

Ohio Veterinary Medical Licensing Board Newsletter

2023 Fall Edition

Current Board Members

Nancy O'Connor, DVM President

Akron, OH
Term: 2/19/16-12/31/24

Kim Riker-Brown, DVM Vice-President

Toledo, OH
Term: 7/13/15-12/31/23

Dianne "Annie" Jones, RVT

Secretary
Ostrander, OH
Term: 3/12/15-12/31/23

Tim Kolb, DVM

Delaware, OH
Term: 1/1/22-12/31/24

Scott Pendleton, DVM

Cadiz, OH
Term: 10/13/22-12/31/23

Susan Pohler, Esq

Public Member
Columbus, OH
Term: 6/2020-12/31/2024

Vacant DVM Position (1)

Board meetings are open to the public to listen to discussion on Agenda items. The Agenda can be found on the Board website under Board Information.

Board Staff:

Theresa Stir, Executive Director (retiring)
Jacob Bell, new ED
Joseph McClain, Licensure Coordinator

Email:

info@ovmlb.ohio.gov

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The Board office is closed on state holidays.

Titles and Duties by Dr. Nancy O'Connor

The Ohio Veterinary Medical Practice Act defines "**Registered veterinary technician**" as a person who has graduated from a veterinary technology college, has successfully passed an examination approved by the Board and maintains eligibility status. It also defines the "**Animal aide**" as a person who is employed by a licensed veterinarian and supervised by a veterinarian or registered veterinary technician to perform duties such as record keeping, animal restraint, and such other duties that the board, by rule, establishes.

Many facilities utilize the term "veterinary technician" to identify unlicensed staff which confuses the client into thinking that the individual is a licensed individual with comparable education and skills of a registered veterinary technician (RVT). This is not only an insult to the RVT, but could potentially be a violation of the law if the individual is performing duties that only an RVT should be doing when in fact they are an Animal Aide by definition in law.

The Board has received a high number of complaints regarding unlicensed individuals performing duties that only licensed veterinarians or RVTs may perform. The Board recognizes that there may be a shortage of licensed practitioners in some parts of the state, but that is not permission to violate the law. The OVMA and other national organizations have taskforces looking at Veterinarian and RVT factors in recruitment and retention.

The Board has [Guidelines](#) on its web site that identifies the duties of an RVT versus an animal aide and the type of supervision required. While the list is not all inclusive, the Board members are certainly open to other veterinary services/treatments that a licensee might want considered for the list. Please contact the Board at info@ovmlb.ohio.gov to submit concerns or recommendations to the list. **Please post the list at your Veterinary facilities.**

The Veterinary Medical Practice Act can be found under [Law & Rules](#) on the website.

Practice Act Rule Revisions

The Ohio Veterinary Medical Licensing Board is in the process of its mandatory five year review of certain rules. The Board has made revisions based on recent passage of legislation or clarifying a rule for veterinary practice. The impacted rules and modifications are as follows:

Rule 4741-1-01 details the requirements for veterinary technician (RVT) registration, duties, and continuing education. The amended language is in response to recently enacted legislation (HB 509 of the 134th General Assembly) which removed the requirement for a picture upon initial application. The enacted House Bill 509 also reduced the fees for RVTs for initial licensure but eliminated the ability for an RVT to renew late. This rule will permit an RVT to renew with the current penalties assessed.

Rule 4741-1-11 relates to continuing education for renewal of licenses. The amended language is meant to clarify the online versus in-person hour requirements of continuing education for licensees upon renewal.

Rule 4741-1-14 defines the duties of an animal aide. The amended version adds the registered veterinary technician as a practitioner who can provide oversight for collecting blood samples.

Rule 4741-1-16 sets the standards for a companion animal vaccination clinic. Since the Board transitioned to the Elicense system, the Board no longer prints a "renewal license" and does not require one to be posted. However, the public should know who the veterinarian is services at a vaccination clinic. Therefore, this amended rule requires something to be posted in a conspicuous location regarding the identity of the veterinarian.

Rule 4741-1-17 sets the standards for home visits for companion animals. The amended version sets out requirements for notification to the client of after hour care.

Rule 4741-1-23 provides the requirements for a euthanasia technician certification course curriculum. The Rule clarifies that the laboratory portion of the course must be an in-person lab.

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Rules (continued)

Rule 4741-1-23 provides the requirements for a euthanasia technician certification course curriculum. The Rule clarifies that the laboratory portion of the course must be an in-person lab.

