
THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 1502
Author: Berman (D)
Amended: 7/1/25 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE BUS., PROF. & ECON. DEV. COMMITTEE: 8-0, 6/30/25
AYES: Ashby, Choi, Archuleta, Arreguín, Menjivar, Smallwood-Cuevas,
Strickland, Umberg
NO VOTE RECORDED: Grayson, Niello, Weber Pierson

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 7-0, 8/29/25
AYES: Caballero, Seyarto, Cabaldon, Dahle, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 76-0, 6/2/25 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Veterinary medicine: California Veterinary Medical Board

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This bill makes numerous technical changes, statutory improvements, and policy reforms in response to the issues raised during the Veterinary Medical Board's (VMB) 2025 sunset review oversight and extends the operations of the VMB and its authority to appoint an Executive Officer (EO) by four years, until January 1, 2030.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the VMB, under the jurisdiction of the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) to license and regulate veterinarians, registered veterinary technicians (RVTs), register veterinary premises (premises) and issue veterinary assistant controlled substance permits (VACSPs) and sunsets the VMB and its authority to appoint an EO January 1, 2026. (Business and

Professions Code (BPC) § 4800, et. seq.)

- 2) Requires the VMB to establish a regular inspection program that will provide for random, unannounced inspections and further requires the VMB to inspect 20% of veterinary premises on an annual basis. (BPC §4809.7)
- 3) Prohibits a veterinarian from prescribing, dispensing, or administering a drug, medicine, application, or treatment of whatever nature for the prevention, cure, relief of a wound, fracture, bodily injury, or disease of animals unless a veterinarian-client patient relationship (VCPR) exists and specifies the conditions under which a VCPR is established, as specified. (BPC § 4826.6)
- 4) States that notwithstanding any other law, a designated agency under the jurisdiction of the DCA, including the VMB, must require an applicant to furnish to the agency a full set of fingerprints for purposes of conducting criminal history record checks, and further specifies that a designated agency may obtain and receive criminal history information from the Department of Justice and the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation. (BPC § 144)
- 5) Requires the VMB, by means of examination, to determine the professional qualifications of all applicants who wish to register as RVTs in California and prohibits the VMB from issuing a registration to anyone who has not demonstrated competency by examination. (BPC § 4841.1)
- 6) Requires a licensed veterinarian to keep a written record of all animals receiving veterinary services and provide a summary of that record to the owner of veterinary animals when receiving the care. (BPC § 4855(a))

This bill:

- 1) Adds an additional RVT member to the VMB and requires one of the four veterinarian members to practice in equine or livestock care, or both.
- 2) Extends the operations of the VMB and its authority to appoint an executive office until January 1, 2030.
- 3) Clarifies that the RVT member on the MDC is to be appointed by the board president.

- 4) Permits a VACSP-holder, under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian, to compound drugs for animal use, as specified.
- 5) Revises and recasts the registration requirements for a VACSP permit holder.
- 6) Revises and recasts the registration requirements for a RVT, as specified.
- 7) Adds a definition of “immediate supervision” for purposes of gaining experience in a veterinary technology program, to mean supervision by a person who is within audible and visual range of both the animal patient and the person being supervised.
- 8) Requires a veterinarian to provide a copy of animal patient records to their respective client or the client’s authorized agent within five days of receiving a verbal or written request.
- 9) Specifies that if the request for records is because the animal is in critical condition or direct transfer to another veterinary premises for medical care is recommended, the veterinarian upon release of the animal patient from the veterinarian’s care must either Provide a copy or summary of the written record to the client or the client’s authorized agency or if a record is not available upon release of the animal patient, communicate information to facilitate continuity of care of the animal patient either to the receiving veterinarian or veterinary premises or the or client’s authorized agents if the receiving veterinary premises is unknown
- 10) Requires within 30 days of receiving a written or verbal request by a client or their authorized agent for a record of client payments, the licensee manager of the veterinary premises provide a record of client payments made to the veterinary premises related to services and treatment provided. A record of client payments must be maintained for a minimum of three years after the animal’s last visits.
- 11) Strikes an existing statute related to veterinarian continuing education (CE) and creates a new article under the Practice Act that regulates CE, as specified.
- 12) Specifies that a fine for unlicensed practice is no less than \$2,000 and no more than \$10,000.

