

MEDIA FACTSHEET – SECOND READING OF VETERINARY PRACTICE BILL

The Second Reading of the Veterinary Practice Bill was held in Parliament today (8 April 2026), following the introduction of the Bill by Minister of State for National Development and Trade and Industry, Mr Alvin Tan, on 6 March 2026.

The Bill provides the legal foundation for the establishment of a Veterinary Council to regulate the practice of veterinary medicine and uplift professional standards. This provides greater assurance that veterinarians meet established professional standards and are held accountable for their practice, while supporting the continued growth and development of the veterinary sector. While the Veterinary Council will oversee professional conduct and standards, the Animal & Veterinary Service (AVS), a cluster under the National Parks Board (NParks), will continue to regulate animal health and welfare, including disease management and biosecurity.

Pet ownership in Singapore has increased over the years, alongside the size, scope and complexity of the veterinary sector. The Veterinary Practice Bill addresses existing gaps in legislation by establishing a clear and consistent framework for professional registration, education and discipline.

Veterinary Practice Bill was developed following extensive stakeholder engagement

The Bill was developed following a comprehensive review of the veterinary sector and extensive stakeholder engagement. AVS has worked with the veterinary sector and other stakeholders since 2021 to shape this Bill together. A public consultation on the Bill was also held from 31 October 2025 to 28 November 2025, and feedback was received from over 100 respondents, including veterinary professionals and members of the public.

The summary of findings from the public consultation is as follows:

- **Broad Support for a Veterinary Council:** Many agreed on the need for a professional regulatory body, with suggestions for diverse representation, including specialists.

- Registration and accreditation: Respondents highlighted the importance of clear criteria for specialist registration and recognition of qualifications accredited by reputable international accreditation bodies.
- Clearer scope of veterinary practice: There was strong support for prohibiting non-duly qualified individuals from practising veterinary medicine, while allowing veterinary nurses and students to perform certain tasks under supervision
- Robust disciplinary framework: The new investigation and disciplinary process was welcomed, with calls for safeguards against conflicts of interest.
- Maintaining access to veterinary services: Concerns were raised about the transparency and pricing of veterinary services. As pricing and fees are not within the scope of the Bill, AVS will consider separate measures to address these concerns.

The Veterinary Practice Bill can be accessed at <https://go.gov.sg/vetpracticebill>.

Key components of the Veterinary Practice Bill

A) Composition of the Veterinary Council

The Bill provides for the establishment of a Veterinary Council, comprising a mixture of public- and private-sector members, appointed by the Minister for National Development. This includes:

- The Director-General, Animal Health and Welfare¹, and the Registrar, who are both public officers.
- The President of the Singapore Veterinary Association (SVA), who is elected by SVA members, and at least four other fully registered veterinarians (at least one with at least 10 years' experience) to provide industry representation and technical expertise.
- At least two laypersons, which are defined as non-veterinarians and can include legal professionals to represent public interest.

¹ Director-General, Animal Health and Welfare, is appointed by the Board of the National Parks Board, under Section 3 of the Animals and Birds Act

This ensures the Council benefits from professional expertise while remaining aligned with the public interest.

B) Registration of Veterinarians

The Bill introduces three categories of registration for veterinarians: full, restricted and specialist registration. See following table for details.

	Full	Restricted	Specialist
Purpose	- General practice - Most veterinarians will be registered under this tier	To address manpower gaps in niche fields of practice, including in the zoo or research institutes	Allowed to use specialist titles, such as “ophthalmologist” or “pathologist”
Eligibility Requirements	- Prescribed qualification in veterinary medicine conferred by a prescribed university; <u>or</u> - On an exceptional basis, veterinarians who hold a non-prescribed qualification, that is deemed to be of equal standing as a prescribed	Qualification in veterinary medicine, other than a prescribed (or equivalent) qualification, but have been assessed to have the necessary training, knowledge, skills, or experience; <u>and</u> Selected for employment in	- Veterinarians must first obtain full registration; <u>and</u> - Either hold an approved postgraduate qualification, or have gained the necessary special knowledge, skill and experience in a particular branch of