While some revisions in the rules were due to legislative initiatives (See Spring, 2022 newsletter edition), other changes were merely grammatical. The proposed rules and explanation can be found on the Board web site (www.ovmlb.ohio.gov) under Law and Rules or click this link: <https://ovmlb.ohio.gov/laws.stm>



Continuing Education—NOTE THE MODIFICATION

The Ohio Veterinary Medical Licensing Board filed a revision to Rule 4741-1-11 OAC that would permit online continuing education in the amount of 18 hours for veterinarians and six for registered veterinary technicians. There is no restriction on the type of online hours, meaning the hours can be real-time/live presentations or self-study.

The remainder of the hours required (12 for veterinarians and four for RVTs) for the two year renewal period must be **in-person and physically attending** continuing education hours.

The proposed rule can be found on the state web site at: Register of Ohio

When enacted, this rule change will be in effect for the RVT renewal in 2025 and for veterinary renewal in 2026.

Current [Rule 4741-1-11](#) OAC automatically approves CE courses that are provided by the national associations, state associations, university or college provided CE or those that are RACE approved. Board-approved continuing education courses can be found on the Board web site under Continuing Education.

Veterinarian Renewal

Veterinarian licenses expire on March 1, 2024. Any licensee, according to the Veterinary Practice Act, who is practicing on an expired license is in violation of the law. Late fees are assessed immediately after the expiration date of March 1st and a stiffer penalty is applied after April 1st. Remember that there is a \$3.50 transaction fee that the State of Ohio charges for security of the system.

Instructions for the ELicensing system are on the Board's web site under Online Renewal. **ALL** License renewal communications will be sent via email notification only. It is important to update your email changes in the ELicense system. Instructions for the ELicensing system are on the Board's web site. **No paper applications or checks will be accepted.**

A few pointers for the ELicensing system:

- A computer with use of Google Chrome, Safari or Firefox are recommended. The system does not function well on a phone or tablet. Computers are available at local libraries, Senior Citizen Centers, and Community Centers. Veterinarians can request another wall certificate through the Options link of the new system. A Letter of Good Standing can be requested through the Options link of the E-Licensing system.
- All documents will need to be readily available (i.e. CE, court documents, military active duty forms) to upload onto a computer so that they can be submitted into the system.
- Renewing licensees do not need to complete the License verification or education section of the renewal application.
- If you begin to enter data, and need to leave the system, you can save the data and return to complete.
- The application will not be submitted to the Board office until payment is made via **VISA or MasterCard only**. If a personal charge card is not an option, a pre-paid payment card can be obtained. Please make sure that the \$3.50 transaction fee has been added to the pre-paid card.
- Licensees will have three options to submit continuing education: write it out, upload a document, or email to the Board.
- Licensees can change an address in the system at any time.
- Passwords can be reset in the system if a licensee has forgotten their password or it is expired.
- Please note that the system will lock the for 30 minutes if there are three unsuccessful attempts to log in.

Veterinarians are required to have 30 continuing education hours to renew. Please update any employment or address changes within 90 days as required by law ([R.C. 4741.171](#)). **REMINDER: No renewal certificate is provided upon renewal. All verifications can be done through ELicense or through the board website.**

Pharmacy Board Notifications



From the Board of Pharmacy June 2023 E-News:

OARRS Guidance: Reporting Gabapentin Prescriptions from Veterinarians without a DEA Registration The Board has been made aware of instances where pharmacies are requesting DEA registration numbers for gabapentin prescriptions issued by veterinarians. As a reminder, gabapentin is not a controlled substance in Ohio and so a veterinarian is not required to have a DEA registration number to prescribe the medication. Additionally, veterinarians do not have NPI numbers.

Compounding Rule Revisions: Currently, the Board is enforcing USP 797 (last revised in 2008) and USP 795 (last revised in 2014). For more information on the Board's compounding requirements, visit: www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/pharmcompound. For more information on the revisions, visit: https://go.usp.org/2022_Revisions_795_797. The earliest possible effective date for this rule change would be Spring 2024. If this is the case, the new standards would not be enforced until Spring 2025.

Veterinary Charitable Loan

The first awards for the Veterinarian Student Debt Assistance Program based on charitable services were awarded at the May 24th board meeting. There were 11 applicants who each received \$10,000 towards their student loans in exchange for a two year contract of 12 hours of charitable services in each year. The awards are only given in the odd year per statute and therefore applications are due **March 1st** of the odd year. Applications and eligibility requirements are available on the board web site at <http://ovmlb.ohio.gov/sl.stm>.

