

CHAPTER 169

VETERINARY PRACTICE

Referred to in §159.6, 162.13, 162.20, 163.3A, 163.3G, 163.32, 167.18, 256.226, 272C.1, 272C.6, 351.45, 351.46, 581.1A, 714.8, 714H.4, 716.7A, 717.1A, 717.2A, 717.3, 717A.1, 717A.2, 717B.1, 717B.2, 717B.3A, 717B.5, 717D.3, 717E.7

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SUBCHAPTER I

PRACTICE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE — LICENSURE

169.1 Title.

[This chapter](#) shall be known as the “Iowa Veterinary Practice Act”.

[C79, 81, §169.1]

169.2 Legislative purpose.

[This chapter](#) is enacted as an exercise of the police powers of the state to promote the public health, safety, and welfare by safeguarding the people of this state against incompetent, dishonest, or unprincipled practitioners of veterinary medicine. It is declared that the right to practice veterinary medicine is a privilege conferred by legislative grant to persons possessed of the personal and professional qualifications specified in [this chapter](#). [This chapter](#) shall be liberally construed to effect the legislative purpose.

[C79, 81, §169.2]

169.3 Definitions.

When used in [this chapter](#):

1. “*Accepted livestock management practice*” includes but is not limited to: Dehorning, castration, docking, vaccination, pregnancy testing, clipping swine needle teeth, ear notching, drawing of blood, relief of bloat, draining of abscesses, branding, and other surgical acts of no greater magnitude; artificial insemination, collecting of semen, implanting of growth hormones, feeding commercial feed defined in [section 198.3](#), or administration or prescription of drugs performed by the owner or contract-feeder thereof of livestock, a bona fide employee, or anyone rendering gratuitous assistance with respect to such livestock. Nothing contained herein shall be construed to permit any person except those persons

enumerated in [this subsection](#), to provide purportedly gratuitous assistance with regard to the treatment of animals other than advisory assistance, in return for the purchase of goods or services.

2. “*Accredited or approved college of veterinary medicine*” means any veterinary college or division of a university or college that offers the degree of doctor of veterinary medicine or its equivalent and that conforms to the standards required for accreditation or approval by the board.

3. a. “*Animal*” means any nonhuman primate, dog, cat, rabbit, rodent, fish, reptile, livestock as defined in [section 717.1](#), or other vertebrate or nonvertebrate life form, living or dead.

b. “*Livestock*” includes a group of livestock such as a herd or flock.

4. a. “*Animal massage*” means a method of treating the body of an animal for relaxation or hygienic purposes through techniques, with or without the aid of a massage device, that include rubbing, stroking, or kneading the body of the animal.

b. “*Animal massage*” does not include acupuncture, chiropractic care, diagnosis, diagnostic treatment, prescription, or surgery.

5. “*Board*” means the Iowa board of veterinary medicine.

6. “*ECFVG certificate*” means a current certificate issued by the American veterinary medical association educational commission for foreign veterinary graduates, indicating that the holder has demonstrated knowledge and skill equivalent to that possessed by a graduate of an accredited or approved college of veterinary medicine.

7. “*Fee*” means monetary compensation given for a service consisting primarily of an act or acts described in [subsection 11](#), paragraph “a”.

8. “*Licensed veterinarian*” means a person who is validly and currently licensed to practice veterinary medicine in the state of Iowa.

9. “*Owner*” means any person, association, partnership, corporation, or other legal entity in whom is vested the ownership, dominion over, or title to an animal, including one who is obligated by law to care for such animal.

10. “*Person*” means natural person or individual.

11. a. “*Practice of veterinary medicine*” means any of the following:

(1) To diagnose, treat, correct, change, relieve or prevent, for a fee, any animal disease, deformity, defect, injury or other physical or mental conditions or cosmetic surgery; including the prescription or administration of any drug, medicine, biologic, apparatus, application, anesthetic, or other therapeutic or diagnostic substance or technique, for a fee; or to evaluate or correct sterility or infertility, for a fee; or to render, advise or recommend with regard to any of the above for a fee.

(2) To represent, directly or indirectly, publicly or privately, an ability or willingness to do an act described in subparagraph (1).

(3) To use any title, words, abbreviation, or letters in a manner or under circumstances which induce the belief that the person using them is qualified to do any act described in subparagraph (1).

(4) The performance or use of complementary, alternative, or integrative therapies including veterinary acupuncture, acutherapy, acupressure, manipulative therapy based on techniques practiced in osteopathy and chiropractic medicine, or other similar therapies as specified by rule adopted by the board.

b. “*Practice of veterinary medicine*” does not include providing authorized veterinary medical services to an animal patient by veterinary auxiliary personnel when performing a delegated task under the supervision of a supervising veterinarian as provided in [subchapter II](#).

12. “*Veterinarian*” means a person who has received a doctor of veterinary medicine degree or its equivalent from an accredited or approved college of veterinary medicine.

13. “*Veterinary medicine*” includes veterinary surgery, veterinary obstetrics, veterinary dentistry, and all other branches or specialties of veterinary medicine.

[S13, §2538-m; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §2764, 2765; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, §169.1, 169.2; C79, 81, §169.3]

[83 Acts, ch 115, §2](#); [2023 Acts, ch 155, §1 – 4, 24](#)

Referred to in [§717C.1](#)

Further definitions; see [§159.1](#)

169.4 License requirement and exceptions.

A person shall not practice veterinary medicine in the state who is not a licensed veterinarian or the holder of a valid temporary permit issued by the board. [This chapter](#) shall not be construed to prohibit any of the following:

