

As Amended by House Committee

Session of 2026

HOUSE BILL No. 2582

By Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources

Requested by Taylor Nikkel, on behalf of the Kansas Livestock Association and the Rural Veterinarian Workforce Task Force

1-28

1 AN ACT concerning animal care; relating to veterinary services for food  
2 animals in rural Kansas; establishing the developing veterinary  
3 medicine in rural Kansas program within the Kansas department of  
4 agriculture; providing financial assistance and support to veterinarians  
5 practicing in rural communities; establishing an advisory committee;  
6 providing for administration and contracting for program management  
7 and support; establishing the developing veterinary medicine in rural  
8 Kansas program fund.  
9

10 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas:*

11 Section 1. (a) (1) Sections 1 through 5, and amendments thereto, shall  
12 be known and may be cited as the developing veterinary medicine in rural  
13 Kansas act.

14 (2) The purpose of this act is to provide encouragement, opportunities  
15 and incentives for licensed veterinarians to practice veterinary medicine  
16 serving food animal patients in rural Kansas communities and enhance the  
17 long-term retention of veterinarians in such communities.

18 (b) **The provisions of this act shall expire and have no effect on  
19 and after July 1, 2032.**

20 (c) As used in this act:

21 (1) "Act" means the developing veterinary medicine in rural Kansas  
22 act.

23 (2) "Advisory committee" means the developing veterinary medicine  
24 in rural Kansas advisory committee established in section 2, and  
25 amendments thereto.

26 (3) "Food animal" means any animal that:

27 (A) Is raised for the production of an edible product intended for  
28 consumption by humans;

29 (B) is itself intended for consumption by humans; or

30 (C) provides a fiber product for human use.

31 (4) "Licensed veterinarian" means an individual licensed to practice  
32 veterinary medicine in Kansas.

33 (5) "Program" means the developing veterinary medicine in rural  
34 Kansas program established pursuant to section 3, and amendments

1 thereto.

2 (6) "Program agreement" means an agreement to meet all the  
3 obligations provided in section 3, and amendments thereto.

4 (7) "Rural" or "rural community" means any county in Kansas with a  
5 population not exceeding 40,000 or any service at a registered veterinary  
6 premises if food animal patients make up at least 50% of the veterinary  
7 practice conducted at such premises at the time that the person entered into  
8 the program agreement.

9 Sec. 2. (a) There is hereby established the developing veterinary  
10 medicine in rural Kansas advisory committee. The advisory committee  
11 shall assist in the administration of the program established in section 3,  
12 and amendments thereto, including the review of applications and  
13 selection of participants.

14 (b) The advisory committee shall consist of seven members appointed  
15 by the secretary of agriculture as follows:

16 (1) Four veterinarians licensed in Kansas who each practice primarily  
17 in a rural community;

18 (2) one representative of the Kansas department of agriculture; and

19 (3) two representatives of the livestock industry.

20 (c) The advisory committee may meet at any time and place upon the  
21 call of the chairperson appointed by the secretary of agriculture. Vacancies  
22 shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

23 Sec. 3. (a) (1) There is hereby established within the Kansas  
24 department of agriculture the developing veterinary medicine in rural  
25 Kansas program.

26 (2) The program shall be administered by the Kansas department of  
27 agriculture in coordination with the advisory committee established in  
28 section 2, and amendments thereto.

29 (3) The program shall be designed to support food animal veterinary  
30 practice in rural Kansas and enhance the long-term retention of  
31 veterinarians in rural communities.

32 (b) The program shall provide awards of up to \$100,000 per  
33 individual or the total of the individual's education debt balance,  
34 whichever is less, subject to appropriations, and require a four-year  
35 commitment from such individual to practice in a rural community.

36 (c) (1) To be eligible to enter into a program agreement, an individual  
37 shall:

38 (A) Be a graduate of an accredited college of veterinary medicine;

39 (B) be licensed or have a pending license to practice veterinary  
40 medicine in Kansas;

41 (C) have at least \$25,000 in education debt at the time of application;

42 (D) be currently engaged in full-time practice in a rural community or  
43 commence full-time practice in a rural community once such individual is

1 licensed to practice veterinary medicine in Kansas; and

2 (E) not be a participant in the veterinary training program for rural  
3 Kansas pursuant to K.S.A. 76-4,112, and amendments thereto.

4 (2) An individual with a pending license to practice veterinary  
5 medicine in Kansas may be approved to enter into a program agreement  
6 under this section, except that such individual shall not receive any award  
7 moneys prior to becoming so licensed.

8 (d) Applications shall be submitted in a form and manner determined  
9 by the advisory committee. The advisory committee shall prioritize  
10 applicants consistent with the purposes of the program and available  
11 appropriations.