Eligibility:

- Prior to applying, the veterinarian must have performed charitable veterinary services in an amount determined by the Board in rules, but at a minimum, 12 hours.(Charitable veterinary services include free spay and neutering services and any other services specified by rule with a nonprofit organization, a humane society, law enforcement agency or a state, local, or federal government entity).
- The veterinarian must be a U.S. citizen, U.S. National, or permanent resident of the United States;
- The veterinarian is licensed and has been engaged in the practice or instruction of veterinary medicine in Ohio for more than six months prior to application'
- The veterinarian has taken out an educational loan that was used for educational expenses incurred while the veterinarian was enrolled in a veterinary college;
- The veterinarian is not a member of the Board at the time application is submitted;
- The veterinarian is not an active program participant under contract with the Board; and
- The veterinarian has not been under contract as a program participant with the Board within a year prior to submitting an application.

The selected candidate(s) will be required to sign a Letter of Intent and then enter into a contract with the Board agreeing to perform charitable veterinary services for a two year period in exchange for repayment of all or part of an educational loan. The amount of hours and other terms are spelled out in Rules implemented by the Board as required in the enacted law. See [Rules 4741-3-06 to 4741-3-09](#)

Veterinary Student Loan Repayment Program

This student loan program was developed in 2006 to provide large animal veterinary services or protect public health in veterinary resource shortage areas. \$10.00 of each veterinary license renewal fee is deposited in the loan repayment fund. The loan awards up to \$10,000 a year for a service commitment of one year for those who have been out of veterinary school less than 3 years. Applications for 2023 can be found on the Board's web site under [Student Loan Program](#) and are due by **May 1st**. The applications can be mailed in or sent via email to Theresa.stir@ovmlb.state.oh.us There were 0 applicants for this loan in 2023! As a result of low interest in the loan, the General Assembly reduced the ability to issue more than \$20,000 in a year to any applicants. Please spread the word regarding this loan to your newly graduated colleagues. There is a significant need for veterinarians in rural/large animal practices.

Grants for rural veterinary services are also available through the National Institute of Food & Agriculture within the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Ohio Professional's Health Program

The Ohio Physician's Health Program (OhioPHP) is now the Ohio Professionals Health Program. OhioPHP is a nonprofit organization that operates independently from all regulatory agencies and provides **confidential** services. OhioPHP provides a compassionate, supportive, and safe environment for healthcare professionals to receive confidential services to improve their health and well-being. Their mission is to facilitate the health and wellness of healthcare professionals in order to enhance patient care and safety. OhioPHP services are available to a multitude of healthcare professionals in Ohio.

Those program services include:

Confidential Resource: OhioPHP serves as a confidential resource that assists with identification, intervention, and referral for assessment or treatment of veterinarians and other healthcare professionals who may be affected by mental, emotional and behavioral illness, substance-related and addictive disorders, or other issues. OhioPHP also provides referrals to community resources for: stress, burnout, psychosocial therapy, family and marriage counseling, ethics training, boundary violations, prescribing guidelines, legal counsel, skills assessment, and others. OhioPHP accepts referrals from any source and protects the confidentiality of program participants and anonymity of referral sources to the fullest extent allowed by law.

Monitoring and Advocacy Services: OhioPHP specializes in providing confidential monitoring and advocacy for qualifying physicians and other healthcare professionals. OhioPHP also provides monitoring and advocacy to healthcare professionals who have formal action with licensing agencies. OhioPHP is staffed with clinical professionals that include a physician specializing in addiction medicine as well as counselors licensed in mental health and chemical dependency. They provide: compliance reviews, assessment of recovery programs, assistance with the continuation in or return to medical practice, support of personal and professional goals, and other advocacy services. OhioPHP also utilizes a large volunteer network of peer monitors to support program participants.

Educational Outreach Programs: OhioPHP provides educational presentations to individuals or groups throughout Ohio. Presentations are delivered on the prevention of mental, emotional and behavioral illness and substance-related and addictive disorders. Programs also cover the topics of stress, burnout, and suicide; statutory guidelines for medical professionals; and the role of OhioPHP in the healthcare community. Presentations meet the criteria for continuing medical education credit.