- 13) Clarifies that provisions of the Act are applicable to a registrant and permit holder in addition to a licensee.
- 14) Clarifies RVT students may only administer controlled substances and perform drug compounding under the “immediate supervision” of a licensed veterinarian.
- 15) Requires all education completed by a RVT to be accredited by the AVMA or the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, or approved by the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education (BPPE).
- 16) Requires a petition by a person whose license or registration has been revoked or who has been placed on probation to be accompanied by At least two verified recommendations from veterinarians licensed by the VMB who have personal knowledge of the activities of the petitioner since the disciplinary penalty was imposed; and, a full set of fingerprints for purposes of conducting a criminal history record check
- 17) States that if reinstatement fees, delinquency fees, or reimbursement of costs of prosecution and enforcement, as applicable, are not paid by a petition, as specified, within one year of the effective date of the decision reinstating the license, registration or permit, the petition is deemed abandoned, and the license, registration or permit cannot be reinstated as ordered by that decision.
- 18) Deletes the current authority for the VMB to provide a fee waiver or refund for any part of an examination fee in those cases where an applicant whose license has been expired for more than five years is reinstated without an examination requirement.
- 19) Adds the definitions of veterinary premises for purposes of a premises registration fee:
- 20) Increases various licensing fee caps.
- 21) Revises existing delinquency or deficiency fees and establishes that all license, registration, and permit delinquency fees shall be 50 percent of the renewal fee in effect on the date of the renewal, but cannot be less than \$50 or more than \$150.

- 22) Strikes the requirement that the CVMB maintain a fund condition of no more than 10 months in reserves, as specified.
- 23) Deletes the filing fee for approval of an institution offering a curriculum training RVTs, as specified.
- 24) Makes numerous other technical, conforming and clarifying changes.

Background

This bill and the accompanying sunset bills aim to implement legislative proposals reflected in the Background Papers prepared by Committee staff for each agency and program reviewed this year, along with those proposals raised in the board's sunset review reports and those discussed during the sunset review oversight hearings. This bill proposes statutory changes to the operations of VMB as identified in issues raised in the background paper and raised during VMB's joint sunset review oversight hearing on March 4, 2025. In order to practice veterinary medicine in California, an individual must hold a license issued by the VMB. The VMB protects the public from unprofessional and unlicensed practice of veterinary medicine.

Pursuant to BPC § 4853, any premises where veterinary medicine, dentistry or surgery is practiced is required to be registered with the VMB. The VMB is authorized to take enforcement action against a registered premise for violations of the Act. SB 1480 (Hill, Chapter 571, Statutes of 2018) among other provisions required the VMB to inspect at least 20% of registered premises annually. This bill will delete the requirement that the VMB inspect 20% of premises, but maintain a requirement for the VMB to inspect premises.

BPC § 4800 specifies the composition of the VMB's membership. The board is to consist of four licensed veterinarians, three public members, and one RVT. This bill will revise the current membership composition to add an additional RVT member, and specify that one of the licensed veterinarian board members practice with equine or livestock to ensure a broader representation of veterinary practice areas.

The VMB is a special fund entity, collecting revenues primarily from licensing, applications, renewals, and examination fees for the various licensees and registrants under the VMB's regulatory jurisdiction. The revenues generated from licensing fees supports both the administrative and enforcement work of the VMB.

