

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2019

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SENATE BILL 604
Agriculture/Environment/Natural Resources Committee Substitute Adopted 5/2/19
Third Edition Engrossed 5/7/19

Short Title: Amend NC Veterinary Practice Act.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

April 4, 2019

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO REGULATE IMPAIRMENT IN VETERINARY PRACTICE, ALLOW
3 VETERINARY FACILITY PERMITTING, AND MAKE TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.
4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5
6 **PART I. REGULATE IMPAIRMENT IN VETERINARY PRACTICE**

7 **SECTION 1.(a)** G.S. 90-181 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

8 "(12) "Impairment" means an individual's inability to practice veterinary medicine,
9 the inability to assist in the delivery of veterinary services as a registered
10 veterinary technician, or the inability to perform acts, tasks, and functions with
11 reasonable skill and safety, and in a manner not harmful to the public or to
12 animals, by reason of physical or mental illness or condition, or use of alcohol,
13 drugs, chemicals, or any other type of substance or material."

14 **SECTION 1.(b)** G.S. 90-187.8(c) reads as rewritten:

15 "(c) Grounds for disciplinary action shall include but not be limited to the following:

16 ...

17 (3) The impairment of ~~a person~~an individual holding a license or registration
18 issued by the Board, when the impairment ~~is caused by that person's use of~~
19 ~~alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances, and the impairment~~ interferes with
20 that ~~person's individual's~~ ability to practice within the scope of the license or
21 registration with reasonable skill and ~~safety~~safety, and in a manner not
22 harmful to the public or to animals under the ~~person's individual's~~ care.

23"

24
25 **PART II. CLARIFY EXEMPTED PRACTICES**

26 **SECTION 2.(a)** G.S. 90-187.10 reads as rewritten:

27 "**§ 90-187.10. Necessity for license; certain practices exempted.**

28 No person shall engage in the practice of veterinary medicine or own all or part interest in a
29 veterinary medical practice in this State or attempt to do so without having first applied for and
30 obtained a license for such purpose from the North Carolina Veterinary Medical Board, or
31 without having first obtained from the Board a certificate of renewal of license for the calendar
32 year in which the person proposes to practice and until the person shall have been first licensed
33 and registered for such practice in the manner provided in this Article and the rules and
34 regulations of the Board.

35 Nothing in this Article shall be construed to prohibit:



- (1) Any person from administering to animals, ~~the title to which is vested in food animals or to animals maintained for the production of food or fiber; administering first aid, not including surgical or invasive procedures, to companion animals in emergency situations; or administering routine disease prevention pharmaceuticals to companion animals; provided that the animals are owned by the person or the person's employer, except when the title is so vested—the ownership is asserted~~ for the purpose of circumventing the provisions of this Article;

...."

SECTION 2.(b) Article 11 of Chapter 90 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ G.S. 90-187.16. Practice of veterinary medicine allowed at registered animal shelters.

Notwithstanding any rule adopted by the Board prescribing minimum facility and practice standards for any location where veterinary medicine is practiced, a licensed veterinarian may practice veterinary medicine, including surgery and invasive procedures, at an animal shelter registered with the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, consistent with any rules adopted by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services concerning animal shelters."

SECTION 3. G.S. 90-181(5) reads as rewritten:

- "(5) "Person" means any individual, firm, entity, partnership, association, joint venture, cooperative or corporation, or any other group or combination acting in concert; and whether or not acting as a principal, trustee, fiduciary, receiver, or as any kind of legal or personal representative, or as the successor in interest, assignee, agent, factor, servant, employee, director, officer, or any other representative of such person."

PART III. FACILITY PERMITTING

SECTION 4.(a) G.S. 90-186 is amended by adding two new subdivisions to read:

- "(8) Pursuant to administrative rule, the Board may establish all provisions and requirements for a veterinary facility permit, the issuance of which shall be required for any facility where veterinary medicine is practiced, except for animal shelters registered with the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.
- (9) Pursuant to administrative rule, the Board may establish all provisions and requirements for a supervising veterinarian for each veterinary facility maintaining a valid veterinary facility permit."

SECTION 4.(b) The Veterinary Medical Board shall adopt rules to implement subsection (a) of this section.