Wellness and Resiliency: OhioPHP is proud to now offer a Wellness & Resiliency Program specifically designed to meet the needs of physicians. Experienced professionals are ready to provide supportive services to meet the unique needs of healthcare professionals as the medical industry continues to grow in size and demand. It has never been more important for physicians to properly take care of their mental, emotional, and physical health. This program is designed to eliminate barriers that may prevent health practitioners from seeking help- such as fear of stigma, loss of license, lack of time, and inability to use peer supports. Services include access to independently licensed mental and behavioral health professionals, referrals to established networks, and confidential support.

If you or a colleague are experiencing stress, burnout, depression, or other issues—or if you have concerns about drugs or alcohol use, speak with an OhioPHP representative at 614-841-9690 or info@ophp.org.

Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: 988

Effective July 16, 2022, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255) transitioned to the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. Ohioans who are experiencing a mental health or addiction crisis, and their family members, are now able to call, chat, or text the 988 number in order to reach a trained counselor who can offer help and support. 988 builds on the existing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline system and provides 24/7, free and confidential support to Ohioans in a behavioral health crisis. It is a direct connection to compassionate, accessible care and support for anyone experiencing mental health related distress – whether that is thoughts of suicide, mental health or addiction concerns, or any other kind of emotional distress.

Research shows that most calls to the Lifeline can be managed and resolved through a consultation on the phone; however, if a person needs an emergency, in-person response, 988 counselors are trained to connect the person in crisis with a mobile response team, which may be a behavioral health team or first responder team (or a combination of both) who will meet the person at their place of crisis. For more information, please visit: <https://mha.ohio.gov/about-us/priorities/ohios-988-implementation>.

FDA Notice on Transitioning certain OTC antimicrobial products to Rx

The FDA published Guidance for Industry (GFI) #263 in June 2021 which outlined a plan for transitioning certain over-the-counter (OTC) antimicrobial products for animals to prescription (Rx) status. As outlined in FDA's Guidance for Industry (GFI) #263, we expect approved animal drug products containing medically important antimicrobials that are currently available as OTC products to transition to Rx status beginning in June 2023. To help prepare for this transition, FDA/CVM is conducting outreach to increase awareness about this expected change. Outreach efforts so far have included disseminating information in September to some target audiences (TX, AZ, OR) through radio and social media.

CVM has also developed some written materials that we hope will be helpful. Below are links for species-specific fact sheets - these include information on products/indications that will be transitioning as part of GFI 263 and information on how interested animal owners can locate a vet. Also linked below are a brochure and poster which detail the importance of veterinary involvement as products transition to Rx.

Antibiotic Stewardship in Veterinary Medicine Brochure – <https://www.fda.gov/media/162067/download>

Español – <https://www.fda.gov/media/162068/download>

Antibiotic Stewardship Poster – <https://www.fda.gov/media/162075/download>

Español – <https://www.fda.gov/media/162076/download>

Antibiotic Stewardship in Beef and Dairy Cattle - <https://www.fda.gov/media/162069/download>

Español – <https://www.fda.gov/media/162070/download>

Antibiotic Stewardship in Poultry – <https://www.fda.gov/media/162071/download>

Español – <https://www.fda.gov/media/162072/download>

Antibiotic Stewardship in Sheep and Goats – <https://www.fda.gov/media/162073/download>

Español – <https://www.fda.gov/media/162074/download>

In addition, CVM has posted a [list of affected applications](#) on its website as well as a [Farmer and Rancher Q&A](#).

Name Changes: The Board has received several inquiries regarding practicing veterinary medicine under a maiden or different name. The veterinarian may maintain their maiden name if that is the name on their veterinary license, they sign their charts with that name, and the clients know them by the maiden name...even though their driver's license may be in another (married) name.

Name changes may be initiated through the Online Service Request of the licensee's Elicense account with:

1. Copy of Valid Driver's License or State Identification Card with the new name (Note: the copy of the driver's license must clearly show the picture and name of the licensee);
2. Copy of marriage certificate;
3. Divorce or dissolution decree indicating the current name of the licensee/applicant;
4. Probate or other court order approving a legal name change; or
5. U.S. Immigration and Citizenship Services issued Green Card

Sorrow: It was with deep and heartfelt regret that we learned of the passing of Dr. John (Jack) Walkenhorst who resided in Lebanon, Ohio and served on the Board of Directors in 2022. His insight and expertise have been missed.