



132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 1220

H.P. 795

House of Representatives, March 20, 2025

An Act to Allow Chiropractors to Treat Dogs and Equids

Reference to the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Robert B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative FOLEY of Wells.
Cosponsored by Senator BRADSTREET of Kennebec and
Representatives: FLYNN of Albion, MASON of Lisbon, MCINTYRE of Lowell, MORRIS of
Turner, OLSEN of Raymond, POMERLEAU of Standish.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

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

3 **§456. Animal chiropractic care**

4 **1. Equid defined.** For the purposes of this section, unless the context otherwise
5 indicates, "equid" means an animal from the family Equidae, including, but not limited to,
6 a horse, donkey, mule or zebra.

7 **2. Certification to perform animal chiropractic care.** The board shall certify a
8 person licensed under this chapter to perform animal chiropractic care if the licensee has
9 successfully completed a 210-hour course of instruction in animal chiropractic care
10 approved by the board.

11 After receiving an initial certification from the board, the licensee must successfully
12 complete at least 20 hours of continuing education prior to each renewal of the licensee's
13 license that is specific to the diagnosis and treatment of animals, including a 2-hour course
14 on contagious, infectious and zoonotic diseases in this State and other locations that might
15 affect a licensee's animal patients.

16 **3. Authorization to perform animal chiropractic care.** A person licensed under this
17 chapter who is certified by the board pursuant to subsection 2 may perform animal
18 chiropractic care on a conscious dog or equid in accordance with the requirements of this
19 subsection.

20 A. After a referral from a licensed veterinarian, a licensee may perform animal
21 chiropractic care on a dog or equid. The licensee shall submit an initiation of treatment
22 report to the primary veterinarian of the dog or equid within 7 days of providing animal
23 chiropractic care to that dog or equid.

24 B. If a licensee suspects that the dog or equid has a contagious disease required to be
25 reported under state law, the licensee shall notify the primary veterinarian and the
26 Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, division of animal and plant
27 health.

28 C. A licensee may perform animal chiropractic care on a dog or equid without a referral
29 from a licensed veterinarian only upon completion of additional course work approved
30 by the State Board of Veterinary Medicine of at least 8 hours of instruction in
31 contagious, infectious and zoonotic diseases and at least one hour of instruction in
32 animal chiropractic care jurisprudence.

33 **4. Malpractice insurance.** A person licensed under this chapter who is certified by
34 the board to perform animal chiropractic care shall at all times maintain malpractice
35 insurance specific to animal chiropractic care.

36 **Sec. 2. 32 MRSA §4860, sub-§13** is enacted to read:

37 **13. Licensed chiropractor certified to perform animal chiropractic care.** A
38 chiropractor licensed under chapter 9 performing animal chiropractic care in accordance
39 with the requirements of section 456.

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SUMMARY

This bill authorizes a chiropractor licensed in this State to provide chiropractic care to dogs and equids as long as the licensed chiropractor is certified to perform animal chiropractic care and meets other conditions specified in the bill.

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An Act to Allow Chiropractors to Treat **Animals**

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

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

§456. Animal chiropractic care

As used in this LD

- (a) "Animal" means any living animal other than a human being.
- (b) "Animal chiropractic" means the evaluation and treatment of an animal's vertebral or extremity joint dysfunction through spinal, joint, or musculoskeletal manipulative therapy or soft tissue therapy. Spinal adjustments are done by hand and provide a process that allows animals better communication within their nervous systems.
- (c) "Animal chiropractic practitioner" means a person licensed as a chiropractor by the State Board of Chiropractic Examiners and who holds a current, valid certification from any of the following: (1) The (AVCA) American Veterinary Chiropractic Association, unless otherwise specified by regulation. (2) The (IVCA) International Veterinary Chiropractic Association, unless otherwise specified by regulation. (3) Any other credentialing organization that the board specifies by regulation adopted under this article.
- (d) "Board" means the State Board of Chiropractic Licensing
- (e) "Licensed veterinarian" means a person licensed by the Veterinary Medical Board pursuant to the Veterinary Medicine Laws

1.. Certification to perform animal chiropractic care. The board shall certify a person licensed under this chapter to perform animal chiropractic care if the licensee has successfully completed and graduated from an AVCA or IVCA certified program of a minimum of 210 hours of course of instruction in animal chiropractic care approved by the Chiropractic Licensing Board.

