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No. 60 of 2024

VETERINARY MEDICINE ACT, 2024

AN ACT TO MAKE PROVISION FOR THE REGISTRATION AND LICENSING OF VETERINARIANS, THE REGISTRATION OF VETERINARY PARA-PROFESSIONALS, THE REGULATION OF THE PRACTICE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE AND RELATED PURPOSES.

[Date of Assent - 18th December, 2024]

Enacted by the Parliament of The Bahamas

PART I - PRELIMINARY

1. Short title and commencement.

(1) This Act shall be cited as the Veterinary Medicine Act, 2024.

(2) This Act shall come into operation on such date as may be appointed by the Minister by notice published in the *Gazette*.

2. Interpretation.

In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires—

"**animal"** means all living beings other than humans;

"**Association**" means the Veterinary Medical Association of The Bahamas;

"**certificate of registration**" means a certificate issued by the Council under sections 15(8), 16(3), 17(4), and 20(4);

"**chairperson"** means the chairperson or deputy chairperson of the Council elected under section 4(6);

"**Council"** means The Bahamas Veterinary Council established under section 3;

"**licence"** means a licence issued to a veterinarian under section 28;

"**Minister**" means the Minister responsible for Veterinary services and Animal Disease;

"**register"** means a register established and maintained by the Council under section 21;

"**Registrar"** means the Registrar of the Council appointed under section 10(1);

"**veterinary health care facility"** includes consulting room, office, outpatient clinic, inpatient clinic, hospital, laboratory, and premises approved by the Council for purposes of diagnosis, treatment and management of diseases, disorders and injuries affecting the health of domestic and wild animals;

"**veterinary medicine"** means the branch of medicine that deals with the prevention, control, diagnosis, treatment, and management of disease, disorder, and injury in domestic and wild animals;

"veterinary para-professional" means a person registered under section 20;

"**veterinarian"** means a person qualified to practice veterinary medicine under this Act;

"**veterinary specialist"** means a veterinarian who possesses additional qualifications and experience in a speciality of veterinary medicine and is registered under section 16.

PART II – THE BAHAMAS VETERINARY COUNCIL

3. Establishment and incorporation of the Council.

(1) There is established, a body to be known as The Bahamas Veterinary Council.

(2) The Council shall be a body corporate with perpetual succession and a common seal, with power to acquire, hold, and dispose of land and other property of whatever kind.

4. Membership of the Council.

(1) The Council shall consist of nine members—

(a) the Director of Veterinary Services appointed under section 12 of The Bahamas Agricultural Health and Food Safety Authority Act 2016 *(No.3 of 2016)*, *ex officio*;

(b) two veterinarians registered under this Act and employed in the public service;

(c) four veterinarians registered under this Act and nominated by the Veterinary Medical Association of The Bahamas;

(d) one veterinary para-professional registered under this Act; and

(e) one other person.

(2) The members referred to in paragraphs (c), (d), and (e) of subsection (1), shall be appointed by the Minister by notice published in the *Gazette.*

(3) The members referred to in paragraphs (a), and (b) of subsection (1) may, in writing, designate a suitable person to represent them at the meetings of the Council.

(4) No person shall serve as a member of the Council if such person —

(a) is not permanently resident in The Bahamas; or

(b) has at any time been convicted of an offence for which he is liable to imprisonment for six months or more,

(5) The first meeting of the Council shall be convened by the Minister.

(6) The members shall elect a chairperson and deputy chairperson from their number for each term of the Council.

5. Tenure of office.

(1) The members of the Council appointed under paragraphs(c), (d) and (e) of section 4 (1) shall hold office for a term of three years and subject to subsection (2), shall be eligible for reappointment for one further term.

(2) The Minister may by Order revoke the appointment of any member of the Council appointed under paragraphs(c), (d) and (e) of section 4 (1) if he is satisfied that the member —

(a) has been absent from three consecutive meetings without the permission of the chairperson;

(b) has become bankrupt;

(c) is incapacitated by physical or mental illness;

(d) ceases to be qualified for membership of the Council;

(e) being a member of the Council appointed under paragraphs (c), and (d) of section 4 (1), fails or neglects to pay the prescribed fees under section 29; or

(f) is otherwise unable or unfit to discharge the functions of member of the Council.

(3) Any member of the Council may at any time resign his office by instrument in writing addressed to the Minister.

(4) Every resignation of a member shall take effect from the date of receipt by the Minister of the instrument of resignation.

(5) The Minister shall appoint a person to serve as a member in the place of any member of the Council in the case of -

(a) death;

(b) resignation;

(c) absence from The Bahamas for six consecutive months;

(d) revocation of appointment under subsection (2); or

(e) inability to act by reason of physical or mental illness or other incapacity of the member,

and a member so appointed under this subsection shall serve until a substantive appointment is made.

6. Functions, duties and powers of the Council.

The functions of the Council are to —

(a) consider and approve the qualifications of veterinarians, and veterinary para-professionals who apply for registration under this Act;

(b) consider and approve the qualifications of veterinarians registered and licensed under this Act;

(c) register and licence persons who satisfy the requirements for registration and licensing as veterinarians under this Act;

(d) register veterinary para-professionals under this Act;

(e) regulate the standards of the practice of veterinary medicine;

(f) establish and maintain a system of ongoing assessment of —

(i) the adequacy of training of veterinarians to ensure conformity with established national and international standards;

(ii) the ability and competency of a veterinarian to provide veterinary medical services;

(g) prescribe standards of professional conduct and establish a code of ethics for the practice of veterinary medicine and ensure the standards of professional conduct and the code of ethics are adhered to by veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals;

(h) regulate the use of veterinary medication specified in the *Sixth Schedule*;

(i) prescribe courses for continuing education training for veterinarians;

(j) initiate, promote, support or recommend participation in programmes to improve the practice of veterinary medicine, and improve the ability of para-professionals to assist veterinarians in the practice of veterinary medicine;

(k) prescribe the number of continuing education course hours required for renewal of licences for veterinarians;

(l) investigate the professional conduct or the capability of veterinarians or specialists to practice veterinary medicine;

(m) advise the Minister on any matter relating to veterinary medicine;

(n) maintain the registers and keep records of all persons registered under the Act;

(o) prescribe fees payable for registration, licensing, and any other matter the Council is required to do to carry out its functions and duties under this Act; and

(p) carry out any other function to improve, promote and advance the practice of veterinary medicine in The Bahamas.

