

**RCW 18.92.260 Animal care societies/nonprofit humane societies—Low-income households—License required—Rule-making authority—Uniform disciplinary act—Registration—Fees.** (1)(a) Subject to the limitations in this section, animal care and control agencies as defined in RCW 16.52.011 and nonprofit humane societies, that have qualified under section 501(c)(3) of the internal revenue code may provide veterinary services to animals owned by qualified low-income households. A veterinarian or veterinary technician acting within his or her scope of practice must perform the veterinary services. For purposes of this section, "low-income household" means the same as in RCW 43.185A.010.

(b) Animal control agencies and nonprofit humane societies, receiving any animals on an emergency basis, may provide emergency care where there is an unexpected, serious occurrence or situation that urgently requires prompt action in order to prevent an animal's death or permanent injury of the animal.

(c) Animal control agencies and nonprofit humane societies may provide veterinary care for sick animals up to thirty days postadoption.

(d) Any local ordinance addressing the needs under this section that was approved by the voters and is in effect on July 1, 2003, remains in effect.

(2) Veterinarians, veterinary technicians, and veterinary medication clerks employed at these facilities must be licensed under this chapter. No officer, director, supervisor, or any other individual associated with an animal care or control agency or nonprofit humane society owning and operating a veterinary medical facility may impose any terms or conditions of employment or direct or attempt to direct an employed veterinarian in any way that interferes with the free exercise of the veterinarian's professional judgment or infringes upon the utilization of his or her professional skills.

(3) Veterinarians, veterinary technicians, veterinary medication clerks, and animal control agencies and humane societies acting under this section shall, for purposes of providing the veterinary services, meet the requirements established under this chapter and are subject to the rules adopted by the veterinary board of governors in the same fashion as any licensed veterinarian or veterinary medical facility in the state.

(4) The Washington state veterinary board of governors shall adopt rules to:

(a) Establish registration and registration renewal requirements;

(b) Govern the purchase and use of drugs for the veterinary services authorized under this section;

(c) Establish annual reporting requirements that demonstrate the animal care and control facilities and nonprofit humane societies are serving only low-income households as defined in RCW 43.185A.010; and

(d) Ensure that agencies and societies are in compliance with this section.

(5) The veterinary medical service authority granted by registration under this section may be denied, suspended, revoked, or conditioned by a determination of the board of governors for any act of noncompliance with this chapter. The uniform disciplinary act, chapter 18.130 RCW, governs unregistered operation, the issuance and denial of registrations, and the discipline of registrants under this section.

(6) No animal control agency or humane society may operate under this chapter without registering with the department. An application for registration shall be made upon forms provided by the department and shall include the information the department reasonably requires, as provided by RCW 43.70.280. The department shall establish registration and renewal fees as provided by RCW 43.70.250. A registration fee shall accompany each application for registration or renewal. [2019 c 142 s 2; 2002 c 157 s 2.]

**Effective date—2002 c 157:** See note following RCW 18.92.250.