1. An employee of the federal, state, or local government from performing official duties.
2. A person who is a veterinary student in an accredited or approved college of veterinary medicine from performing duties or actions assigned by an instructor of the college, or acting under the supervision of a supervising veterinarian as provided in [subchapter II](#). The board shall issue to a veterinary medicine student who attends an accredited veterinary medicine college or school and who has been certified as being competent by an instructor of such college or school to perform veterinary duties under the direction of an instructor of veterinary medicine or under the supervision of a supervising veterinarian, a certificate authorizing the veterinary medicine student to perform such functions.
3. A veterinarian currently licensed in another state from consulting with a licensed veterinarian in this state.
4. Any manufacturer, wholesaler, or retailer from advising with respect to or selling in the ordinary course of trade or business, drugs, feeds, including, but not limited to customer-formula feeds as defined in [section 198.3](#), appliances, and other products used in the prevention or treatment of animal diseases.
5. The owner of an animal or the owner’s bona fide employees from caring for and treating the animal in the possession of such owner except where the ownership of the animal was transferred solely for the purpose of circumventing [this chapter](#).
6. A member of the faculty of an accredited college of veterinary medicine from performing functions in the classrooms or continuing education. However, those faculty members who have professional responsibility to the owner must be licensed. A temporary permit may be granted for a period not to exceed two years to interns or residents who are on the staff of the college of veterinary medicine of Iowa state university of science and technology. Such permit shall be renewable annually upon the application of the dean of the college of veterinary medicine.
7. Any person from manufacturing, selling, offering for sale, or applying any pesticide, insecticide, or herbicide.
8. Any person from engaging in bona fide scientific research which reasonably requires experimentation involving animals.
9. Any veterinary auxiliary personnel when performing delegated tasks under the supervision of a supervising veterinarian as provided in [subchapter II](#).
10. A graduate of a foreign college of veterinary medicine, who has or is in the process of obtaining an ECFVG certificate, when performing delegated tasks under the supervision of a supervising veterinarian as provided in [subchapter II](#).
11. Any person from advising with respect to or performing accepted livestock management practices.
12. Any person from engaging in the full-time study of the improvement of the quality of livestock.
13. Any person from performing post-mortem examinations on swine or cattle.
14. Any person from collecting or evaluating semen from livestock or poultry, or artificial insemination of livestock and poultry.
15. Any person from castrating, dehorning or branding notwithstanding [section 169A.14](#).
16. A person performing animal massage.
17. a. An emergency medical care provider certified pursuant to [chapter 147A](#) who elects

to provide veterinary medical services by diagnosing or treating a police service dog, if all of the following apply:

(1) The police service dog was on duty under the supervision of a peace officer as defined in [section 801.4](#).

(2) The police service dog suffered a severe injury.

(3) The veterinary medical services are necessary to immediately stabilize the police service dog's condition for later diagnosis or treatment by a licensed veterinarian or the holder of a valid temporary permit.

b. An emergency medical care provider certified pursuant to [chapter 147A](#) may elect not to provide veterinary medical services under paragraph "a".

c. If an emergency medical care provider certified pursuant to [chapter 147A](#) elects to provide veterinary medical services under paragraph "a", the emergency medical care provider shall not be civilly liable for diagnosing or treating the police service dog if the emergency medical care provider acted reasonably and in good faith.

d. An emergency medical care provider certified pursuant to [chapter 147A](#) electing to provide veterinary medical services under paragraph "a" shall comply with all of the following:

(1) The emergency medical care provider may diagnose or treat a severely injured police service dog only after the emergency medical care provider furnishes all diagnoses or treatment needed by the last human at the scene of the emergency.

(2) The emergency medical care provider shall not use equipment, or shall discontinue the use of equipment, to diagnose or treat a severely injured police service dog at the scene of an emergency, if any of the following apply:

(a) The equipment is needed to diagnose or treat a human at the scene of the emergency.

(b) The equipment is dispatched to another location.

(3) The emergency medical care provider shall not diagnose or treat a severely injured police service dog, or shall discontinue diagnosing or treating a severely injured police service dog, at the scene of an emergency, if any of the following apply:

(a) The emergency medical care provider is dispatched to another location.

(b) A vehicle used to transport the emergency medical care provider is dispatched to another location.

e. A severely injured police service dog shall not be transported in a vehicle that provides emergency medical or ambulance services.

[S13, §2538-a; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §2766; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, §169.3; C79, 81, §169.4]

[83 Acts, ch 115, §3; 2023 Acts, ch 155, §5 – 7, 24; 2025 Acts, ch 53, §2](#)

Referred to in [§147A.8, 169.33](#)

NEW subsection 17

169.4A Provision of veterinary services.

1. A person, including a corporation, limited liability company, or partnership, established on or after July 1, 1994, shall not provide veterinary medical services, own a veterinary clinic, or practice veterinary medicine in this state, except as otherwise provided in [this chapter](#).

2. [Subsection 1](#) shall not do any of the following:

a. Apply to a veterinarian licensed under [this chapter](#), a partnership formed under [chapter 486A](#) and composed of licensed veterinarians, a limited liability partnership formed under [chapter 486A](#) and composed of licensed veterinarians, a professional limited liability company organized under [chapter 489](#) and engaging in the practice of veterinary medicine, or a professional corporation organized under [chapter 496C](#) and engaging in the practice of veterinary medicine.

b. Prohibit a person from owning an interest in real property or a building where a veterinary clinic is located, if veterinary medical services or a veterinary medicine practice is conducted at the clinic by a person described in paragraph "a".

[94 Acts, ch 1198, §35; 2015 Acts, ch 77, §1](#)

169.5 Board of veterinary medicine.

1. *a.* The governor shall appoint, subject to confirmation by the senate pursuant to [section 2.32](#), a board of five individuals, three of whom shall be licensed veterinarians and two of whom shall not be licensed veterinarians and shall represent the general public, one of whom shall be a farmer involved in the production of agricultural animals. The board shall be known as the Iowa board of veterinary medicine.

b. Each licensed veterinarian board member shall be actively engaged in veterinary medicine and shall have been so engaged for a period of five years immediately preceding appointment, the last two of which shall have been in Iowa. The representatives of the general public shall be knowledgeable in the area of animal husbandry. A member of the board shall not be employed by or have any material or financial interest in any wholesale or jobbing house dealing in supplies, equipment, or instruments used or useful in the practice of veterinary medicine.

c. Professional associations or societies composed of licensed veterinarians may recommend the names of potential board members to the governor, but the governor is not bound by the recommendations.

