

HB 1627-FN - AS INTRODUCED

2020 SESSION

20-2371  
08/10

HOUSE BILL            **1627-FN**  
AN ACT                creating an animal health certificate database.  
SPONSORS:            Rep. Bixby, Straf. 17; Sen. Bradley, Dist 3  
COMMITTEE:           Environment and Agriculture

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ANALYSIS

This bill:

- I. Creates a database for animal health certificates.
- II. Authorizes the commissioner of the department of agriculture, markets, and foods to transfer money from certain funds.
- III. Establishes a fee on the submission of animal health certificates.
- IV. Establishes a fee on rabies vaccinations.
- V. Requires veterinarians to send a copy of the rabies vaccination certificate to the department of agriculture, markets, and food.

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Explanation:           Matter added to current law appears in **bold italics**.  
                             Matter removed from current law appears [~~in brackets and struck through.~~]  
                             Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

*In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty*

AN ACT creating an animal health certificate database.

*Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:*

1 1 New Section; Health Certificate Database. Amend RSA 437 by inserting after section 8 the  
2 following new section:

3 437:8-a Animal Health Certificate Database Established.

4 I. The department shall maintain a statewide database of all health certificates for any dog,  
5 cat, or ferret for which it is required; records of all rabies vaccinations, records of quarantine for any  
6 animal brought into New Hampshire for transfer under RSA 437:8, IV; any records required of pet  
7 vendors for the transfer of any animal that is not a dog, cat, or ferret; and the number of individual  
8 and group licenses issued each year by each municipality in New Hampshire under RSA 466.

9 II. Such database may also be used to record other data relevant to the oversight of pet  
10 animal health in the state as the commissioner of the department of agriculture, markets, and food  
11 deems necessary.

12 III. The department shall maintain a reporting system capable of receiving electronically  
13 transmitted reports from veterinarians, pet vendors, animal shelters, and hobby breeders, within 6  
14 months of the effective date of this section. The commissioner shall adopt rules under RSA 541-A to  
15 govern methods of obtaining, compiling, and maintaining such information it deems necessary to  
16 manage such database. The commissioner shall also adopt rules relative to the collection of fees  
17 necessary to maintain the database.

18 2 Transfer Authorized. The commissioner of the department of agriculture, markets, and food is  
19 authorized to transfer funds from the following funds in order to establish the animal transfer  
20 database:

21 I. The agricultural product and scale testing fund established under RSA 435:20, IV.

22 II. The pesticides control fund under RSA 430:34, V.

23 3 Health Certificates; Fee. Amend RSA 437:8, VI to read as follows:

24 VI. No dog, cat, or ferret shall be offered for transfer by a licensee or by any individual  
25 without first being protected against infectious diseases using a vaccine approved by the state  
26 veterinarian. No dog, cat, or ferret shall be offered for transfer by a licensee or by any individual  
27 unless accompanied by an official health certificate issued by a licensed veterinarian. No transfer  
28 shall occur unless the transferred animal is accompanied by a health certificate issued within the  
29 prior 14 days. The **veterinarian shall make sufficient copies of the** certificate~~[-shall be in~~  
30 ~~triplicate]~~, one copy of which shall be retained by the signing veterinarian, one copy of which shall be  
31 for the licensee's records, and one copy of which shall be given to the transferee upon transfer as

1 provided in paragraph III. If an official health certificate is produced, it shall be prima facie  
2 evidence of transfer. The signing veterinarian shall provide a copy of the health certificate to the  
3 department of agriculture, markets, and food [~~upon request~~] **and submit with the copy a \$1 fee**  
4 **for the administration of the animal health certificate database.**

5 4 Duties of Veterinarian; Notification of Administration of Rabies Vaccine. Amend RSA 436:102  
6 to read as follows:

7 436:102 Duties of Veterinarian. It shall be the duty of each veterinarian, at the time of  
8 vaccinating any dog, cat, or ferret, to complete a certificate of rabies vaccination [~~in triplicate~~], **with**  
9 **sufficient copies**, which includes the following information: owner's name and address, description  
10 of dog, cat, or ferret (breed, sex, markings, age, name), date of vaccination, rabies vaccination tag  
11 number, type of rabies vaccine administered, manufacturer's serial number of vaccine, and the  
12 expiration date of the vaccination. Distribution of copies of the certificate shall be: the original to the  
13 owner, one copy retained by the issuing veterinarian and, within 40 days of the vaccination, one copy  
14 to the town or city clerk where the dog, cat, or ferret is kept **and one copy to the department of**  
15 **agriculture, markets, and food for inclusion in the animal health certificate database**  
16 **under RSA 437:8-a.** The veterinarian and the owner shall retain their copies for the interval  
17 between vaccinations specified in RSA 436:100. A metal or durable plastic tag, serially numbered,  
18 shall be securely attached to the collar or harness of the dog. Whenever the dog is out-of-doors, off  
19 the owner's premises, and not under the control of the owner or handler while working the dog, the  
20 collar or harness with the vaccination tag shall be worn. For the purposes of this section, "working  
21 the dog" means a dog doing a defined functional canine activity with its owner or handler such as  
22 hunting, field work, drafting, and guarding, working, or herding livestock, as defined in RSA 21:34-a,  
23 II(a)(4), or participating in any lawful competitive event, including, but not limited to, conformation  
24 shows or obedience trials, field trials, agility events, hunts, sled races, or training activities pertinent  
25 to functional canine activities. Cats and ferrets shall not be required to wear the collar or harness  
26 with the tag.

