

WSR 26-07-008

PERMANENT RULES

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

(Veterinary Board of Governors)

[Filed March 6, 2026, 8:24 a.m., effective April 6, 2026]

Effective Date of Rule: Thirty-one days after filing.

Purpose: Veterinary technicians and unregistered assistants; supervision and delegation of animal health care tasks from licensed veterinarians. The veterinary board of governors (board) is adopting amendments to animal health care tasks in WAC 246-935-050 to align Washington state with industry standards. The adopted amendments designate the animal health care tasks that may be delegated to veterinary technicians and unregistered assistants and the level of supervision that is required for each task. For readability purposes, the board has reformatted the rule to list individual tasks and the required level of supervision in a categorized table format.

The board is also adopting a new definition for "general anesthesia" and is updating the current definition of "immediate supervision" as related to unregistered assistants in WAC 246-935-010. These updates are consistent with and clarify amendments made to the animal health care tasks rule.

Finally, the board is adopting updates in subsection WAC 246-935-040 (2)(b) to strengthen the intent of the rule and move the language to the beginning of the section. The amendment clarifies the responsibilities of the supervising veterinarian in relation to the delegation of animal health tasks to veterinary technicians and unregistered assistants.

Citation of Rules Affected by this Order: Amending WAC 246-935-010, 246-935-040, and 246-935-050.

Statutory Authority for Adoption: RCW 18.92.030.

Adopted under notice filed as WSR 25-21-126 on October 21, 2025.

Changes Other than Editing from Proposed to Adopted Version: Language in WAC 246-935-050(2) was changed from "... delegated by the veterinarian, or otherwise restricted ..." to "... otherwise restricted that are delegated by the veterinarian" to align with the requirements in WAC 246-935-040.

Language in WAC 246-935-050(3) was changed as follows:

Proposed language: A licensed veterinary technician or unregistered assistant may perform the following animal health care tasks under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian as indicated in the tables categorized in this subsection.

Adopted language: A licensed veterinary technician may perform the following animal health care tasks under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian as indicated in the tables categorized in this subsection. An unregistered assistant may perform the following animal health care tasks under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian or licensed veterinary technician as indicated in the tables categorized in this subsection.

A final cost-benefit analysis is available by contacting Poppy Budrow, P.O. Box 47852, Olympia, WA 98504-7852, phone 564-669-0026, TTY 711, email poppy.budrow@doh.wa.gov, website www.doh.wa.gov.

Number of Sections Adopted in Order to Comply with Federal Statute: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; Federal Rules or Standards: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; or Recently Enacted State Statutes: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted at the Request of a Nongovernmental Entity: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted on the Agency's own Initiative: New 0, Amended 3, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted in Order to Clarify, Streamline, or Reform Agency Procedures: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted using Negotiated Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; Pilot Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; or Other Alternative Rule Making: New 0, Amended 3, Repealed 0.

Date Adopted: March 6, 2026.

Katherine Bibi, DVM, Chair  
Veterinary Board of Governors

## RDS-6329.5

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 09-15-120, filed 7/17/09, effective 8/17/09)

**WAC 246-935-010 Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Anesthesia maintenance" means maintaining adequate depth of anesthesia through control of the amount and type of drug(s) delivered to the animal patient.

(2) "Anesthesia monitoring" means measuring, reporting, and recording vital signs.

(3) "Direct supervision" means the (~~veterinary~~) supervisor is on the premises, is quickly and easily available and the animal patient has been examined by a veterinarian at such times as acceptable veterinary medical practice requires, consistent with the particular delegated animal health care task.

(4) "Emergency" means that the animal patient has a life-threatening condition where immediate treatment is necessary to sustain life or avoid significant injury and morbidity.

(5) "General anesthesia" means a state of unconsciousness produced by anesthetic agents, with absence of response to painful stimuli over the entire body, in which the animal patient is without protective reflexes, and in which cardiovascular function may be impaired.

(6) "Immediate supervision" means the supervisor is in audible and visual range of the animal patient and the person treating the patient. Immediate supervision of an unregistered assistant requires consultation and instruction from the supervisor.