After receiving an initial certification from the board, the licensee must successfully complete at least 20 hours of continuing education prior to each renewal of the licensee's license that is specific to the diagnosis and treatment of animals, including a 2-hour course on contagious, infectious and zoonotic diseases in this State and other locations that might affect a licensee's animal patients.

Anyone not having that certification would be required to have supervision of a veterinarian.

3. Authorization to perform animal chiropractic care. A person licensed under this chapter who is certified by the board pursuant to subsection 2 may perform animal chiropractic care on a conscious animal in accordance with the requirements of this subsection.

- (a) A chiropractor who is not registered as an animal chiropractic practitioner by the board pursuant to this article shall not do either of the following if they are not under the supervision of a veterinarian: (1) Practice animal chiropractic. (2) Represent that the person is, or hold themselves out to the public as, an animal chiropractic practitioner.

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(b) All of the following apply to a chiropractor who is an animal chiropractic practitioner: (1) The chiropractor shall register with the board as an animal chiropractic practitioner in a manner specified by the board. (2) The chiropractor may provide animal chiropractic only to types of animals on which the animal chiropractic practitioner has received training. (3) The chiropractor may provide animal chiropractic without supervision by a licensed veterinarian. (4) The chiropractor shall obtain a completed application for care form for each animal evaluated or treated

(c). (5) The chiropractor shall maintain for at least three years a medical record for each animal evaluated or treated that includes the application for care form and, on request, shall provide the medical record to the animal's veterinarian in a timely fashion.

(c) Before providing animal chiropractic in accordance with this section, a chiropractor shall require the animal's owner, owner's agent, or another person responsible for the animal to complete and sign an application for care form that contains at least the following: (1) A statement that the chiropractor is not a licensed veterinarian and cannot maintain primary responsibility for the animal's care. (2) A statement that animal chiropractic 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 question as to whether the animal has been seen by a licensed veterinarian within the past 12 months. (4) A question as to whether a licensed veterinarian has provided a diagnosis of the medical condition of the animal for which animal chiropractic is sought, and if so, a request to specify the diagnosis. (5) A statement authorizing the chiropractor to provide animal chiropractic to the animal.

(d) The board shall maintain and make available to the public a list of animal chiropractic practitioners who are registered with the board pursuant to this section.

(e) This section does not restrict a licensed veterinarian from engaging in the practice of veterinary medicine pursuant to the Veterinary Practice Act or prevent any other individual from lawfully acting in a manner pursuant to the scope of practice pursuant to this division.

(f) An animal's veterinarian is not liable for any actions or omissions of an animal chiropractic practitioner who provides animal chiropractic in accordance with this section.

(g) (1) An animal chiropractic practitioner shall comply with all regulations of the board applicable to chiropractors, unless otherwise specified by the board by regulation. (2) The board may adopt regulations necessary to implement this article. The following regulations, if adopted, shall be adopted in consultation with the Veterinary Medical Board in accordance with paragraph (2): (A) Regulations regarding standards of medicine or care for an animal. (B) Regulations to remove or specify additional credentialing organizations for purposes of subdivision (c) of Section 1070. (3) When considering adopting, amending, or repealing a regulation, the board shall, in a timely manner, provide to the Veterinary Medical Board the full text of the regulation proposed to be adopted, amended, or repealed. The Veterinary Medical Board shall informally vote on whether to adopt, amend, or repeal the regulation at its next regularly scheduled meeting. Regardless of whether the vote is affirmative or not, the State Board of Chiropractic Licensing may proceed with the adoption, amendment, or repeal of the regulation in accordance with the current law.