7. Meetings and procedures of the Council.

The *First Schedule* shall apply to the proceedings of the Council.

8. Delegation by the Council.

(1) The Council may establish committees for the performance of its functions under this Act.

(2) Subject to this Act, the Council may delegate to a committee established under subsection (1), the exercise of any of the Council's powers or the performance of any of the Council's functions and duties under this Act.

9. Remuneration of Council members.

There shall be paid to the members of the Council, such remuneration or allowances for expenses as are approved by the Minister.

10. Registrar.

(1) The Minister shall appoint a veterinarian registered under the Act to be Registrar and Secretary of the Council.

(2) Where the Registrar is absent, or for any reason unable to perform the functions of his office, the Minister shall appoint a person to act as Registra**r.**

11. Duties of Registrar.

The duties of the Registrar are to —

(a) open and maintain the registers under section 21;

(b) issue certificates of registration;

(c) correct the registers under section 23 to reflect changes in addresses, qualifications or other particulars relating to persons registered under the Act ;

(d) remove from the registers the name of persons in circumstances referred to in section 23;

(e) issue licences;

(f) keep a record of persons licensed to practice veterinary medicine;

(g) carry out any other duty conferred on the Registrar under this Act.

12. Employees of the Council.

The Council may—

(a) appoint employees at the remuneration and on the terms and conditions approved by the Minister; and

(b) engage under contracts of service, professional and technical assistance as are necessary to carry out the functions of the Council.

13. Search of buildings.

(1) The Council shall appoint suitable persons to be inspectors for this Act.

(2) Subject to subsection (3), where an inspector has reasonable grounds to believe or to suspect that a person is practising veterinary medicine without being registered and licensed under this Act, the inspector may enter and search any building or place where the inspector reasonably suspects the practice of veterinary medicine is being carried on.

(3) An inspector shall not enter any building or place to search without a search warrant issued by a Magistrate and without first presenting his certificate of appointment to the occupiers of the building or place.

(4) Any person who prevents or obstructs an inspector from entering, and searching a building or place suspected of being used for the practice of veterinary medicine in contravention of this Act, commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of thirty thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years or to both such fine and imprisonment.

(5) An inspector shall be accompanied on an inspection under this section by a police officer.

PART III – REGISTRATION AND PRACTICE

VETERINARIAN

14. Practice as a veterinarian.

(1) No person shall practise, or hold himself out, whether directly or indirectly, as qualified to practise as a veterinarian, unless the person is registered and licensed under this Act.

(2) No organization or institution shall offer veterinary services unless the organization has a registered and licensed veterinarian in its employment

(3) A person shall be deemed to practise veterinary medicine who, without a licence to practice-

(a) alleges, implies or states that he is qualified to practise veterinary medicine;

(b) holds himself out by advertisement, sign, or statement of any kind, as being qualified to practise veterinary medicine;

(c) diagnoses, or offers to diagnose, or attempts by any means whatsoever to diagnose, an animal disease, ailment, deformity, defect, or injury;

(d) examines or advises upon, or offers to examine or advise upon, the physical or other condition of an animal;

(e) prescribes and administers any veterinary medication specified in the *Sixth Schedule,* or any serum, other medication, or any substance or remedy, whether for the cure, treatment, or prevention, of any animal disease, ailment, deformity, defect, or injury;

(f) treats any animal for the cure or prevention of any animal disease or ailment without the advice and supervision of a veterinarian registered and licensed under the Act;

(g) performs any operation or manipulation, or applies any apparatus or appliance for the treatment of any deformity, defect or injury;

(h) prescribes or sells any veterinary medication specified in the *Sixth Schedule*; or

(i) inspects and examines carcasses and the meat and organs of animals slaughtered for human consumption.

(4) Any person who is not a registered and licensed veterinarian and does any act specified in subsection (3), commits an offence and shall be liable, on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding fifty thousand dollars or to imprisonment not exceeding one year or to both.

(5) The prohibitions referred to in subsection (1), shall not apply to —

(a) registered and licensed veterinarians in private practice;

(b) registered and licensed veterinarian specialists;

(c) registered veterinarians employed in the public service; or

(d) foreign veterinarians temporarily registered.

15. Qualification for registration of veterinarian.

(1) A person shall be qualified to be registered as a veterinarian under this Act if he—

(a) is a legal resident of The Bahamas;

(b) holds a degree in veterinary medicine from a university accredited by the National Accreditation and Equivalency Council of The Bahamas established by the Equivalency Council of The Bahamas Act (*Ch. 47A)*; and

(c) is a member of the Veterinary Medical Association of The Bahamas.

(2) An application under this section shall be made to the Registrar in Form 1A set out in the *Fourth Schedule* and shall be accompanied by the fees set out in the *Fifth Schedule*.

(3) The Council shall review the application to determine if the applicant meets the qualifications for registration as a veterinarian under this Act and if the Council is satisfied that the applicant is qualified for registration, the Council shall approve the application.

(4) Where the Council is not satisfied with an applicant's qualifications, the Council shall refuse the application and the reasons for the refusal shall be given to the applicant in writing.

(5) A person registered by the Council under this section shall swear or affirm the veterinarian's oath set out in the *Third Schedule*, and shall be entitled to have his name entered in the register maintained by the Registrar for that purpose.

(6) Where the Council has determined the qualifications for registration of a veterinarian under this Act have been met, the Council shall on payment of the fee set out in the *Fifth Schedule* issue a certificate of registration in the Form 2A of the *Fourth Schedule*.