SECTION 5.(a) G.S. 90-181.1 reads as rewritten:

"§ 90-181.1. ~~Practice facility~~ Facility names and levels of service.

(a) In order to accurately inform the public of the levels of service offered, a veterinary ~~practice~~ facility shall use in its name one of the descriptive terms defined in subsection (b) of this section. The name of a veterinary ~~practice~~ facility shall, at all times, accurately reflect the level of service being offered to the public. If a veterinary facility or practice offers on-call emergency service, that service must be as that term is defined in subsection (b) of this section.

(b) The following definitions are applicable to this section:

- (1) "Animal health center" or "animal medical center" means a veterinary ~~practice~~ facility in which consultative, clinical, and hospital services are rendered and in which a large staff of basic and applied veterinary scientists perform significant research and conduct advanced professional educational programs.
- (2) "Emergency facility" means a veterinary medical facility whose primary function is the receiving, treatment, and monitoring of emergency patients

1 during its specified hours of operation. At this veterinary ~~practice~~-facility a
 2 veterinarian is in attendance at all hours of operation and sufficient staff is
 3 available to provide timely and appropriate emergency care. An emergency
 4 facility may be an independent veterinary medical after-hours facility, an
 5 independent veterinary medical 24-hour facility, or part of a full-service
 6 hospital or large teaching institution.

7 (3) "Mobile facility" means a veterinary practice conducted from a vehicle with
 8 special medical or surgical facilities or from a vehicle suitable only for making
 9 house or farm calls; provided, the veterinary medical practice shall have a
 10 permanent base of operation with a published address and telephone facilities
 11 for making appointments or responding to emergency situations.

12 (4) "Office" means a veterinary ~~practice~~-facility where a limited or consultative
 13 practice is conducted and which provides no facilities for the housing of
 14 patients.

15 (5) "On-call emergency service" means a veterinary medical service at a ~~practice~~
 16 facility, including a mobile facility, where veterinarians and staff are not on
 17 the premises during all hours of operation or where veterinarians leave after a
 18 patient is treated. A veterinarian shall be available to be reached by telephone
 19 for after-hours emergencies.

20 (6) "Veterinary clinic" or "animal clinic" means a veterinary ~~practice~~-facility in
 21 which the practice conducted is essentially an out-patient practice.

22 (7) "Veterinary hospital" or "animal hospital" means a veterinary ~~practice~~-facility
 23 in which the practice conducted includes the confinement as well as the
 24 treatment of patients.

25 (c) If a veterinary ~~practice~~-facility uses as its name the name of the veterinarian or
 26 veterinarians owning or operating the facility, the name of the veterinary ~~practice~~-facility shall
 27 also include a descriptive term from those listed in subsection (b) of this section to disclose the
 28 level of service being offered.

29 (d) Those facilities existing and approved by the Board as of December 31, 1993, may
 30 continue to use their approved name or designation until there is a partial or total change of
 31 ownership of the facility, at which time the name of the veterinary ~~practice~~-facility shall be
 32 changed, as necessary, to comply with this section."

33 **SECTION 5.(b)** G.S. 90-186 reads as rewritten:

34 "**§ 90-186. Special powers of the Board.**

35 In addition to the powers set forth in G.S. 90-185 above, the Board may:

36 ...

37 (3) Upon complaint or information received by the Board, prohibit through
 38 summary emergency order of the Board, prior to a hearing, the operation of
 39 any veterinary ~~practice~~-facility that the Board determines is endangering, or
 40 may endanger, the public health or safety or the welfare and safety of animals,
 41 and suspend the license of the veterinarian operating the veterinary ~~practice~~
 42 facility, provided that upon the issuance of any summary emergency order,
 43 the Board shall initiate, within 10 days, a notice of hearing under the
 44 administrative rules issued pursuant to this Article and Chapter 150B of the
 45 General Statutes for an administrative hearing on the alleged violation;

46 ...

47 (6) Set and require fees pursuant to administrative rule. The Board may increase
 48 the following fees, provided (i) no fee shall be increased more than fifteen
 49 percent (15%) within a calendar year and (ii) the cumulative total increases of
 50 any fee shall not exceed one hundred percent (100%) of the fee amounts set
 51 in this subdivision:

