

A-Engrossed Senate Bill 976

Ordered by the Senate April 7
Including Senate Amendments dated April 7

Sponsored by Senator NASH

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure. The statement includes a measure digest written in compliance with applicable readability standards.

Digest: The Act says a person might be allowed to check and see if cows are pregnant, even if the person is not a veterinarian. Allows the ODA to adopt rules to explain when this is okay. (Flesch Readability Score: 68.7).

[Digest: The Act says a person might be allowed to do certain jobs with animals, like taking care of horses' teeth or checking if cows are pregnant, even if they are not veterinarians. Allows the ODA to adopt rules to explain when this is okay. (Flesch Readability Score: 61.4).]

Allows an individual to *[perform equine dentistry and to]* verify whether cattle are pregnant without holding a valid license issued by the Oregon State Veterinary Medical Examining Board under certain circumstances. Permits the State Department of Agriculture to adopt rules.

Establishes the Task Force on Equine Dentistry. Directs the task force to report on findings to the interim committees of the Legislative Assembly related to agriculture no later than December 15, 2025.

Declares an emergency, effective on passage.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

Relating to providing animal health care; creating new provisions; amending ORS 596.321 and 686.040; and declaring an emergency.

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. ORS 686.040, as amended by section 10, chapter 30, Oregon Laws 2024, is amended to read:

686.040. (1) ORS 686.020 (1)(a) does not apply to **the following**:

(a) Commissioned veterinary officers of the United States Army, or those in the employ of other United States Government agencies while engaged in their official capacity, unless they enter into a private practice.

(b) An individual who has received training to verify whether cattle are pregnant and is performing pregnancy verification services on cattle within the scope of the individual's training.

(2) Nothing in ORS 167.322 or 686.020 (1)(a) shall be so construed as to prevent any person or the agent or employee of the person from practicing veterinary medicine and surgery or dentistry in a humane manner on any animal belonging to the person, agent or employee or for gratuitous services or from dehorning and vaccinating cattle for the person, agent or employee.

(3) Nothing in ORS 686.020 (1)(a) shall be so construed as to prevent the selling of veterinary remedies and instruments by a licensed pharmacist at the regular place of business of the licensed pharmacist.

(4) A practitioner of allied health methods may practice that method on animals without violating ORS 686.020 (1)(a), as long as the practice is in conformance with laws and rules governing

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 the practitioner's practice and the practice is upon referral from a licensed veterinarian for treat-
2 ment or therapy specified by the veterinarian.

3 (5) ORS 686.020 (1)(a) does not apply to the lay testing of poultry by the whole blood
4 agglutination test.

5 (6) A certified euthanasia technician holding an active, current certificate may inject sodium
6 pentobarbital, sedative and analgesic medications and any other euthanasia substance approved by
7 the Oregon State Veterinary Medical Examining Board without violating ORS 686.020 (1)(a).

8 (7) The board by rule may specify circumstances under which unlicensed persons may give
9 vaccinations, administer an anesthetic or otherwise assist in the practice of veterinary medicine.

10 (8) Any individual licensed as a veterinarian in another state may be used in consultation in this
11 state with a person licensed to practice veterinary medicine in this state provided the consultation
12 does not exceed 30 days in any 365 consecutive days.

13 (9) ORS 686.020 (1)(a) does not apply to authorized representatives of the State Department of
14 Agriculture in the discharge of any duty authorized by the department.

15 (10) ORS 686.020 (1)(a) does not apply to an unlicensed representative of a livestock association,
16 cow-testing association, or poultry association who, for the benefit of the association, takes blood
17 samples for laboratory tests for the diagnosis of livestock or poultry diseases, but only if this person
18 has received authorization from the State Department of Agriculture following a written request to
19 the department.

20 (11) ORS 686.020 (1)(a) does not apply to persons permitted by the State Department of Fish and
21 Wildlife to rehabilitate orphaned, sick or injured wildlife, as defined in ORS 496.004, for the purpose
22 of restoring the animals to the wild.

23 (12) ORS 686.020 (1)(a) does not apply to students, agents or employees of public or private ed-
24 ucational or medical research institutions involved in educational or research activities under the
25 auspices of those institutions.