(7) Any person who practices veterinary medicine without being registered under this section or otherwise contravenes any other provisions of this section commits an offence and shall be liable, on conviction on information to a fine not exceeding one hundred thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year , or to both.

16. Veterinarian specialist registration

(1) Where a person is registered as a veterinarian and acquires additional qualifications and experience in a specialty of veterinary medicine, that person may apply to the Council to be registered as a specialist in the branch of veterinary medicine to which his additional qualifications and experience relate.

(2) An application under subsection (1) shall be in Form 1B of the *Fourth Schedule* and shall be accompanied by the fees set out in the *Fifth Schedule*.

(3) Where the Council approves the application for registration as a specialist in veterinary medicine, the Council shall, on payment of the fee set out in the *Fifth Schedule* issue a certificate of registration in Form 2B in the *Fourth Schedule* which shall be signed by the Registrar.

17. Temporary registration of foreign veterinarian.

(1) The Council may register for a period not exceeding six months, a foreign veterinarian who —

(a) applies to the Council for temporary registration;

(b) satisfies the Council that he resides temporarily in The Bahamas; and

(c) satisfies the qualification requirements referred to, in section 15.

(2) An application under subsection (1) shall be in Form 1C in the *Fourth Schedule* and shall be accompanied by the fees set out in the *Fifth Schedule*.

(3) The Council may temporarily register a foreign veterinarian who satisfies the Council that he is qualified to practice veterinary medicine under this Act, and —

(a) is doing special work in the field of veterinary medicine or research, and is sponsored by a University or College, an international organization, or such other inter-governmental organization or body approved by the Minister, after consultation with the Council; or

(b) is a veterinarian employed by an international organization and assigned to The Bahamas to act as a consultant or specialist in veterinary medicine to the Minister in matters relating to veterinary medicine.

(4) Where the Council is satisfied that the foreign veterinarian —

(a) is qualified to practice veterinary medicine under the Act; and

(b) meets the prescribed standards,

the Council may register the foreign veterinarian for the purposes mentioned in this section and grant a certificate of registration in the Form 2C in the *Fourth Schedule* on payment of the fee set out in the *Fifth Schedule*.

18. Reinstatement of registration.

(1) Where a person registered as a veterinarian under this Act, vacates or suspends his practice for a period of ten years or less, and desires to return to practice as a veterinarian, that person shall apply to the Council for reinstatement of registration

(2) The Council, if satisfied that the veterinarian remains qualified to be registered as a veterinarian under this Act, shall reinstate the registration.

VETERINARY PARA-PROFESSIONALS

19. Requirement for registration of veterinary para-professionals.

(1) No person shall practice, or hold himself out, whether directly or indirectly, as practising or being able to practice as a veterinary para-professional or to take up employment as such, unless he is registered under this Act.

(2) A person practices as a veterinary para-professional if he carries out any service specified in the *Second Schedule*.

(3) The Council shall review the application to determine if the applicant meets the qualifications for registration under this Act, and may approve or refuse the application for registration.

(4) Where an application for registration is refused, the reasons for the refusal shall be given to the applicant in writing.

(5) The Minister may, by Order, on the advice of the Council, amend the *Second Schedule.*

20. Qualification and registration of veterinary para-professionals.

(1) A person shall be qualified for registration as a veterinary para-professional if the person —

(a) is a legal resident of The Bahamas, and

(b) has successfully completed —

(i) a Bachelors' degree in veterinary health science, veterinary nursing, animal health science or veterinary technology, at an accredited institution approved by the Council; or

(ii) a post-secondary school training course of two years or more in veterinary health science, veterinary nursing, animal health science or veterinary technology, at an accredited institution approved by the Council.

(2) An application under subsection (1) shall be in Form 3A set out in the *Fourth Schedule*, and shall be accompanied by—

(a) the fee prescribed in the Fifth Schedule;

(b) certified copies of relevant certificates.

(3) A person registered under this section, shall swear or affirm the oath set out in the *Third Schedule* and shall be entitled to have his name entered in the register of veterinary para-professionals maintained by the Registrar for that purpose.

(4) Every person registered as a para-professional under this section shall, upon payment of the fee set out in the Fifth Schedule be issued a certificate of registration set out in Form 3B in the *Fourth Schedule.*

21. Registers.

(1) The Registrar shall open and maintain a separate register for—

(a) veterinarians registered under section 15, into which shall be entered the names, qualifications, addresses and the dates of registration;

(b) specialists in veterinary medicine registered under section 16 into which shall be entered the names, qualifications, addresses, the dates of registration and the speciality for which the veterinarian is registered;

(c) temporary registration of veterinarians into which shall be entered the names, qualifications, addresses, the dates of temporary registration of persons qualified for registration under section 17, the sponsor of every veterinarian, and any condition or restriction to which registration may be subject;

(d) veterinary para-professionals registered under section 19 into which shall be entered the names, qualifications, addresses and the dates of registration;

(e) such other particulars as the Council may direct in respect of persons registered under this Act.

(2) The lists of persons registered under subsection (1) shall be published in the *Gazette* not later than the 1st January in every year, and may be published on the official website of the Association or the Council.

22. Confirmation of entries in registers.

(1) The Registrar shall not later than the 31st January in every year, publish a notice in the *Gazette* inviting all persons registered under the Act whose names appear on the list, to inspect the relevant register and confirm the particulars of their entries in the register within thirty days of the publication of the notice.

(2) A notice under subsection (1) shall specify the place at which the registers may be inspected.

23. Correction of registers.

(1) Pursuant to section 22, the Registrar shall make the necessary alterations or corrections to the particulars in the relevant register maintained for the purposes of this Act.

(2) Every person registered under the Act shall notify the Registrar within the time mentioned in section 22(1) of a change in any of the particulars entered in the register.

(3) Notification under subsection (2) shall be in writing and shall be accompanied by certified copies of documents attesting to the intended change.

