



CVO
College of
Veterinarians
of Ontario

Strategy 2026

Vision

Public confidence in
veterinary regulation

Mission

Governing the veterinary
profession in the public interest

Principles

In collaboration, we strive to be:

TRANSPARENT: Ethical, fair, clear and direct

RELIABLE: Competent, well-informed, evidence-based and adequately resourced

RELEVANT: Risk-aware, current, responsive and nimble

INDEPENDENT: Mandate-focused and objective

COMPASSIONATE: Approachable, supportive and adaptable to context

INCLUSIVE: Respectful of all voices, conscious of personal bias, open-minded and committed to learning

ACCOUNTABLE: Performance driven, impact oriented and publicly responsible

Strategic Objectives

Championing legislative reform to affirm an agile future

Partnering for improved access to veterinary services

Creating space for innovation and technology

Promoting the importance of One Health

Focusing regulation on people and context



1

Championing Legislative Reform to Affirm an Agile Future

The College has been leading conversations and initiatives to create a receptive environment for modernizing the *Veterinarians Act* for almost a decade. With current government commitment and the continuing support of important partners such as the Ontario Association of Veterinary Technicians and the Ontario Veterinary Medical Association, reforming the legislation to better meet the public interest is now making significant progress. By 2026 the College of Veterinarians of Ontario will be transformed to a next regulatory model which will support two professionals, veterinarians and veterinary technicians, and better advance animal health and welfare in the province.

Year One Tactics:

1. to actively support the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs in their leadership of modernizing the *Veterinarians Act*, including attending internal and external meetings, developing background briefings and providing general advice as requested
2. to collaborate with the Ontario Association of Veterinary Technicians and the Ontario Veterinary Medical Association in preparing our organizations, members and governance for modernization, inclusive of education and communication initiatives
3. to engage stakeholders from varied species, professions, related industries and the general public in collaborative discussions that progress new legislation

2

Partnering for Improved Access to Veterinary Services

Access to veterinary services is paramount to animal health and welfare in Ontario. While the veterinary workforce has had long standing patterns of abundance versus shortage, the effects of the pandemic, the shifting mindset related to work, and the increased public demand for service have created a crisis impacting access in every area of service. Over the next three years, the College will continue to lead, convene and influence strategic initiatives that inform improved access to veterinary care for all species and public health purposes.

Year One Tactics:

1. to lead and implement a national project that produces a competency assessment model for limited licensure that facilitates an easier pathway for competent internationally educated veterinarians to enter the workforce
2. to identify policy work that will strengthen teamwork between veterinarians and veterinary technicians and make a plan for development that coincides with legislative modernization
3. to promote and educate veterinarians and the public on Council's position on balancing access to veterinary care with options
4. to convene discussions with partners and colleagues on possibilities related to the delivery of veterinary medicine for the future
5. to develop a paper outlining an empirical approach to better understanding the dynamics of the veterinary workforce that will support future decision-making
6. to consider programs that support new graduates to gain confidence in front line practice

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Creating Space for Innovation and Technology

Understanding, appreciating, and supporting the importance of innovation and the use of existing and emerging technological advances are key for the sustainable future of veterinary medicine in Ontario. The College has long recognized the impact of technology in the delivery of veterinary medicine and ensuring that new approaches are encouraged and fostered in an environment that promotes safety for all.

Tactics:

1. to encourage early outcomes from Council's recently formed Ontario Veterinary Regulatory Innovation Panel and identify key areas where technology adaption can improve access to animal care in Ontario
2. to approve and promote at least one new Regulatory Sandbox¹ initiative

1. A Regulatory Sandbox is a tool designed to allow a regulator to relax specific legal and regulatory requirements to create a safe space to experiment with an innovative idea while mitigating any fallout from failure. It is particularly helpful in identifying where existing regulations hinder innovation and where amended rules might better manage public protection.

A Regulatory Sandbox is managed by the regulator, and it is the regulator that permits a project to happen outside normal rules, but within a strict protocol for the duration of the pilot project.

4

Promoting the Importance of One Health

Since 2017 the College Council has recognized the importance of broader animal and human health initiative within its strategic considerations. A One Health approach to public policy has gained momentum over the last many years, its importance for animals, humans and the environment is increasingly recognized in broader society. While the College must consider how veterinary regulation intersects with the broad array of issues that are constantly evolving, Council remains committed to its role as a convenor and influencer of discussion and action.

Tactics:

1. to continue to provide direction and support to a provincial interagency dialogue on One Health opportunities
2. to continue to promote drug stewardship that ensures the safe use, management, and disposal of veterinary drugs
3. to convene a working group on the College's role in assisting with animal welfare in times of natural disaster and disease outbreak
4. to initiate discussion with public health agencies on the potential role of lay vaccinators in Ontario

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Focusing Regulation on People and Context

The College recognizes that its trustworthiness is built on its competence, its honesty and its reliability. Its impact, however, is built on its relationships. Relationships come in many forms — direct, indirect, large, small, daily, yearly and so on. Collaboration has been a primary driver in our approach. The recent pandemic, however, has taught our organization that our interests needed additional balancing, setting an importance on veterinary well-being, compassion, and inclusivity. Our aim in this plan is to build on these developing skills and aim for engagement and empowerment for the public good.

Tactics:

1. to intentionally design external policy related communications with an emphasis on why and how the College intends to implement a particular position
2. to implement the College published action plan on diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion and evaluate its progress annually
3. to refine and implement a refreshed brand strategy focused on collaboration
4. to continue leadership of a coordinated provincial approach to veterinarian well-being
5. to leverage findings from our 2022 customer experience survey to better embed a just and compassionate culture at all levels of the organization