

Proposition ____: Establishing Veterinary Professional Associates

Placed on the ballot by citizen initiative • Passes with a majority vote

1 **Proposition __ proposes amending the Colorado statutes to:**

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

6 **What Your Vote Means**

7 **YES**

8 A “yes” vote on Proposition __ establishes
9 the new regulated profession of veterinary
10 professional associate as a provider of
11 veterinary care, alongside veterinarians,
12 veterinary technicians, and veterinary
13 technician specialists.

14 **NO**

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

20 **Summary and Analysis of Proposition __**

21 **Who can provide veterinary care in Colorado?**

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

30 **What is a veterinary professional associate?**

31 Proposition __ creates and adds the new regulated profession of veterinary professional
32 associate in Colorado’s field of veterinary care. At a minimum, a qualified veterinary
33 professional associate must receive a master’s degree in veterinary clinical care, or an
34 equivalent degree determined by the state board. The state board may also adopt additional
35 credentials or testing requirements to become a veterinary professional associate in the
36 state. Similar to a vet tech or vet tech specialist, this new professional may perform tasks that

1 are within their advanced education and training, while under the supervision of a
 2 veterinarian. The state board may determine the specific tasks and level of supervision
 3 required.
 4 Table 1 describes the educational requirements and scope of practice limitations for current
 5 and proposed veterinary professions in Colorado.

6 **Table 1**
 7 **Veterinary Professions in Colorado Under Current Law and Proposition __**

	Veterinary Technician (current law)	Veterinary Technician Specialist (current law)	Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (current law)	Veterinary Professional Associate (under Proposition __)
Degree Requirements	Either an associate’s or bachelor’s degree in veterinary technology.	Either an associate’s or bachelor’s degree in veterinary technology, and three to five years of clinical experience and training.	Advanced doctorate degree and clinical experience.	Master’s degree in veterinary clinical care. Additional qualifications and training may be determined by the state board.
Scope of Practice	Provides support to licensed veterinarians, including performing dental procedures, advanced nursing care, animal health education, and treating minor medical conditions.	Performs the same tasks as a veterinary technician, as well as specialized support including emergency medicine and surgical assistance.	Performs all levels of care including diagnosis, prognosis, prescribing medications, and conducting surgery. Responsible for the supervision of all veterinary care.	May perform tasks that are within the individual’s advanced education and training. Full scope of practice may be determined by the state board.

8

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>

1 **Argument For Proposition** __

2 1) Many Coloradans struggle to get veterinary care for their animals, especially in rural and
3 agricultural communities. Allowing new veterinary providers to practice under state law
4 may create more training and career opportunities for veterinary professionals, leading
5 to expanded access. Veterinary professional associates could provide needed relief to
6 overworked veterinarians, allowing them to delegate additional tasks and take better
7 care of animals in Colorado.

8 **Argument Against Proposition** __

9 1) The measure's education and training requirements are vague and do not differentiate
10 veterinary professional associates from existing veterinary care professionals. There are
11 currently no academic programs for this profession in Colorado, so it is unclear when
12 anyone would be eligible to work as a veterinary professional associate. Creating a new
13 and untested profession could increase risk for animals.

14 **Fiscal Impact of Proposition** __

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

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5 to expanded access. Veterinary professional associates could provide needed relief to
6 overworked veterinarians, allowing them to delegate additional tasks and take better
7 care of animals in Colorado.

8 **Argument Against Proposition __**

9 1) Proposition __ is unnecessary and will not help Colorado provide better veterinary care.
10 The measure's requirements for education and training are vague and do not
11 differentiate veterinary professional associates from existing veterinary care
12 professionals. In addition, there are currently no training programs for this profession in
13 Colorado, so it is unclear when anyone would be eligible to work as a veterinary
14 professional associate. Creating a new and untested profession does not guarantee an
15 increase in access to quality veterinary care.