(~~(+6)~~) (7) "Indirect supervision" means the supervisor is not on the premises, but has given either written or oral instructions for treatment of the animal patient and the animal patient has been examined by a veterinarian at such times as acceptable veterinary medical practice requires, consistent with the particular delegated animal health care task and the animal patient is not anesthetized.

(~~(+7)~~) (8) "Licensed veterinary technician" means any person who has met the requirements of RCW 18.92.015 and who is licensed as required by chapter 18.92 RCW.

~~((8))~~ (9) "Supervisor" means a veterinarian or a licensed veterinary technician.

~~((9))~~ (10) "Unregistered assistant" means any individual who is not a veterinary technician or veterinarian.

~~((10))~~ (11) "Veterinarian" means a person ~~((authorized by))~~ licensed under chapter 18.92 RCW to practice veterinary medicine in the state of Washington.

~~((11))~~ (12) "Veterinary medical facility" is any premises, unit, structure or vehicle where any animal patient is received ~~((and/))~~ or confined, in order to provide veterinary medicine, surgery, or dentistry as defined in RCW 18.92.010.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 09-15-120, filed 7/17/09, effective 8/17/09)

**WAC 246-935-040 Responsibilities of a veterinarian supervising a licensed veterinary technician or an unregistered assistant.** It is the supervising veterinarian's responsibility to delegate animal health care tasks only if the licensed veterinary technician or unregistered assistant is qualified, competent, educated, trained, and able. The supervising veterinarian shall ensure the delegated task is appropriate for the species of the animal patient.

(1) A veterinarian must not delegate:

(a) To any licensed veterinary technician the performance of any animal health care services not authorized by WAC 246-935-040 or 246-935-050.

(b) To any unregistered assistant the performance of any animal health care services not authorized by WAC 246-935-040 or 246-935-050.

(2) The supervising veterinarian shall:

(a) Have legal responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of the animal patient which the licensed veterinary technician or unregistered assistant serves.

~~(b) ((Delegate animal health care tasks only if the licensed veterinary technician or unregistered assistant is qualified to perform the task, and the task is not precluded by the medical condition of the animal patient.~~

~~(c))~~ Use the level of supervision required for a specific task.

~~((d))~~ (c) Make all decisions relating to the diagnosis, treatment, management, and future disposition of an animal patient.

~~((e))~~ (d) Limit the number of unregistered assistants under indirect supervision to that which is appropriate for the circumstances.

~~((f))~~ (e) Allow licensed veterinary technicians and unregistered assistants the right and responsibility to refuse to perform duties they are not legally or technically able to perform.

(3) A supervising veterinarian shall examine the animal patient prior to the delegation of any animal health care task to either a licensed veterinary technician or unregistered assistant. The examination of the animal patient must be conducted at the times and in the manner consistent with veterinary medicine practice, and the particular delegated animal health care task.

(4) If a licensed veterinary technician is authorized to provide supervision for an unregistered assistant performing a specified health care task, the licensed veterinary technician ~~((shall))~~ must be under the same degree of supervision by the veterinarian, as if the licensed veterinary technician were performing the task.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 16-03-086, filed 1/20/16, effective 2/20/16)

**WAC 246-935-050 Animal health care tasks.** No individual, other than a licensed veterinary technician, may advertise or offer ((her/his)) their services in a manner calculated to lead others to believe that ((she/he is)) they are a trained or licensed veterinary technician.

(1) Licensed veterinary technicians and unregistered assistants are prohibited from performing the following activities:

- (a) Surgery except as outlined below;
- (b) Diagnosis and prognosis;
- (c) Prescribing drugs, medication or appliances;
- (d) Initiation of treatment without prior instruction by a veterinarian except as outlined under emergency animal care.