(h) A chiropractor who works under the supervision of a veterinarian is authorized to practice animal chiropractic without being registered by the board pursuant to this section.

(i) A chiropractor providing care in an office setting must maintain a separate space for animal care with its own entrance and exam rooms.

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

5. Malpractice insurance. A person licensed under this chapter who is certified by the board to perform animal chiropractic care shall at all times maintain malpractice insurance specific to animal chiropractic care.

Sec. 2. 32 MRSA §4860, sub-§13 is enacted to read:

13. Licensed chiropractor certified to perform animal chiropractic care. A chiropractor licensed under chapter 9 performing animal chiropractic care in accordance with the requirements of section 456.

SUMMARY

This bill authorizes a chiropractor licensed in this State to provide chiropractic care to animals as long as the licensed chiropractor is certified to perform animal chiropractic care and meets other conditions specified in the bill.

DPFR/OPOR
LD 1220 Stakeholder Group Meeting

January 23, 2026 Questions

Below are questions we plan to discuss at the January 23rd meeting. While we want to hear from all parties, we appreciate that not all parties will have answers to each question. When possible, please share your answers to the questions with OPOR staff in advance of the meeting.

To the extent possible, please coordinate with your respective stakeholders to provide a single response. Whenever possible, we ask that you quantify your response with data. In addition to the questions below, please feel free to share additional quantitative data not captured in the questions below.

1. How many active licensed chiropractors and veterinarians are there in Maine? (OPOR will provide number of active licenses).
2. Where in Maine (geographically) are chiropractors and veterinarians practicing (please provide data by town or county when possible)?
3. What associations represent each of the practitioners and how many members do they have? a. Chiropractors b. Veterinarians
4. Does the Maine Chiropractic Association have additional proposed amendments to further clarify the intent of the draft committee amendment dated
5. Identify the states that have expanded chiropractic practice to include the treatment of animals (dogs, equines, etc.) and include regulations of same.
6. In states with expanded scope for chiropractors, please provide quantitative data that shows:
 - a. the number of licensed chiropractors who became authorized to perform under the expanded scope of practice within the first 5 years of enactment.
 - b. The number of animal patients who accessed treatment from chiropractors with expanded authorities within first 5 years of enactment.
 - d. The number and type of adverse event reports regarding the procedures related to expanded scope of practice from initial enactment to date.
 - e. Please provide any other quantitative data that you believe is relevant to this discussion.
7. Identify the specialized training and/or examination(s) necessary to ensure commensurate with the scope of practice procedures anticipated to ensure competency in ensuring public protection.

LD 1220 Stakeholder Group

Primary Components of Original Bill and Sponsor's Amendment to LD 1220

Draft Committee Amendment

Section 1:

Provides definitions to the following terms: Animal, Animal chiropractic care, and Practice agreement.

Identifies the certification requirements to perform animal chiropractic care.

Identifies limitations when performing animal chiropractic care to training requirements and a practice agreement with a licensed veterinarian who must be accessible at all times for consultation and collaboration. Requires that prior to providing care, a completed form must be completed by the animal's owner identifying certain statements and assertions of care. Including reporting, recordkeeping and malpractice insurance requirements.

Provides an exception to the certification requirements for chiropractors providing care to an animal in the presence of and under the direct supervision of a veterinarian.

Section 2. Defines licensed chiropractor certified to perform animal chiropractic care.