16 **Fiscal Impact of Proposition __**

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

Last Draft Comments from Interested Parties

Initiative 145 Establishing Veterinary Professional Associates

Kalinda Gupta, representing themselves:

Should the state board not create these rules and regs by 2027, these professionals, as written by this initiative, will be allowed to practice the full extent of veterinary medicine without a nationally accredited or standardized curriculum or exam, half the educational depth in clinical medicine, and little to no hands-on experience. This creates a corporate interest to not hire veterinarians, hire VPAs, and have them practice under a single vet's license, increasing veterinarian liability and mental health strain - this will likely cause a further exodus of the veterinary community and CREATE access to care issues in urban areas where they may not exist currently, and worsen it where it already does. This initiative also does not address rural area shortages as these professionals still have to practice under the supervision of a veterinarian - with no veterinarian in the area, there still remains no expansion of care opportunities for a VPA to fill the need.

Erin Henninger, representing CACVT:

Here are CACVT's additional recommendations for Initiative 145's section in the Blue Book.

Page 2, Table 1:

Degree requirements under veterinary technician and veterinary technician specialist: the AVMA-accredited associate's or bachelor's degree is in veterinary technology, not veterinary care.

Page 2, Table 1:

Veterinary Technician Specialist Scope of Practice

It's important for the public to understand that veterinary technicians are legally allowed to perform all veterinary tasks excepts the ones listed under the Scope of Practice for Doctors of Veterinary Medicine. Without explicitly stating this fact, the public is left to assume there are some "grey area" tasks that the Veterinary Professional Associate would be allowed to perform that a veterinary technician specialist could not.

With additional years of clinical experience, training, and competency exams, higher level tasks are more likely delegated to a Veterinary Technician Specialist. To convey this message and further highlight the different roles of RVTs and VTs, I would suggest editing the language under the VTS scope of practice to reflect the legally allowed tasks for veterinary technicians, such as "Performs any task except those limited to a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, including

Last Draft Comments from Interested Parties

Erin Henninger, representing CACVT (Cont.):

specialized support in emergency medicine, surgical assistance, clinical practice, and equine medicine”.

I suggest using those areas of specialized support because Colorado already has multiple Veterinary Technician Specialists certified in those areas, whereas we do not have any yet certified in diagnostic imaging.

Thank you again for the opportunity to participate in this process and your hard work!

Erin Louet, representing PAC/WEST:

As a member of the campaign team, along with Mark Truax, Tricia Oakes, and Erena Connon, I am reaching out to provide our requested revisions to Initiative 145 as outlined in the blue book draft 3.

Attached, you will find a line-by-line breakdown of the proposed revisions, each accompanied by a footnote explaining the rationale for the update.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, we sincerely appreciate it.

Ms. Louet also submitted Attachment A.

Representative Karen McCormick, representing themselves:

Here are my additional comments for Blue Book consideration on Initiative 145. Thanks for working on this!

Page 2, Table 1:

I will again suggest that the order of the list of folks in the veterinary medical table be listed from left to right in the chart in order of highest level of training and competency first and then the "unknown" listed on the far right as below:

DVM ---- VTS-----RVT -----then the last column should be VPA.

The order is important as it suggests consciously or subconsciously to the reader that there is a sort of hierarchy to the order and it is not logical the way it is presently listed. Having the VPA listed right after DVM sends a subliminal signal that they are close to each other in training and competency, which won't be the case with all that is currently known about the proposed Master's program and the state of the program's non-accredited and non-credentialed status.

Last Draft Comments from Interested Parties

Representative Karen McCormick, representing themselves (Cont.):

Since the regulated professions are known and it is clear who they are, what their training is and what they do, then listing them in order of qualifications and training with the highest first makes the most sense. Since the VPA is an unknown entity as far as training and competency, ie; there is no standard curriculum, no state or national standard, then listing it in the 4th column with the very general descriptions, *after* the first three professions, will make it clearer to voters that the new proposed profession is not fully defined.

Page 3:

Arguments For -

If the "for arguments" are going to list the "potential benefit" of this position that "could allow them to take better care of animals in Colorado" as written here:

Veterinary professional associates could provide needed relief to overworked veterinarians, allowing them to delegate additional tasks and take better care of animals in Colorado.

then it is only fair that you also list a real "potential harm" of this position in that...(see italics add on below)

Arguments Against -

Creating a new and untested profession does not guarantee an increase in access to quality veterinary care... *"and could create real risks of potential harm to animal health and welfare as well as risks to public health in having under-trained individuals not sufficiently able to recognize diseases especially those transmissible to humans"*

Thanks again for your work and I hope you will take in these suggestions on the final draft.