(2) ~~((Immediate supervision. Unregistered assistants are not authorized to perform the tasks in this section. A licensed veterinary technician may perform the following tasks only under the immediate supervision of a veterinarian: Dental extractions.~~

~~(3) Direct supervision. Unregistered assistants are not authorized to perform the tasks in this section. A licensed veterinary technician may perform the following tasks only under the direct supervision of a veterinarian:~~

- ~~(a) Anesthesia:~~
  - ~~(i) Induction, including preanesthesia;~~
  - ~~(ii) Maintenance;~~
  - ~~(iii) Monitoring.~~
- ~~(b) Application of casts and splints;~~
- ~~(c) Floating teeth;~~
- ~~(d) Intraperitoneal injections;~~
- ~~(e) Blood administration;~~
- ~~(f) Closure, including suturing, of prepared skin wound or gingival incision;~~
- ~~(g) Arterial and central venous catheters.~~

~~(4) Indirect supervision. Unregistered assistants are not authorized to perform the tasks in this section. A licensed veterinary technician may perform the following tasks only under the indirect supervision of a veterinarian:~~

- ~~(a) Intravenous injections into uncatheterized vein;~~
- ~~(b) Centesis, including fine needle aspirates;~~
- ~~(c) Unobstructed bladder catheter;~~
- ~~(d) Diagnostic procedures:~~
  - ~~(i) Fecal analysis;~~
  - ~~(ii) Electrocardiograms;~~
  - ~~(iii) Blood pressure;~~
  - ~~(iv) Cytology analysis, including urinalysis and hematology;~~
  - ~~(v) Microbiology.~~
- ~~(e) Placement and use of nasogastric and orogastric tubes for gavage, lavage, or reflux;~~
- ~~(f) Ophthalmological procedures:~~
  - ~~(i) Tear production testing;~~
  - ~~(ii) Topical anesthetic application;~~
  - ~~(iii) Fluorescein staining of the cornea;~~
  - ~~(iv) Tonometry.~~

~~(g) Tasks authorized to be performed under immediate or direct supervision for unregistered assistants, may be performed by licensed~~

~~veterinary technicians under indirect supervision unless otherwise restricted.~~

~~(5) Immediate supervision for unregistered assistants. An unregistered assistant may perform the following tasks only under the immediate supervision of a veterinarian or licensed veterinary technician:~~

- ~~(a) Place and secure an intravenous catheter;~~
- ~~(b) Monitor vital signs of an anesthetized patient;~~
- ~~(c) Dental prophylaxis.~~

~~(6) Direct supervision for unregistered assistant. An unregistered assistant may perform the following tasks only under the direct supervision of a veterinarian or licensed veterinary technician:~~

~~(a) Intravenous injection into catheterized vein;~~  
~~(b) Vaccines (except for rabies and those diseases described in subsection (8) of this section) with the veterinarian's verification signature on an appropriate certificate;~~

- ~~(c) Imaging procedures;~~
- ~~(d) Removal of sutures, drain tubes and staples;~~
- ~~(e) Bandaging;~~
- ~~(f) Removal of exposed foreign bodies;~~
- ~~(g) Lab sample collection and test preparation (not evaluation)~~

~~to include:~~

- ~~(i) Venipuncture;~~
- ~~(ii) Skin scraping.~~
- ~~(h) Microchip implantation;~~
- ~~(i) Enema;~~
- ~~(j) Ear flush;~~
- ~~(k) Perform electrocardiogram and blood pressure measurements;~~
- ~~(l) Intramuscular and subcutaneous injection;~~
- ~~(m) Massage except where regulated.~~

~~(7) Indirect supervision for unregistered assistants. An unregistered assistant must always be under the indirect supervision of a veterinarian or licensed veterinary technician, except as listed in subsections (5) and (6) of this section. Tasks not specifically listed or otherwise restricted may be performed by a licensed veterinary technician or unregistered assistant under the indirect supervision of a veterinarian.~~

~~(8) Veterinary biologics. Licensed veterinary technicians and unregistered assistants may only administer veterinary biologics for rabies and those diseases listed in WAC 16-42-026(1) under the direct supervision of a veterinarian.~~

~~(9)) Tasks not specifically listed or otherwise restricted that are delegated by the veterinarian may be performed by a licensed veterinary technician or unregistered assistant under the indirect supervision of a veterinarian.~~

(3) A licensed veterinary technician may perform the following animal health care tasks under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian as indicated in the tables categorized in this subsection. An unregistered assistant may perform the following animal health care tasks under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian or licensed veterinary technician as indicated in the tables categorized in this subsection.

