or licensed veterinary  
286 technician in a clinical setting.

287 ~~(26)~~ (28) VETERINARY TECHNOLOGY. The skills and  
288 knowledge accrued in a post-high school course of study,  
289 accredited by the AVMA Committee on Education (COE) or the  
290 board, in the area of care and treatment of animals. It  
291 embodies limited skills, responsibility, and minimal exercise  
292 of independent judgment in the treatment of patients of  
293 veterinarians while under direct, indirect, or immediate  
294 supervision of a veterinarian.

295 ~~(27)~~ (29) WHOLESALE VETERINARY DRUG DISTRIBUTOR. A  
296 person engaged in the business of distributing veterinary  
297 drugs and medicines for resale to veterinary practitioners and  
298 other veterinary wholesalers and possesses a current permit  
299 issued by the Alabama State Board of Pharmacy to engage in the  
300 selling of veterinary drugs or medicines in the State of  
301 Alabama."

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

304 §34-29-77.1

305 (a) A VCPR remains with the licensed veterinarian who  
306 established the initial VCPR and remains valid with other  
307 licensed veterinarians within the practice premises where the  
308 written or electronic medical records of the patient are kept.



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

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

313 (c) With a VCPR, a prescription may be refilled for not  
314 more than 365 calendar days from the initial prescription date  
315 unless medically prohibited or restricted or prohibited by  
316 state or federal law, rule, or regulation.

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

320                   Section 3. This act shall become effective on October  
321                   1, 2026.