As special fund entity, the VMB receives no general fund support. As noted in the VMB's *2025 Sunset Review Report*, revenues continue to fall below expenditures, forcing the VMB to utilize its Contingent Fund (fund) to subsidize the structural imbalance. This bill will increase the statutory fee cap for a number of application and licensing fees currently assessed by the VMB. In order for the fees to be increased, the VMB will need to utilize the regulatory process to do so. In addition, this bill establishes a new licensure fee category for premises registrations by establishing a "FTE-based" premises registration fee. Depending on the number of veterinarians, practicing full-time at the facility will determine the premises registration fee and tier.

Current law limits drug compounding—which is the process of combining, mixing or altering ingredients of a drug to tailor it for the needs of a specific patient—to be performed by a licensed veterinarian, or an RVT under the supervision of a veterinarian. This bill will authorize VACSP holders in addition to RVTs to compound drugs under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian.

Current law, (BPC § 4843) requires that the VMB "approve" all schools offering RVT curriculum, and that the schools renew approval every two years. According to the VMB's *2025 Sunset Review Report*, compliance with the VMB's role in approval of these educational programs has been inconsistent and burdensome on VMB resources. This bill will delete the requirement for the VMB to "approve" RVT programs and instead require the VMB to accept education from an educational program approved by ACCJC, the American Veterinary Medical Association and the BPPE or education equivalency certified by the AAVSB's Program for Assessment of Veterinary Education Equivalence.

This bill revises the current pathways for registration as an RVT for both in-state applicants and out-of-state applicants. The changes proposed by this bill provide parity for applicants seeking registration. This bill additionally clarifies that a person can either get education or education and experience in order to obtain a RVT registration. This bill reduces the current clinical-practice hour requirements to 2,500 hours, in line with previous amendments for RVTs who hold a license outside of California. This bill maintains the VMB's discretion to determine the clinical or experience requirements necessary for the education and experience pathway for registration.

Current law (BPC §§ 4855, 4826.6) requires veterinarians to keep a written record of all animal patients receiving veterinary services, and to provide a summary of

that record to the owner of an animal patient whenever requested. This bill will revise the patient record requirements.

Licensed veterinarians are required to complete a minimum of 36 hours of CE every two years in order to renew their license. Additionally, RVTs are required to meet certain CE conditions, as determined by VMB through regulation. This bill will revise and recast the current CE requirements.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: Yes

According to the Senate Committee on Appropriations, VMB notes increased fee revenue of up to \$5.8 million annually from the revision of the VMB's current fee structure from a fixed amount to specify statutory fee limits as well as minor travel costs, totaling to an annual cost of approximately \$4,000, to add an additional RVT board member. The Office of Information Services within the Department of Consumer Affairs reports costs of approximately \$11,000 to update applications, add fee codes, and make other IT changes. Costs are anticipated to be absorbable through the redirection of existing maintenance resources.

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/29/25)

California Veterinary Medical Association

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/29/25)

The Animal Physical Therapy Coalition

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: The California Veterinary Medical Association notes, "The CVMA supports the continued existence of the Veterinary Medical Board under the Department of Consumer Affairs, to regulate the practice of veterinary medicine in California. The CVMA believes that an independent board is essential to ensure the competency of licensees who perform complex medical procedures and provide critical care to animals. The Board's Executive Officer, Legal Counsel, and Board representatives are to be commended for their efforts to elevate consumer protection and oversee the veterinary medical profession."

ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION: The Animal Physical Therapy Coalition is opposed unless amended and notes, "AB 1502, as written, represents a significant fiscal and legal risk to the state while failing to address longstanding issues of accountability and transparency within the VMB. A two-year extension with targeted reforms and fair, capped enforcement authority would better serve Californians, protect taxpayer funds, and align the VMB with its true mission: protecting the public and ensuring access to safe, effective animal healthcare."

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 76-0, 6/2/25

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NO VOTE RECORDED: Sanchez, Schiavo, Ta

Prepared by: Elissa Silva / B., P. & E.D. / 916-651-4104
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