



## State Legislative Update

June 2025

This issue of the State Legislative Update includes select summaries of bills and regulations tracked by the AVMA Division of State Advocacy and introduced in June. For more information, please contact Madeline Brezin, assistant director, AVMA Division of State Advocacy ([mbrezin@avma.org](mailto:mbrezin@avma.org)).

### **Animal Disease | Vaccination**

**Maine** enacted ME L.D. 528 (H.P. 347), which directs the Maine Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry in consultation with the Animal Welfare Advisory Council, to appoint one or more persons in each county to administer rabies vaccines to animals. It requires appointees to complete a training developed by the Commissioner, in consultation with veterinarians employed by the State, that includes properly storing and administering rabies vaccines, issuing rabies certificates, and providing information to an owner or keeper of an animal to be vaccinated. Licensed veterinary technicians are allowed to vaccinate an animal under the direct supervision or indirect supervision of a licensed veterinarian or a certified rabies vaccinator. Finally, the bill clarifies that certified rabies vaccinators serve in a volunteer capacity unless the person is an employee of the State or an animal shelter and allows an animal shelter to submit a request to the Commissioner that a member of the animal shelter's staff be appointed as a certified rabies vaccinator, in a limited capacity.

### **Scope of Practice**

**Rhode Island** enacted RI S.B. 180/RI H.B. 5668, which prohibits performance of a declawing procedure on a cat unless it is a medically necessary procedure to address an existing or recurring illness, infection, disease, injury, or abnormal condition in the claws, nail bed, or toe bone, that compromises the cat's health. This does not include trimming of nonviable claw husks or placing nonpermanent nail caps.

### **Telemedicine | Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship (VCPR)**

**Ohio** enacted OH H.B. 96, a budget bill containing the veterinary telehealth provisions from OH S.B. 60. This new law allows for the virtual establishment of the VCPR and outlines requirements for veterinarians practicing via telehealth. It allows a veterinarian with a virtual VCPR to prescribe, except: they may only issue an initial prescription for no more than fourteen days, and are required to have the patient have another telehealth visit to issue a refill for not more than fourteen days, and then requires an in-person visit for any additional refills; they must notify the client that certain prescription drugs or medications may be available at a pharmacy and, if requested, the veterinarian will submit a prescription to a pharmacy of the client's choosing; and, they may not order, prescribe, or make available a controlled substance unless the veterinarian has performed an in-person physical examination of the patient. It prohibits a veterinarian whose client is engaged in raising livestock for human food products from using telehealth services for those livestock unless the veterinarian has established a VCPR

in person before the use of telehealth services. However, it allows a veterinarian whose client is engaged in raising livestock for human food products to use teleadvice services for those livestock prior to the establishment of a VCPR. It also clarifies that the practice of veterinary medicine is deemed to occur in the state where the patient is located. This new law will go into effect on September 30, 2025.

### **Other bills and regulations of note:**

#### **Enacted/Finalized**

- **CT S.B. 1282**: Reduces the minimum quarantine period for animals exposed to rabies from six months to four months and requires the animal to be vaccinated against rabies as soon as medically appropriate.
- **LA LAC 46:LXXXV.301, 801, and 1201**: Reduces the length of time for which a veterinarian, registered veterinary technician, and certified animal euthanasia technician licensure application is valid from two years to one year from the initial application submission date.
- **LA S.B. 21**: Expands the definitions of "healthcare professional" and "healthcare facility" to include veterinarians, veterinary staff, and veterinary clinics for the purpose of including them in existing law penalizing assault and battery of human health care personnel and unlawful disruption of the operation of a human health care facility.
- **NV A.B. 136**: Requires any owner or operator of a commercial establishment engaged in the business of selling access to live animals to interact with the public to conspicuously post specified notices with contact information for local animal control to report suspected cruelty and creates an exception for accredited institutional members of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums.
- **NV A.B. 381**: Among other things, authorizes an officer who takes possession of an animal to destroy the animal in a humane manner if the officer obtains an order from a court or a licensed veterinarian, veterinarian technician, or euthanasia technician examines the animal and recommends that the animal be humanely destroyed.
- **NC H. 975**: Allows emergency medical services personnel to provide emergency medical transport or emergency medical services to an injured K-9 police unit animal or an injured search and rescue dog.
- **TX S.B. 2155**: Makes several changes to the regulation of the practice of veterinary medicine in the state, including streamlining complaint resolution and issuance of cease-and-desist orders for unlicensed practice, and creation of new facility registration requirements.
- **TX H.B. 285**: Adds acts committed with criminal negligence to the offense of cruelty to non-livestock animals and creates a defense to prosecution for alleged criminal negligence if the conduct occurred during the actual discharge of the actor's duties while employed as a licensed veterinarian or as a person assisting the veterinarian.

