



Legislation HB24-1048 Advances Veterinary Telehealth in Colorado

Telehealth and telemedicine have been used in veterinary medicine since the telephone was invented and are used today. With new legislation passed in the 2024 session, Colorado has added the definition of veterinary telemedicine to the veterinary practice act and clarified that the practice of veterinary telemedicine requires establishing a Veterinarian-Client-Patient-Relationship (VCPR) through an in-person, physical examination of the animal patient, or timely visits to the premises where the animal(s) is (are) kept. The new law defines a range of telehealth services that do not require a VCPR. It also facilitates the extension of VCPRs among Colorado-licensed veterinarians within the same physical practice in the state, provided there is access to and review of medical records; between referring veterinarians and consulting specialists; and in specified emergency situations.

The bill, officially named **HB24-1048 Providing Veterinary Services Through Telehealth**, updates the Veterinary Practice Act by adding Part 3 which addresses using telehealth to enhance access to veterinary care while also ensuring that high standards of care and ethical practice are provided to pets and agricultural animals in our state.

Key provisions of the new law:

- 1. Clarifies Requirements for Establishing a VCPR:** Colorado law has long required that one criterion for the establishment of a VCPR is that the veterinarian conduct an examination of the animal patient. HB24-1048 clarifies that the examination must be an in-person, physical examination.
- 2. Defines Telehealth and Telemedicine:** Clearly defines telemedicine as “the remote practice of veterinary medicine that allows a licensed veterinarian with an established VCPR to evaluate, diagnose and treat a patient virtually”. Also defines five different methods of telehealth that can be provided without a VCPR, including: tele-advice, teleconsulting, tele-education, telereferral, and teletriage.
- 3. Extends an Established VCPR:** The law allows the extension of a VCPR established by a licensed veterinarian to other licensed veterinarians in the same physical location provided the other veterinarians have access to and have reviewed the patient’s medical records.
- 4. Authorization for Virtual Specialist Consultations:** Allows virtual specialist consultations through a primary veterinarian’s established in-person veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR). Allows the licensed veterinarian with the VCPR to prescribe medications following consultation with the

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE >

EFFECTIVE

August 7, 2024

*Colorado Gov. Jared Polis signed
HB24-1048 into law April 19, 2024.*

REFERENCES

[🔗 HB24-1048 Full Text](#)

[🔗 CO General Assembly
Overview of HB24-1048](#)

QUESTIONS?

CVMA
Colorado Veterinary
Medical Association

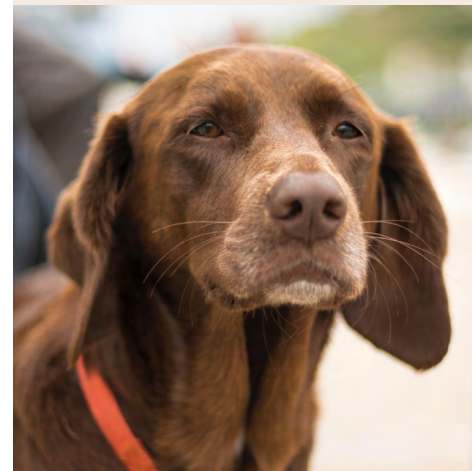
✉ info@colovma.org

☎ 303-318-0447

**Colorado State Board of
Veterinary Medicine**

✉ dora_veterinarymedicineboard@state.co.us

☎ 303-894-7800



specialist to whom the patient was referred. This will allow increased access to expert opinions and aid in the development of rapid treatment plans for animals.

5. Emergency Telemedicine Collaboration through VCPR: Empowers an animal's primary veterinarian with a VCPR to collaborate with other licensed veterinary professionals via telemedicine to administer, distribute, or dispense medication during emergencies in accordance with 12-315-105 (2)(b). Colorado animals will have their urgent medical needs met swiftly and efficiently under this provision.



6. Colorado-licensed Veterinarians Only:

Mandates that only Colorado-licensed veterinarians can practice veterinary telemedicine services within Colorado, with client consent. This ensures that those practicing veterinary telemedicine meet the rigorous standards of training and accountability, and consumer protection required by our State Board of Veterinary Medicine. The law prohibits a licensed veterinarian from recommending treatment or care for an animal based solely on a client's responses to an online questionnaire.

7. Prescriptions via Telemedicine: The law stipulates that only a Colorado-licensed veterinarian with an established VCPR may prescribe medication via telemedicine.

8. Tele-supervision of Veterinary Practice Staff: Colorado-licensed veterinarians will now be able to utilize tele-supervision of registered veterinary technicians within the same practice. Together with the updates to Veterinary Technician Scope of Practice (via HB24-1047) this will ensure that tasks requiring indirect supervision are carried out safely and effectively. Personnel must be licensed or registered in Colorado, and the patient must be located within the state.

9. Record-Keeping, Confidentiality, and Privacy: Imposes strict requirements for record-keeping, confidentiality, and privacy in telemedicine usage to ensure telemedicine and telehealth are used responsibly and ethically. Safeguards sensitive information and maintains professional standards for Coloradans' personal data.

10. Regulatory Framework by the State Board: The bill allows the Colorado State Board of Veterinary Medicine to create rules regarding the use of telemedicine and telehealth in veterinary services. It also requires the Board to consult with licensed veterinarians, registered veterinary technicians, clients and other stakeholders in developing rules.

The passing of this legislation marks a significant step forward in defining and ensuring the provision of quality veterinary telehealth and telemedicine in Colorado, benefitting animals, animal owners, and veterinary professionals.

If you have questions about the application of this new legislation, please contact **CVMA** or the **Colorado State Board of Veterinary Medicine** for more information.

Note: Colorado Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) acknowledges that state law impacting veterinary medicine is implemented/regulated by the Colorado State Veterinary Board of Medicine. Information stated on this handout in regard to HB24-1048 is not verbatim legislative text and is provided as educational, interpretive material only.

Document last updated July 2024.