

# Proposition \_\_\_\_: Establishing Veterinary Professional Associates

1 Placed on the ballot by citizen initiative • Passes with 55 percent of the vote

## 2 **Proposition \_\_ proposes amending the Colorado statutes to:**

- 3 • create the state-regulated profession of veterinary professional associate in the  
4 field of veterinary care; and
- 5 • outline the minimum education and qualifications required to become a  
6 veterinary professional associate.

## 7 **What Your Vote Means**

### 8 **YES**

9 A “yes” vote on Proposition \_\_ establishes  
10 the new regulated profession of veterinary  
11 professional associate as a provider of  
12 veterinary care.

### 13 **NO**

14 A “no” vote on Proposition \_\_ allows only  
15 veterinarians, veterinary technicians, and  
16 veterinary technician specialists to be  
17 regulated providers of veterinary care in  
18 Colorado.

## 19 **Summary and Analysis of Proposition \_\_**

### 20 **Who can provide veterinary care in Colorado?**

21 Under current law, a licensed veterinarian, a registered veterinary technician (vet tech), a  
22 registered veterinary technician specialist (vet tech specialist), and other qualified personnel  
23 may provide veterinary care in Colorado. Current law establishes the scope of work for  
24 veterinarians and specifies some of the tasks that a veterinarian can delegate to vet techs,  
25 vet tech specialists or other qualified individuals. The Colorado State Board of Veterinary  
26 Medicine (state board) regulates these three licensed and registered professions, and creates  
27 rules for the practice and supervision of veterinary care, professional and academic  
28 qualifications, continuing education, and disciplinary measures.

### 29 **What is a veterinary professional associate?**

30 Proposition \_\_ creates and adds the new regulated profession of veterinary professional  
31 associate in Colorado’s field of veterinary care. At a minimum, a qualified veterinary  
32 professional associate must receive a master’s degree in veterinary clinical care. There are  
33 currently no master’s degree programs for this profession offered in Colorado, and the state  
34 board will determine the educational requirements for veterinary professional associates.

35 The state board may also approve a national organization to provide credentials and  
36 establish qualifying examinations for veterinary professional associates in the state. Similar  
37 to a vet tech or vet tech specialist, this new professional may perform tasks that are within

1 the individual’s advanced education and training while under the supervision of a  
 2 veterinarian.

3 Table 1 describes veterinary professions in Colorado.

4 **Table 1**  
 5 **Veterinary Professions in Colorado Under Current Law and Proposition \_\_**

	<b>Veterinary Technician (current law)</b>	<b>Veterinary Technician Specialist (current law)</b>	<b>Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (current law)</b>	<b>Veterinary Professional Associate (new)</b>
Degree Requirements	Either an associate’s or bachelor’s degree from an accredited program.	Either an associate’s or bachelor’s degree from an accredited program, and three to five years of clinical experience and training.	Advanced doctorate degree and clinical experience from an accredited program.	Master’s degree in veterinary clinical care, or an equivalent degree determined by the state board. Additional qualifications and training may be determined in future rules or regulations by the state board.
Supervision Requirements	Must have direct or indirect supervision by a licensed veterinarian. May perform certain tasks under direct supervision of a licensed veterinarian, including dental procedures, suturing, and treating minor medical conditions.	Must have direct or indirect supervision by a licensed veterinarian. May perform certain tasks under direct supervision of a licensed veterinarian, including dental procedures, suturing, and treating minor medical conditions.	None.	Must be supervised by a licensed veterinarian. The level of direct or indirect supervision may be determined in future rules or regulations by the state board.

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**Table 1 (cont.)  
Veterinary Professions in Colorado Under Current Law and Proposition \_\_**

	<b>Veterinary Technician (current law)</b>	<b>Veterinary Technician Specialist (current law)</b>	<b>Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (current law)</b>	<b>Veterinary Professional Associate (new)</b>
Scope of Practice	Provides support to licensed veterinarians, including performing dental procedures, advanced nursing care, animal health education, and treating minor medical conditions.	Provides specialized support including emergency medicine, diagnostic imaging, and surgical assistance.	Performs all levels of care including diagnosis, initiating care, prescribing medications, and conducting surgery. Responsible for the oversight of all veterinary care.	May perform tasks that are within the individual’s advanced education and training. Full scope of practice may be determined in future rules or regulations by the state board.

For information on those issue committees that support or oppose the measures on the ballot at the November 5, 2024, election, go to the Colorado Secretary of State’s elections center web site hyperlink for ballot and initiative information:

<https://coloradosos.gov/pubs/elections/Initiatives/InitiativesHome.html>

**3 Arguments For Proposition \_\_**

- 4 1) Many Coloradans struggle to get veterinary care for their animals, especially in rural and  
5 agricultural communities. Introducing new providers of veterinary care may help the  
6 industry meet demand and expand access. Veterinary professional associates could  
7 provide needed relief to overworked veterinarians, allowing them to delegate additional  
8 tasks and take better care of animals in Colorado.

**9 Arguments Against Proposition \_\_**

- 10 1) Proposition \_\_ is unnecessary and will not help Colorado provide better veterinary care.  
11 The measure’s requirements for education and training are vague and do not  
12 differentiate veterinary professional associates from existing veterinary care  
13 professionals. Creating a new and untested profession does not guarantee an increase in  
14 access to quality veterinary care.

1 **Fiscal Impact of Proposition** \_\_

2 **State revenue and spending.** Workload for the state board will increase to adopt rules, but  
3 spending for this effort is expected to be minimal. Once a population of veterinary  
4 professional associates exists, state spending will increase for oversight and enforcement of  
5 the new profession, and state revenue will increase in equal amounts from registration fees  
6 charged to associates.