#### **Vetoed**

- **MT H.B. 860**: Would have established a veterinary training program for underserved areas in rural Montana to provide incentives for students pursuing a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine program to locate their veterinary practice in rural Montana communities and to meet the needs of those owning animals in

underserved areas. The Governor vetoed the measure out of concern for the state's budget.

### **Filed/Introduced/Proposed**

#### **Liability | Malpractice | Non-economic damages**

- **MI S.B. 390/MI H.B. 4542**: Would allow the owner or handler of a service animal to collect damages that result from an injury to the service animal, including death, when it is caused by an individual or by an animal owned by the individual. It would include economic damages, punitive damages if the conduct of the liable person was intentional or reckless, and attorney's fees. This bill is very similar to a measure introduced last year in Michigan, which would have allowed non-economic damages; however, those provisions were removed in this year's version of the bill.

#### **Pharmaceuticals | Prescription drug monitoring programs (PDMP)**

- **CA A.B. 1505**: Would prohibit the administration of medically important antimicrobial drugs to livestock unless it is ordered by a licensed veterinarian through a prescription or veterinary feed directive that complies with federal and state law. And, would require prescriptions for labeled uses of medically important antimicrobial drugs and veterinary feed directives and prescriptions for extralabel uses of medically important antimicrobial drugs to be issued pursuant to a veterinarian-client-patient relationship.
- **CT H.B. 7179**: Would allow a veterinarian to authorize a person, under direct supervision, to dispense a prescription veterinary drug, provided it is dispensed upon the lawful written or oral order of the veterinarian acting in the course of the veterinarian's professional practice, in accordance with all state and federal laws and regulations concerning the dispensing of prescription veterinary drugs, and for an animal the veterinarian has access to the medical records of and has established a veterinarian-client-patient relationship.
- **MI S.B. 401**: Would require prescribers to issue opioid antagonist prescriptions alongside opioid prescriptions.
- **OH H.B. 324**: Would require a prescriber, before they may issue a prescription for a drug that causes one or more severe adverse effects in greater than five percent of the drug's users, to conduct an in-person exam, inform the patient that the drug causes one or more severe adverse effects in greater than five percent of the drug's users, and schedule the patient for a follow-up appointment.
- **OH H.B. 374**: Would require a licensed terminal distributor of dangerous drugs, before selling a dangerous drug at retail, to provide notice that a prescription reader can be made available and outline the provision of prescription readers, notice requirements, and exemptions.

#### **Scope of practice**

- **PA S.B. 846**: Would prohibit declawing procedures unless they are necessary for a therapeutic purpose and performed by a licensed Doctor of Veterinary Medicine.

**State programs | Boards of veterinary medicine**

- **NC S.B. 401**: Would create the Feral Swine Working Group within the Wildlife Resources Commission and require one member to be a representative of the North Carolina Veterinary Medical Association.

**Veterinary technicians | Veterinary assistants**

- **TN 1730-02-.03, 1730-03-.12, 1730-05-.03, and 1730-05-.08**: Would require veterinary technicians to obtain 12 hours of continuing education each calendar year- six hours must pertain to the medical, surgical, and/or nursing care of animals, six hours may pertain to an area of special interest in veterinary medicine in fields (including practice management and state and federal regulatory programs), and a maximum of four hours may be obtained in a multi-media format. And, would add to the requirements for being a Certified Animal Euthanasia Technician that the applicant obtain their certificate of completion from an approved course on euthanasia in the past 12 months, and require approved course on euthanasia include participation in the performance of proper euthanasia of an animal by each student. This bill would also outline requirements for reinstatement or reactivation of Certified Animal Euthanasia Technician certificates.