2. The members of the board shall be appointed for a term of three years, except the terms of the members of the initial board shall be rotated in such a manner that at least one member shall retire each year and a successor be appointed. The term of each member shall commence and end as provided by [section 69.19](#). Members shall serve no more than three terms or nine years total, whichever is less. Any vacancy in the membership of the board caused by death, resignation, removal, or otherwise, shall be filled for the period of the unexpired term in the same manner as original appointments.

3. Necessary meetings may be called by the president of the board by giving proper notice. Except as provided, a majority of the board constitutes a quorum. Meetings shall be open and public except that the board may meet in closed session to prepare, approve, administer, or grade examinations, or to deliberate the qualifications of an applicant for license or the disposition of a proceeding to discipline a licensed veterinarian.

4. The board shall organize by electing a president and such other officers as may be necessary. Officers of the board serve for terms of one year and until a successor is elected, without limitation on the number of terms an officer may serve. The president shall serve as chairperson of board meetings. The person designated as the state veterinarian shall serve as secretary of the board.

5. The duties of the board shall include carrying on the correspondence of the board, keeping permanent accounts and records of all receipts and disbursements by the board and of all board proceedings, including the disposition of all applications for a license, and keeping a register of all persons currently licensed by the board. The representatives of the general public shall not prepare, grade, or otherwise administer examinations to applicants for a license to practice veterinary medicine. All board records shall be open to public inspection during regular office hours.

6. Members of the board shall set their own per diem compensation, at a rate not exceeding the per diem specified in [section 7E.6](#) for each day actually engaged in the discharge of their duties, as well as compensation for necessary traveling and other expenses. Compensation for veterinarian members of the board shall include compensation for the time spent traveling to and from the place of conducting the examination and for a reasonable number of days for the preparation of examination and the reading of papers, in addition to the time actually spent in conducting examinations, within the limits of funds appropriated to the board.

7. Upon a three-fifths vote, the board may:

a. Examine and determine the qualifications and fitness of applicants for a license to practice veterinary medicine in the state.

b. Issue, renew, or deny issuance or renewal of licenses and temporary permits to practice veterinary medicine in this state.

c. Establish and publish annually a schedule of fees for licensing and registration of veterinarians. The fees shall be set by rule and shall include fees for a license to practice veterinary medicine issued upon the basis of the examination, a license granted on the basis

of reciprocity, a renewal of a license to practice veterinary medicine, a certified statement that a licensee is licensed to practice in this state, and an issuance of a duplicate license when the original is lost or destroyed. The fee schedule shall be based on the board's anticipated financial requirements for the year, which shall include but not be limited to the following:

- (1) Per diem, expenses, and travel of board members.
- (2) Costs to the department for administration of [this chapter](#).

d. Conduct investigations for the purpose of discovering violations of [this chapter](#) or grounds for disciplining licensed veterinarians.

e. Hold hearings on all matters properly brought before the board and administer oaths, receive evidence, make the necessary determinations, and enter orders consistent with the findings. The board may require by subpoena the attendance and testimony of witnesses and the production of papers, records, or other documentary evidence and commission depositions. An administrative law judge may be appointed pursuant to [section 17A.11](#) to perform those functions which properly repose in an administrative law judge.

f. Employ full-time or part-time personnel, professional, clerical, or special, as are necessary to effectuate the provisions of [this chapter](#).

g. Appoint from its own membership one or more members to act as representatives of the board at any meeting within or without the state where such representation is deemed desirable.

h. Bring proceedings in the courts for the enforcement of [this chapter](#) or any regulations made pursuant to [this chapter](#).

i. Adopt, amend, or repeal rules relating to the qualifications, standards of conduct, the supervision of tasks delegated to veterinary auxiliary personnel by a licensed veterinarian, and disciplinary action of veterinary auxiliary personnel for whom the board has issued a certificate or permit. The rules may provide for the testing of individuals who apply to be issued a certificate of registration as a veterinary technician, apply to be issued a renewal of a certificate of registration, or apply to be reissued a certificate of registration; and the suspension or revocation of a certificate of registration.

j. Adopt, amend, or repeal all rules necessary for its government and all regulations necessary to carry into effect the provision of [this chapter](#), including the establishment and publication of standards of professional conduct for the practice of veterinary medicine.

k. Adopt, amend, or repeal rules requiring a veterinarian to have a valid veterinarian-client-patient relationship, except in the case of an emergency, before practicing veterinary medicine on an animal, including by acting as a supervising veterinarian.

8. The powers enumerated in [subsection 7](#) are granted for the purpose of enabling the board to effectively supervise the practice of veterinary medicine and are to be construed liberally to accomplish this objective.

9. A person who provides veterinary medical services, owns a veterinary clinic, or practices in this state shall obtain a certificate from the board and be subject to the same standards of conduct, as provided in [this chapter](#) and rules adopted by the board, as apply to a licensed veterinarian, unless the board determines that the same standards of conduct are inapplicable. The board shall issue, renew, or deny a certificate; adopt rules relating to the standards of conduct; and take disciplinary action against the person, including suspension or revocation of a certificate, in accordance with the procedures established in [section 169.14](#). Certification fees shall be established by the board pursuant to [subsection 7](#), paragraph "j". Certification fees shall be established in an amount sufficient to fully offset the costs of certification pursuant to [this subsection](#). Certification fees shall be deposited in the general fund of the state and are appropriated to the department to administer the certification provisions of [this subsection](#). [This subsection](#) shall not apply to an animal shelter, as defined in [section 162.2](#), that provides veterinary medical services to animals in the custody of the shelter.

10. The department shall furnish the board with all articles and supplies required for the public use and necessary to enable the board to perform the duties imposed upon it by law. Such articles and supplies shall be obtained by the department in the same manner in which the regular supplies for the department are obtained, and the department shall assess the costs to the board for such articles and supplies. The board shall also reimburse the

department for direct and indirect administrative costs incurred in issuing and renewing the licenses.

