

HOUSE No. 406

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Daniel J. Hunt

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act regulating the practice and licensure of veterinary technicians.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Daniel J. Hunt</i>	<i>13th Suffolk</i>	<i>2/17/2021</i>
<i>William J. Driscoll, Jr.</i>	<i>7th Norfolk</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>William C. Galvin</i>	<i>6th Norfolk</i>	<i>3/18/2021</i>
<i>Adam J. Scanlon</i>	<i>14th Bristol</i>	<i>4/6/2021</i>
<i>Andres X. Vargas</i>	<i>3rd Essex</i>	<i>4/6/2021</i>
<i>Richard M. Haggerty</i>	<i>30th Middlesex</i>	<i>4/6/2021</i>
<i>Carmine Lawrence Gentile</i>	<i>13th Middlesex</i>	<i>4/6/2021</i>

HOUSE No. 406

By Mr. Hunt of Boston, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 406) of Daniel J. Hunt and others relative to regulating the practice and licensure of veterinary technicians. Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court
(2021-2022)**

An Act regulating the practice and licensure of veterinary technicians.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. Findings. The general court finds that:
- 2 (1) veterinary technicians are essential members of veterinary teams; and
- 3 (2) veterinary technicians protect consumers, the public health, and health and safety in
- 4 veterinary offices and in other areas of animal medical care and welfare; and
- 5 (3) an increase in pet ownership has increased the need and demand for veterinary care
- 6 while advances in veterinary medicine have elevated the level of care and existing best
- 7 practices;
- 8 and
- 9 (4) it is in the best interest of the commonwealth to promote the advancement of

10 veterinary technicians, their management and professionalism, while making use of
11 existing
12 accredited private and public training already available in the commonwealth.

13 SECTION 2. Chapter 13 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after
14 section 26 the

15 following section:-

16 Section 26A. Subsidiary Board for Veterinary Technology.

17 Section 1. As used in sections one to six, inclusive, the following words shall have the
18 following meanings:-

19 “Subsidiary board”, the subsidiary board for veterinary technology.

20 2

21 “Veterinary technology”, the performance of services within the field of veterinary
22 medicine by a person who, for compensation or personal profit, is employed by or under

23 the

24 supervision of a licensed veterinarian to perform such duties as are required in carrying

25 out

26 medical orders as prescribed by a licensed veterinarian requiring an understanding of

27 veterinary

28 science,

29 “Veterinary technician”, a graduate of an American Veterinary Medical
30 Association accredited program in veterinary technology or veterinary nursing who has achieved
31 a passing
32 score on an approved licensing exam as determined by the board of registration in
33 veterinary
34 medicine and has successfully applied for a license in the commonwealth.

35 “Veterinary assistant”, an individual working as part of a veterinary healthcare team who
36 is not licensed as a veterinary technician.

37 Section 2. There shall be a subsidiary board for veterinary technology within and subject
38 to the control of the board of registration in veterinary medicine.

39 (a) The subsidiary board shall be comprised of five members appointed by the governor.

40 One member shall be a veterinarian member of the board of registration in veterinary
41 medicine.

42 Three members shall be veterinary technicians selected from a list of nominees provided
43 to the

44 governor by the Massachusetts Veterinary Technician Association. One member shall be
45 appointed as the public member of the subsidiary board.

46 (b) The subsidiary board is subject to the board of registration in veterinary medicine, and

47 the subsidiary board's recommendations and decisions are subject to approval by the full
48 board
49 of registration in veterinary medicine.

50 (c) Each member of the subsidiary board shall be a legal resident of the commonwealth.
51 3

52 (d) Each veterinary technician member of the subsidiary board shall be licensed to
53 practice veterinary technology in the commonwealth.

54 (e) Until the effective date of regulations establishing the criteria for licensed veterinary
55 technicians, the veterinary technicians appointed to the subsidiary board shall be
56 Massachusetts
57 Veterinary Technician Association Certified Veterinary Technicians.