12 (e) Each program agreement shall require the participant to:

13 (1) Continue practicing as a licensed veterinarian in a rural  
14 community for four continuous years unless such obligation is otherwise  
15 satisfied as provided in this act;

16 (2) (A) engage with the rural community beyond normal veterinary  
17 practice duties;

18 (B) participate in professional development activities, as determined  
19 by the advisory committee; and

20 (C) submit an annual report to the advisory committee describing  
21 such engagement by the participant; and

22 (3) comply with any additional provisions adopted by the advisory  
23 committee.

24 (f) Subject to appropriations by the legislature, awards shall be made  
25 in amounts not to exceed \$100,000 per individual or the total of the  
26 participant's education debt balance, whichever is less, to be disbursed in  
27 installments over the required service period pursuant to the program  
28 agreement.

29 (g) The advisory committee may adopt additional provisions,  
30 requirements or conditions for participation in the program as deemed  
31 practicable and appropriate or necessary for implementation or  
32 administration. Any such provisions shall not be inconsistent with this act  
33 or appropriation acts of the legislature.

34 (h) (1) Each program agreement entered into under this act may  
35 include reasonable provisions addressing breach of contract, including  
36 prorated repayment, timelines for repayment and interest consistent with  
37 this act.

38 (2) Upon failure to satisfy the obligation to engage in the full-time  
39 practice of veterinary medicine in accordance with this act and the  
40 program agreement, the participant shall repay within 90 days the amount  
41 equal to the amount awarded to such person less a prorated amount based  
42 on any periods of practice of veterinary medicine meeting the  
43 requirements of this act, plus interest at the prime rate of interest plus 2%

1 from the date such award accrued. Such interest shall be compounded  
2 annually. The Kansas department of agriculture shall be responsible for  
3 enforcing the agreement and collecting any damages or penalties owed.

4 (i) An obligation to engage in the practice of veterinary medicine in  
5 accordance with this section shall be postponed during any period of  
6 temporary medical disability during which the obligated individual is  
7 unable to practice veterinary medicine due to such disability or during any  
8 other period of postponement agreed to or determined in the program  
9 agreement. An obligation shall be satisfied if:

10 (1) The obligation to engage in the practice of veterinary medicine  
11 required by this section or the program agreement has been completed;

12 (2) the obligated individual is unable to practice veterinary medicine  
13 because of permanent disability; or

14 (3) the obligated individual dies.

15 (j) On or before February 15 of each year, the secretary of agriculture  
16 shall submit a report to the senate standing committee on agriculture and  
17 natural resources and the house standing committee on agriculture and  
18 natural resources, or any successor committees, that details the  
19 participation in the program, the amount of awards that have been  
20 distributed and the location of program participants.

21 Sec. 4. (a) The secretary of agriculture may contract with one  
22 statewide nonprofit veterinary medical association to:

23 (1) Provide administrative support to the advisory committee for the  
24 application and selection process pursuant to section 3, and amendments  
25 thereto; and

26 (2) issue awards from the fund established pursuant to section 5, and  
27 amendments thereto.

28 (b) The secretary shall assess an administrative fine against any  
29 nonprofit organization awarded a contract under this section for failure to  
30 satisfy the requirements of the program or for the intentional or reckless  
31 misuse of any funds awarded by the terms of such contract. The state  
32 treasurer shall deposit any moneys recovered from any such fine into the  
33 state treasury to the credit of the state general fund.

34 Sec. 5. (a) There is hereby established in the state treasury the  
35 developing veterinary medicine in rural Kansas program fund. Such fund  
36 shall be administered by the secretary of agriculture, subject to any  
37 contract entered into by the secretary pursuant to section 4, and  
38 amendments thereto.

39 (b) All moneys credited to the developing veterinary medicine in  
40 rural Kansas program fund shall be expended only for awards and  
41 administrative expenses necessary to implement and administer the  
42 program for individuals who enter into a program agreement pursuant to  
43 this act. All expenditures from the developing veterinary medicine in rural

1 Kansas program fund shall be made in accordance with appropriation acts  
2 upon warrants of the director of accounts and reports issued pursuant to  
3 vouchers approved by the secretary of agriculture or the secretary's  
4 designee. All moneys received by the Kansas department of agriculture for  
5 the program shall be deposited in the state treasury in accordance with  
6 K.S.A. 75-4215, and amendments thereto. Upon receipt of each such  
7 remittance, the state treasurer shall deposit the entire amount in the state  
8 treasury to the credit of the developing veterinary medicine in rural Kansas  
9 program fund.

10 Sec. 6. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its  
11 publication in the statute book.