(4) The Registrar may, pursuant to subsection (1) —

(a) make corrections to any particulars in the register;

(b) remove the name of any deceased person;

(c) remove the name of any person who has requested in writing that his name be removed from the register;

(d) remove the name of any person registered under the Act who is convicted of an offence under section 39;

(e) remove the name of any person, if satisfied that the person has left The Bahamas and has not returned within twelve months, unless —

(i) the person has notified the Council in writing of his absence before the expiry of the said twelve months;

(ii) the person has requested that his registration be continued during the period of his absence; and

(iii) the person continued, during the period of his absence, to pay the licence fees as required under section 29 ; or

(f) correct clerical errors.

(5) A copy of the register corrected under this section shall be published in the *Gazette* before the 30th June in each year and shall be evidence in any court of the registration and qualifications of any person mentioned in the register.

(6) Any person whose name does not appear in the relevant register after the 30 June in any year, shall be deemed not to be registered under this Act.

PART IV – PRACTICE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE UNDER THE ACT

24. Persons entitled to practise.

(1) Subject to subsection (2), every veterinarian registered under this Act must hold a licence issued under section 28 to entitle that veterinarian to practice veterinary medicine.

(2) A veterinarian registered under this Act employed in the public service shall not require a licence to practise veterinary medicine in the course of that employment.

(3) A veterinary para-professional registered under this Act shall be entitled to perform the services set out in the *Second Schedule* as an employee of-

(a) the public service under the supervision of a veterinarian registered under this Act and employed in the public service; or

(b) a health care facility under the supervision of a veterinarian in private practice and registered and licensed under this Act.

(4) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (3), a veterinary para-professional may render necessary first-aid in matters not specified in the *Second Schedule* in cases of emergency, and shall refer such cases to a veterinarian in private practice as soon as possible.

(5) A veterinarian practising under this Act, shall be entitled to demand, sue for, and recover in any court of competent jurisdiction, reasonable charges for professional services, and the cost of medication, appliances, and materials supplied by the veterinarian.

25. Obligation of veterinarians.

(1) Every veterinarian licensed under this Act shall provide a written report, in the prescribed form to the Director of Veterinary Services on any notifiable disease encountered in his practice.

(2) A veterinarian licensed under this Act who fails to comply with the duty to report the presence of a notifiable disease under subsection (1), commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of fifty thousand dollars and in addition, the Council may take appropriate disciplinary measures pursuant to Part VI of this Act.

(3) For this section, “notifiable disease” means a disease listed by the Director of Veterinarian Services under section 16(1) of the Animal Health and

Production Act, 2016 (*No. 7 of 2016*) and published by Order of the Minister in the *Gazette* under section 16(4) of the Animal Health Production Act 2016 (*No. 7 of 2016*).

26. Exempted Persons.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, it shall not be an offence for any person who is registered and not licensed as a veterinarian under this Act, or is not registered as a veterinary para-professional and is in the service of—

(a) The Bahamas Agricultural Health and Food Safety Authority established under The Bahamas Agricultural Health and Food Safety Authority Act (*No. 4 of 2016*);

(b) a livestock-based research organization where research is conducted for education purposes; or

(c) such other authority, organization or institution as the Minister may, by notice in the *Gazette* declare to be an approved body for the purpose of this provision,

if in the course of his service he undertakes such procedures, as he may be required to perform under the supervision of a veterinarian registered under this Act.

27. Use of titles.

(1) A person registered under the Act is entitled to take and use the title and description of "veterinarian" or "veterinary para-professional" and—

(a) in the case of a veterinarian, a prefix of the title "Doctor" in an abbreviated form followed by his name as it appears in the appropriate register, and thereafter by abbreviated formats of degrees and any other special qualifications he may possess; and

(b) in the case of a veterinary para-professional, his name as it appears in the appropriate register followed by any suitable words in parentheses indicating he is a veterinary para-professional.

(2) No person registered under the Act shall take or use, or affix to or use, in connection with his premises, any title or description, in addition to that of veterinarian or veterinary para-professional, other than as indicated by the particulars of his qualification, or other details permitted by the Council, and entered in the register.

28. Grant and renewal of licence.

(1) A veterinarian registered under this Act may apply for a licence in Form 5 in the *Fourth Schedule*, to engage in private practice and if granted, the veterinarian shall renew the licence annually before the expiry of the existing licence.

(2) The Council shall not renew the licence of a veterinarian under subsection (1), unless he completes the required number of continuing education course hours prescribed by the Council.

(3) The Council shall require every veterinarian registered under this Act to provide documents, including certificates, or other information for the Council's consideration as evidence of his completion of the required course hours mentioned in subsection (2), before the Council issues a renewal of his licence.

29. Licence fees.

(1) A veterinarian shall pay to the Council on application for a licence and on application for a renewal of a licence under section 28, the fee set out in the *Fifth Schedule.*

(2) The licence fee shall be paid before the 31st December of every year.

(3) The payment of the licence fee shall be evidenced by a receipt, or by an endorsement by the Council on the licence.

30. Professional charges not recoverable by a person not registered under the Act.

No veterinarian in private practice, shall be entitled to recover in any court, any fees, or charges for expenses incurred, in giving professional service or advice, or cost of any medicine, material, substance or appliance supplied, unless the veterinarian is registered and licensed under this Act.

31. Certification.

(1) No document required to be certified by a veterinarian shall be valid unless signed by a veterinarian registered under this Act.

(2) A person who signs a document in contravention of the provisions of subsection (1), and any person who knowingly and falsely alters such certificate or document, commits an offence and is liable, on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding fifty thousand dollars or to imprisonment not exceeding one year or to both.

PART V – FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

32. Funds of the Council

The funds of the Council shall comprise —

(a) monies appropriated by Parliament;

(b) monies which accrue to, or vest in, the Council in the course of the exercise of its powers or the performance of its functions under this Act;

(c) monies from any other source provided by donations or loans to the Council; and

(d) such fees as may be paid to the Council.

33. Annual estimates

(1) At least four months before the commencement of each financial year, the Council shall cause to be prepared estimates of revenue and expenditure of the Council for the next financial year.

