



South Carolina

Document No. 5121

BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINERS

CHAPTER 120

Statutory Authority: 1976 Code Sections 40-1-70, 40-69-60, and 40-69-70

120-1. Definitions.

120-3. Licensure to Practice Veterinary Medicine.

120-8. Practice Standards for Licensed Veterinarians.

120-9. Practice Standards for Licensed Veterinary Technicians; Unlicensed Veterinary Assistants.

**Synopsis:**

**The South Carolina Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners is considering proposing amendments to Chapter 120: to define “emergency animal patient” and “imaging” in Regulation 120-1; to update and clarify Regulation 120-9 regarding the practice standards for licensed veterinary technicians and revise and move practice standards for unlicensed veterinary aides to Regulation 120-8; and to clarify Regulation 120-3 in accordance with the statutes for licensure and examinations for veterinarians.**

**A Notice of Drafting was published in the State Register on July 22, 2022**

120-1. Definitions.

A. “Comprehensive veterinary services” means: examination, diagnosis, and treatment of animal patients, diagnostic imaging, surgery, laboratory, pharmacology, and provision for hospitalization and emergency treatment.

B. “Comprehensive veterinary facility” means: a location where comprehensive veterinary services are offered.

C. “Veterinarian-client-patient relationship” means:

(1) The veterinarian has recently seen and is personally acquainted with the keeping and care of the animal through an examination of or visit to the premises where the animal is kept.

(2) The veterinarian has assumed the responsibility for making clinical judgments regarding the health of the animal and the need for medical treatment.

(3) The veterinarian has sufficient knowledge of the animal to initiate a general or preliminary diagnosis of the medical condition of the animal.

(4) The veterinarian is available or has arranged for emergency coverage for follow-up and evaluation.

(5) The client has agreed to follow the veterinarian's instructions.

(6) The veterinarian-client-patient relationship lapses when the licensee has not seen the animal within one year.

D. "Emergency animal patient" means: a patient with a medical condition manifesting itself by acute symptoms of sufficient severity, such that the absence of immediate medical attention could reasonably be expected to result in any of the following:

(1) Cardiopulmonary arrest (CPA), imminent/impending CPA, or death;

(2) Serious jeopardy to the long-term health of a patient;

(3) Serious, life-threatening impairment to bodily functions;

(4) Serious, life-threatening dysfunction of any bodily organs or part.

E. "Imaging" means including, but not limited to, radiography, ultrasonography, computed tomography, magnetic resonance imaging, fluoroscopy, and the administration of radio-opaque agents/materials.

### 120-3. Licensure to Practice Veterinary Medicine.

It shall be unlawful for any person to engage in the practice of veterinary medicine unless duly licensed under the applicable provisions of this chapter.

A. Application. Any person desiring to be licensed as a veterinarian must apply to the Board and provide all information and documentation required by the Board. Applications and accompanying documents will be valid for one (1) year from the initial application date. After one (1) year, a new application with attendant documents and appropriate fees must be submitted.

B. Education Transcripts(s). Certified transcripts shall be sent directly to the Board office from the educational institution.

(1) Certified transcript from an American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) accredited school or college of veterinary medicine, or

(2) Certification from the Program for the Assessment of Veterinary Education (PAVE), or

(3) Certification from the Education Commission of Foreign Veterinary Graduates (ECVFG), or

(4) Certification from another credentialing entity approved by the Board.

(5) Senior students. Senior students must submit an attested letter from the accredited veterinary medical college establishing senior status as of the date of the application for licensure.

C. Examination.

(1) National Examinations. A certified copy of the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination (NAVLE), with a minimum score as set by the American Association of

Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB) or the national board examination, results with a minimum passing score as set by the National Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (NBVME) and the Clinical Competency Test (CCT) current within five (5) years of the date of the application with a minimum score as set by AAVSB. Examination scores must be within five (5) years immediately preceding the date of the application.

(2) If the NAVLE or NBE and CCT examination scores are older than five (5) years immediately preceding the date of application, the applicant must meet the licensure requirements of S.C. Code Section 40-69-260.

(3) South Carolina State Law and Ethics Examination. Minimum passing score of the South Carolina state law and ethics examination as set by the SCBVME. An applicant who fails SCBVME may be reexamined upon submission of an application and re-examination fee.

D. Verification(s) of Licensure. Verification from each state, active or inactive, in which the applicant is or has been licensed.

E. Fees. A non-refundable certified check, money order, or electronic payment.

F. Denial of Application. An application may be denied if the applicant:

- (1) is currently restricted (including probation or other conditions) in another state;
- (2) has committed any act that would be grounds for disciplinary action under this chapter; or
- (3) has committed any act which indicates that the applicant does not possess the character and fitness to practice veterinary medicine.

120-8. Practice Standards for Licensed Veterinarians.

A. Licensed veterinarians shall comply with the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) Code of Professional Ethics.

B. Recordkeeping. Licensed veterinarians shall comply with the following standards for medical record keeping and retention.

(1) Veterinarians performing any act requiring a license pursuant to the provisions of the Veterinary Practice Act shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, a written record concerning the animal(s).

(2) The medical record shall contain the following information:

- (a) Name, address, and telephone number of animal's owner;
- (b) Name and identification of animal, to include the age, sex, species, and breed of animal;
- (c) The animal's medical history to include:
  - (i) Treatment dates;
  - (ii) Diagnosis or condition at the beginning of animal care;
  - (iii) Medication and treatment, including amount, route, and frequency of administration;
  - (iv) Progress and disposition of the case; and
  - (v) Surgery, radiology, laboratory information.

