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Bill Analysis

Version: As Introduced

Primary Sponsors: Reps. Fischer and Deeter

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SUMMARY

- Creates a process under which a licensed veterinarian may authorize a registered veterinary technician (RVT) to establish a veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR) on behalf of the veterinarian for certain purposes.
- Prohibits a person from using certain titles or any other words, letters, or symbols, with the intent to represent that the person is authorized to act as an RVT.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Veterinarian-client-patient relationship

The bill creates a process under which a licensed veterinarian may authorize a registered veterinary technician (RVT) to establish a veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR) on behalf of the veterinarian for either or both of the following purposes:

- To allow the RVT to administer vaccines, including the rabies vaccine, to a dog or cat ("covered animal");
- To allow the RVT to administer antiparasitic medication to a covered animal.[1]

Current law authorizes a licensed, and in good standing, dentist, physician, chiropractor, or physical therapist to assist a licensed veterinarian to the extent to which the law that governs the individual providing the support permits, if all of the following apply: (1) a valid VCPR exists, (2) the individual acts under direct veterinary supervision, (3) the individual receives informed, written, client consent, and (4) the veterinarian maintains responsibility for the patient and keeps

[1] R.C. 4741.19(C)(1), (G)(1), and (H).

the patient's medical records.[2] However, no authorization exists in current law for an RVT to establish a valid VCPR.

Under existing law, a VCPR serves as the basis for interaction between veterinarians, their clients, and their patients. A VCPR exists when all of the following conditions have been met:

- A veterinarian assumes responsibility for making clinical judgments regarding the health of a patient and the need for medical treatment, medical services, or both for the patient, and the client has agreed to follow the veterinarian's instructions regarding the patient;
- The veterinarian has sufficient knowledge of the patient to initiate at least a general or preliminary diagnosis of the medical condition of the patient. To demonstrate that sufficient knowledge, the veterinarian must have seen the patient recently and must be acquainted personally with the keeping and care of the patient by examining the patient in person, examining the patient in real time via telehealth services, or making medically appropriate and timely visits to the premises where the patient is kept; and
- The veterinarian is readily available for a follow-up evaluation or has arranged for emergency coverage in the event the patient suffers adverse reactions to the treatment regimen or the treatment regimen fails.[3]

Written protocol

Under the bill, an RVT administering vaccines or medications is subject to veterinary supervision, which may be met by a veterinarian who is readily available to communicate with the RVT via telephone.[4] Additionally, before authorizing an RVT to establish a VCPR on behalf of a veterinarian, the veterinarian must establish a written protocol that describes the duties the RVT must perform before and during the administration of any vaccine or antiparasitic medication. The protocol must include provisions regarding each of the following:

- Obtaining from the covered animal's owner or caretaker the animal's available medical history;
- Requirements for the covered animal's examination before administration of a vaccine or antiparasitic medication;
- Criteria that would disqualify the covered animal from receiving a vaccine or antiparasitic medication, including any information in the covered animal's history or physical examination;
- Vaccination protocols for each covered animal species for which vaccines are administered that include, at a minimum, handling and administration of vaccines and what to do in the event of an adverse reaction or other emergency; and

[2] R.C. 4741.19(F).

[3] R.C. 4741.04, not in the bill.

[4] R.C. 4741.19(G)(2).

- Parasite treatment and control protocols for each covered animal species for which antiparasitic medications are being administered, which must include, at a minimum, handling and administration of medications and what to do in the event of an adverse reaction or other emergency.

The written protocol also must include documentation of all the following information:

- The name or initials of the RVT who establishes a VCPR on behalf of the veterinarian;
- The name, address, and telephone number of the client;
- The name or identity of the covered animal;
- The age, sex, breed, species, and color of the covered animal;
- The medical history information as it pertains to each covered animal;
- Any physical examination findings;
- Any assessment completed before administering a vaccine or other medication;
- Client consent for recommended vaccines or antiparasitic medications;
- All medications and treatments, including strength, dosage, and route of administration; and
- Record of relevant client communication, including whether an evaluation by a veterinarian or follow-up care was recommended.[5]

Formal authorization of VCPR

If a veterinarian authorizes an RVT to establish a VCPR, the veterinarian and RVT must sign and date both of the following:

- A statement containing the authorization for the RVT to act on behalf of the veterinarian and to establish the VCPR for the limited purposes of administering vaccines and antiparasitic medication when acting in compliance with the protocols, conditions, and procedures specified above. The authorization remains in effect until the date the veterinarian terminates the authorization for the RVT to act on behalf of the veterinarian.
- A statement containing an assumption of the risk by the veterinarian for all acts of the RVT related to examining the covered animal and administering vaccines or antiparasitic medication, except that the assumption of risk by the veterinarian does not apply to willful acts of animal cruelty, gross negligence, or gross unprofessional conduct on behalf of the RVT.

Client consent

Before an RVT examines or administers any vaccines or antiparasitic medication to a covered animal, the client must be informed orally or in writing that the RVT is acting on behalf

[5] R.C. 4741.19(G)(3).

of a licensed veterinarian. The client also must be provided with the veterinarian's name and license number. The RVT or a person authorized by the supervising veterinarian must obtain permission from the client for the RVT to proceed with examining the covered animal and administering any vaccine or medication after that disclosure. The RVT or authorized person must document in the covered animal's medical record the oral or written authorization of the client to proceed with the RVT's examination of the animal and administration of the specified vaccine or medication. Such documentation must be retained by the veterinarian for at least three years.[6]

Registered veterinary technician terminology prohibition

The bill prohibits a person from using the title "registered veterinary technician," "veterinary technician," "RVT," or any other words, letters, or symbols, with the intent to represent that the person is authorized to act as an RVT, unless that person is registered with the board and that registration is not suspended or revoked.

Whoever violates this provision is guilty of a second degree misdemeanor on a first offense and a first degree misdemeanor on each subsequent offense.[7]

HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	01-29-26

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[6] R.C. 4741.19(G)(4), (5), and (6).

[7] R.C. 4741.19(D)(2) and 4741.99, not in the bill