

VVCA Model Telemedicine Regulations

July 2022

Preface: The foundation for these regulations is the trained judgment of the practicing veterinarian. The VVCA issues these model telemedicine regulations to provide guidance for practitioners, associations, legislatures and state boards of veterinary medicine. These are intended to be real-world standards, not theoretical policies, and the VVCA will conduct reviews to update model regulations based upon field experiences and comments from practitioners.

1. Subject to the judgment and decision of a licensed veterinarian, a virtual veterinarian-client-patient-relationship (VCPR) may be established, provided:
 - There is video communication between the parties through which the animal is observed or the veterinarian obtains current knowledge of the animal patient through the use of instrumentation and diagnostic equipment through which images and medical records may be transmitted electronically. Real-time video engagement is not required for the delivery of telemedicine services after a VCPR is established.
 - If medical records exist from a previous in-person visit and are available to the client, the records (including diagnostic data if available), are encouraged to be transmitted electronically to enable the veterinarian to obtain historical knowledge of the animal.
2. Privacy protections must be in place and confidentiality maintained for the client and patient.
3. The veterinarian must be licensed in the jurisdiction in which the client primarily resides, or in which the patient is present at the time of the virtual examination.
4. Telemedicine must be practiced in such a manner that the veterinarian is prepared to refer or supply the pet owner with contact information for veterinary practices in the pet's location in case the pet owner seeks in-person care.





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5. A virtual VCPR requires documented consent to a telemedicine visit from the animal owner to the veterinarian, including acknowledgment that:

- The same standards of care under the state veterinary practice act and regulations apply to telemedicine and in-person medical services.
- The animal owner has the option to choose an in-person visit rather than telemedicine service.

6. Subject to FDA regulations and AMDUCA provisions regarding extra label drugs, veterinarians should give careful consideration to prescribing any medications, especially antimicrobials, but they may prescribe after establishing a virtual VCPR based upon their professional judgment with the following conditions.

- Prescriptions based on a virtual VCPR should be issued initially for no more than 30 days, and may not be renewed for more than 30 days without an additional virtual or in-person examination.
- A prescription renewed once and based upon only virtual examinations may not be renewed again without an in-person examination.

7. An in-person examination is required for controlled substance prescriptions, except for limited dosage deemed essential by the veterinarian to maintain an animal's safety during transport to a clinic for in-person examination.

VVCA's mission is to make virtual care part of the standard of care in veterinary medicine by advocating for best practices, providing educational resources, and creating a space for a wide alliance of professionals to congregate.

Whether you're a veterinarian, a vet tech or nurse, part of a veterinary team, an industry stakeholder or a student, we want you to be a part of the movement. We are creating memberships for everyone who shares our passion for improving the lives of every animal on the planet through virtual care.

Ready to join us?

Go to **www.vvca.org** and use the coupon code **VIC22** for a 25% discount on all membership categories!