

# Veterinary Legislation and Regulation

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WORKSHOP ON VETERINARY  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
AND VPPs IN SOUTHERN  
AFRICA

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for Animal  
Health  
Founded as OIE

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mondiale  
de la santé  
animale  
Fondée en tant qu'OIE

Organización  
Mundial  
de Sanidad  
Animal  
Fundada como OIE



## Agenda

1. What is legislation?
2. What is veterinary legislation?
3. WOAHA standards on veterinary legislation
4. WOAHA standards on veterinary practice legislation
5. What is veterinary practice legislation?
6. Veterinary practice legislation and the Veterinary Statutory Body
7. Why have legislation around veterinary practice?
8. Why cover veterinary paraprofessionals in veterinary practice legislation?
9. WOAHA sample Veterinary Practice Act



## What is legislation?

- Rules governing all areas of life in a country
- Legal texts that convert policies into concrete actions and results
  - Assign the roles, powers and responsibilities of government
  - Establish the rights, duties and prohibitions of citizens
  - Create the basic system of implementation and controls.
- Features:
  - Established in advance
  - Official process
  - Binding (mandatory for everyone)
  - Published (accessible by everyone)
- Essential to a functioning society → legal certainty, transparency, fairness and accountability.





## What is veterinary legislation?

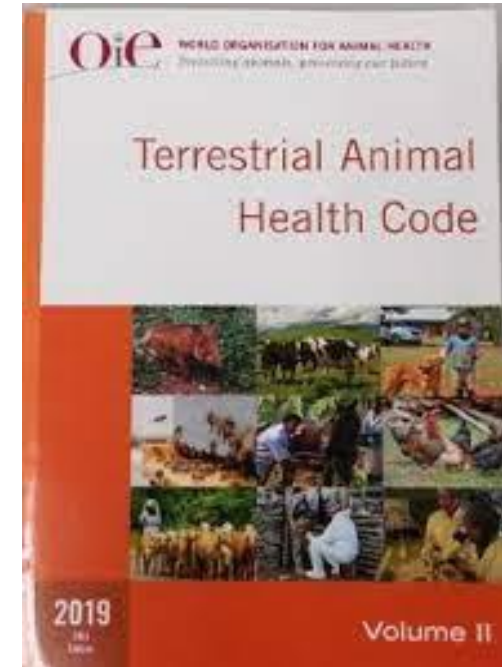
- Rules governing all areas of the veterinary domain in a country.  
“All the activities that are directly or indirectly related to animals, their products and by-products which help to protect, maintain and improve animal health, animal welfare and veterinary public health.” (TAHC 3.4.2)
- Legal texts that convert veterinary policies into concrete actions and results:
  - Assign the roles, powers and responsibilities of the competent authority for animal health.
  - Establish the rights, duties and prohibitions of individuals who own/conduct activities related to animals (and their products and by-products).
  - Create the basic system of implementation and controls.



## WOAH guidelines on veterinary legislation

### Terrestrial Code Chapter 3.4:

- Competent authorities (3.4.5)
- Veterinarians and veterinary paraprofessionals (3.4.6)
- Laboratories in the veterinary domain (3.4.7)
- Health provisions relating to animal production (3.4.8)
- Animal diseases (3.4.9)
- Animal welfare (3.4.10)
- Veterinary medicinal products (3.4.11)
- Human food production chain (3.4.12)
- Import and export procedures and veterinary certification (3.4.13)
- General: purpose and objectives, definitions, structure and organization, drafting, alignment with international standards and obligations (3.4.1 – 3.4.4)





## What is veterinary practice legislation?

The purpose of veterinary practice legislation is to provide a basis for regulating **veterinarians and veterinary paraprofessionals** in the interests of the public.

1. Establishes the veterinary statutory body (VSB) as the competent authority for regulating veterinarians and veterinary paraprofessionals.
2. Provides for the definition of the officially recognised categories of veterinarians and veterinary paraprofessionals.
3. Describe the general structure and system of regulation of veterinarians and veterinary paraprofessionals by the veterinary statutory body



## What is a veterinary statutory body (VSB)?

***Veterinary statutory body*** means an autonomous regulatory body for veterinarians and veterinary paraprofessionals. (TAHC Glossary)

**Autonomous** = operates independently, without undue influence from political or commercial interests.

**Regulatory body** = has the authority to control veterinary practitioners

**Veterinarians and veterinary paraprofessionals** = regulates all categories of practitioners

Independence of the VSB is ensured through transparent governance and funding arrangements including an elected, representative council or equivalent, and financial arrangements for the collection and management of registration fees.



## Veterinary practice legislation and the VSB

### 1. Establish the VSB:

- Mandate, responsibilities
- Powers, competencies
- Structure and composition
- Operating rules and procedures
- Sources and uses of funding





## Veterinary practice legislation and the VSB

2. Provide for the definition of the officially recognised categories of veterinarians and veterinary paraprofessionals in the country, including:
  - Prerogatives
  - Minimum educational/training requirements
  - Basic competencies
  - Supervision



## Veterinary practice legislation and the VSB

3. Outline the basic system of controls:
  - Recognition of qualifications (e.g. registration)
  - Conditions to practice (e.g. licensing)
  - Minimum initial and continuous educational requirements and competencies for the various professional categories of veterinarians and VPPs
  - Adherence to codes of conduct
  - Disciplinary action



## Why have legislation around veterinary practice?

Sets standards for the qualifications and competencies of veterinary practitioners and enforces those standards → **quality control**

Protects individual interests...

