

New in 2018: Requirements for the Veterinary Profession

Mandatory CE for Veterinarians

On January 1, 2018, all California veterinarians must complete a minimum of one credit hour of continuing education on the judicious use of medically important antimicrobial drugs every four years as a condition of licensure. This new requirement can be found in Business and Professions Code Section 4846.5(k) and is a result of SB-361 (Hill) which passed in 2015.

The California Veterinary Medical Board (VMB) is charged with enforcing the law and has published the following implementation schedule:

- For licensees renewing in 2018, the one-hour course must be taken within the 2018-2020 two-year renewal cycle. The requirement will then follow a four-year cycle of every other renewal cycle thereafter (e.g. renewal in 2024, 2028, etc.).
- For licensees renewing in 2019, the one-hour course must be taken within the 2019-2021 two-year renewal cycle. The requirement will then follow a four-year cycle of every other renewal cycle thereafter (e.g. renewal in 2025, 2029, etc.).

Medically important antimicrobial drugs include all of those listed in Appendix A of the Federal Food and Drug Administration Guidance for Industry #152 including critically important, highly important, and important antimicrobial drugs.

Qualified courses must be at least one hour in length and must be provided by statutorily approved providers or be approved by the Registry of Approved Continuing Education. Courses may be taken in a classroom setting, self-guided online, or by live webinar.

The CVMA has resources on continuing education for judicious use of antimicrobials on cvma.net under Resources > Animal, Medicines, and Diseases > Judicious Use of Antibiotics.

New Parental Leave Act for Businesses with at Least 20 Employees

Commencing January 1, California law will change to add the New Parental Leave Act (Senate Bill 63) into the California Family Rights Act (CFRA). The new law prohibits an employer with at least 20 employees living within a 75-mile radius of the business, from refusing to allow an employee to take up to 12 weeks of parental leave to bond with a new child within one year of the child's birth, adoption, or foster care placement. The employee must

have more than 12 months of service with the employer and at least 1,250 hours of service with the employer during the previous 12-month period. The law also prohibits an employer from refusing to maintain and pay for coverage under a group health plan for an employee who takes this leave. Under the new law, if the employer employs both parents, the mandated parental leave would be capped at the amount granted to one employee. It also authorizes the employer to grant simultaneous leave to these parents. This law inhibits an employer from refusing to hire, or from discharging, fining, suspending, expelling, or discriminating against, an individual for exercising the right to parental leave provided by this law. Additionally, this law prohibits an employer from interfering with, restraining, or denying the exercise of, or the attempt to exercise, any right to take leave.

Minimum Wage Increase Schedule

In 2016, Governor Brown signed SB 3, a bill that increases the minimum wage in California to \$15 per hour by 2022. The governor's action made California the first state in the nation to commit to raising the minimum wage to \$15 per hour statewide.

Large businesses with 26 or more employees began complying on January 1, 2017, and will reach \$15 per hour in 2022.

Small businesses with 25 or fewer employees had a one-year delay and will see their first increase on January 1, 2018. Small businesses have until 2023 to reach the \$15 per hour rate.

Also, effective January 1, 2018, the overtime rate for minimum wage employees is as follows:

- Employers with 26 or more employees – \$16.50 per hour for time and one-half or \$22 per hour for double-time.
- Employers with 25 or fewer employees – \$15.75 per hour for time and one-half or \$21 per hour for double-time.

Updated Employee Poster Sets for 2018

Beginning January 1, 2018, employee posters must include:

- **Updates from the Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) on the Discrimination and Harassment Notice**
- **California Family Rights Act (CFRA) Leave Notice**
- **Minimum Wage Increases for 2018**

Posters can be ordered at cvma.net/Products.