[S13, §2538-f, -h, -i, -j, -t; C24, 27, 31, 35, §2799-d1, -d5; C39, §2773, 2777-2780, 2782, 2784, 2785, 2799.1, 2799.5; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, §169.11, 169.15 – 169.19, 169.21, 169.22, 169.37, 169.41; C79, 81, §169.5]

83 Acts, ch 115, §4; 84 Acts, ch 1067, §23; 88 Acts, ch 1109, §17; 90 Acts, ch 1256, §31; 98 Acts, ch 1202, §32, 46; 2000 Acts, ch 1183, §1, 3; 2001 Acts, ch 24, §70, 74; 2005 Acts, ch 159, §1; 2009 Acts, ch 133, §72; 2023 Acts, ch 155, §§, 9, 24; 2024 Acts, ch 1170, §96, 241; 2025 Acts, ch 134, §34

Subsection 9 amended

169.6 Disclosure of confidential information.

1. A member of the board shall not disclose information relating to the following:
 - a. Criminal history or prior misconduct of the applicant.
 - b. Information relating to the contents of the examination.
 - c. Information relating to the examination results other than final score except for information about the results of an examination which is given to the person who took the examination.
2. A member of the board who willfully communicates or seeks to communicate information in violation of [subsection 1](#), and any person who willfully requests, obtains, or seeks to obtain such information, is guilty of a simple misdemeanor for each separate offense.

[C75, 77, §169.56; C79, 81, §169.6]

2009 Acts, ch 133, §207

169.7 Status of persons previously licensed.

Any person holding a valid license to practice veterinary medicine in this state on January 1, 1979 shall be recognized as a licensed veterinarian and shall be entitled to retain this status as long as licensee complies with the provisions of [this chapter](#).

[C79, 81, §169.7]

169.8 Qualifications.

1. a. Any person desiring a license to practice veterinary medicine in this state shall make written application to the board on a form approved by the board. The application shall show that the applicant is a graduate of an accredited or approved college of veterinary medicine or the holder of an ECFVG certificate. The application shall also show such other information and proof as the board may require by rule. The application shall be accompanied by a fee in the amount established and published by the board.

b. If the board determines that the applicant possesses the proper qualifications, it shall admit the applicant to the next examination, or if the applicant is eligible for license without examination under [section 169.10](#), the board may grant a license to the applicant.

c. If an applicant is found not qualified to take the examination or for a license without examination, the secretary of the board shall immediately notify the applicant in writing of such finding and the grounds therefor. An applicant found unqualified may request a hearing on the question of the applicant's qualification under the procedure set forth in [section 169.14](#). Any applicant who is found not qualified shall be allowed the return of the application fee.

d. Based upon an applicant's education, experience, and training, the board may grant a limited license to an applicant to perform a restricted range of activities within the practice of veterinary medicine, as specified by the board.

2. a. The name, location, number of years of practice of the person to whom a license is issued, the number of the certificate, and the date of registration thereof shall be entered in a book kept in the office of the department of agriculture and land stewardship, to be known as the "registry book", and the same shall be open to public inspection.

b. When any person licensed to practice under [this chapter](#) changes residence, the board shall be notified within thirty days and such change shall be noted in the registry book.

3. Every individual licensed under [this chapter](#) shall keep the license displayed in the place at which an office is maintained.

[S13, §2538-e, -i, -j; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §2767, 2768, 2775, 2776, 2786; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, §169.4, 169.5, 169.13, 169.14, 169.23; C79, 81, §169.8]

[83 Acts, ch 115, §5, 6; 90 Acts, ch 1117, §1; 2009 Acts, ch 41, §63](#)

169.9 Examinations.

1. The board shall hold at least one examination during each year and may hold such additional examinations as it deems necessary. The secretary shall give public notice of the time and place for each examination at least ninety days in advance of the date set for the examination. A person desiring to take an examination shall make application at least thirty days before the date of the examination.

2. The preparation, administration, and grading of examinations shall be governed by rules prescribed by the board. Examinations shall be designed to test the examinee's knowledge of and proficiency in the subjects and techniques commonly taught in veterinary schools. To pass the examination, the examinee must demonstrate scientific and practical knowledge sufficient to establish competency to practice veterinary medicine in the judgment of the board. All examinees shall be tested by a written examination, supplemented by such oral interviews and practical demonstrations as the board may deem necessary. The board may adopt and use the examination prepared by the national board of veterinary examiners as a part of the examination given to examinees.

3. After each examination, the board shall notify each examinee of the examination result, and the board shall issue licenses to the individuals successfully completing the examination. The board shall record the new licenses and issue a certificate of registration to the new licensees. Any individual failing an examination shall be admitted to any subsequent examination on payment of the application fee.

4. In all written examinations the identity of the individual taking the same shall not be disclosed upon the examination papers in such a way as to enable the members of the examining board to know by whom written until after the papers have been passed upon.

[S13, §2538-e, -f, -i; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §2772, 2790 – 2792; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, §169.10, 169.27 – 169.29; C79, 81, §169.9]

[83 Acts, ch 115, §7; 2017 Acts, ch 54, §76](#)

169.10 License by endorsement.

1. The board may issue a license to practice veterinary medicine in this state without written examination to an applicant who meets all of the following requirements:

a. Has graduated from an accredited college of veterinary medicine or has received a certificate from the educational commission for foreign veterinary graduates at least five years prior to application.

b. Has actively practiced for at least two thousand hours during the five years preceding application.

c. Has not previously failed and not subsequently passed a veterinary licensing examination in this state.

d. Holds a current license to practice veterinary medicine in another state or United States territory or province of Canada.

e. Is not subject to license investigation, suspension, or revocation in any state, United States territory, or province of Canada.

f. Provides other information and proof as the board may require by rule.

2. The board may issue a license to practice veterinary medicine in this state without written or oral examination to an applicant who meets all of the following requirements:

a. Holds a current certification as a diplomate of a national specialty board or college recognized by the board by rule.

b. Is not subject to license investigation, suspension, or revocation in any state, United States territory, or province of Canada.

c. Provides other information and proof as the board may require by rule.