#### **Table A: Anesthesia**

Task	Licensed Veterinary Technician			Unregistered Assistant			
	Immediate	Direct	Indirect	Immediate	Direct	Indirect	Prohibited
Induction of anesthesia		X					X
Maintenance of anesthesia		X		X (requires supervisor consultation)			
Monitor sedated or anesthetized patient			X	X			
Intubation		X					X

**Table B: Bandaging**

Task	Licensed Veterinary Technician			Unregistered Assistant			
	Immediate	Direct	Indirect	Immediate	Direct	Indirect	Prohibited
Application of casts, splints, and slings		X					X
Closure, including suturing of prepared skin wound or gingival incision		X					X
Removal of sutures, drain tubes, and staples			X		X		
Removal of exposed foreign bodies			X		X		

**Table C: Centesis Procedures**

Task	Licensed Veterinary Technician			Unregistered Assistant			
	Immediate	Direct	Indirect	Immediate	Direct	Indirect	Prohibited
Centesis of abdominal, thoracic, ocular, or cerebrospinal fluids except the urinary bladder	X						X
Cystocentesis			X				X
Fine needle aspirate of any other area			X	X			

**Table D: Dental Procedures**

Task	Licensed Veterinary Technician			Unregistered Assistant			
	Immediate	Direct	Indirect	Immediate	Direct	Indirect	Prohibited
Single root (except canine tooth) extractions not requiring sectioning of the tooth or sectioning of the bone or incision of gingiva	X						X
Dental prophy			X	X			
Floating teeth		X					X

**Table E: Procedures**

Task	Licensed Veterinary Technician			Unregistered Assistant			
	Immediate	Direct	Indirect	Immediate	Direct	Indirect	Prohibited
Blood pressure			X		X		
Cytology analysis including urine sediment and basic hematology			X		X		

<u>Task</u>	<u>Licensed Veterinary Technician</u>			<u>Unregistered Assistant</u>			
	<u>Immediate</u>	<u>Direct</u>	<u>Indirect</u>	<u>Immediate</u>	<u>Direct</u>	<u>Indirect</u>	<u>Prohibited</u>
<u>Electrocardiogram measurement</u>			X		X		
<u>Fecal analysis</u>			X		X		
<u>Urine dipstick and specific gravity</u>			X		X		
<u>Placement of a urinary catheter in unobstructed animal</u>			X				X
<u>Acquisition of diagnostic images</u>			X		X		
<u>Placement of nasogastric and orogastric tubes</u>			X				X
<u>Use of nasogastric and orogastric tubes</u>			X		X		
<u>Skin scraping</u>			X		X		
<u>Euthanasia</u>		X					X
<u>Carbon dioxide and blood oxygen saturation</u>			X		X		

**Table F: Injections**

<u>Task</u>	<u>Licensed Veterinary Technician</u>			<u>Unregistered Assistant</u>			
	<u>Immediate</u>	<u>Direct</u>	<u>Indirect</u>	<u>Immediate</u>	<u>Direct</u>	<u>Indirect</u>	<u>Prohibited</u>
<u>Intramuscular and subcutaneous injections</u>			X		X		
<u>Intraperitoneal injections</u>		X					X
<u>Intra-testicular block for local anesthesia</u>			X	X			
<u>Peripheral nerve block and epidurals</u>		X					X
<u>Intravenous injection in uncatheterized vein</u>			X	X			
<u>Microchip implantation</u>			X		X		
<u>Vaccines (except rabies and those diseases described in subsection (8) of this section) with the veterinarian's verification signature on an appropriate certificate</u>			X		X		

