



# VPRBV POLICY: IDENTIFIED NEED – SPECIFIC REGISTRATION UNDER SECTION 7(1)(D) OF THE VETERINARY PRACTICE ACT 1997

VETERINARY PRACTITIONERS REGISTRATION BOARD OF  
VICTORIA



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## BACKGROUND: SECTION 7(1)(D) VETERINARY PRACTICE ACT 1997

A primary function of the Veterinary Practitioners Registration Board of Victoria (the Board) is to protect the public by ensuring that persons who apply for registration to practise as veterinary practitioners in Victoria are appropriately qualified for registration.

Through a rigorous accreditation process, the Australasian Veterinary Boards Council Inc. (AVBC) maintains a nationally recognised list of qualifications that qualify a bearer of one of those qualifications for general registration as a veterinary practitioner in Victoria under section 6 of the *Veterinary Practice Act 1997* (VPA).

In certain circumstances, the Board may grant a category of registration called "specific registration" to applicants who do not qualify to apply for general registration. One such circumstance is provided for under section 7(1)(d) of the (VPA):

7(1) The Board may grant or refuse to grant specific registration as a veterinary practitioner to an applicant if the applicant holds qualifications in veterinary practice which do not qualify that applicant for general registration—  
(d) if the Board is of the opinion that, in order to meet an identified need for a veterinary practitioner, it is necessary for a person having qualifications in the nature of the applicant to provide veterinary services.

This policy covers:

1. the factors the Board considers when assessing an application for specific registration under section 7(1)(d) of the VPA and deciding whether to grant or refuse to grant registration
2. the type of information an applicant may provide to support an application for specific registration under section 7(1)(d) of the VPA
3. if the Board grants specific registration under section 7(1)(d) of the VPA to an applicant, the conditions, limitations or restrictions it may impose on the veterinary practitioner's registration to mitigate potential risks, and
4. other general requirements and expectations of veterinary practitioners granted specific registration under section 7(1)(d) of the VPA.

## 1. BOARD CONSIDERATIONS IN ASSESSMENT AND DECISION-MAKING

The Board forms an opinion on the necessity for an applicant for specific registration under section 7(1)(d) of the VPA to provide veterinary services based on the information provided by that applicant (supported by their prospective employer) and on other available information about the need for veterinary personnel in a specific branch of veterinary practice or region of Victoria.

When assessing an application for specific registration under section 7(1)(d) of the VPA, the Board will consider the following 3 factors.

### 1.1 NEED TO BE MET BY PROVISION OF VETERINARY SERVICES

The Board will consider whether the application identifies a need to be met by provision of veterinary services:

- the application must clearly describe a public or community need, which may be:
  - for veterinary services to be provided to animals by a person with a specific skillset, and/or
  - for veterinary services to be provided in a location where the absence of a veterinary practitioner may negatively affect the public/community and/or health and welfare of animals
- the application must explain the potential risks in not meeting the identified need, i.e., how the public/community and/or health and welfare of animals will be at risk if the position is not filled, and
- the application must show the efforts made by the applicant's prospective employer to fill the position which will meet the identified need with a person who would qualify to apply for general registration, i.e., who holds a qualification on the nationally recognised list of qualifications maintained by the AVBC.

### 1.2 APPLICANT'S KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

The Board will consider whether the applicant has the knowledge, skills and experience to meet the identified need:

- The Board will consider the applicant's veterinary and other qualifications (including postgraduate qualifications), the number of years they have practised as a veterinary practitioner, the field of veterinary practice in which they have practised and their technical competence in that field. The focus will be on whether the applicant has a veterinary qualification, other appropriate qualifications, and sufficient competence and experience to undertake the duties proposed to meet the identified need without requiring additional training or a high level of support.
- The Board will consider information provided by the applicant about their competency in speaking and communicating in English. To practise safely in Victoria, all registered veterinary practitioners are expected to be able to use English to communicate effectively with clients, collaborate with colleagues and peers in the veterinary profession, and write clear and accurate veterinary medical records and other written communications required in the delivery of veterinary services. When considering the information provided by the applicant about their English competency, the Board may refer to the [English language standards set by the AVBC](#). The Board recognises that there are many ways to achieve English competency.

### 1.3 OTHER AVAILABLE INFORMATION ABOUT NEED FOR VETERINARY PERSONNEL

The Board may also consider other information about the need for veterinary personnel with specific skills or in specific regions of Victoria, including:

- government information such as labour market updates and skills priority lists
- reporting and forecasting on the veterinary services industry
- information from peak veterinary bodies such as the AVBC, Australian Veterinary Association and Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists
- information in the public domain including media reports.



## **2. INFORMATION TO SUPPORT AN APPLICATION**

The Board encourages applicants to supply the information listed below to support their application for specific registration under section 7(1)(d) of the *Veterinary Practice Act 1997*. This information should be provided in the form of a letter (with attachments) from the applicant's prospective employer.