[S13, §2538-i, -il; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §2794 – 2797; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, §169.31 – 169.34; C79, 81, §169.10]

[90 Acts, ch 1117, §2](#)

Referred to in [§169.8](#)

169.11 Temporary permit.

The board may issue without examination a temporary permit to practice veterinary medicine in this state:

1. To a qualified applicant for license pending examination and the temporary permit shall expire the day after the notice of results of the first examination given after the permit is issued. The temporary permit holder should keep the secretary continually advised of the permit holder's current address.

2. To a nonresident veterinarian validly licensed in another state, territory, or district of the United States or a foreign country who pays the fee established and published by the board. Such temporary permit shall be issued for a period of no more than one hundred eighty days and no more than one permit shall be issued to a person during each calendar year.

[C79, 81, §169.11]

169.12 License renewal.

1. All licenses shall expire in multiyear intervals as determined by the board but may be renewed by registration with the board and payment of the registration renewal fee established and published by the board. Prior to expiration the secretary shall mail a notice to each licensed veterinarian that the license will expire and provide the licensee with a form for registration.

2. Any person who shall practice veterinary medicine after license expiration is practicing in violation of [this chapter](#). However, a person may renew an expired license within five years of the date of its expiration by making written application for renewal and paying the current renewal fee plus all delinquent renewal fees. After five years have elapsed since the date of expiration, a license may not be renewed, and the holder must make application for a new license and take the license examination.

3. The board may by rule waive the payment of the registration renewal fee of a licensed veterinarian during the period when the veterinarian is on active duty with any branch of the armed services of the United States.

4. Any licensee who is desirous of changing residence to another state or territory shall, upon application to the department and payment of the legal fee, receive a certified statement that the licensee is a duly licensed practitioner in this state.

[S13, §2538-j; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §2769, 2769.1, 2798; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, §169.6, 169.35; C79, 81, §169.12]

[2017 Acts, ch 54, §76](#)

Referred to in [§169.13](#)

169.13 Discipline of licensees.

1. The board of veterinary medicine, after due notice and hearing, may take disciplinary action against a licensee if it determines that a veterinarian licensed to practice veterinary medicine is guilty of violating any of the grounds for discipline in [this section](#).

2. The board is authorized to discipline licensees in any of the following ways:

a. Impose a civil penalty against the licensee in an amount not to exceed ten thousand dollars. If the board imposes a civil penalty, all of the following apply:

(1) The collection of the civil penalty may be enforced in a civil action brought by the attorney general on behalf of the board.

(2) Moneys collected in civil penalties shall be deposited in the general fund of the state.

b. Revoke or suspend a license to practice veterinary medicine.

3. Any of the following actions or offenses constitutes grounds for discipline:

a. Knowingly making a misleading, deceptive, untrue, or fraudulent representation in the practice of the profession.

b. Being convicted of a felony in a court of this state or another state, territory, or country. Conviction as used in this paragraph includes a conviction of an offense which if committed in this state would be deemed a felony without regard to its designation elsewhere, or a criminal proceeding in which a finding or verdict of guilt is made or returned, but the adjudication or guilt is either withheld or not entered. A certified copy of the final order or judgment of conviction or plea of guilty in this state or in another state is conclusive evidence.

c. Violating a statute or law of this state, another state, or the United States, without regard to its designation as either felony or misdemeanor, if the statute or law relates to the practice of veterinary medicine.

d. Having the person's license to practice veterinary medicine revoked or suspended, or having other disciplinary action taken by a licensing authority of another state, territory, or country. A certified copy of the record or order of the suspension, revocation, or disciplinary action is conclusive or prima facie evidence.

e. Knowingly aiding, assisting, procuring, or advising a person to unlawfully practice veterinary medicine.

f. Being adjudged mentally incompetent by a court of competent jurisdiction. The adjudication shall automatically suspend a license for the duration of the license unless the board orders otherwise.

g. Being guilty of a willful or repeated departure from, or a failure to conform to, the minimal standard of acceptable and prevailing practice of veterinary medicine as defined in rules adopted by the board, in which proceeding actual injury to an animal need not be established; or the committing by a veterinarian of an act contrary to honesty, justice, or good morals, whether the act is committed in the course of the practice or otherwise, and whether committed within or without this state.

h. Demonstrating an inability to practice veterinary medicine with reasonable skill and safety by reason of illness, drunkenness, excessive use of drugs, narcotics, chemicals, or other type of material or as a result of a mental or physical condition.

i. Having willfully or repeatedly violated lawful rules adopted by the board or violation of a lawful order of the board, previously entered by the board in a disciplinary hearing.

4. a. The board, upon probable cause, may compel a veterinarian to submit to a mental or physical examination by designated physicians. Failure of a veterinarian to submit to an examination constitutes an admission to the allegations made against that veterinarian and the finding of fact and decision of the board may be entered without the taking of testimony or presentation of evidence. At reasonable intervals, a veterinarian shall be afforded an opportunity to demonstrate that the veterinarian can resume the competent practice of veterinary medicine with reasonable skill and safety to animals.

b. A person licensed to practice veterinary medicine who applies for the renewal of the person's license as required by [section 169.12](#) gives consent to submit to a mental or physical examination as provided by this paragraph when directed in writing by the board. All objections shall be waived as to the admissibility of the examining physician's testimony or examination reports on the grounds that they constitute privileged communication. The medical testimony or examination reports shall not be used against a veterinarian in another proceeding and are confidential except for other actions filed against a veterinarian to revoke or suspend that person's license.