Ali Mickelson, representing Dumb Friends League:

Thank you for sending this. A few additional comments from us:

1. Page 1, Line 36: "Similar to a vet tech or vet tech specialist..." - 1. this implies that these three professional designations are the same, but there are quite a few differences in what the law will permit a Vet PA to do that a vet tech and VTS cannot. What if instead the sentence simply began with "This new profession.."
2. In the arguments for and against – in the arguments for, it says things like "may create more training opportunities" and "could provide needed relief" but in the opposition, there is much more definitive language like "is unnecessary" and "will not help..." It is unfair to make one potential outcome definitive and one a possibility when neither of the outcomes are guaranteed. The language should be consistent and the argument for should either say "will create more training opportunities" and "will provide needed relief" or the opposition should say "may be unnecessary" and "may not help Colorado..."

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Requested Revisions

Initiative 145 Draft 3: Establishing Veterinary Professional Associates

August 19, 2024

Page # and Line #	Original Text	Revised Text/Issue Stated
Page 1, line 32-34	At a minimum, a qualified veterinary professional associate must receive a master's degree in veterinary clinical care, or an equivalent degree determined by the state board.	At a minimum, a qualified veterinary professional associate must receive a master's degree in veterinary clinical care, or an equivalent degree determined by the state board. There are currently no master's degree programs for this profession offered in Colorado.¹
Page 2, line 3	The state board may determine the specific tasks and the level of supervision required.	The state board may determine the specific tasks and the level of supervision required. Irrespective of any anticipated changes at the state level, federal law prevents a veterinary professional associate from being able to prescribe medications.²
Page 3, Lines 14-15	Creating a new and untested profession does not guarantee an increase in access to quality veterinary care.	Creating a new and untested profession does not guarantee an increase in access to quality veterinary care and could create risk for animals³

¹ This wording was removed from Draft 2 to Draft 3, and we would like to suggest that it is included in the text in this section as well. An adequate training program is essential for the VPA, and the lack of an approved program is essential information to have while considering this measure. We understand that this information is noted in the "Argument Against the Proposition" section in Draft 3, however we suggest it is also included in the "What is a Veterinary Professional Associate" section as well since it is a critical technical detail.

² We believe it is critical to know that federal law prohibits a VPA from prescribing medication. This is a significant functional gap that is essential to communicate.

³ It is central to our position in our campaign that this measure could create risk for animals. This is our core concern, and we would like to request that to be represented.

Initiative 145
Establishing Veterinary Professional Associates
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Initiative 145
Establishing Veterinary Professional Associates
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Interested Party	Organization Name	Email Address
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Initiative 145
Establish Qualifications and Registration for Veterinary Professional Associate

Ballot Title:

Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes creating a new veterinary professional associate profession, and, in connection therewith, establishing qualifications including a master's degree in veterinary clinical care or the equivalent as determined by the state board of veterinary medicine to be a veterinary professional associate; requiring registration with the state board; allowing a registered veterinary professional associate to practice veterinary medicine under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian; and making it a misdemeanor to practice as a veterinary professional associate without an active registration?

Text of Measure:

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **amend** 12-315-102 as follows:

12-315-102. **Legislative declaration.** (1) This article 315 is enacted as an exercise of the police powers of the state to promote the public health, safety, and welfare by safeguarding the people of this state against incompetent, dishonest, or unprincipled practitioners of veterinary medicine. It is hereby declared that the practice of veterinary medicine is a privilege conferred upon persons possessed of the personal and professional qualifications specified in this article 315.