26 (13) ORS 686.020 (1)(a) does not apply to:

27 (a) Veterinarians employed by Oregon State University;

28 (b) Instructors of veterinary courses; or

29 (c) Students of veterinary science who participate in the diagnosis and treatment of animals if
30 the students:

31 (A) Are participating in the diagnosis and treatment of animals while engaged in an educational
32 program approved by the board or a college of veterinary medicine accredited by the American
33 Veterinary Medical Association; and

34 (B) Are under the direct supervision of an Oregon licensed veterinarian or a veterinarian ap-
35 proved by the board or Oregon State University to supervise students in the educational program.

36 **(14) The State Department of Agriculture shall by rule specify circumstances under**
37 **which unlicensed persons may engage in activities described in subsection (1)(b) of this sec-**
38 **tion.**

39 **(15) The department shall inform individuals authorized to verify whether cattle are**
40 **pregnant of the requirement to report livestock diseases as required under ORS 596.321.**

41 **SECTION 2.** ORS 596.321 is amended to read:

42 596.321. (1) The State Department of Agriculture shall enact rules and regulations:

43 (a) Containing a list of livestock diseases that must be reported to the department by any person
44 practicing veterinary medicine in this state.

45 (b) Concerning the time and manner of reporting livestock diseases and any other information

1 considered reasonably necessary by the department.

2 (c) Regarding the time and manner of vaccinating female cattle against brucellosis.

3 (2) Any person practicing veterinary medicine in this state, having knowledge of the existence
4 of any livestock disease listed pursuant to subsection (1) of this section, shall immediately report the
5 disease to the department in the manner provided by rule or regulation.

6 (3) For the purposes of this section, “practicing veterinary medicine” includes individuals
7 authorized to verify whether cattle are pregnant under ORS 686.040 (1)(b).

8 **SECTION 3.** The amendments to ORS 596.321 and 686.040 by sections 1 and 2 of this 2025
9 Act become operative on January 1, 2026.

10 **SECTION 4.** (1) The Task Force on Equine Dentistry is established.

11 (2) The task force consists of five members appointed by the Director of Agriculture as
12 follows:

13 (a) Two members who represent statewide agriculture or livestock organizations.

14 (b) One member who represents a statewide veterinarian organization.

15 (c) One member who represents the State Department of Agriculture.

16 (d) One member who is the State Veterinarian, or the State Veterinarian’s designee.

17 (3) The task force shall identify ways to provide greater access to equine dentistry
18 throughout Oregon.

19 (4) A majority of the members of the task force constitutes a quorum for the transaction
20 of business.

21 (5) Official action by the task force requires the approval of a majority of the members
22 of the task force.

23 (6) The Director of Agriculture shall select one member of the task force to serve as
24 chairperson and another to serve as vice chairperson, for the terms and with the duties and
25 powers necessary for the performance of the functions of the offices as the director deter-
26 mines.

27 (7) If there is a vacancy for any cause, the appointing authority shall make an appoint-
28 ment to become immediately effective.

29 (8) The task force shall meet at times and places specified by the call of the chairperson
30 or of a majority of the members of the task force.

31 (9) The task force may adopt rules necessary for the operation of the task force.

32 (10) The task force shall submit a report in the manner provided in ORS 192.245, and may
33 include recommendations for legislation to an interim committee of the Legislative Assembly
34 related to agriculture no later than December 15, 2025.

35 (11) The State Department of Agriculture shall provide staff support to the task force.

36 (12) Members of the task force serve as volunteers on the task force and, unless they
37 are qualified members, as defined in ORS 292.495, are not entitled to compensation or re-
38 imbursement for expenses.

39 (13) All agencies of state government, as defined in ORS 174.111, are directed to assist
40 the task force in the performance of the duties of the task force and, to the extent permitted
41 by laws relating to confidentiality, to furnish information and advice the members of the task
42 force consider necessary to perform their duties.

43 (14) All appointments to the task force made under subsection (2) of this section must
44 be completed not more than 60 days after the effective date of this 2025 Act.

45 **SECTION 5.** Section 4 of this 2025 Act is repealed on December 31, 2026.

1 **SECTION 6. This 2025 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public**
2 **peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2025 Act takes effect**
3 **on its passage.**

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