[S13, §2538-e; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §2799; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, §169.36; C79, 81, §169.13]

[83 Acts, ch 115, §8](#); [2009 Acts, ch 41, §64](#); [2025 Acts, ch 134, §35](#)

Referred to in [§169.14](#), [272C.3](#), [272C.4](#)

Section amended

169.14 Procedure for suspension or revocation.

A proceeding for the revocation or suspension of a license to practice veterinary medicine or to discipline a person licensed to practice veterinary medicine shall be substantially in accord with the following:

1. The board, upon its own motion or upon a verified complaint in writing, may request the department of inspections, appeals, and licensing to conduct an investigation of the charges

contained in the complaint. The department of inspections, appeals, and licensing shall report its findings to the board, and the board may issue an order fixing the time and place for hearing if a hearing is deemed warranted. A written notice of the time and place of the hearing, together with a statement of the charges, shall be served upon the licensee at least ten days before the hearing in the manner required for the service of notice of the commencement of an ordinary action.

2. If the licensee has left the state, the notice and statement of the charges shall be so served at least twenty days before the date of the hearing, wherever the licensee may be found. If the whereabouts of the licensee is unknown, service may be had by publication as provided in the rules of civil procedure upon filing the affidavit required by those rules. If the licensee fails to appear either in person or by counsel at the time and place designated in the notice, the board shall proceed with the hearing.

3. The hearing shall be before a member or members designated by the board or before an administrative law judge appointed by the board according to the requirements of [section 17A.11, subsection 1](#). The presiding board member or administrative law judge may issue subpoenas, administer oaths, and take or cause depositions to be taken in connection with the hearing. The member or officer shall issue subpoenas at the request and on behalf of the licensee.

4. A mechanized or stenographic record of the proceedings shall be kept. The licensee shall be given the opportunity to appear personally and by attorney, with the right to produce evidence in one's own behalf, to examine and cross-examine witnesses, and to examine documentary evidence produced against the licensee.

5. If a person refuses to obey a subpoena issued by the presiding member or administrative law judge or to answer a proper question put to that person during the hearing, the presiding member or administrative law judge may invoke the aid of a court of competent jurisdiction in requiring the attendance and testimony of that person and the production of papers. A failure to obey the order of the court may be punished by the court as a civil contempt may be punished.

6. Unless the hearing is before the entire board, a transcript of the proceeding, together with exhibits presented, shall be considered by the entire board at the earliest practicable time. The licensee and attorney shall be given the opportunity to appear personally to present the licensee's position and arguments to the board. The board shall determine the charge upon the merits on the basis of the evidence in the record before it.

7. Upon three members of the board voting in favor of finding the licensee guilty of an act or offense specified in [section 169.13](#), the board shall prepare written findings of fact and its decision imposing one or more of the following disciplinary measures:

a. Suspend the license to practice veterinary medicine for a period to be determined by the board.

b. Revoke the license to practice veterinary medicine.

c. Suspend imposition of judgment and penalty or impose the judgment and penalty, but suspend enforcement and place the veterinarian on probation. The probation ordered may be vacated upon noncompliance. The board may restore and reissue a license to practice veterinary medicine, and may impose a disciplinary or corrective measure which it might originally have imposed.

8. Judicial review of the board's action may be sought in accordance with [chapter 17A](#).

9. The filing of a petition for review does not in itself stay execution or enforcement of board action. Upon application, the board or the review court, in appropriate cases, may order a stay pending the outcome of the review proceedings.

[C31, 35, §2799-d1, -d3, -d4, -d6; C39, §2799.1, 2799.3, 2799.4, 2799.6; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, §169.37, 169.39, 169.40, 169.42; C79, 81, §169.14]

[83 Acts, ch 115, §9; 88 Acts, ch 1109, §18; 88 Acts, ch 1158, §44; 89 Acts, ch 296, §19; 98 Acts, ch 1202, §33, 46; 2023 Acts, ch 19, §1918](#)

Referred to in [§169.5, 169.8, 169.34](#)

169.15 Appeal.

Any party aggrieved by a decision of the board may appeal the matter to the district court as provided in [section 17A.19](#).

[C79, 81, §169.15]

[83 Acts, ch 115, §10](#)

169.16 Reinstatement.

A person whose license is suspended or revoked may be relicensed or reinstated at any time by a vote of five members of the board after written application made to the board showing cause justifying relicensing or reinstatement. Examination of the applicant may be waived by the board.

[C79, 81, §169.16]

[83 Acts, ch 115, §11](#)

169.17 Forgeries.

Any person who shall file or attempt to file with the department or board of veterinary medicine any false or forged diploma or certificate or affidavit of identification or qualification is guilty of a fraudulent practice.

[C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §2803; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, §169.43; C79, 81, §169.17]

169.18 Fraud.

Any person who shall present to the department or board of veterinary medicine a diploma or certificate of which the person is not the rightful owner, for the purpose of procuring a license, or who shall falsely impersonate anyone to whom a license has been granted by said department, is guilty of a fraudulent practice.

[C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §2804; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, §169.44; C79, 81, §169.18]

169.19 Enforcement — penalties.

1. Any person who practices veterinary medicine without a currently valid license or temporary permit is guilty of a fraudulent practice. Each act of such unlawful practice shall constitute a distinct and separate offense.

2. A person who shall practice veterinary medicine without a currently valid license or temporary permit shall not receive any compensation for services so rendered.

3. The county attorney of the county in which any violation of [this chapter](#) occurs shall conduct the necessary prosecution for such violation. Notwithstanding this provision, the board of veterinary medicine or any citizen of this state may bring an action to enjoin any person from practicing veterinary medicine without a currently valid license or temporary permit. The action brought to restrain a person from engaging in the practice of veterinary medicine without possessing a license shall be brought in the name of the state of Iowa. If the court finds that the individual is violating or threatening to violate [this chapter](#) it shall enter an injunction restraining the individual from such unlawful acts.

4. The successful maintenance of an action based on any one of the remedies set forth in [this section](#) shall in no way prejudice the prosecution of an action based on any other remedy set forth in [this section](#).

5. The department shall cooperate with the board of veterinary medicine in the enforcement of the provisions of [this chapter](#).