(2) THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF COLORADO DECLARE THAT:

(a) THERE IS A CRITICAL VETERINARY WORKFORCE SHORTAGE IMPACTING THE ANIMALS OF COLORADO;

(b) THE VETERINARY WORKFORCE SHORTAGE IS CAUSING AN ACCESS-TO-VETERINARY-CARE CRISIS IN COLORADO;

(c) THE ACCESS-TO-VETERINARY-CARE CRISIS IS THREATENING THE WELFARE OF COMPANION ANIMALS, THE LIVELIHOOD OF MEMBERS OF COLORADO'S ANIMAL AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY, AND THE SAFETY OF OUR FOOD SUPPLY;

(d) THE VETERINARY WORKFORCE SHORTAGE AND ACCESS-TO-VETERINARY-CARE CRISIS CANNOT BE SOLVED WITHOUT SEEKING NEW WAYS TO BRING ADDITIONAL PEOPLE INTO THE VETERINARY WORKFORCE; AND

(e) EXPERTS IN VETERINARY MEDICINE HAVE IDENTIFIED A MID-LEVEL VETERINARY PRACTITIONER CAREER PATHWAY AS ONE SOLUTION TO THE VETERINARY WORKFORCE SHORTAGE AND ACCESS-TO-VETERINARY-CARE CRISIS.

SECTION 2. In Colorado Revised Statutes 12-315-104, **amend** (21.5) and **add** (21.7) as follows:

12-315-104. Definitions. As used in this article 315, unless the context otherwise requires:

(21.5) "Veterinary professional" means a veterinarian licensed pursuant to this part 1, A VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE REGISTERED PURSUANT PART 2 OF THIS ARTICLE 315, and a veterinary technician registered pursuant to part 2 of this article 315.

(21.7) "VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE" MEANS AN INDIVIDUAL WHO HOLDS A MASTER'S DEGREE IN VETERINARY CLINICAL CARE, OR THE EQUIVALENT, AND WHO IS SUBJECT TO THE REQUIREMENTS IN SECTION 12-315-203.7.

SECTION 3. In Colorado Revised Statutes 12-315-105, **add** (1)(r) as follows:

33 **12-315-105. License requirements and exceptions - definitions - rules.** (1) A person shall not practice
34 veterinary medicine in this state if the person is not a licensed veterinarian. A person shall not practice artificial
35 insemination or ova transplantation of cattle or other animal species in this state except in accordance with
36 section 12-315-106 (5)(c). This article 315 does not prohibit:

37 (r) A VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE FROM PRACTICING VETERINARY MEDICINE THAT IS:

38 (I) WITHIN THE VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE'S ADVANCED EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE; AND

39 (II) PERFORMED WHILE UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF A LICENSED VETERINARIAN WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL
40 ASSOCIATE'S PERFORMANCE.

41 **SECTION 4.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 12-315-106, **amend** (5)(a), (5)(b), (5)(d), and (7); and **add** (5)(j) as
42 follows:

43 **12-315-106. Board of veterinary medicine - creation - powers - rules.** (5) The board has the power to:

44 (a) Examine and determine the qualifications and fitness of applicants for a license to practice veterinary medicine
45 or for registration as a veterinary technician OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE in this state;

46 (b) Pursuant to section 12-20-404, issue, renew, deny, suspend, or revoke licenses to practice veterinary medicine
47 or registrations of veterinary technicians AND VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATES in the state or otherwise discipline
48 or fine, or both, licensees or registrants consistent with this article 315 and the rules adopted by the board under
49 this article 315;

50 (d) Establish, pursuant to section 12-20-105, and publish annually a schedule of fees for licensing and registration
51 of veterinarians, ~~and~~ veterinary technicians, AND VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATES. The board shall base the fee on
52 its anticipated financial requirements for the year.

53 (j) APPROVE A NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE CREDENTIALING ORGANIZATION FOR PURPOSES OF
54 CREDENTIALING VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATES IN THIS STATE. THE CREDENTIALING ORGANIZATION APPROVED BY THE BOARD MAY:

55 (I) REQUIRE COMPLETION OF A UNIVERSITY-APPROVED PROGRAM FOR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATES; AND

56 (II) REQUIRE THAT AN APPLICANT PASS A VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE NATIONAL EXAMINATION .

57 (7) The powers of the board are granted to enable the board to effectively supervise the practice of veterinary
58 medicine and of veterinary technicians AND VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATES and are to be construed liberally to
59 accomplish this objective.