(2) The annual estimates shall be prepared in accordance with the Public Finance Management Act 2023 *(No. 4 of 2023)*, shall make provisions for all the estimated expenditure of the Council for the financial year concerned and shall provide for —

(a) the payment of salaries, allowances and other charges in respect of the employees of the Council;

(b) payments of allowances and any other emoluments to the members of the Council;

(c) payment of pensions, gratuities and other charges in respect of retirement benefits;

(d) the proper maintenance of buildings, other property and grounds of the Council;

(e) the acquisition, maintenance, repair and replacement of the equipment and other movable or immovable property of the Council; and

(f) the creation of such reserve funds to meet future or contingent liabilities in respect of retirement benefits, where applicable, insurance or replacement of buildings or equipment, or such other matters as the Council may deem appropriate.

(3) The annual estimates shall be approved by the Council before the commencement of the financial year to which they relate and after the approval, the sum provided shall not be altered without the consent of the Council.

34. Accounts and Audit.

(1) The Council shall cause to be kept all proper books and records of accounts relating to the income, expenditure, assets and liabilities of the Council.

(2) Within a period of three months after the end of a financial year, the Council shall submit to the Auditor-General for that year together with—

(a) a statement of income and expenditure during the year; and

(b) a statement of the assets and liabilities of the Council as on the last day of that year.

PART VI – INQUIRIES AND DISCIPLINE BY THE COUNCIL

35. Inquiries by the Council.

(1) The Council may, either on its own motion or on a complaint by any person, institute an inquiry into the conduct of a veterinarian registered or licensed under the Act for an alleged act or omission in contravention of this Act or regulations.

(2) The Council shall form a committee comprising three of its members delegated by the chairperson to inquire into the conduct of any veterinarian against whom a complaint under subsection (1) is made.

(3) One member of the Council delegated under subsection (2) shall be appointed by the Council to preside over the inquiry.

(4) An inquiry under subsection (1), shall be held on the date and at the time and place determined by the committee, and the Registrar shall inform in writing, the complainant and the person complained against, of the date and time of the inquiry.

(5) The committee may seek the advice and assistance of the Attorney-General on matters pertaining to law, procedure and evidence, or to lead the evidence at the inquiry and to cross-examine the witnesses.

(6) The person presiding over the inquiry shall keep or cause to be kept, a record of the proceedings, in writing or by way of electronic recording.

(7) Any person against whom an inquiry is instituted under this section, shall be entitled, either in person, or through a counsel and attorney, to—

(a) be present at the inquiry;

(b) cross-examine any person who gives evidence at the inquiry;

(c) inspect any book, document, record or other evidence adduced in evidence;

(d) be heard in his defence; and

(e) call evidence in support of his defence.

(8) The committee may summon any person who, in its opinion, is able to furnish any information of material importance to the inquiry, or who the committee has reason to believe has in his possession, custody or control,

any book, document or record including any record in electronic format relevant to the inquiry, to appear before the committee, and to produce such book, document or record in his possession, custody or control.

(9) The committee may retain for examination any book, document or record produced by a person summoned under subsection (8).

(10) The person presiding at the inquiry may examine or cause any person present at the inquiry to be examined on oath.

(11) A person who fails or neglects, when summoned by the committee, to attend as a witness or to produce any books, documents or records, or who gives false evidence at an inquiry under this section knowing such evidence to be false, commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of ten thousand dollars.

(12) Where the person against whom a complaint is lodged under this section, is a member of the Council, the member shall be excused from proceedings of the Council pending inquiry into the alleged misconduct.

36. Action after inquiry.

(1) If the complaint against a person, is found to be established by an inquiry under section 35, the committee shall forward a report of the findings of the committee to the Council.

(2) The Council after considering the report from the committee may make a disciplinary order —

(a) removing the person's name from the register;

(b) suspending the registration, and or, licence for such period as the Council thinks fit;

(c) cancelling the registration, and or, licence; or

(d) referring the complaint to the police for further investigation.

(3) A decision by the Council after an inquiry held under section 35, shall be communicated to the person affected no later than seven days after the date of the decision.

(4) Any person aggrieved by a decision of the Council under this section may appeal to the Supreme Court within twenty-one days from the date of receipt of the Council's decision and if an appeal is filed, the decision of the Council shall be suspended pending the determination of the appeal.

(5) Where a person against whom a disciplinary order is made by the Council does not appeal within the time limited for appeal, the Registrar shall, after the expiry of the time, publish in the *Gazette* and in a daily newspaper in national circulation, the cancellation and removal of the name of the veterinarian from the register, and or, the cancellation of a licence under this section.

(6) Where a person's appeal is dismissed and the disciplinary order of the Council affirmed, the Registrar shall publish in the *Gazette* and a daily newspaper in national circulation, the order for the cancellation and removal of a name from the register, and or, the order for the cancellation of a licence and the veterinarian shall deliver his certificate of registration and the licence to the Registrar.

(7) Where the appeal is allowed, the decision of the Council shall-

(a) vacate the disciplinary order made by the Council;

(b) reinstate the name of the veterinarian to the register; and

(c) return the certificate of registration and, or the licence to the veterinarian.

37. Veterinarian charged with criminal offence.

(1) If any registered, and or licensed veterinarian is charged with a criminal offence, that veterinarian's registration, and or, licence may be suspended pending determination of the charge by a court.

(2) If any registered, and or, licensed person is convicted by a court of any offence punishable on conviction to a term of imprisonment of two years or more, the Council may —

(a) cancel the registration;

(b) remove that person name from the register;

(c) require the return of the certificate of registration; or

(d) cancel the licence.

38. Restoration of registration and licence

The Council may, by order, either of its own motion or on the application of the veterinarian, cause the name of the veterinarian whose registration is cancelled or removed, to be restored to the register or where the veterinarian's licence has been suspended or cancelled, terminate the suspension or cancellation of the licence, and grant a new licence on such terms and conditions for the payment of outstanding fees as the Council may determine.

