

VETERINARY ASSISTANT CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE PERMIT (VACSP)

Nancy Ehrlich, RVT – CaRVTA Legislative Committee

The Veterinary Medical Board (VMB) held a special telephone conference meeting on June 17, 2015 to finalize wording for the Veterinary Assistant Controlled Substance Permit (VACSP) language.

CVMA sponsored the legislation that allows unregistered assistants to administer all drugs, including controlled drugs, under the Direct or Indirect Supervision of a veterinarian. The legislation requires the VMB to write regulations setting up a program that allows assistants who want to be able to obtain or administer controlled drugs to be fingerprinted. Assistants who are found to be free of drug convictions will be issued a VACSP.

After hearing from CaRVTA, the VMB agreed that an assistant should be at least 18 years of age to apply for a VACSP. The hospital's licensee manager will be required to sign an agreement with the VACSP holder specifying that the VACSP holder must cease obtaining or administering controlled drugs immediately upon termination of the relationship with the licensee manager.

VACSP holders will also have to either wear a name tag with their VACSP # on it or post their permit in a prominent location visible to all clients.

There are several steps that a person will have to complete before they can obtain or administer controlled drugs:

- Apply for and receive a VACSP (be over 18, pass fingerprint check - \$50 fee for 2 yrs)
- Sign a Permit Holder/Licensee Manager Agreement
- Licensee Manager signs Licensee Manager Acknowledgement

Documents 2 & 3 must be filed with the VMB. Assistant cannot obtain controlled drugs until 2 & 3 are filed with VMB. The licensee manager is responsible to inform the VMB if they terminate the relationship with the VACSP holder. The VACSP holder may not access controlled drugs until they have a new agreement filed with the VMB. The VACSP can be revoked if the holder is convicted of a drug offense.

The new language will not be going for public hearing. It will be published for 45 days. If there are any comments, they may need to hold a hearing. Assuming there are no comments and there is no hearing, the regulation could be in effect in 6-9 months at the earliest. In the meantime, remember that assistants who access controlled drugs must be background checked and found free of drug convictions.

Veterinarians can be disciplined if they don't do this.