	qualification, and have been assessed to have the knowledge, skills, or experience necessary for the practice of veterinary medicine	an establishment recognised by the Veterinary Council. • Subject to specific conditions and restrictions, including on supervision by fully registered veterinarians approved by the Veterinary Council, scope or place of practice.	veterinary medicine.
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Under the Bill's transitional arrangements, all veterinarians holding a valid licence under the Animals and Birds Act will transit seamlessly to the new framework, with no disruption to their practice. Sessions with veterinarians will be held to explain the transition approach, and further engagements will also be carried out to address any questions or concerns they may have about the transition period and registration framework.

C) Provisions for other individuals in the veterinary sector

The Bill clarifies the scope of veterinary activities and the conditions under which other individuals may continue to perform supporting roles (see following table). These provisions are intended to clarify, rather than expand, such roles, allowing them to be carried out under appropriate supervision of a registered veterinarian. Once established, the Veterinary Council will be developing a guidance framework to provide greater clarity on the nature of supervision for such activities and individuals.

When established, the Veterinary Council, together with AVS, will conduct a comprehensive study of Singapore's veterinary landscape to better understand the needs and challenges faced by these groups. This will inform the development of the regulatory framework for these individuals, where appropriate, which will be implemented in a staged manner.

Category of person(s)	Conditions
Veterinary students	Under veterinary supervision
Any (non-veterinarian) individual, including veterinary nurses	Under veterinary supervision, excluding specified acts
Individuals licensed under the Animals and Birds Act to inoculate or vaccinate animals on farms with veterinary biologics, such as vaccines	In accordance with AVS's licensing conditions
Non-veterinary individuals working in animal research facilities under the Animals and Birds (Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes) Rules	

D) Penalties and Disciplinary Proceedings

The Bill also sets out various offences relating to the practice of veterinary medicine and their penalties (see following table). To strengthen deterrence against unqualified practice, the revised penalties have a higher maximum fine quantum of \$50,000, with no change to the maximum imprisonment term of 12 months, when compared against existing penalties for similar offences under the Animals and Birds Act. The maximum fine quantum was benchmarked against the healthcare sectors.

Offences relating to practice of veterinary medicine	
Offence	Proposed maximum penalty
Unlawful engagement in practice of veterinary medicine by non-duly qualified veterinarian	\$50,000 fine and/or 12 months imprisonment
Unauthorised individual acting as duly qualified veterinarian	\$50,000 fine and/or 12 months imprisonment
False representation: • Making representation of another as a duly qualified veterinarian • Causing or permitting another to make representation of oneself as a duly qualified veterinarian • Liability of registered veterinarian for enabling another to falsely act as a duly qualified veterinarian	\$50,000 fine and/or 12 months imprisonment
Fraudulent registration as registered veterinarian	\$50,000 fine and/or 12 months imprisonment

Individuals may lodge a complaint against a registered veterinarian to the Veterinary Council. The disciplinary case is first referred to the Registrar, who will review the case and recommend the Veterinary Council to either dismiss the case, or refer the case to a Complaints Assessment Committee (CAC), Disciplinary Committee (DC) or Interim Orders Committee (IOC)². Appeals may be submitted to either the Minister or the General Division

² Members are drawn from the Veterinary Council and/or the Complaints Panel (CP), appointed by the Veterinary Council

of the High Court, depending on the level at which the case is referred to. The decision made by Minister or the General Division of the High Court is final.

Establishment of Veterinary Council

The establishment of the Veterinary Council under the Veterinary Practice Bill will help strengthen professionalism and trust across Singapore's veterinary sector while safeguarding animal health and welfare, as well as supporting pet owners and other stakeholders.

The Veterinary Council is targeted to be established in the second half of 2026. From 2027 onwards, a transition period will commence for existing AVS-licensed veterinarians to move to the new registration framework. Further details on timelines and transition arrangements will be shared closer to implementation.