PART VII – OFFENCES AND PENALTIES

39. Offences.

Any person who—

(a) employs a veterinarian who is not registered and licensed under this Act for the purpose of practising veterinary medicine;

(b) employs a veterinary para-professional who is not registered under this Act;

(c) fraudulently causes or permits a false or incorrect entry to be made on any register kept under this Act

(d) being a veterinarian registered under the Act, allows unqualified persons to practice veterinary medicine unlawfully under his registration certificate or licence

(e) not being a person registered under the Act, holds himself out as being so registered, or falsely takes or uses any title or description implying, he is a veterinarian or veterinary para-professional or is qualified to practice veterinary medicine;

(f) forges a document, or, knowing a document to be forged, utters the document by purporting the document to be a certificate, receipt, approval or other document issued under this Act

(g) impersonates any person registered under this Act;

(h) fails, neglects or refuses to furnish or provide any information or particulars required by this Act;

(I) obstructs or hinders a member of the Council or employee of the Council, or any person duly authorized by the Council, or the Registrar, in the exercise of his powers under this Act;

(j) refuses, neglects or fails to comply with any conditions imposed on him by the Council under this Act;

(k) wilfully destroys, damages or renders illegible or causes another person to destroy, damage or render illegible any entry in a register kept by the Registrar , or any certificate, licence or other document issued under this Act;

(l) operates a veterinary health care facility used in the practice of veterinary medicine without the approval and licensing by the Council;

(m) being a practising veterinarian or veterinary para-professional, discovers a notifiable disease and fails or neglects to report the notifiable disease to the Director of Veterinary Services pursuant to section 16 of the Animal Health and Production Act, 2016 *(No. 7 of 2016)*;

(n) being a practising veterinarian or veterinary para-professional, is in breach of the oath administered by the Council;

(o) fails to surrender to the Council, the certificate of registration when called upon to do so by the Council;

(p) contravenes any of the provisions of this Act,

commits an offence and is liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding fifty thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year or to both

PART VIII – MISCELLANEOUS

40. Service of documents.

(1) Any document, notification, or summons required or authorized by or under this Act may be served—

(a) by delivering it personally to the person by electronic or physical means; or

(b) by registered mail.

(2) A summons must—

(a) if it is to be served under subsection (1)(a), be served at least 48 hours before the attendance of the witness is required:

(b) if it is to be served under subsection (1)(b), be served at least 10 days before the attendance of the witness is required.

41. Common seal of the Council.

(1) The common seal of the Council shall be kept by the Registrar, or other person designated by the Council.

(2) Subject to subsection (3), the affixing of the common seal on any document of the Council shall be authenticated by the signature of the chairperson, the deputy chairperson or the Registrar.

(3) The Council shall, in the absence of either the chairperson, the deputy chairperson or the Registrar, nominate one of its members to authenticate the seal on behalf of either the chairperson, deputy chairperson or the Registrar.

(4) A contract or instrument not required to be executed under seal, may be executed on behalf of the Council by any person specifically authorised by the Council in writing.

42. Certificate as property of the Council.

A certificate of registration issued under this Act shall remain the property of the Council.

43. Protection from personal liability.

Nothing done by a member of the Council or by an officer, or employee of the Council shall, if the matter or thing is done in the execution of any of the

functions, powers or duties of the Council, render the member, officer, or employee personally liable to any action, claim or demand whatsoever arising from the matter or thing done.

44. Liability of the Council for damages.

The provisions of section 43 shall not relieve the Council of liability to pay compensation to any person for injury to him, or for damage, or loss of the person's property, or to any of his interests, by the exercise of a function, power or duty conferred by this Act which is lawfully exercised under this Act.

45. Amendment of Fifth Schedule.

The Minister may by order amend the *Fifth Schedule*.

46. Regulations.

The Minister may make regulations for—

(a) the process of registration of veterinarians, specialist veterinarians, temporary registration of foreign veterinarians and the registration of veterinary para-professionals;

(b) establishing the process of licensing of veterinarians in private practice, and foreign veterinarians ;

(c) prescribing fees for registration and licensing;

(d) prescribing the standards of practice of veterinary medicine;

(e) establishing a process of ongoing assessment of the adequacy of the training of veterinarians and the ability and competency of veterinarians;

(f) prescribing standards of professional conduct and establishing a code of conduct for veterinarians;

(g) prescribing courses of training for veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals and for veterinary medicine research;

(h) prescribing the continuing education hours required for renewal of licences;

(i) the procedures to be followed by the Council in any disciplinary inquiry under section 35;

(j) the enforcement of the attendance of witnesses and the production of books and other documents for the purposes of a disciplinary inquiry under section 35;

(k) any form to be used in connection with any matter, or any fee to be charged under this Act;

(l) conditions under which training institutions shall be approved and examinations conducted for purposes of this Act;

(m) the conduct of examinations authorized or permitted under the provisions of this Act and for the carrying into effect of any scheme or curriculum for education in the veterinary profession;

(n) advertisement of services by veterinarians;

(o) the appointment of inspectors for the purposes of entering and searching premises on which an unregistered person is reasonably suspected of practising veterinary medicine or practising as a veterinary para-professional;

(p) establishing modalities for the election of members of the Council;

(q) the procedure for reinstatement of persons registered under the Act;

(r) the handling of animals to safeguard their welfare;

(s) the creation of registers for persons registered under the Act; and

(t) anything required by this Act to be prescribed.

PART IX – REPEAL AND TRANSITIONAL

47. Repeal of Ch. 245.

The Veterinary Surgeons Act (*Ch. 245*) is repealed.

48. Transitional.

(1) All the rights, interests and assets of The Bahamas Veterinary Board existing immediately before the commencement of this Act shall be transferred to, and vested in, the Council for the purposes of this Act.-

(2) Any contract or instrument executed by The Bahamas Veterinary Board shall be of the same force and effect against or in favour of the Council and shall be enforceable as fully and effectively as if instead of The Bahamas Veterinary Board, the Council had been named as a party to the contract or instrument.