[S13, §2538-1; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §2805 – 2807; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, §169.45 – 169.48; C79, 81, §169.19]

[83 Acts, ch 115, §12; 2012 Acts, ch 1023, §157](#)

Referred to in [§331.756\(27\), 714.8](#)

169.20 Veterinary assistants. Repealed by 2023 Acts, ch 155, §21, 24.

169.21 Limitations of actions.

Any action for professional negligence against an individual licensed under [this chapter](#) resulting in damage to property shall not be brought more than two years after the date on

which the claimant knew, or through the use of reasonable diligence should have known, or received notice in writing of the existence of, the injury for which damages were sought in the action, whichever of the dates occurs first. For purposes of [this section](#), “property” includes an animal.

[2021 Acts, ch 81, §1](#)

169.22 through 169.30 Reserved.

SUBCHAPTER II

VETERINARY AUXILIARY PERSONNEL — REGISTRATION

Referred to in [§169.3](#), [169.4](#)

169.31 Subchapter definitions.

As used in [this subchapter](#):

1. “*Accredited or approved veterinary technology program*” means a program in veterinary technology that is accredited by the American veterinary medical association and an accrediting agency that has been approved by the United States department of education or its successor.

2. “*Direct supervision*” means supervision by a supervising veterinarian that occurs when the supervising veterinarian is readily available and on the premises where an animal patient is being provided authorized veterinary medical services by veterinary auxiliary personnel.

3. “*Immediate supervision*” means supervision by a supervising veterinarian that occurs when the supervising veterinarian is in the immediate area, and within audible and visual range, of an animal patient and veterinary auxiliary personnel providing the animal patient with authorized veterinary medical services.

4. “*Indirect supervision*” means supervision by a supervising veterinarian, other than direct supervision or immediate supervision, that occurs when all of the following apply:

a. The supervising veterinarian has given written protocols or real-time oral instructions to veterinary auxiliary personnel for the treatment of an animal patient for which a veterinarian-client-patient relationship exists.

b. The supervising veterinarian is readily available by telephone or other means of immediate communication with the veterinary auxiliary personnel providing the animal patient with authorized veterinary medical services.

5. “*Registered veterinary technician*” means an individual who has graduated from an accredited or approved veterinary technology program and who has been issued a valid certificate of registration by the board pursuant to [section 169.34](#).

6. “*Supervising veterinarian*” means a licensed veterinarian who assumes responsibility for supervising veterinary auxiliary personnel providing authorized veterinary medical services to an animal patient under immediate supervision, direct supervision, or indirect supervision.

7. a. “*Veterinary assistant*” means an individual employed to work in veterinary practice who performs tasks under the supervision of a supervising veterinarian.

b. “*Veterinary assistant*” does not include a person who is a licensed veterinarian or a registered veterinary technician, veterinary student, veterinary technician student, or graduate from a foreign college of veterinary medicine who is not a licensed veterinarian or the holder of a valid temporary permit issued by the board.

8. “*Veterinary auxiliary personnel*” means a veterinary assistant, registered veterinary technician, veterinary student, veterinary technician student, or graduate of a foreign college of veterinary medicine who is not a licensed veterinarian or the holder of a valid temporary permit issued by the board.

9. “*Veterinary student*” means an individual currently admitted to and in good academic standing with an accredited or approved college of veterinary medicine.

10. “*Veterinary technician student*” means an individual currently admitted to and in good academic standing with an accredited or approved veterinary technology program.

2023 Acts, ch 155, §10, 24

169.32 Supervising veterinarian.

1. A licensed veterinarian may provide veterinary medical services to an animal patient by acting as a supervising veterinarian as provided in [this subchapter](#) and rules adopted by the board.

2. A supervising veterinarian shall determine the supervision required for tasks delegated to veterinary auxiliary personnel within the limits provided in [this subchapter](#) and rules adopted by the board. The decision must be based on factors such as the veterinary auxiliary personnel’s training, experience, and skill. The supervising veterinarian is responsible for providing the required supervision and delegating tasks to veterinary auxiliary personnel. The supervising veterinarian shall not delegate veterinary medical services of diagnosis, prescription, or surgery to any veterinary assistant, veterinary technician student, or registered veterinary technician.

3. The board shall adopt rules providing for when a licensed veterinarian must exercise immediate supervision, direct supervision, or indirect supervision for each category of auxiliary veterinary personnel providing authorized veterinary medical services to an animal patient. Nothing in [this subchapter](#) or the rules adopted by the board shall prohibit the supervising veterinarian from providing more supervision than required when the veterinary auxiliary personnel’s training, experience, and skill indicate more supervision is necessary.

2023 Acts, ch 155, §11, 24

Referred to in §169.36, 169.37, 169.38, 169.39, 169.40

169.33 Veterinary auxiliary personnel — employment.

1. *a.* A licensed veterinarian may employ any number of veterinary auxiliary personnel who may be delegated tasks associated with providing authorized veterinary medical services to an animal patient within the limits provided in [this subchapter](#) and rules adopted by the board pursuant to [this subchapter](#).

b. A person may employ any number of veterinary auxiliary personnel to provide authorized veterinary medical services to animals that are owned or cared for by the person if a supervising veterinarian who practices at the same place of business as the veterinary auxiliary personnel supervises the veterinary auxiliary personnel within the limits provided in [this subchapter](#) and rules adopted by the board pursuant to [this subchapter](#).

2. Veterinary auxiliary personnel shall only receive compensation for authorized veterinary medical services from their employer as provided in [this section](#) except for those services provided in accordance with [section 169.4](#).

2023 Acts, ch 155, §12, 24

169.34 Registered veterinary technician — certificate of registration.

1. The board shall issue a certificate of registration to an individual if all of the following apply:

a. The individual has graduated from an accredited or approved veterinary technology program.

b. The individual has received a passing score on a national veterinary technician examination approved by the board.

c. The individual has submitted a complete application to the board that is approved by the board.

(1) The application must be in a form prescribed by the board.

(2) To be complete, the application must include all of the following:

(a) Information and material required by the board.