- Animals
- Owners
- Consumers
- Businesses
- Veterinary professionals and paraprofessionals

...and societal interests

- Public health
- Economy

As with all legislation, veterinary practice legislation promotes legal certainty, transparency, and accountability → trust and confidence.



# Differences between a VSB and veterinary/VPP association



## Veterinary/VPP association:

- Professional body → career development, advocacy role
- Primarily promotes the interests of its members
- **Voluntary membership**

## Veterinary Statutory Body:

- Regulatory body → control, enforcement role
- Promotes societal interests along with member interests
- **Mandatory membership**



## Why cover veterinary paraprofessionals in veterinary practice legislation?

The WOAH guidelines recommend including veterinary paraprofessionals (VPPs) in veterinary practice legislation. (TAHC 3.4.6)

- Establishes the officially recognized categories of VPPs and their qualifications, prerogatives and competencies.
- Ensures all practice areas (professional and paraprofessional) are covered without gaps, overlaps or inconsistencies among the different categories of practitioners.
- Allows the VPP system to be tailored to national circumstances and needs.
- Facilitates VPP supervisory arrangements.



## WOAH sample Veterinary Practice Act

The WOAH has a sample Veterinary Practice Act for Member Countries to consult as a reference when drafting veterinary practice legislation.

- Contains the most common elements of a regulatory framework for veterinary practice.
- Includes drafting notes explaining certain provisions and presenting different options.
- Intended to be used as a guide, not as a template.
- Each country must tailor its legislation to national circumstances (content as well as form).
- WOAH can support drafting of new practice and other veterinary legislation through its Veterinary Legislation Support Programme (VLSP).

# WOAH sample Veterinary Practice Act

## PART 1. VETERINARIANS AND VETERINARY PARA-PROFESSIONALS

Corresponds to Article 3.4.6 of Chapter 3.4., 'Veterinary Legislation',  
of the OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*

An Act on the regulation of veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals

### Preamble

### Chapter 1. Preliminary

Article 1. Short title  
Article 2. Definitions

### Chapter 2. The [National] Veterinary Council

Article 3. Establishment of the [National] Veterinary Council  
Article 4. Objectives of Council  
Article 5. Powers and functions of the Council  
Article 6. Constitution of the Council  
Article 7. Qualifications of members of the Council  
Article 8. Tenure of office of members of the Council  
Article 9. Vacation of office and filling of vacancies  
Article 10. President and vice-president of the Council  
Article 11. Meetings of the Council  
Article 12. Executive committee  
Article 13. Other committees  
Article 14. Allowances of members of the Council and committees  
Article 15. Appointment of registrar and staff  
Article 16. Funds of the Council  
Article 17. Bookkeeping and auditing  
Article 18. Reports by the Council

### Chapter 3. Regulation of veterinary medicine

Article 19. Practice of veterinary medicine  
Article 20. Non-application of Act

### Chapter 4. Registration, licensure and authorisation

Article 21. Registration of veterinarians  
Article 22. Grounds for refusing registration  
Article 23. Modification of registration

Article 21 Registration of Vets  
Article 27 Registration of VPPs  
Article 31 Supervision of VPPs by vets

Article 24. Licensure and renewal of license  
Article 25. Titles  
Article 26. Reference to academic titles  
Article 27. Registration of veterinary para-professionals  
Article 28. Refusal to register  
Article 29. Modification of registration  
Article 30. Licensure and renewal of license  
Article 31. Supervision of veterinary para-professionals  
Article 32. Supervision in declared emergencies or other special circumstances  
Article 33. Veterinary students  
Article 34. Civil liability

### Chapter 5. Veterinary oath

Article 35. Requirement for an oath

### Chapter 6. Discipline

Article 36. Professional discipline  
Article 37. Sanctions

### Chapter 7. Professional code of conduct

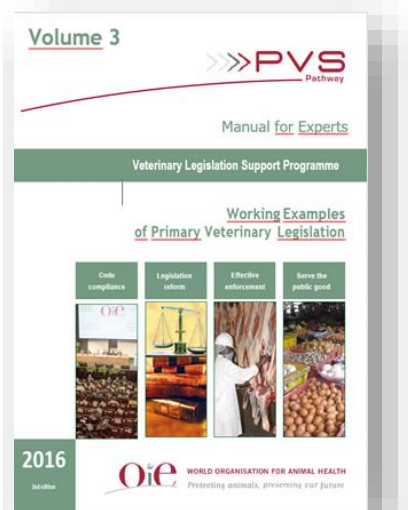
Article 38. Development and adoption  
Article 39. Application of the professional code of conduct

### Chapter 8. Regulations

Article 40. Scope of regulations

### Chapter 9. Penal provisions

Article 41. Penalties





# Thank you

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