



## State of Wisconsin

### Veterinary Examining Board

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#### Guidance Document VEB-GD-010 Animal Massage

Wis. Stat. § 89.02

Wis. Admin. Code § VE 1.44 and 1.48

4/22/25

#### **Topic**

This guidance document clarifies activities regarding animal massage.

#### **Relevant Statutes and Administrative Code**

Wisconsin Stat. § 89.02 (6) defines the practice of veterinary medicine as to examine into the fact or cause of animal health, disease or physical condition, or to treat, operate, prescribe or advise for the same, or to undertake, offer, advertise, announce, or hold out in any manner to do any of said acts, for compensation, direct or indirect, or in the expectation thereof.

Wisconsin Admin. Code § VE 1.44 (4) (a) allows a veterinarian to delegate the provision of nonsurgical treatment of animal diseases and conditions to certified veterinary technicians under the supervision of the veterinarian.

Wisconsin Admin. Code § VE 1.44 (8) allows a veterinarian to delegate the provision of nonsurgical veterinary treatment of animal diseases and conditions to an unlicensed assistance under the supervision of the veterinarian when the veterinarian is personally present on the premises where the services are provided.

Wisconsin Admin. Code § VE 1.48 (1) defines “Complementary, alternative, and integrative therapies” as a heterogeneous group of preventive, diagnostic, and therapeutic philosophies and practices. These therapies include:

- (a) Veterinary acupuncture, acutheraPy, and acupressure.
- (b) Veterinary homeopathy.
- (c) Veterinary manual or manipulative therapy, meaning therapies based on techniques practiced in osteopathy, chiropractic medicine, or physical medicine and therapy.
- (d) Veterinary nutraceutical therapy.
- (e) Veterinary phytotherapy.

Wisconsin Admin. Code § VE 1.48 (2) allows a veterinarian to make a referral to a client, for treatment of a patient by a license holder in another profession, using complimentary, alternative, or integrative therapies, as defined in Wisconsin Admin. Code § VE 1.48 (1) if the license holder, to whom the client and patient are referred, provides all of the following evidence to the veterinarian for performing the type of therapy for which the referral is being made:

- (a) The license holder's current licensing in good standing, with the applicable board through the department of safety and professional services.
- (b) The license holder's education, training, and experience in performing the therapy on an animal.

Wisconsin Admin. Code § VE 1.48 (3) provides that the VCPR, as defined in Wisconsin Stat. § 89.02 (8) does not extend to the provision of any complementary, alternative, or integrative therapy performed on a veterinarian's patient, under either of the following circumstances:

- (a) The therapy is performed by a license holder in another profession, where the veterinarian demonstrates meeting the requirements, in Wisconsin Admin. Code § VE 1.48 (2) , for making the referral to the license holder.
- (b) The veterinarian's client obtains any complementary, alternative, or integrative therapy services for a veterinarian's patient without a referral by the veterinarian.

### **Board Position**

The practice of animal massage, when it includes activities that are considered the practice of veterinary medicine as defined under Wisconsin Stat. § 89.02 (6), is considered a complementary, alternative, and integrative therapy (CAITS). CAITS are veterinary services that can be delegated in accordance with Wisconsin Admin. Code § VE 1.44 (4) (a) or VE 1.44 (8), or the client may be referred to a licensed massage therapist in accordance with Wisconsin Admin. Code § VE 1.48.

The practice of massage, when it does not include any activities that are the practice of veterinary medicine (for example, the massage therapist does not align, adjust, manipulate, offer animal rehabilitation services, use needles, apply any product, diagnose or prescribe), would not need to be delegated or referred in accordance with Wisconsin Stat. ch. 89 or Wisconsin Admin. Code ch. VE 1.