60 **SECTION 5.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 12-315-112, **amend** (1)(ee) as follows;

61 **12-315-112. Discipline of licensees.** (1) Upon receipt of a signed complaint by a complainant or upon its own
62 motion, the board may proceed to a hearing in accordance with section 12-315-113. After a hearing, and by a
63 concurrence of a majority of members, the board may take disciplinary or other action as authorized in section
64 12-20-404 against an applicant for a license or a licensed veterinarian for any of the following reasons:

65 (ee) Failure to properly supervise a veterinary student, a veterinary student preceptor, a veterinary technician, A
66 VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE, or other veterinary staff;

67 **SECTION 6.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, article 315 of title 12, rename Part 2 as follows:

68 Part 2. VETERINARY TECHNICIANS AND VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATES

69 **SECTION 7.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 12-315-201, **add** (1)(c) and (1)(d) as follows:

70 **12-315-201. Additional board duties - rules - repeal.** (1) In addition to any other duties specified in this part 2
71 or section 12-315-106, the board shall:

72 (c) REQUIRE BIENNIAL CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATES, AS MAY BE DETERMINED BY THE BOARD BY
73 RULE, AS A CONDITION OF RENEWING REGISTRATION; AND

74 (d) ADOPT ANY RULES NECESSARY FOR THE PRACTICE AND SUPERVISION OF VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATES.

75 **SECTION 8.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** 12-315-203.7 as follows:

76 **12-315-203.7. Veterinary professional associate - qualifications- registration - fees - continuing education**
77 **- rules.** (1) AN INDIVIDUAL WHO DESIRES TO PRACTICE AS A VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE IN THIS STATE MUST FILE AN
78 APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION WITH THE BOARD, ALONG WITH THE REQUIRED APPLICATION FEE, IN THE MANNER DETERMINED BY THE
79 BOARD.

80 (2) **Qualifications.** TO BE QUALIFIED FOR REGISTRATION AS A VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE, AN INDIVIDUAL MUST:

81 (a) BE AT LEAST EIGHTEEN YEARS OF AGE; AND

82 (b) HOLD A MASTER'S DEGREE IN VETERINARY CLINICAL CARE OR THE EQUIVALENT AS DETERMINED BY THE BOARD.

83 (3) **Registration.** COMMENCING JANUARY 1, 2026, AN INDIVIDUAL WHO PRACTICES AS A VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE IN
84 THIS STATE MUST BE REGISTERED BY THE BOARD PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION AND RULES ADOPTED BY THE BOARD FOR THE REGISTRATION OF
85 VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATES.

86 (4) **Rules.** PRIOR TO REGISTERING VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATES PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION, THE BOARD SHALL ESTABLISH, BY
87 RULE:

88 (a) THE TIME FRAMES AND REQUIREMENTS FOR REGISTRATION, RENEWAL OF REGISTRATION, AND SUSPENSION AND REINSTATEMENT OF
89 REGISTRATION FOR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATES;

90 (b) THE METHOD FOR AN APPLICANT TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THE APPLICANT MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS SET FORTH IN SUBSECTION (2) OF
91 THIS SECTION;

92 (c) ANY INFORMATION OR CONFIRMATION REQUIRED BY THE SUPERVISING, LICENSED VETERINARIAN;

93 (d) ANY CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS FOR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATES IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 12-315-
94 201(1)(c) AND SUBSECTION (5) OF THIS SECTION; AND

95 (e) ANY OTHER RULES NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT THIS SECTION.

96 (5) A VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE IS SUBJECT TO ANY BIENNIAL CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENT ESTABLISHED BY THE
97 BOARD PURSUANT TO SECTION 12-315-201(1)(c) AND RULES ADOPTED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (4)(d) OF THIS SECTION AS A
98 CONDITION OF RENEWING REGISTRATION.

99 **SECTION 9.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **amend** 12-315-204 as follows:

100 **12-315-204. Use of title restricted.** (1) On and after January 1, 2024, only a person who is registered pursuant to
101 this part 2 may use the title "veterinary technician" or "registered veterinary technician" or the initials "VT" or
102 "RVT".

103 (2) ON AND AFTER JANUARY 1, 2026, ONLY AN INDIVIDUAL WHO IS REGISTERED PURSUANT TO SECTION 12-315-203.7 MAY USE THE
104 TITLE "VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE" OR "REGISTERED VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE" OR THE INITIALS "VPA" OR
105 "RVPA."