(3) Records for groups of economic animals may be maintained on a per-client basis.

(4) Rabies vaccination records shall comply with all Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) requirements, including, but not limited to record content, record retention, public health record retrieval request responses, location of records, and ownership of records. Compliance with all DHEC requirements is the

professional responsibility of the veterinarian performing the vaccination and signing the rabies certificate.

(5) An electronic record satisfies all requirements that a record be in writing.

#### C. Record Storage.

(1) Records shall be maintained for a minimum of three (3) years after the last entry, or as otherwise provided by law.

(2) A radiograph is the property of the facility where the original radiograph was exposed.

(3) The original or a copy must be released upon the request of another veterinarian who has the written authorization of the owner of the animal.

(4) Radiograph(s) shall be returned within thirty (30) days to the originating facility.

#### D. Supervision of Unlicensed Veterinary Aides.

The licensed veterinarian is responsible for determining whether tasks delegated to unlicensed veterinary aides are within the aides' training, expertise, and skills. The licensed veterinarian shall verify and document qualifications of unlicensed veterinary aides in accordance with S.C. Code Section 40-69-270(C). The delegating veterinarian remains responsible for the care of the patient.

(1) Supervision. Any unlicensed veterinary aide must at all times be under the appropriate degree of supervision of a South Carolina licensed veterinarian whenever providing patient care in this state.

(2) Emergency Animal Patient Care.

An unlicensed veterinary aide working under the indirect supervision of a licensed veterinarian may provide acute care for emergency medical conditions. In the event of a CPA, an unlicensed veterinary aide may follow standing medical orders that have been established by a veterinarian until the patient is stabilized or a veterinarian can provide supervision.

(3) An unlicensed veterinary aide shall not:

(a) Make any diagnosis or prognosis,

(b) Prescribe any treatments, drugs, or medications,

(c) Perform surgery,

(d) Identify as a licensed veterinarian, licensed veterinary technician, veterinary technician, veterinary technologist, vet tech, technician, or veterinary nurse. A veterinary aide must clearly identify himself or herself as such in order to ensure that he or she is not mistaken by the public as a licensed veterinarian or licensed veterinary technician.

#### 120-9. Practice Standards for: Licensed Veterinary Technicians.

A. Licensed Veterinary Technicians. Duties shall be performed under the direction, supervision, and control of a South Carolina licensed veterinarian who has established a veterinarian-client-patient relationship.

(1) Immediate Supervision:

(a) Surgical assistance to a licensed veterinarian.

(b) Flootation of equine teeth.

(2) Direct Supervision:

(a) Induction, maintenance, and immediate recovery of anesthesia.

(b) Perform dental procedures including, but not limited to: prophylaxis and procedures not altering the shape, structure, or positional location of teeth in the dental arch.

(c) Perform euthanasia.

(d) Administration of rabies vaccines as allowed by law.

(3) Indirect Supervision:

(a) Administration and application of treatments, drugs, medications, and immunological agents by

parenteral (to include subcutaneous, intradermal, intramuscularly, intraperitoneal, and intravenous) and non-parenteral routes, except when in conflict with government regulations.

(b) Initiation of parenteral fluid administration.

(c) Perform peripheral venous catheterizations.

(d) Perform imaging including settings, positioning, exposing, processing, and safety procedures.

(e) Collect venous blood specimens as allowed by law.

(f) Collect urine by free catch, expression, cystocentesis, or catheterization.

(g) Collect and prepare tissue, cellular or microbial samples by skin scrapings, impressions, or other non-surgical methods.

(h) Perform routine diagnostic tests.

(i) Supervise handling of biohazardous waste materials.

(j) Collect and prepare blood or blood components as related to blood transfusions.

(k) Administer blood or blood components as related to transfusions.

(l) Apply splints, bandages, slings, and casts.

(m) Perform non-emergency intubations.

(n) Measure medication quantities as prescribed by a licensed veterinarian.

(o) Perform arterial catheterization.

(p) Perform central venous catheterization.

(q) Administer vaccines, excluding rabies.

(r) Microchip insertion.

(4) Other services under the appropriate degree of supervision of a licensed veterinarian.

(5) Emergency Animal Patient Care. A licensed veterinary technician working under the indirect supervision of a licensed veterinarian may provide: acute care for emergency medical conditions. In the event of a CPA or imminent CPA, a licensed veterinary technician may follow standing medical orders that have been established by a veterinarian until the patient is stabilized or a veterinarian can provide supervision.

(6) Practice Limitations. Licensed veterinary technicians shall not be permitted to:

(a) Make any diagnosis or prognosis.

(b) Prescribe any treatments, drugs, medications, or appliances.

(c) Perform surgery.

(d) Identify as a licensed veterinarian, veterinary nurse, or anything other than a licensed veterinary technician.

B. In accordance with S.C. Code Section 40-69-270(C), licensed veterinarians may delegate duties superseding the above scope of practice restrictions to licensed veterinary technicians

holding specialty certification from the National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America's Committee on Veterinary Technician Specialists. Duties must be within the specialty certification discipline.

**Fiscal Impact Statement:**

There will be no cost incurred by the State or any of its political subdivisions for these regulations.

**Statement of Rationale:**

The proposed regulation would: define "emergency animal patient" and "imaging" in Regulation 120-1; update and clarify Regulation 120-9 regarding the practice standards for licensed veterinary technicians and revise and move practice standards for unlicensed veterinary aides to Regulation 120-8; and clarify Regulation 120-3 in accordance with the statutes for licensure and examinations for veterinarians.

