

HOUSE No. 4912

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, July 25, 2024.

The committee on Ways and Means, to whom was referred the Bill regulating the practice and licensure of veterinary technicians (House, No. 332), reports recommending that the same ought to pass with an amendment substituting therefor the accompanying bill (House, No. 4912).

For the committee,

AARON MICHLEWITZ.

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**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court
(2023-2024)**

An Act regulating the practice and licensure of veterinary technicians.

Whereas, The deferred operation of this act would tend to defeat its purpose, which is to forthwith regulate the practice and licensure of veterinary technicians, therefore it is hereby declared to be an emergency law, necessary for the immediate preservation of the public convenience.

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. Chapter 13 of the General Laws is hereby amended by striking out section
2 26 and inserting in place thereof the following section:-

3 Section 26. (a) There shall be a board of registration in veterinary medicine, in sections
4 27 and 28 called the board, consisting of 4 veterinarians, 3 licensed veterinary technicians, as
5 defined in section 54A of chapter 112, selected from a list of nominees provided by the
6 Massachusetts Veterinary Technician Association, and 2 representatives of the public, subject to
7 section 9B. Each member shall be appointed by the governor. Each member of the board shall be
8 a legal resident of the commonwealth. Each veterinarian member of the board shall be licensed
9 to practice veterinary medicine in the commonwealth, a graduate of a school or college teaching
10 veterinary medicine and approved by the approving authority and shall have had at least 5 years'
11 experience in the active practice of veterinary medicine, surgery and dentistry prior to their

12 appointment. Each licensed veterinary technician member shall be licensed in accordance with
13 with section 56F of chapter 112. No member shall be a member of any faculty in any institution
14 having the power to confer degrees in veterinary medicine. One member thereof shall annually
15 before December first be appointed by the governor, for 5 years from January first following. No
16 member appointed to a full 5-year term shall be reappointed to succeed themselves.

17 SECTION 2. Section 54A of chapter 112 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022
18 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting, after the definition of “Board”, the following
19 definition:-

20 “Licensed veterinary technician”, a graduate of an American Veterinary Medical
21 Association accredited program in veterinary technology or veterinary nursing who has achieved
22 a passing score on an approved licensing exam as determined by the board and is licensed in the
23 commonwealth.

24 SECTION 3. Said section 54A of said chapter 112, as so appearing, is hereby further
25 amended by inserting, after the definition of “Veterinarian”, the following definition:-

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

28 SECTION 4. Said section 54A of said chapter 112, as so appearing, is hereby further
29 amended by adding the following definition:-

30 “Veterinary technology”, the performance of services within the field of veterinary
31 medicine by a licensed veterinary technician who is employed by or under the supervision of a

32 licensed veterinarian to perform such duties as are required in carrying out medical orders as
33 prescribed by a licensed veterinarian.

34 SECTION 5. Said chapter 112 is hereby further amended by inserting after section 56E
35 the following section:-

36 Section 56F. (a)(1) An individual shall be licensed as a veterinary technician, by the
37 board, to practice veterinary technology. Only those individuals who are licensed shall utilize the
38 title of veterinary technician. No person shall hold themselves out as a licensed veterinary
39 technician or as being able to practice veterinary technology in the commonwealth unless
40 licensed in accordance with this section; provided, that any individual or veterinary practice in
41 violation of this subsection may be subject to fines as established by the board.

42 (2) Veterinary technician students, or other individuals deemed appropriate by the board,
43 working under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian or a licensed veterinary technician may
44 engage in activities necessary to learn and practice supervised techniques on patients.

45 (b)(1) The board shall promulgate rules and regulations by which veterinary technicians
46 shall be licensed and registered in the commonwealth. The board may recommend the
47 suspension or revocation of a veterinary technician's license for failure to abide by the laws of
48 the commonwealth or regulations promulgated by the board.

49 (2) The regulations shall: (i) delineate the duties which supervising, licensed veterinarians
50 may assign to licensed veterinary technicians and to non-licensed veterinary assistants; (ii)
51 address the maintenance, suspension and revocation of licenses; (iii) provide for continuing
52 education requirements for licensed veterinary technicians; (iv) determine the criteria by which
53 an individual shall be deemed a licensed veterinary technician or a veterinary assistant; and (v)

54 establish guidance for students working under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian or
55 licensed veterinarian technician pursuant to paragraph (2) of subsection (a).

56 (c) This section shall not apply to: (i) a research institution as defined in section 136A of
57 chapter 140; or (ii) special cases, including zoos and aquaria, diagnostic facilities, licensed
58 wildlife rehabilitation facilities and any other such special cases as the subsidiary board shall
59 identify.

60 SECTION 6. Notwithstanding section 26 of chapter 13 of the General Laws, or any other
61 general or special law to the contrary, the initial appointments of veterinary technicians to the
62 board of registration in veterinary medicine shall be Massachusetts Veterinary Technician
63 Association certified veterinary technicians and said initial veterinary technician appointees shall
64 be appointed for 3-year terms.

65 SECTION 7. The board of registration in veterinary medicine shall promulgate
66 regulations pursuant to section 56F of chapter 112 of the General Laws, inserted by section 5, not
67 later than 180 days after the effective date of this act.

68 SECTION 8. Not later than 180 days after the effective date of this act, the board of
69 registration in veterinary medicine shall provide information to veterinarians, veterinary
70 practices and animal hospitals regarding the differences in the duties and actions allowed for by
71 licensed veterinary technicians and veterinary assistants as promulgated under regulations
72 pursuant to section 56F of chapter 112 of the General Laws, inserted by section 5.

73 SECTION 9. The board of registration in veterinary medicine shall issue temporary
74 licenses for individuals practicing veterinary technology and shall promulgate regulations for the

75 temporary licensure of individuals practicing veterinary technology within 180 days of the
76 effective date of this act.

77 SECTION 10. All individuals practicing veterinary medicine technology required to be
78 licensed pursuant to section 56F of chapter 112 of the General Laws, inserted by section 5, shall
79 be licensed not later than July 1, 2030.