106 **SECTION 10.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **amend** 12-315-206 as follows:

107 **12-315-206. Expiration, renewal, reinstatement, or reactivation of a registration - inactive status - rules -**
108 **definition.** (1) A registration issued pursuant to this part 2 is subject to the renewal, expiration, reinstatement,
109 and delinquency fee provisions specified in section 12-20-202 (1) and (2). A person whose registration expires is
110 subject to the penalties provided in this part 2 or section 12-20-202 (1).

111 (2) The board, by rule, may waive a veterinary technician's OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE'S renewal fee while
112 the veterinary technician OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE is on active duty with any branch of the armed
113 services of the United States. The period during which the renewal fee is waived cannot exceed the longer of
114 three years or the duration of a national emergency.

115 (3) The board shall not renew, reinstate, or reactivate a registration issued pursuant to ~~section 12-315-203(3)~~ THIS
116 PART 2 unless the veterinary technician OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE demonstrates to the board's satisfaction
117 that the veterinary technician OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE maintains active credentialing with the
118 credentialing organization OR THE VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE CONTINUES TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
119 REGISTRATION UNDER THIS PART 2. Subject to board rule, the evidence may be provided by an attestation on the
120 registration application.

121 (4) (a) Upon notice to the board, the board shall transfer a veterinary technician's OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL
122 ASSOCIATE'S registration to inactive status. If a person whose registration is in inactive status wishes to resume
123 practicing as a veterinary technician OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE the person shall apply to the board in a
124 form and manner approved by the board and shall demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the board, that the person
125 has obtained and maintains credentialing in good standing by the credentialing organization OR THE PERSON
126 CONTINUES TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS FOR REGISTRATION UNDER THIS PART 2.

127 (b) The board may pursue disciplinary proceedings pursuant to section 12-315-207 against a veterinary technician
128 OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE whose registration is inactive pursuant to this subsection (4) for conduct that
129 violates this part 2 that the person engages in while the registration is in inactive status.

130 **SECTION 11.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 12-315-207, **amend** (1) introductory portion, (1)(e), (1)(f) introductory
131 portion, (1)(f)(l), (1)(g), (1)(l), (5), and (8) as follows:

132 **12-315-207. Discipline of a registered veterinary technician – registered veterinary professional associate –**
133 **repeal.** (1) Upon receipt of a signed complaint by a complainant or upon its own motion, the board may proceed
134 to a hearing in accordance with section 12-315-113. After a hearing, and by a concurrence of a majority of
135 members, the board may take disciplinary action as authorized in section 12-20-404 against an applicant for a
136 registration or a registered veterinary technician OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE for any of the following
137 reasons:

138 (e) Unprofessional or unethical conduct or engaging in practices that are in violation of generally accepted
139 standards for practice as a veterinary technician OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE or prescribed by the rules of
140 the board;

141 (f) The veterinary technician OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE:

142 (l) Has a registration or credential as a veterinary technician OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE in another state
143 revoked or suspended;

144 (g) Practicing as a veterinary technician OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE while in inactive status or while the
145 person's registration is expired;

146 (l) A determination that the individual is mentally incompetent by a court of competent jurisdiction, and the court
147 has entered, pursuant to part 3 or 4 of article 14 of title 15 or section 27-65-110 (4) or 27-65-127, an order
148 specifically finding that the mental incompetency is of such a degree that the individual is incapable of continuing
149 to hold a registration as a VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE OR veterinary technician;

150 (5) With respect to denying the issuance of a veterinary technician OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE registration
151 or taking disciplinary action against a veterinary technician OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE, the board may
152 accept as prima facie evidence of grounds for the action any federal or state action taken against a veterinary
153 technician OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE in another jurisdiction if the violation that prompted the disciplinary
154 action in the jurisdiction would constitute grounds for disciplinary action under this section.

155 (8) The board may suspend the registration of a veterinary technician OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE who
156 fails to comply with an order of the board issued in accordance with this section. The board may impose the
157 registration suspension until the registrant complies with the board's order.

