

State of New Mexico  
**Board of Veterinary Medicine**

**MICHELLE LUJÁN GRISHAM**  
*Governor*



Rebecca J. Washburn, DVM  
*Chair*

Frances R. Sowers  
*Executive Director and CFO*

New Mexico statute established the Board of Veterinary Medicine in 1931 (HB190, Sessions Laws 1931, Chapter 76) to regulate the practice of veterinary medicine in New Mexico. New Mexico's veterinarians are responsible for protecting the state's meat, milk and poultry industries; the public from zoonotic disease; and the health and welfare of companion animals. The Board works closely with the Boards of Pharmacy and Livestock, the Department of Health, and the Solid Waste Bureau as well as the USDA, DEA and many other federal agencies.

The Board is governed by the New Mexico Veterinary Practice Act and the rules promulgated by the Board. The Board is comprised of seven members: five veterinarians and two public members; Dr. Rebecca J. Washburn is the current Chair. The Board meets four times a year in open meetings; as needed for special meetings; and as needed for disciplinary hearings.

The Board operates with funds generated solely from the fees for the licensure of veterinarians, veterinary technicians, bovine artificial insemination and pregnancy diagnosis technicians, and veterinary facilities. In calendar year 2017, new and renewal licenses and permits were issued totaling 1,077. The Board is located in Albuquerque and is staffed by an Executive Director and two support staff positions.

The Board's constituency consists of the general public and the professionals in the field of veterinary medicine. All licensure is renewable on an annual basis; facilities providing medical care to animals are inspected biennially. The Board contracts with a New Mexico-licensed veterinarian to conduct the facilities inspections throughout the state of New Mexico. The Facility Inspector inspects the physical plant, mobile units and all records. The Inspector is also available to assist veterinarians with any difficulties they are encountering in their practice. If deficiencies cited in an inspection are not corrected within a reasonable length of

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time as set by the Inspector, the facility is presented to the Board for possible disciplinary action.

The Board also provides a process in which to file a complaint relative to a perceived lack of adequate medical services. The Board contracts with a New Mexico-licensed veterinarian to conduct investigations of the complaints. A complaint review committee comprised of Board members reviews the investigator's reports and presents the complaints to the Board for resolution. If warranted, and the complaint is egregious, disciplinary action is initiated by the Board.

Veterinarians work in research, medical schools, pathology, public health, slaughter houses, inspection facilities, and biomedical research. This work is performed within the medical, livestock and food preparation plant industries. Veterinarians work closely with dairy farms, feed lots and ranches protecting the nation's food supply to include illegal food animal products in an effort to keep diseases from contaminating food and herds. Veterinarians also work closely with international groups to keep food and animals safe throughout the world.

The Board serves as a source and resource for the professionals, the general public and companion animals.

On July 1, 2018, the New Mexico Animal Sheltering Board will be subsumed into the Board of Veterinary Medicine. On that date, the Board of Veterinary Medicine will assume jurisdiction over New Mexico shelter providers thereby protecting the public, the mandate of all State of New Mexico agencies, and sheltered animals. Shelter providers will be subject to annual inspections by the BVM and must comply with the minimum standards of care established by the Board. For the first time in New Mexico sheltering provider history, the State of New Mexico will be overseeing sheltering providers and their facilities.