

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Date: 4/1/26 Majority

L.D. 1220
(Filing No. H-955)

HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

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**STATE OF MAINE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
132ND LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION**

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" to H.P. 795, L.D. 1220, "An Act to Allow Chiropractors to Treat Dogs and Equids"

Amend the bill by striking out the title and substituting the following:

'An Act to Allow Chiropractors to Perform Animal Chiropractic Care Under Certain Conditions'

Amend the bill by striking out everything after the enacting clause and inserting the following:

'Sec. 1. 32 MRSA §456 is enacted to read:

§456. Animal chiropractic care

1. Definitions. For the purposes of this section, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

A. "Animal" has the same meaning as in section 4853, subsection 1.

B. "Animal chiropractic care" means the evaluation and treatment of an animal's vertebral or extremity joint dysfunction through manual spinal and joint manipulation of the musculoskeletal system. "Animal chiropractic care" does not include medical diagnosis; systemic disease treatment; the performing of surgery; the dispensing or administering of medications, drugs or biologics; or the performance of any traditional veterinary care and diagnosis unless the individual is a veterinarian licensed pursuant to chapter 71-A.

C. "Evaluation" means a comprehensive clinical assessment and physical examination to assess the animal's musculoskeletal health, focusing on posture, gait and movement patterns.

2. Authority to perform animal chiropractic care. A chiropractor licensed under this chapter may submit an application together with the fee established pursuant to section 558 to the board for additional authority to perform animal chiropractic care in accordance with the following requirements.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT

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A. A licensee applying for the authority under this subsection shall provide:

(1) Verification of having obtained initial certification from the Animal Chiropractic Certification Commission or its successor organization demonstrating successful completion of a basic chiropractic animal training program accredited by the American Veterinary Chiropractic Association or the International Veterinary Chiropractic Association or either of their successor organizations or another basic chiropractic animal training program approved by the board; and

(2) Verification of having successfully passed any written and practical examinations approved by the American Veterinary Chiropractic Association, the International Veterinary Chiropractic Association or either of their successor organizations or other examinations approved by the board.

B. After receiving the additional authority to perform animal chiropractic care from the board under paragraph A, the licensee must successfully complete at least 22 hours of continuing education prior to each renewal of the licensee's license under section 553-A that is specific to the evaluation and treatment of animals, including a 2-hour course on the animal welfare laws and a 2-hour course on contagious, infectious and zoonotic diseases in this State and other jurisdictions that might affect a licensee's animal patients. The continuing education required under this paragraph may not be construed to expand the scope of animal chiropractic care beyond the initial authority obtained by a licensee under paragraph A.

3. Requirements to perform animal chiropractic care. A chiropractor licensed under this chapter who has been issued the additional authority by the board under subsection 2 may perform animal chiropractic care on a conscious animal in accordance with the requirements of this subsection.

A. A licensee may perform animal chiropractic care on an animal to only those species of animals on which the licensee has received training and as long as the licensee:

(1) Has obtained a referral from a veterinarian licensed under chapter 71-A to perform animal chiropractic care on that animal; or

(2) After completing an initial evaluation of the animal, requests and receives medical clearance from a veterinarian licensed under chapter 71-A that animal chiropractic care for that animal is appropriate. A licensed veterinarian shall respond to a request from a licensee under this paragraph within 48 hours of receiving the request in accordance with joint rules adopted by the board and the State Board of Veterinary Medicine. A licensee shall maintain accurate and complete records of requests for medical clearance and documentation of requests granted under this subparagraph and such records must be made available to the board upon request. The board and the State Board of Veterinary Medicine shall jointly adopt rules to implement the process for obtaining a medical clearance and the responsibilities of licensees and licensed veterinarians under this subparagraph. Rules adopted under this subparagraph are routine technical rules as described in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

B. Prior to providing animal chiropractic care to an animal and after meeting the requirements of paragraph A, a licensee shall obtain a completed application-for-care form for each animal signed by the animal's owner, owner's agent or another individual

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responsible for the animal. At a minimum, the application-for-care form must include the following:

(1) A statement that the licensee is not a licensed veterinarian and may not maintain primary responsibility for the animal's care;

(2) A statement that animal chiropractic care is not intended to replace traditional veterinary care and is considered an alternative therapy to be used concurrently and in conjunction with traditional veterinary care by a licensed veterinarian;

(3) A statement of whether the animal has had a veterinarian-client-patient relationship as described in section 4877 with a licensed veterinarian within the past 12 months;

(4) A statement of whether a licensed veterinarian has provided a diagnosis of the medical condition of the animal for which animal chiropractic care is sought, and if so, a documentation of the specific diagnosis; and

(5) A statement authorizing the licensee to provide animal chiropractic care to the animal.

C. A licensee may not diagnose medical conditions of an animal for which animal chiropractic care is sought and shall refer an animal to a licensed veterinarian for imaging, laboratory work or other diagnostic testing if the licensee suspects that underlying conditions exist.

D. If a licensee suspects that the animal has a contagious disease required to be reported under state law, the licensee shall notify the animal's veterinarian and the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, division of animal and plant health.

E. If a licensee suspects that the animal is the subject of cruelty or neglect in violation of Title 7, chapter 739 or of Title 17, chapter 42, the licensee shall report the suspected violation pursuant to Title 7, section 4018.

F. If a licensee has reasonable knowledge that an animal receiving animal chiropractic care from the licensee has died or has received emergency care or transport to a veterinarian within 48 hours of receiving care from the licensee, the licensee shall report that information to the board, including the date and time of the treatment provided by the licensee, the name of the animal's owner and a description of any treatment provided to the animal by the licensee.

G. A licensee shall maintain for at least 7 years a medical record for each animal provided with animal chiropractic care, including a copy of the signed application-for-care form under paragraph B for each animal. Upon request, the licensee shall provide the medical record to the board and to the animal's veterinarian within 2 business days.