58 (f) Member of the subsidiary board shall be appointed for two-year terms, except that the
59 initial veterinarian appointee and one of the initial veterinary technician appointees shall
60 be
61 appointed for three-year terms.

62 (g) During the initial two years, rules and procedures for veterinary technician licensure
63 will be established by the subsidiary board subject to approval by the board of
64 registration of

65 veterinary medicine. After those rules are established, each veterinary technician member
66 shall
67 be a Massachusetts licensed veterinary technician.

68 (h) The subsidiary board shall draft and propose criteria and regulations by which
69 veterinary technicians shall be licensed and registered in the commonwealth, subject to
70 approval
71 by the board of registration in veterinary medicine.

72 (i) The subsidiary board shall delineate the duties which supervising, licensed
73 veterinarians may assign to licensed veterinary technicians, and to non-licensed
74 veterinary
75 assistants, consistent with good veterinary medical practice in the best interests of
76 consumers.

77 (j) The subsidiary board shall, subject to the approval of the board of registration of
78 veterinary medicine, change or alter the duties and rights granted to licensed veterinary
79 technicians and veterinary assistants as deemed necessary or appropriate by the
80 subsidiary board
81 to reflect changes in the practice of veterinary technology over time.

82 4

83 (k) The subsidiary board shall also provide education regarding differences in the duties

84 and actions allowed for by licensed veterinary technicians and unlicensed veterinary
85 assistants.

86 Section 3. (a) The subsidiary board shall draft regulations to govern the practice of
87 veterinary technicians and veterinary assistants., including criteria for licensure of
88 veterinary
89 technicians and for the maintenance, suspension, or revocation of licenses.

90 (b) The regulations established by the subsidiary board shall not apply to veterinary
91 technicians employed by a research institution as defined in section 136A of chapter 140.

92 (c) Veterinary students and veterinary technician students working under the supervision
93 of a licensed veterinarian or a licensed veterinary technician may engage in activities
94 necessary
95 to learn and practice supervised techniques on patients. The subsidiary board may
96 recommend
97 additional categories of individuals who may engage in activities necessary to learn and
98 practice
99 supervised techniques on patients.

100 Section 4. The rules created by the subsidiary board and approved by the board of
101 registration in veterinary medicine shall not apply to individual veterinary technicians or
102 veterinary assistants who are working

103 (a) a research institution as defined in Section 136A of Chapter 140., and
104 (b) special cases, including veterinary technicians or veterinary assistants working with
105 zoos and
106 aquaria, diagnostic facilities, licensed wildlife rehabilitation facilities and other such
107 special
108 cases as the subsidiary board shall identify.

109 Section 5. (a) The subsidiary board shall propose the criteria by which a veterinary
110 technician is deemed a licensed veterinary technician or a non-licensed assistant. Any
111 rules that
112 allow individuals currently working as non-credentialed technicians to become licensed
113 without
114 a formal degree in veterinary technology shall have an end date to be determined by the
115 5
116 subsidiary board subject to approval by the board of registration in veterinary medicine.

117 Any
118 such rule will include consideration of experience, education, and examination.

119 (b) The subsidiary board shall propose continuing education requirements for licensed
120 veterinary technicians.

121 (c) The subsidiary board may recommend the suspension or revocation of a veterinary

122 technician's license for failure to abide by the general laws or regulations promulgated by
123 the
124 board of registration in veterinary medicine.

125 Section 6. Only those individuals who are licensed may utilize the title of veterinary
126 technician. Regardless of job description and duties, anyone who does not hold a valid
127 license to
128 practice veterinary technology in the commonwealth, yet who functions in a similar
129 capacity of
130 supporting the overall care of veterinary patients, shall be referred to as a veterinary
131 assistant.

132 Any individual or veterinary practice who is found to be inappropriately using the title
133 veterinary
134 technician may be subject to fines as established by the board of registration in veterinary
135 medicine.