(3) The Council shall be subject to all the obligations and liabilities to which The Bahamas Veterinary Board was subject immediately before the commencement of this Act, and all other persons shall have the same rights, powers and remedies against the Council as they had against The Bahamas Veterinary Board before the commencement of this Act.

(4) Any proceedings or causes of action pending or existing immediately before the commencement of this Act, by or against The Bahamas Veterinary Board in respect of any right, interest, obligation or liability may be continued, and any determination of a court, may be enforced by or against the Council to the same extent that such proceedings or causes

of action or determination might have been continued, commenced or enforced by or against The Bahamas Veterinary Board.

(5) Any person who is registered under the Veterinary Surgeons Act as a veterinary surgeon, before the commencement of this Act shall continue to be registered as a veterinarian as if registered under this Act, and except for veterinarians employed in the public service, shall apply for a licence to practice under section 28 within 90 days of the coming into operation of this Act.

FIRST SCHEDULE

(section 7)

CONDUCT OF BUSINESS AND AFFAIRS OF THE COUNCIL

(1) The Council shall meet once every month for the transaction of its business, and such meetings shall be held at such places and times and on such days as the Council may determine.

(2) Any member of the Council may attend a meeting virtually.

(3) The chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Council at which he is present, and in case of his absence the deputy chairperson shall preside, but in the absence of both the chairperson and deputy chairperson, members present and constituting a quorum shall elect one from their number to be the chairperson for purposes of the meeting.

(4) The quorum of meetings of the Council shall be five.

(5) The decisions of the Council shall be by a simple majority of the votes of the members present, but in the case of an equality of votes, the chairperson, deputy chairperson, or person presiding shall have a casting vote.

(6) The minutes of each meeting shall be kept in the minute book, after the meetings are confirmed by the Council and signed by the chairperson at a subsequent meeting of the Council.

(7) The deliberations and minutes of meetings of the Council shall be confidential.

(8) No proceedings of the Council shall be invalid by reason only of a vacancy among the members thereof.

(9) Subject to this Schedule, the Council may determine its own procedure.

SECOND SCHEDULE

(section 19(2), 24(3) and 24(4))

SERVICES WHICH MAY BE OFFERED BY A VETERINARY PARA-PROFESSIONAL.

The following may be performed by a veterinary para-professional —

(1) Implementation of parasite control programmes in animals.

(2) Meat inspection and other duties under the relevant legislation and authorized by the Director of Veterinary Services.

(3) Delegated duties pertaining to identifying notifiable animal diseases, including various eradication schemes.

(4) Extension services, including training and education of farmers and the wider community.

(5) The collection, and evaluation of data and compiling reports from supervised epidemiological and research projects.

(6) The collection of samples, including blood smears, impression smears, skin scrapings, and fecal samples (excluding the collection of samples by biopsy).

(7) The examination and analysis of samples, including blood smears, skin and urine analysis and fecal samples and clinical chemistry.

(8) Assisting with basic post-mortem examinations and the collection and submission of samples for examination.

(9) Artificial insemination provided that the veterinary para-professional is approved as an inseminator with Government veterinary services.

(10) Administration of veterinary medications prescribed by a registered, and licensed veterinarian, giving vaccinations, assisting in research, the performance of laboratory procedures and examinations.

(11) Any other function which may be assigned by a veterinarian pursuant to this Act.

THIRD SCHEDULE

(section 15(5) and 20(3))

VETERINARIAN'S OATH

I ……....……, BEING ADMITTED TO THE PROFESSION OF VETERINARY MEDICINE, ……....……., SOLEMNLY SWEAR/AFFIRM THAT I SHALL USE MY SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FOR THE BENEFIT OF SOCIETY THROUGH THE PROTECTION OF ANIMAL HEALTH, THE RELIEF OF ANIMAL SUFFERING, THE CONSERVATION OF LIVESTOCK RESOURCES, THE PROMOTION OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND SHALL AT ALL TIMES SUPPORT THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE.

I SHALL PRACTICE MY PROFESSION CONSCIENTIOUSLY WITH

DIGNITY AND IN KEEPING WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE ETHICS OF VETERINARY MEDICINE.

I ACCEPT AS A LIFELONG OBLIGATION THE CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT OF MY PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCE.

SO HELP ME GOD.

SIGNED …….

DATE …….

…….

REGISTRAR

THE BAHAMAS VETERINARY COUNCIL

THE VETERINARY PARA-PROFESSIONAL'S OATH

I ……..... BEING ADMITTED AS A

VETERINARY PARA-PROFESSIONAL, SOLEMNLY SWEAR/AFFIRM

THAT I SHALL DEDICATE MYSELF TO AIDING SOCIETY BY PROVIDING EXCELLENT CARE AND SERVICES FOR ANIMALS TO ALLEVIATE ANIMAL SUFFERING AND TO PROMOTING PUBLIC HEALTH.

I ACCEPT MY OBLIGATION TO PRACTISE MY PROFESSION CONSCIENTIOUSLY AND WITH SENSITIVITY, ADHERING TO THE PROFESSION'S CODE OF ETHICS, AND FURTHERING MY KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCE THROUGH A COMMITMENT TO LIFELONG LEARNING.

SO HELP ME GOD.

SIGNED……

DATE ……

……

REGISTRAR

THE BAHAMAS VETERINARY COUNCIL

FOURTH SCHEDULE

(Sections 15(2), 15(6), 16(2), 16(3), 17(2), 20(2), 20(4), and 28(1))

FORM 1A

APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION AS A VETERINARIAN

The Registrar,

The Bahamas Veterinary Council,

Nassau

I,_____of _____

hereby make an application for registration as a veterinarian, and forward herewith the prescribed fee of $BSD ._____

My qualifications are _____

I enclose:-

1) the following certificates/diplomas _____

2) the veterinarian's oath as required by section 15(5) of the Veterinary Medicine Act.

.....

