

Providing Medications to Clients or the Public

Governor Gavin Newsom [declared the COVID -19 virus to be a state of emergency](#) in California on March 4, 2020. California law allows veterinarians to provide medications to animal owners during declared states of emergency. The law states the following:

[California Business and Professions Code Section 4826.4](#)

(a) A California-licensed veterinarian at premises registered in accordance with Section 4853 that is located within a 25-mile radius of any condition of emergency specified in Section 8558 of the Government Code may, in good faith, do both of the following in addition to any other acts authorized by law:

(1) Render necessary and prompt care and treatment to an animal patient without establishing a veterinarian-client-patient relationship if conditions are such that one cannot be established in a timely manner.

(2) Dispense or prescribe a dangerous drug or device, as defined in Section 4022, in reasonable quantities where failure to provide services or medications, including controlled substances, may result in loss of life or intense suffering of the animal patient. Prior to refilling a prescription pursuant to this paragraph, the veterinarian shall make a reasonable effort to contact the originally prescribing veterinarian.

(b) A veterinarian acting under this section shall make an appropriate record that includes the basis for proceeding under this section.

(c) A veterinarian who performs services pursuant to this section shall have immunity from liability pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 8659 of the Government Code.