

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE
ASSEMBLY, No. 317
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

DATED: JULY 7, 2021

SUMMARY

Synopsis: Requires annual inspection of certain veterinary facilities.

Type of Impact: Annual State Expenditure Increases.

Agencies Affected: Department of Law and Public Safety

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>	<u>Year 3</u>
Annual State Cost Increase		Indeterminate	

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) finds that the bill will cause indeterminate increases in annual State expenditures within the Division of Consumer Affairs, in the Department of Law and Public Safety. The OLS, however, cannot assess the amount given the absence of information on the future cost of the additional annual inspections. Depending on the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners’ resource allocation policies, however, the added workload may or may not augment State administrative expenditures.

BILL DESCRIPTION

This bill requires animal and veterinary facilities to register with the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners and to be inspected by the board on an annual basis. The annual inspection would be in addition to, and would not be deemed to be satisfied by, an inspection conducted to investigate a complaint against the facility or a suspected violation by the facility involving an unlawful act or practice. The registration and inspection requirements would apply to any fixed or mobile establishment, veterinary hospital, animal hospital, or premises wherein or whereon the practice of veterinary medicine or any part thereof is conducted. The bill will take effect 180 days after the date of enactment.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS finds that the bill will cause indeterminate increases in annual State expenditures. The OLS, however, cannot assess the amount given the absence of information on the future cost of the additional annual inspections.

State Expenditure Increase: The State will incur an annual expenditure increase with the establishment of the required annual inspections by the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners in the Division of Consumer Affairs.

It appears that neither the municipal boards of health nor the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners currently provides an annual inspection of these facilities. The OLS does not have information pertaining to the exact number of veterinary facilities in New Jersey. According to a representative with the New Jersey Veterinary Medical Association, based on their current membership, there is an estimated 2,600 practicing licensed veterinarians and over 800 facilities Statewide. According to the NJ COVID-19 Vaccination Plan there are 3,244 licensed veterinarians. The bill requires the board to complete annual visits for each facility, which at the estimates provided by the association would necessitate an increase in personnel to complete the site visits.

Depending on the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiner’s and the Division of Consumer Affairs resource allocation policies, however, the added workload may or may not augment State administrative expenditures.

According to the New Jersey Department of Health website, the Office of Veterinary Public Health provides assistance to municipal governments and local health departments regarding the laws and rules addressing animal control, animal facility licensing and sanitary rules, dog licensing, and the training of Animal Control Officers. It is the OLS’s understanding that although kennels, pet shops, shelters, and pounds appear to receive inspections, veterinary offices do not.

According to the Division of Consumer Affairs website, the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners licenses and regulates veterinarians in New Jersey. Specifically, the purpose of the Board is to: supervise the practice of veterinary medicine, surgery and dentistry; ensure that veterinary medicine is performed in a manner consistent with acceptable medical and ethical standards; and adjudicate consumer complaints against licensees. It is the understanding that although veterinarians are licensed by the board, veterinary offices are not inspected.

Potential State Revenue Increases: Although the bill does not state as such, the OLS estimates that an inspection fee may be imposed to offset the potential expenditures resulting from the annual facility inspection.

Section: Law and Public Safety
Analyst: Kristin Brunner Santos
Lead Fiscal Analyst
Approved: Thomas Koenig
Legislative Budget and Finance Officer

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).