



April 8, 2020

Dear ASV Colleagues,

As we navigate through this difficult time the creativity and innovation seen in our profession is inspiring. Veterinarians understand the importance of limiting our human contact, yet we are also needed to ensure animals receive essential medical care. Telemedicine is an important tool that can help us achieve these goals. In many states, in order for a veterinarian to practice telemedicine, there is a requirement of establishing a veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR) through an in-person physical examination or timely visits to the premises of a herd/population of animals (typically within the previous 12 months). During this public health crisis, there are animals in situations where the restrictions around establishing a VCPR through an in-person examination is preventing veterinarians' ability to care for patients in need.

Multiple states (AK, AZ, CO, ME, MI, PA, SC, VT, WV), current as of 4/7/2020, have enacted executive orders to provide a temporary waiver of the VCPR or a temporary allowance that a VCPR can be established through telemedicine and subsequent veterinary care (when appropriate) can be provided through telemedicine during this crisis condition. If you practice in a state that has not yet enacted provisions to this effect, we have provided a template below that you can personalize to contact your Governor's office as well as your state veterinary medical association and state veterinary board advocating for this temporary provision. Personalized requests from constituents are the most valuable for advocacy. Please note that many organizations and academic institutions have restrictions around advocacy as an organizational entity. Thus, this template is to be used for individual veterinarians advocating for themselves (not for their organization).

In addition, providing specific case examples to the AVMA (send email to coronavirus@avma.org) and your state VMA of how restrictions to telemedicine is impacting your ability to care for patients is extremely valuable.

Our membership - our friends and colleagues - are always in our thoughts. Especially during times of crisis we appreciate our collaborative work and shared mission.

Sincerely,

ASV Board of Directors

The mission of the
ASV is to advance and
support the practice
of shelter medicine
in order to improve
community animal
health and well-being.

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Link to find your Governor's contact information: <https://www.usa.gov/state-governor>

Honorable _____,

As a licensed veterinarian in the state of _____, I am called to continue my service to animals needing critical medical care during this crisis. I am also working to limit unnecessary human interaction, limit use of PPE to protect our community's health and contribute to the One Health approach for infectious disease management. A temporary legal provision to allow veterinarians to establish a veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR) through telemedicine and provide subsequent veterinary care when appropriate through telemedicine will help me and my colleagues to continue to provide essential veterinary services while following social distancing recommendations during the COVID-19 crisis.

Thank you for your leadership during this difficult time.

Sincerely,

Dear _____ Veterinary Medical Association,

As a licensed veterinarian and member of the _____VMA I am called to continue my service to animals needing critical medical care during this crisis. I am also working to limit unnecessary human interaction, limit the use of PPE to protect our community's health and contribute to the One Health approach for infectious disease management. A temporary legal provision to allow veterinarians to establish a veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR) through telemedicine and provide subsequent veterinary care when appropriate through telemedicine will help our association members to continue to provide essential veterinary services while following social distancing recommendations during the COVID-19 crisis. I encourage _____VMA to advocate to Governor _____ and our state board of veterinary medicine to enact legislation to allow for these temporary provisions.

Thank you for your leadership and advocacy for veterinarians in the state of _____ during this difficult time.

Sincerely,