4. Use of title. A chiropractor licensed under this chapter may not use the title "animal chiropractor" or purport to be an animal chiropractor unless the licensee has been issued the additional authority by the board under subsection 2 to perform animal chiropractic care under this section.

5. Malpractice insurance. A chiropractor licensed under this chapter who has been issued the additional authority by the board under subsection 2 to perform animal chiropractic care shall at all times maintain malpractice insurance specific to animal chiropractic care.

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1 6. List of licensees authorized to provide animal chiropractic care. The board shall
2 make available on its publicly accessible website a list of all licensees with authority to
3 provide animal chiropractic care under this section. The board shall update the list as
4 necessary, but not less frequently than quarterly.

5 7. Practice of veterinary medicine; liability. This section does not restrict a licensed
6 veterinarian from engaging in the practice of veterinary medicine pursuant to chapter 71-A.
7 A veterinarian who has an established veterinarian-client-patient relationship with an
8 animal as described in section 4877 is not liable for any acts or omissions of a licensed
9 chiropractor with authority under this section to provide animal chiropractic care.

10 8. Rules. Except as provided in subsection 3, paragraph A, subparagraph (2), the board
11 may adopt rules to implement this section as necessary and prior to adopting any rules, the
12 board shall consult with the State Board of Veterinary Medicine. Rules adopted pursuant
13 to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter
14 2-A.

15 **Sec. 2. 32 MRSA §503-B, sub-§4,** as enacted by PL 2007, c. 402, Pt. H, §7, is
16 amended to read:

17 **4. Nonchiropractic practice.** Offering health services outside the field of
18 chiropractic; or

19 **Sec. 3. 32 MRSA §503-B, sub-§5,** as enacted by PL 2007, c. 402, Pt. H, §7, is
20 amended to read:

21 **5. Fee-splitting.** Splitting or dividing a fee with an individual who is not an associate
22 licensed as a chiropractor; or

23 **Sec. 4. 32 MRSA §503-B, sub-§6** is enacted to read:

24 6. Animal chiropractic care. Violating this chapter or rules adopted by the board
25 when providing animal chiropractic care.

26 **Sec. 5. 32 MRSA §4859-B** is enacted to read:

27 **§4859-B. Joint rules; animal chiropractic care**

28 Pursuant to section 456, subsection 3, paragraph A, subparagraph (2), the board shall
29 jointly adopt rules with the Board of Chiropractic Licensure to implement the process for
30 obtaining a medical clearance from a licensed veterinarian authorizing animal chiropractic
31 care and the responsibilities under that subparagraph of licensed veterinarians and licensed
32 chiropractors with authority to provide animal chiropractic care. Rules adopted under this
33 paragraph are routine technical rules as described in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

34 **Sec. 6. 32 MRSA §4860, sub-§13** is enacted to read:

35 13. Licensed chiropractor authorized to perform animal chiropractic care. A
36 chiropractor licensed under chapter 9 performing animal chiropractic care in accordance
37 with the requirements of section 456.'

38 Amend the bill by relettering or renumbering any nonconsecutive Part letter or section
39 number to read consecutively.

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SUMMARY

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2 This amendment, which is the majority report of the committee, replaces the bill and
3 changes the title. The amendment authorizes a chiropractor licensed in this State to apply
4 for additional authority from the Board of Chiropractic Licensure to provide animal
5 chiropractic care to animals as long as the licensed chiropractor obtains training and
6 successfully passes any written and practical examinations approved by the licensing
7 board. After receiving initial authority, a licensed chiropractor must complete at least 22
8 hours of continuing education prior to each renewal of the licensee's chiropractic license
9 that is specific to the evaluation and treatment of animals, including a 2-hour course on the
10 animal welfare laws and a 2-hour course on contagious, infectious and zoonotic diseases
11 in this State.

12 The amendment authorizes a licensed chiropractor with this additional authority to
13 perform animal chiropractic care to only those species of animals on which the licensee has
14 received training and as long as the licensee has obtained a referral from a licensed
15 veterinarian to perform animal chiropractic care on that animal or, after completing an
16 initial evaluation of the animal, has received medical clearance from a licensed veterinarian
17 that animal chiropractic care for that animal is appropriate. A licensed veterinarian must
18 respond to a request for medical clearance within 48 hours of receiving the request. The
19 amendment requires the Board of Chiropractic Licensure and the State Board of Veterinary
20 Medicine to jointly adopt rules to implement the process for obtaining a medical clearance
21 and the responsibilities of licensees and licensed veterinarians.

22 The amendment requires a licensed chiropractor with this additional authority to notify
23 the animal's veterinarian and the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry,
24 division of animal and plant health of suspected contagious disease and to report suspected
25 animal abuse or neglect. The amendment also requires a licensee to maintain malpractice
26 insurance specific to animal chiropractic care.

27 **FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED**

28 (See attached)



132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

LD 1220

LR 2375(02)

An Act to Allow Chiropractors to Treat Dogs and Equids

Fiscal Note for Bill as Amended by Committee Amendment **A (H-955)**
Committee: Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services

Fiscal Note Required: Yes

Fiscal Note

Future biennium cost increase - Other Special Revenue Funds
Future biennium revenue increase - Other Special Revenue Funds

Fiscal Detail and Notes

Expanding the scope of practice for the Board of Chiropractic Licensure may result in increased costs over time. The board does not have sufficient projected revenue and available cash to support these costs, and a fee increase may be necessary.

Any additional administrative costs to the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation, Office of Professional and Occupational Regulation, associated with implementing the provisions of this bill, including rulemaking, oversight of licensed professionals, and reporting requirements, can be absorbed within existing budgeted resource.