### **2.1 INFORMATION ABOUT THE IDENTIFIED NEED**

Information an applicant can provide to describe the public or community need, and the potential risks in not meeting that need, may include:

- the type(s) of animals to be treated
- the average numbers of these animals in the area
- the needs of these animals, e.g., conditions, illnesses that they may be subject to
- the consequences for the animals and for the public if the animals are not diagnosed, treated, or overseen generally
- the activities that need to be undertaken to diagnose, treat, and maintain the health and welfare of the animals, e.g., performing and analysing tests, administering veterinary medicines, performing procedures or surgery, assessing health and welfare
- the title of the position and a detailed position description for the position
- the number of other registered veterinary practitioners in the workplace, and whether any of those practitioners do the same work and have similar skills and experience, and
- the number of registered veterinary practitioners (and practices) in the region in which the position is located, and whether any of those vets do the same work and have similar skills and experience.

### **2.2 EFFORTS TO FIND A PERSON QUALIFIED FOR GENERAL REGISTRATION TO MEET THE IDENTIFIED NEED**

Information an applicant can provide to show their prospective employer has made efforts to employ a veterinary practitioner who would qualify for general registration in Victoria to meet the identified need may include:

- The names of all national and international general and veterinary-related employment agencies or other entities through which the employer has placed advertisements on websites, etc.
- The length of time a position was advertised (on websites, etc.) by national and international general and veterinary-related employment agencies or other entities e.g., the dates from and to, or permanent and continuing
- Names of all publications including websites in which the employer has placed advertisements, e.g., national and international veterinary-related journals, newsletters, and newspapers
- Copies of all advertisements placed/communications issued to fill the position including the advertised salary. If some online advertisements are no longer active or obtainable, copies of emails and proofs sent to the relevant employment agency, publication, or organisation
- Copies of emails seeking potential applicants for the position sent to national and international organisations with links to veterinary practitioners who would qualify for general registration
- The number of applications received in response to attempts to fill the position, the number of applicants interviewed, and why other interviewees were not successful in securing the position.
- A copy of the offer of employment and contract for the position including the salary offered for the position
- Any information available that shows it may be difficult to fill positions in the area, for example:
  - the location of the workplace
  - the population of the area
  - information about the conditions and challenges for people living in the area from the local council, Australian Bureau of Statistics or other appropriate organisation.



## 2.3 APPLICANT'S SUITABILITY FOR THE PROPOSED ROLE AND WHETHER THEY CAN MEET THE IDENTIFIED NEED

Information an applicant can provide which demonstrates that they have the training, knowledge, and skills to perform the duties in the position they have been offered may include:

- An up-to-date personal resume which 1) lists the applicant's veterinary and other qualifications, training and research; 2) contains the applicant's veterinary practice history; and 3) describes any practice in the areas described in the position description offered by the applicant's prospective employer
- Academic transcripts showing completed courses and results
- Certified copies of veterinary degrees including postgraduate veterinary qualifications
- Certified evidence of any specialist accreditation they hold in another jurisdiction
- Certified copies of additional training certificates
- Registration history with other veterinary registration authorities, and a letter confirming the applicant's good professional standing from the veterinary registration authority where the applicant is currently registered
- Names of referees that can be contacted by the Board
- Information about the applicant's English competency, e.g., English language test results where taken.

## 3. CONDITIONS, RESTRICTIONS AND LIMITATIONS ON SPECIFIC REGISTRATION

Under section 7(2) of the VPA, 'A grant of specific registration ... is subject to any conditions, limitations or restrictions imposed by the Board including the period of registration which must be no less than 12 months and no more than 36 months.'

It is the Board's general practice to impose conditions on specific registration under section 7(1)(d) of the VPA, limiting the veterinary practitioner's practice to a specific employer under the supervision of a registered veterinary practitioner for a defined period.

In relation to supervision, as the VPA does not mandate supervision of veterinary practitioners granted registration under section 7(1)(d) of the VPA, the Board decides whether registration is required and, if so, whether direct or indirect supervision is required, based on the circumstances and with reference to [VPRBV Policy: Supervision of veterinary practitioners](#).

## 4. OTHER REQUIREMENTS ON SPECIFIC REGISTRATION

Veterinary practitioners granted specific registration under section 7(1)(d) of the VPA are expected to familiarise themselves with and comply with all legislation and guidance relating to veterinary practice in Victoria, including the Board's [Guidelines on standards of veterinary practice and veterinary facilities](#).

[Guideline 9.1](#) requires registered veterinary practitioners in Victoria to practise within their areas of technical competence.

[Guideline 10.1](#) requires registered veterinary practitioners in Victoria to participate in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programs sufficient to demonstrate the maintenance of their competency in their chosen field of veterinary practice.

## PUBLICATION DETAILS

Document	Author	Revision number	Date
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