§60-J. Evaluation criteria

Pursuant to Title 5, section 12015, subsection 3, any professional or occupational group or organization, any individual or any other interested party, referred to in this section as the "applicant group," that proposes regulation of any unregulated professional or occupational group or substantial expansion of regulation of a regulated professional or occupational group shall submit with the proposal written answers and information pertaining to the evaluation criteria enumerated in this section to the appropriate committee of the Legislature. The technical committee, the Commissioner of Professional and Financial Regulation, referred to in this subchapter as the "commissioner," and the joint standing committee, before it makes its final recommendations to the full Legislature, also shall accept answers and information pertaining to the evaluation criteria from any party that opposes such regulation or expansion and from any other interested party. All answers and information submitted must identify the applicant group, the opposing party or the interested party making the submission and the proposed regulation or expansion of regulation that is sought or opposed. The commissioner may develop standardized questions designed to solicit information concerning the evaluation criteria. The preauthorization evaluation criteria are: [PL 1995, c. 686, §2 (NEW).]

1. Data on group. A description of the professional or occupational group proposed for regulation or expansion of regulation, including the number of individuals or business entities that would be subject to regulation, the names and addresses of associations, organizations and other groups representing the practitioners and an estimate of the number of practitioners in each group; [PL 1995, c. 686, §2 (NEW).]

2. Specialized skill. Whether practice of the profession or occupation proposed for regulation or expansion of regulation requires such a specialized skill that the public is not qualified to select a competent practitioner without assurances that minimum qualifications have been met; [PL 1995, c. 686, §2 (NEW).]

3. Public health; safety; welfare. The nature and extent of potential harm to the public if the profession or occupation is not regulated, the extent to which there is a threat to the public's health, safety or welfare and production of evidence of potential harm, including a description of any complaints filed with state law enforcement authorities, courts, departmental agencies, other professional or occupational boards and professional and occupational associations that have been lodged against practitioners of the profession or occupation in this State within the past 5 years; [PL 1995, c. 686, §2 (NEW).]

4. Voluntary and past regulatory efforts. A description of the voluntary efforts made by practitioners of the profession or occupation to protect the public through self-regulation, private certifications, membership in professional or occupational associations or academic credentials and a statement of why these efforts are inadequate to protect the public; [PL 1995, c. 686, §2 (NEW).]

5. Cost; benefit. The extent to which regulation or expansion of regulation of the profession or occupation will increase the cost of goods or services provided by practitioners and the overall cost-effectiveness and economic impact of the proposed regulation, including the indirect costs to consumers; [PL 1995, c. 686, §2 (NEW).]

6. Service availability of regulation. The extent to which regulation or expansion of regulation of the profession or occupation would increase or decrease the availability of services to the public; [PL 1995, c. 686, §2 (NEW).]

7. Existing laws and regulations. The extent to which existing legal remedies are inadequate to prevent or redress the kinds of harm potentially resulting from nonregulation and whether regulation

can be provided through an existing state agency or in conjunction with presently regulated practitioners;

[PL 1995, c. 686, §2 (NEW).]

8. Method of regulation. Why registration, certification, license to use the title, license to practice or another type of regulation is being proposed, why that regulatory alternative was chosen and whether the proposed method of regulation is appropriate;

[PL 1995, c. 686, §2 (NEW).]

9. Other states. A list of other states that regulate the profession or occupation, the type of regulation, copies of other states' laws and available evidence from those states of the effect of regulation on the profession or occupation in terms of a before-and-after analysis;

[PL 1995, c. 686, §2 (NEW).]

10. Previous efforts. The details of any previous efforts in this State to implement regulation of the profession or occupation;

[PL 1995, c. 686, §2 (NEW).]

11. Mandated benefits. Whether the profession or occupation plans to apply for mandated benefits;

[PL 1995, c. 686, §2 (NEW).]

12. Minimal competence. Whether the proposed requirements for regulation exceed the standards of minimal competence and what those standards are; and

[PL 1995, c. 686, §2 (NEW).]

13. Financial analysis. The method proposed to finance the proposed regulation and financial data pertaining to whether the proposed regulation can be reasonably financed by current or proposed licensees through dedicated revenue mechanisms.

[PL 1995, c. 686, §2 (NEW).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 1995, c. 686, §2 (NEW).

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