27 5 Cost; Rabies Vaccination Fee. Amend RSA 436:103 to read as follows:

28 436:103 Cost. The cost of rabies vaccination shall be paid by the owner of the dog, cat, or ferret.  
29 **A fee of \$1 shall be included in the cost of such vaccinations and shall be submitted to the**  
30 **department of agriculture, markets, and food at the time of the submission of the**  
31 **vaccination certificate required in RSA 436:102 for the administration of the animal**  
32 **health certificate database.**

33 6 Effective Date.

34 I. Sections 3-5 of this act shall take effect July 1, 2021.

35 II. The remainder of this act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.

**HB 1627-FN- FISCAL NOTE  
AS INTRODUCED**

AN ACT creating an animal health certificate database.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**     State             County             Local             None

| STATE:                 | Estimated Increase / (Decrease)   |                         |                         |                         |
|------------------------|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
|                        | FY 2020   | FY 2021                 | FY 2022                 | FY 2023                 |
| <b>Appropriation</b>   | \$0   | \$0                     | \$0                     | \$0                     |
| <b>Revenue</b>         | \$0   | \$0                     | \$0                     | \$233,000               |
| <b>Expenditures</b>    | \$0   | Indeterminable Increase | Indeterminable Increase | Indeterminable Increase |
| <b>Funding Source:</b> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Highway <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other -<br>Agricultural product and scale testing fund, pesticides control fund and fee revenue |                         |                         |                         |

**METHODOLOGY:**

This bill creates a database for animal transfers and health certificates and authorizes the Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food to transfer money from the agricultural product and scale testing and pesticide control funds to pay for the database. The bill establishes a \$1 fee on animal health certificates and rabies vaccines and requires veterinarians to send a copy of each rabies vaccine certificate to the Department of Agriculture, Markets and Foods.

The Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food makes the following assumptions regarding the fiscal impact of this bill:

- Based on data available from the American Veterinary Medical Association regarding pet ownership, the Department estimates over 45,000 health certificates will be issued annually.
- Regarding the annual rabies vaccine, the Department estimates 77,733 dogs and 110,400 cats are vaccinated each year, for a total of about 188,000 vaccines annually.
- The Department estimates the annual revenue to the animal health certificate database from the new \$1 fees will be \$233,000 (45,000 health certificates x \$1, plus 188,000 rabies vaccines x \$1)
- The Department does not have existing resources that could be used in support of the bill.

- The Department does not currently have the capacity or personnel with the expertise to collect the anticipated volume of fees or the ability to accept electronic payments. Without personnel to dedicate to collections, the Department assumes an electronic payment system would need to be developed. The cost of such a system is not known at this time.
- The Department assumes, in the absence of new positions, the intent is for electronic submission of all files directly into the database. If health certificates are to be submitted in hard copy form, additional staff would be needed to perform the responsibilities in the bill related health certificates and the animal health certificate database. This work would require 2 additional staff positions for the receipt, review, data entry and filing of an estimated 45,000 health certificates based on processing time of 5 minutes per certificate. The Department does not have the physical space for additional staff or to store the volume of additional hard copy records and would need to find new/additional office space.
- Rabies certificates are currently submitted to by veterinarians to town clerks. If certificates are not submitted directly into the database, submission of hardcopy rabies certificates to the Department would require 8.5 additional staff positions for receipt, review, data entry and filing of an 188,000 health certificates assuming a processing time of 5 minutes per certificate.
- Based on general discussions with possible vendors, a database would cost between \$675,000 and \$1,000,000 for the initial purchase and \$300,000 for annual maintenance. The bill would require implementation of the electronic system within 6 months of the effective date. Due to the time required for a public RFP process, approvals of the Departments of Information Technology, the Department of Justice, the Governor and Executive Council, and the actual development work, the Department assumes the earliest implementation could occur would be July 1, 2022.
- Based on communications with the Division of Vital Records the Department assumes a minimum of one full-time project manager with IT experience will be needed to oversee design and implementation of the animal health certificate database.

**AGENCIES CONTACTED:**

Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food