158 **SECTION 12.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 12-315-208, **amend** (1)(a)(l) introductory portion, (1)(a)(l)(B), (1)(b),
159 and (2) introductory portion as follows:

160 **12-315-208. Examination of registrants - behavioral health - mental health - physical conditions.** (1)(a)(l) If,
161 upon receipt of a signed complaint by a complainant, the board has reasonable cause to believe that a veterinary
162 technician OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE is unable to practice as a veterinary technician with reasonable skill
163 and safety to patients or clients due to a physical condition or a behavioral health, mental health, or substance
164 use disorder, the board may require in writing that the veterinary technician OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE
165 submit to an examination to evaluate:

166 (B) Any impact the physical condition or the behavioral health, mental health, or substance use disorder has on
167 the veterinary technician's OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE'S ability to practice as a veterinary technician with
168 reasonable skill and safety to patients and clients.

169 (b) If a veterinary technician OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE fails to submit to an examination required under
170 subsection (1)(a) of this section, the board may suspend the veterinary technician's OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL
171 ASSOCIATE'S registration until the veterinary technician OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE submits to the
172 examination; however, if the veterinary technician OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE demonstrates to the
173 satisfaction of the board that the failure to submit to the examination is due to circumstances beyond the
174 veterinary technician's OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE'S control, the board shall not suspend the veterinary
175 technician's OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE'S registration.

176 (2) Every veterinary technician OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE in this state is deemed, by practicing as a
177 veterinary technician OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE or applying for a renewal of the person's registration, to
178 have:

179 **SECTION 13.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** 12-315-209.7 as follows:

180 **12-315-209.7. Duties of licensed veterinarian - direction and supervision of veterinary professional**
181 **associate - rules.** (1) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (2) OF THIS SECTION, A PERSON PRACTICING AS A VETERINARY
182 PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE MAY PERFORM DUTIES AND ACTIONS AUTHORIZED PURSUANT TO SECTION 12-315-105(1)(r) THAT ARE
183 WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THE VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE'S ADVANCED EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE IF THE PERSON PERFORMS
184 THOSE DUTIES UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF A LICENSED VETERINARIAN.

185 (2) A VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE SHALL PERFORM ONLY THOSE DUTIES OR ACTIONS DELEGATED BY THE LICENSED,

186 SUPERVISING VETERINARIAN FOR WHICH THE VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE HAS THE NECESSARY TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE, AS
187 DETERMINED BY THE SUPERVISING VETERINARIAN, TO MEET GENERALLY ACCEPTED STANDARDS OF VETERINARY CARE.

188 (3) IF A VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE IS DELEGATED DUTIES BEYOND THE VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE'S TRAINING AND
189 EXPERIENCE, THE LICENSED VETERINARIAN:

190 (a) IS IN VIOLATION OF SECTION 12-315-112(1)(ee) ;

191 (b) MAY BE LIABLE FOR DAMAGES RESULTING FROM ANY NEGLIGENCE OF THE VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE IN PROVIDING CARE TO
192 AN ANIMAL; AND

193 (c) MAY BE SUBJECT TO PROFESSIONAL DISCIPLINE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 12-315-112.

194 (4) IF A VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE PERFORMS DUTIES BEYOND THE VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE'S TRAINING AND
195 EXPERIENCE OR DOES NOT CONFORM WITH THE REQUIREMENT TO PERFORM ALL DUTIES AND ACTIONS PURSUANT TO SECTION 12-315-
196 105(1)(r) UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF A LICENSED, SUPERVISING VETERINARIAN AS SPECIFIED IN SUBSECTION (1) OF THIS SECTION, THE
197 VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE MAY BE SUBJECT TO:

198 (a) A CEASE-AND-DESIST ORDER PURSUANT TO SECTION 12-20-405;

199 (b) DAMAGES RESULTING FROM ANY NEGLIGENCE OF THE VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE IN PROVIDING CARE TO AN ANIMAL; AND

200 (c) DISCIPLINE PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 12-20-404 FOR A VIOLATION OF SECTION 12-315-207(1)(n).

201 **SECTION 14.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **amend** 12-315-210 as follows:

202 **12-315-210. Unauthorized practice - penalties.** A person who practices or offers or attempts to practice as a
203 veterinary technician OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE without an active registration issued under this part 2 is
204 subject to penalties pursuant to section 12-20-407 (1)(a).