**Table G: Veterinary Biologics**

<u>Task</u>	<u>Licensed Veterinary Technician</u>			<u>Unregistered Assistant</u>			
	<u>Immediate</u>	<u>Direct</u>	<u>Indirect</u>	<u>Immediate</u>	<u>Direct</u>	<u>Indirect</u>	<u>Prohibited</u>
<u>Veterinary biologics for rabies and those diseases listed in WAC 16-42-026(1)</u>		X			X		

**Table H: Intravenous Devices**

Task	Licensed Veterinary Technician			Unregistered Assistant			
	Immediate	Direct	Indirect	Immediate	Direct	Indirect	Prohibited
Placement of arterial and central venous catheters		X					X
Place and secure an IV catheter			X		X		
Blood and blood product administration		X					X

**Table I: Lab Sample Collection and Test Preparation (not evaluation)**

Task	Licensed Veterinary Technician			Unregistered Assistant			
	Immediate	Direct	Indirect	Immediate	Direct	Indirect	Prohibited
Venipuncture			X		X		

**Table J: Ophthalmological Procedures**

Task	Licensed Veterinary Technician			Unregistered Assistant			
	Immediate	Direct	Indirect	Immediate	Direct	Indirect	Prohibited
Tear production testing			X		X		
Topical anesthetic application			X		X		
Fluorescein staining of cornea			X		X		
Eye pressures/ tonometry			X		X		

**Table K: Other**

Task	Licensed Veterinary Technician			Unregistered Assistant			
	Immediate	Direct	Indirect	Immediate	Direct	Indirect	Prohibited
Enema			X		X		
Ear flush			X		X		
Massage (except where regulated)			X		X		
Noninvasive cardiopulmonary resuscitation and basic first aid procedures			X			X	
Packaging, preparation, administration, or delivery of controlled substances, see also: WAC 246-935-420			X				X
Ear tipping (for the identification of sterilized cats)		X		X			

(4) Emergency animal care: Under conditions of an emergency, a licensed veterinary technician and unregistered assistant may render certain life saving aid to an animal patient as indicated in the table in this subsection. Nothing in the table shall be construed to prohibit the provision of basic first aid to animals in the absence of a veterinarian or licensed veterinary technician.

Task	Licensed Veterinary Technician			Unregistered Assistant			
	Immediate	Direct	Indirect	Immediate	Direct	Indirect	Prohibited
<u>Administer pharmacologic agents and parenteral fluids only after communication with a veterinarian</u>			X			X	
<u>Utilize basic life support including noninvasive cardiopulmonary resuscitation and basic first aid procedures</u>			X			X	
<u>Provide other aid upon the order of a licensed veterinarian as outlined in this section</u>			X			X	

(5) Rabies vaccinations require an appropriate rabies certificate. The certificate is considered part of the medical record and must contain at least the following information:

- (a) Owner's name, address, and telephone number;
- (b) Species, age, breed, sex, size, name, and predominant colors/markings;
- (c) Month, day, and year of vaccination;
- (d) Month, day, and year of next vaccination due date;
- (e) Product name and identification of manufacturer;
- (f) Effective date of vaccine, example: One year, three years;
- (g) Vaccine serial or lot number; and
- (h) Veterinarian's name, license number, address, and signature.

~~((10))~~ (6) To be authorized to dispense pharmaceuticals, an unregistered assistant(s) must be registered as a veterinary medication clerk under chapter 246-937 WAC.

~~((11) Emergency animal care. Under conditions of an emergency, a licensed veterinary technician and unregistered assistant may render certain life saving aid to an animal patient.~~

- ~~(a) A licensed veterinary technician may:
 
  - ~~(i) Apply emergency cardiopulmonary resuscitation and first-aid procedures and all tasks as listed in subsections (3), (4), (5), and (6) of this section;~~
  - ~~(ii) Administer pharmacologic agents and parenteral fluids only after communication with a veterinarian.~~~~
- ~~(b) An unregistered assistant may:
 
  - ~~(i) Apply noninvasive cardiopulmonary resuscitation and basic first aid procedures;~~
  - ~~(ii) Provide other aid upon the order of a licensed veterinarian as outlined in this section.)~~~~