Date: Signature

FORM 1B

APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION AS A SPECIALIST VETERINARIAN

The Registrar,

The Bahamas Veterinary Council,

Nassau

I, _____of _____
hereby make an application for registration as a Specialist Veterinarian, and forward herewith the prescribed fee of $ BSD_____
My qualifications are _____

I enclose:-

1) the following certificates/diplomas _____

2) the veterinarian's oath as required by section 15(5) of the Veterinary Medicine Act.

Date Signature

FORM 1C

APPLICATION FOR TEMPORARY REGISTRATION OF A FOREIGN VETERINARIAN

The Registrar,

The Bahamas Veterinary Council,

Nassau

I, _____ of _____
hereby make an application for temporary registration as a Foreign Veterinarian, and forward herewith the prescribed fee of $ BSD_____
My qualifications are _____

I enclose:-

1) the following certificates/diplomas _____

2) the veterinarian's oath as required by section 15(5) of the Veterinary

Medicine Act.

Date Signature

FORM 2A

CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION AS A VETERINARIAN

.....

is hereby registered as a veterinarian under section 15(6) of the Veterinary Medicine Act.

Given this ..... day of ..... , 20 .....

Fee: $BSD .....

.....

Registrar,

The Bahamas Veterinary Council

FORM 2 B

CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION AS A SPECIALIST VETERINARIAN

.....

is hereby registered as a veterinarian under section of the Veterinary Medicine Act.

Given this ..... day of ..... , 20 .....

Fee: $BSD .....

.....

Registrar,

The Bahamas Veterinary Council

FORM 2 C

CERTIFICATE OF TEMPORARY REGISTRATION OF A FOREIGN VETERINARIAN

.....

is hereby registered as a veterinarian under section 17(3)-of the Veterinary Medicine Act.

Given this ..... day of ..... , 20 .....

Fee: $BSD .....

.....

Registrar,

The Bahamas Veterinary Council

FORM 3A

APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION AS A VETERINARY PARA-PROFESSIONAL

The Registrar,

The Bahamas Veterinary Council,

Nassau

I, ...of .....
hereby make an application for registration as a Veterinary Para-professional, and forward herewith the prescribed fee of $BSD .....
My qualifications are ….....

I enclose-

(1) the following certificates/diplomas….....
….....

(2) the veterinary para-professional's oath as required by section 20 (3)of the Veterinary Medicine Act.

Date Signature

FORM 3B

CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION AS A VETERINARY PARA-PROFESSIONAL

.....

Is hereby registered as a para-professional in accordance with the provisions of section 21(5) of the Veterinary Medicine Act.

Given this ..... day of ....., 20.....

Fee:$BSD .....

.....

Registrar,
The Bahamas Veterinary Council

FORM 4
LICENCE TO PRACTICE AS A VETERINARIAN

.....of
Practice name: ….....
Physical address: .....P.O. Box ….....

Telephone: .....

Email: .....

Is hereby licensed to practice as a veterinarian in accordance with the provisions of section 28 of the Veterinary Medicine Act. This licence is subject to the conditions set out by The Bahamas Veterinary Council below:

CONDITIONS OF LICENCE:

…….....

.....

Dated this ..... day of ....., 20.....

Fee: $BDS .....

.....

Registrar,
The Bahamas Veterinary Council

FIFTH SCHEDULE

(Section 15(2), 15(8), 16(2), 16(3) 17(2), 17(4), 21(3), 21(5) 29(1) 30(1) and 45)

(PRESCRIBED FEES)

FEE	***SECTION***	***AMOUNT $***
Veterinarian application fee	Section 15(2)	$100.00
Veterinarian registration fee	Section 15(8)	$150.00
Veterinarian specialist application fee	Section 16(2)	$300.00
Veterinarian specialist registration fee	Section 16(3)	$500.00
Foreign veterinarian temporary application fee	Section 17(2)	$100.00
Foreign veterinarian temporary registration fee	Section 17(4)	$150.00
Veterinary para-professional application fee	Section 21(3)	$50.00
Veterinary para-professional registration fee	Section 21(5)	$100.00
Licence fee	Section 29 (1)	$250.00
Renewal Fee	Section 29(1)	$250.00

SIXTH SCHEDULE

(Section (6(h), 14(3(e), 14(3) (h))

VETERINARY MEDICATION

THERAPEUTIC DRUGS

(1) Antibiotics and Antimicrobials except those sold over the counter as topical ointments, sprays and rubs.

(2) Antiprotozoals.

(3) Analgesics except those sold over the counter at pharmacies.

(4) Anticoagulants.

(5) Antidepressants.

(6) Anti psychotics.

(7) Cardiovascular.

(8) Depressants.

(9) Anti-diabetics.

(10) Antispasmodics.

(11) Stimulants.

(12) Anti-epileptics.

(13) Anthelmintics except those sold over the counter at pharmacies.

(14) Anti-inflammatory (NSAIDS) except those sold over the counter at pharmacies.

(15) Tranquillizer and Sedatives.

(16) Anaesthetics to include general or local, except topical preparations sold over the counter at pharmacies as topical ointment, sprays and rubs.

(17) Antihistamines except those sold over the counter at pharmacies as topical ointments and rubs.

(18) Corticosteroids except those sold over the counter at pharmacies as topical ointments and rubs.

(19) Hormone substitutes.

(20) Vitamin injections.

(21) Antiseptic and Anti-maggot, except those sold over the counter at pharmacies.

(22) Infusions including IV fluids.

(23) Insecticides and Acaricides except those sold over the counter at pharmacies.

(24) Antivirals, Anti-fungals, and Antineoplastics.

(25) Anti bloat.

(26) Shampoos, sprays and mousses that contain anti-fungals, and/or insecticides and acaricides.

(27) Therapeutic diets (prescription foods).

(28) Narcotics- morphine, fentanyl, methadone and other opioids.

VETERINARY BIOLOGICALS:

(1) Vaccines.

(2) Toxoids.

(3) Bacterins.

(4) Antitoxins.

(5) Antiserum.

(6) Diagnostics.

(7) Immunomodulators.

(8) Allergenic extract.