205 **SECTION 15.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 12-20-404, **amend** (1)(d)(II)(M) as follows:

206 **12-20-404. Disciplinary actions - regulator powers - disposition of fines - mistreatment of at-risk adult –**
207 **exceptions - definitions.** (1) General disciplinary authority. If a regulator determines that an applicant, licensee,
208 certificate holder, or registrant has committed an act or engaged in conduct that constitutes grounds for
209 discipline or unprofessional conduct under a part or article of this title 12 governing the particular profession or
210 occupation, the regulator may:

211 (d)(II) A regulator is not authorized under this subsection (1)(d) to refuse to renew the license, certification, or
212 registration of a licensee, certificate holder, or registrant regulated under the following:

213 (M) Article 315 of this title 12 concerning veterinarians, veterinary technicians, AND VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL
214 ASSOCIATES.

215 **SECTION 16.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 12-20-407, **amend** (1)(a)(V)(W) as follows:

216 **12-20-407. Unauthorized practice of profession or occupation - penalties - exclusions.** (1) (a) A person
217 commits a class 2 misdemeanor and shall be punished as provided in section 18-1.3-501 if the person:

218 (V) Practices or offers or attempts to practice any of the following professions or occupations without an active
219 license, certification, or registration issued under the part or article of this title 12 governing the particular
220 profession or occupation:

221 (W) Veterinary medicine or as a veterinary technician OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE, as regulated under article
222 315 of this title 12; or

223 **SECTION 17.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 12-20-408, **amend** (1)(f) as follows:

224 **12-20-408. Judicial review.** (1) Except as specified in subsection (2) of this section, the court of appeals has initial
225 jurisdiction to review all final actions and orders of a regulator that are subject to judicial review and shall conduct
226 the judicial review proceedings in accordance with section 24-4-106 (11); except that, with regard only to cease-
227 and-desist orders, a district court of competent jurisdiction has initial jurisdiction to review a final action or order
228 of a regulator that is subject to judicial review and shall conduct the judicial review proceedings in accordance
229 with section 24-4-106 (3) for the following:

230 (f) Article 315 of this title 12 concerning veterinarians, ~~and~~ veterinary technicians, AND VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL
231 ASSOCIATES.

232 **SECTION 18.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 24-72-204, **amend** (3)(a)(XIV) as follows:

233 **24-72-204. Allowance or denial of inspection - grounds - procedure - appeal - definitions - repeal.** (3) (a)
234 The custodian shall deny the right of inspection of the following records, unless otherwise provided by law;
235 except that the custodian shall make any of the following records, other than letters of reference concerning
236 employment, licensing, or issuance of permits, available to the person in interest in accordance with this
237 subsection (3):

238 (XIV) Veterinary medical data, information, and records on individual animals that are owned by private individuals
239 or business entities, but are in the custody of a veterinary medical practice or hospital, including the veterinary
240 teaching hospital at Colorado state university, that provides veterinary medical care and treatment to animals. A
241 veterinary-patient-client privilege exists with respect to such data, information, and records only when a person in
242 interest and a veterinarian OR VETERINARY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE enter into a mutual agreement to provide medical
243 treatment for an individual animal and such person in interest maintains an ownership interest in such animal
244 undergoing treatment. For purposes of this subsection (3)(a)(XIV), "person in interest" means the owner of an
245 animal undergoing veterinary medical treatment or such owner's designated representative. Nothing in this
246 subsection (3)(a)(XIV) shall prevent the state agricultural commission, the state agricultural commissioner, or the
247 state board of veterinary medicine from exercising their investigatory and enforcement powers and duties
248 granted pursuant to section 35-1-106 (1)(h), article 50 of title 35, and section 12-315-106 (5)(e), respectively. The
249 veterinary-patient-client privilege described in this subsection (3)(a)(XIV), pursuant to section 12-315-120 (5), may
250 not be asserted for the purpose of excluding or refusing evidence or testimony in a prosecution for an act of
251 animal cruelty under section 18-9-202 or for an act of animal fighting under section 18-9-204.

252 **SECTION 19. Effective date.** This act takes effect on January 1, 2026.