(b) A registration fee in an amount established by the board.

d. The individual meets other criteria or qualifications as specified by rule adopted by the board, including but not limited to a state veterinary technician examination.

e. The board may grant a waiver from any qualification for a certificate of registration to

an individual who was in active duty military service or the individual's spouse in accordance with [section 272C.4](#), or to an individual who was previously a veterinary medical student and who substantially meets the qualifications to receive a certificate of registration.

2. The board may issue an endorsed certificate of registration to an individual if the individual holds a valid registration, certificate, license, or other authorization issued by a jurisdiction recognized by the board, and all of the following apply:

a. The individual meets the educational, experience, or testing requirements as specified by the board in rule.

b. The individual is not subject to an investigation or disciplinary action which may result or has resulted in the suspension or the revocation of a registration, certificate, license, or other authorization issued by a jurisdiction recognized by the board.

c. The individual has submitted a complete application to the board that is approved by the board.

(1) The application must be in a form prescribed by the board.

(2) To be complete, the application must include all of the following:

(a) Information and material required by the board.

(b) A registration fee in an amount established by the board.

d. The individual meets other criteria, standard, or qualification as specified by rule adopted by the board.

e. The board may grant a waiver from any qualification for an endorsed certificate of registration to an individual who was in active duty military service or the individual's spouse in accordance with [section 272C.4](#), or to an individual who was previously a veterinary medical student who substantially meets the qualifications to receive a certificate of registration.

3. a. All certificates of registration shall be issued and expire according to a registration period based on a triennium cycle beginning and ending on dates established by the board. However, a new certificate of registration issued during a registration period shall be for the balance of that registration period.

b. To renew a certificate of registration, a registered veterinary technician must apply to the board for approval. The application must show that the registered veterinary technician has completed all continuing education credit hours during the preceding registration period as required by the board. The board shall determine the number of continuing education credit hours required and the type of continuing hours awarded credit. The certificate of registration expires after the individual has been provided a notice and opportunity for a hearing by the board under [chapter 17A](#). An individual whose certificate of registration has expired is no longer credentialed as provided in [section 169.35](#).

c. The board shall reissue a certificate of registration to an individual whose certificate of registration has expired. To be reissued a certificate of registration, the individual must apply to the board for approval. The application must show that the individual has completed the same number of continuing education credit hours required to renew a certificate of registration during the prior three years.

d. A certificate of registration for a registered veterinary technician that was issued prior to July 1, 2024, remains valid and does not expire.

e. The board shall adopt all rules required to administer and enforce [this subsection](#).

4. A registered veterinary technician is subject to investigation and disciplinary action taken by the board to suspend or revoke a certificate or registration pursuant to [section 272C.3](#). However, the board shall utilize the procedures set forth in [section 169.14](#). A certificate of registration shall not be suspended or revoked by less than a two-thirds vote of the entire board in a proceeding conducted in compliance with [section 17A.12](#).

[2023 Acts, ch 155, §13, 24](#)

Referred to in [§169.31](#), [169.35](#)

169.35 Registered veterinary technician — credentials.

1. A person shall not use any recognized title, abbreviation, or sign to indicate that such person is a registered veterinary technician unless that person is an individual who has been issued a certificate of registration pursuant to [section 169.34](#).

2. A person who violates [subsection 1](#) commits a simple misdemeanor.

[2023 Acts, ch 155, §14, 24](#)

Referred to in [§169.34](#)

169.36 Registered veterinary technician — scope of authority.

1. A registered veterinary technician shall only perform tasks associated with providing authorized veterinary medical services to an animal patient under the supervision of a supervising veterinarian according to [this section](#) and rules adopted by the board under [this subchapter](#).

2. A supervising veterinarian shall decide the specific tasks delegated to a registered veterinary technician and provide the required supervision pursuant to [section 169.32](#) and the rules adopted by the board.

3. A veterinary technician shall not do any of the following:

a. Perform equine floating teeth services. However, a registered veterinary technician may perform such services after submitting to the board all of the following:

(1) Proof of current certification from the international association of equine dentistry or other professional equine dentistry association as determined by the board.

(2) A written statement signed by a supervising veterinarian experienced in large animal medicine that the applicant will be under the direct supervision or indirect supervision of the supervising veterinarian when treating floating equine teeth.

b. Gingival resection.

[2023 Acts, ch 155, §15, 24](#)

169.37 Veterinary assistant — scope of authority.

1. A veterinary assistant shall only perform tasks associated with providing authorized veterinary medical services to an animal patient under the direct supervision of a supervising veterinarian according to rules adopted by the board under [this subchapter](#).

2. A supervising veterinarian shall decide the specific tasks delegated to a veterinary assistant and provide the required supervision pursuant to [section 169.32](#) and rules adopted by the board.

[2023 Acts, ch 155, §16, 24](#)

169.38 Veterinary technician student — scope of authority.

1. A veterinary technician student shall only perform tasks associated with providing authorized veterinary medical services to an animal patient under the supervision of a supervising veterinarian according to rules adopted by the board under [this subchapter](#).

2. A supervising veterinarian shall decide the specific tasks delegated to a veterinary technician student and provide the required supervision pursuant to [section 169.32](#) and rules adopted by the board.

[2023 Acts, ch 155, §17, 24](#)

169.39 Veterinary student — scope of authority.

1. A veterinary student shall only perform tasks associated with providing authorized veterinary medical services to an animal patient under the supervision determined by the supervising veterinarian.

2. A supervising veterinarian shall decide the specific tasks delegated to a veterinary student and provide the required supervision pursuant to [section 169.32](#) and the rules adopted by the board.

[2023 Acts, ch 155, §18, 24](#)

169.40 Graduate from foreign college of veterinary medicine — scope of authority.

1. A graduate from a foreign college of veterinary medicine shall only perform tasks associated with providing authorized veterinary medical services to an animal patient under the supervision determined by the supervising veterinarian.

2. A supervising veterinarian shall decide the specific tasks delegated to a graduate from a foreign college of veterinary medicine who is not a licensed veterinarian or temporary permit

holder and provide the required supervision pursuant to [section 169.32](#) and the rules adopted by the board.
[2023 Acts, ch 155, §19, 24](#)