
SENATE BILL 5208

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2019 Regular Session

By Senators Palumbo, Wilson, L., Mullet, Wilson, C., Carlyle, Cleveland, Kuderer, Zeiger, and Lias

1 AN ACT Relating to emergency medical services for animals;
2 amending RCW 18.92.060; adding a new section to chapter 18.73 RCW;
3 and creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that emergency
6 medical service providers often give immediate, lifesaving medical
7 treatment to animals when responding to a fire or other emergency
8 that threatens human life. Such actions, including providing oxygen,
9 controlling hemorrhages, immobilizing fractures, and applying
10 bandaging, can make the difference between life and death for an
11 animal prior to, or during its transportation to a veterinarian for
12 medical treatment.

13 (2) It is the intent of the legislature to provide legal
14 authority and liability protection for emergency medical service
15 providers that choose to perform limited veterinary medical
16 procedures on animals.

17 (3) It is not the intent of the legislature to require emergency
18 medical service providers to provide medical treatment to animals.
19 Whether or not to provide medical treatment to animals, and what
20 treatment to provide, if any, must be decided by each emergency
21 medical service provider as it determines what is reasonable, based

1 on factors that include, but are not limited to, the availability of
2 trained personnel, equipment, and supplies, and any risks of human
3 injury or to human life that may result from providing medical
4 treatment of animals.

5 **Sec. 2.** RCW 18.92.060 and 2000 c 93 s 11 are each amended to
6 read as follows:

7 Nothing in this chapter applies to:

8 (1) Commissioned veterinarians in the United States military
9 services or veterinarians employed by Washington state and federal
10 agencies while performing official duties;

11 (2) A person practicing veterinary medicine upon his or her own
12 animal;

13 (3) A person advising with respect to or performing the
14 castrating and dehorning of cattle, castrating and docking of sheep,
15 castrating of swine, caponizing of poultry, or artificial
16 insemination of animals;

17 (4) (a) A person who is a regularly enrolled student in a
18 veterinary school or training course approved under RCW 18.92.015 and
19 performing duties or actions assigned by his or her instructors or
20 working under the direct supervision of a licensed veterinarian
21 during a school vacation period or (b) a person performing assigned
22 duties under the supervision of a veterinarian within the established
23 framework of an internship program recognized by the board;

24 (5) A veterinarian regularly licensed in another state consulting
25 with a licensed veterinarian in this state;

26 (6) A veterinary technician or veterinary medication clerk acting
27 under the supervision and control of a licensed veterinarian. The
28 practice of a veterinary technician or veterinary medication clerk is
29 limited to the performance of services which are authorized by the
30 board;

31 (7) An owner being assisted in practice by his or her employees
32 when employed in the conduct of the owner's business;

33 (8) An owner being assisted in practice by some other person
34 gratuitously;

35 (9) The implanting in their own animals of any electronic device
36 for identifying animals by established humane societies and animal
37 control organizations that provide appropriate training, as
38 determined by the veterinary board of governors, and/or direct or
39 indirect supervision by a licensed veterinarian;

1 (10) The implanting of any electronic device by a public fish and
2 wildlife agency for the identification of fish or wildlife;

3 (11)(a) An emergency medical responder, emergency medical
4 technician, advanced emergency medical technician, or paramedic
5 authorized to provide emergency medical services under chapter 18.73
6 RCW who provides emergency medical services to an animal; or

7 (b) A professional or volunteer emergency responder serving a
8 fire protection district, regional fire protection service authority,
9 municipal fire department, regional emergency medical service system,
10 or law enforcement agency who provides emergency medical services to
11 an animal.

12 NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. A new section is added to chapter 18.73
13 RCW to read as follows:

14 (1) In an emergency medical or fire response, or response to aid
15 law enforcement, an emergency medical service provider may provide
16 the following emergency medical services to an animal prior to or
17 during transfer for further treatment by a veterinarian licensed to
18 practice under chapter 18.92 RCW if the emergency medical service
19 provider is authorized by law or rules to provide the corresponding
20 service to a human patient:

- 21 (a) Opening and manually maintaining an airway;
- 22 (b) Giving mouth to snout or mouth to barrier ventilation;
- 23 (c) Administering oxygen;
- 24 (d) Performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation;
- 25 (e) Managing ventilation by mask;
- 26 (f) Controlling hemorrhage with direct pressure;
- 27 (g) Immobilizing a fracture; or
- 28 (h) Bandaging.

29 (2) In addition to any other immunity from civil liability
30 granted by law, an emergency medical service provider, emergency
31 medical services medical program director, or emergency medical
32 service organization is not liable for civil damages, criminal
33 prosecution, or professional disciplinary action resulting from any
34 act or omission in the rescue, stabilization, transport, or rendering
35 of emergency medical care services to an animal in accordance with
36 this section other than acts or omissions constituting gross
37 negligence or willful or wanton misconduct.

38 (3)(a) Notwithstanding any conflicting provision of chapter 18.92
39 RCW or rules adopted by the veterinary board of governors, a

1 veterinarian may establish and provide a written protocol to, or
2 consult with, an emergency medical service provider, emergency
3 medical services medical program director, or emergency medical
4 service organization for the purpose of enabling the provision of
5 emergency medical services to an animal under this section.

6 (b) A veterinarian who acts in good faith in accordance with (a)
7 of this subsection is not liable for civil damages, criminal
8 prosecution, or professional disciplinary action resulting from any
9 act or omission of an emergency medical service provider defined in
10 subsection (1) of this section in performing rescue, stabilization,
11 transport, or emergency medical services to an animal under this
12 section.

13 (4) For purposes of this section, "emergency medical service
14 provider" means an emergency medical responder, emergency medical
15 technician, advanced emergency medical technician, paramedic, or
16 other professional or volunteer emergency responder serving a fire
17 protection district, regional fire protection service authority,
18 municipal fire department, regional emergency medical service system,
19 or law enforcement agency.

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