

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 59th Legislature (2024)

HOUSE BILL 3196

By: Newton

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to professions and occupations;
amending 59 O.S. 2021, Section 698.33, which relates
to the Oklahoma Veterinary Practice Act; modifying
veterinary training program for rural Oklahoma;
updating references; and declaring an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 59 O.S. 2021, Section 698.33, is
amended to read as follows:

Section 698.33 A. There is hereby established the veterinary
training program for rural Oklahoma to be administered by the
Oklahoma State University ~~Center for~~ College of Veterinary Health
~~Sciences~~ Medicine. The program shall be developed and implemented
in order to provide encouragement, opportunities and incentives for
persons pursuing a veterinary medicine degree at Oklahoma State
University to locate their veterinary practice in rural Oklahoma
communities, and receive specialized training targeted to meet the
needs of livestock producers in rural Oklahoma communities.

1 B. Subject to available funds, each year the Veterinary Center
2 College may enter into program agreements with up to ~~three first-~~
3 ~~year five~~ veterinary students ~~or currently practicing large animal~~
4 ~~veterinarians with qualifying school loans, as determined by the~~
5 ~~Veterinary Center.~~ Preference shall be given to those students ~~and~~
6 focused on large animal veterinarians veterinary medicine who are
7 Oklahoma residents and who agree to serve in a community as
8 described in paragraph 3 of subsection D of this section, which is
9 determined by the Veterinary Center College to be an underserved
10 area for the practice of veterinary medicine.

11 C. Subject to available funds, each student ~~or large animal~~
12 ~~veterinarian~~ entering into a program agreement under this section
13 shall receive assistance in an amount not to exceed Twenty Thousand
14 Dollars (\$20,000.00) per year for not more than four (4) years for
15 tuition, books, supplies and other school expenses, and travel and
16 training expenses incurred by the student in pursuing a veterinary
17 medicine degree. Upon satisfaction of all commitments under the
18 provisions of the agreement and the provisions of this section, the
19 financial obligations pursuant to this section shall be deemed
20 satisfied and forgiven.

21 D. Each program agreement shall require that the person
22 receiving the assistance:

23 1. Complete the veterinary medicine degree program at ~~the~~
24 ~~Veterinary Center~~ Oklahoma State University;
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1 2. Complete all requirements in public health, livestock
2 biosecurity, foreign animal disease diagnosis, regulatory veterinary
3 medicine and zoonotic disease, and an externship and mentoring
4 requirement with a licensed, accredited veterinarian in rural
5 Oklahoma as required by the Veterinary ~~Center~~ College;

6 3. Engage in the full-time practice of veterinary medicine in
7 any community in Oklahoma which has a population not exceeding
8 twenty-five thousand (25,000) as determined by the most recent
9 Federal Decennial Census at the time the person entered into the
10 program agreement for a period of at least twelve (12) continuous
11 months for each separate year a student receives assistance under
12 the program, unless the obligation is otherwise satisfied as
13 provided in this section. If, after the date a program agreement
14 was entered into by the parties, a community no longer meets the
15 maximum population requirements provided in this paragraph, a person
16 engaging in the full-time practice of veterinary medicine pursuant
17 to the program agreement shall continue to practice in that
18 designated community; and

19 4. Commence the full-time practice of veterinary medicine in
20 that community within ninety (90) days after completion of the
21 person's degree program, or if the person enters a postdegree
22 training program, such as a graduate school or internship or
23 residency program, within ninety (90) days after completion of the
24 postdegree training program.

1 E. Upon the failure of a person to satisfy the obligation to
2 engage in the full-time practice of veterinary medicine in
3 accordance with the provisions of this section, that person shall
4 repay to the Veterinary ~~Center~~ College, within ninety (90) days of
5 the failure, the amount equal to the assistance provided to the
6 person less a prorated amount based on any periods of practice of
7 veterinary medicine meeting the requirements of this section, plus
8 interest at the prime rate of interest plus ~~two~~ four percent ~~(2%)~~
9 (4%) from the date the assistance accrued. The interest shall be
10 compounded annually.

11 F. An obligation to engage in the practice of veterinary
12 medicine in accordance with the provisions of this section shall be
13 postponed during:

14 1. Any period of temporary medical disability during which the
15 person obligated is unable to practice veterinary medicine due to
16 the disability; and

17 2. Any other period of postponement agreed to or determined in
18 accordance with criteria agreed to in the practice agreement.

19 G. An obligation to engage in the practice of veterinary
20 medicine in accordance with the provisions of the agreement and this
21 section shall be satisfied:

22 1. If the obligation to engage in the practice of veterinary
23 medicine in accordance with the agreement has been completed;

1 2. If, because of permanent disability, the person obligated is
2 unable to practice veterinary medicine; or

3 3. The person who is obligated dies.

4 H. The Veterinary ~~Center~~ College may adopt additional
5 provisions, requirements or conditions to participate in this
6 program as are practicable and appropriate to accomplish the
7 provisions of the program or may be required for the implementation
8 or administration of the program, and are not inconsistent with the
9 provisions of this section.

10 I. The Veterinary ~~Center~~ College shall not enter into any
11 program agreements pursuant to the provisions of this section after
12 July 1, 2025. All agreements entered into prior to such date shall
13 be valid.

14 SECTION 2. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
15 of the public peace, health or safety, an emergency is hereby
16 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
17 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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