

1988 No. 526

**VETERINARY SURGEONS**

**The Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 (Schedule 3  
Amendment) Order 1988**

*Made* - - - - - *15th March 1988*

*Coming into force* *16th March 1988*

The Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, the Secretary of State for Scotland, the Secretary of State for Wales and the Department of Agriculture for Northern Ireland, acting jointly, in exercise of the powers conferred by section 19(5) and (6) of the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966(a) and now vested in them and of all other powers enabling them in that behalf(b), after consultation in accordance with the said section 19(5) with the Council of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons and with persons appearing to them to represent interests so appearing to be substantially affected, hereby make the following Order, of which a draft has been approved by a resolution of each House of Parliament:

**Title and commencement**

1. This Order may be cited as the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 (Schedule 3 Amendment) Order 1988 and shall come into force on the day after the day on which it is made.

**Amendment**

2. For Schedule 3 to the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 (exemptions from restrictions on practice of veterinary surgery)(c) there shall be substituted the following Schedule –

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(a) 1966 c.36. (b) In the case of the Secretary of State for Wales, by virtue of S.I. 1978/272 and, in the case of the Department of Agriculture for Northern Ireland, by virtue of section 40 of, and paragraph 7(1) of Schedule 5 to, the Northern Ireland Constitution Act 1973 (c.36), and section 1(3) of, and paragraph 2(1)(b) of Schedule 1 to, the Northern Ireland Act 1974 (c.28). (c) Part II of Schedule 3 was substituted by S.I. 1982/1885.

**SCHEDULE 3**  
**EXEMPTIONS FROM RESTRICTIONS ON PRACTICE**  
**OF VETERINARY SURGERY**

**PART 1**

**TREATMENT AND OPERATIONS WHICH MAY BE GIVEN OR CARRIED OUT**  
**BY UNQUALIFIED PERSONS**

1. Any minor medical treatment given to an animal by its owner, by another member of the household of which the owner is a member or by a person in the employment of the owner.
2. Any medical or minor surgical treatment (not involving entry into a body cavity) given, otherwise than for reward, to an animal used in agriculture, as defined in the Agriculture Act 1947, by the owner of the animal or by a person engaged or employed in caring for animals so used.
3. The rendering in an emergency of first aid for the purpose of saving life or relieving pain or suffering.
4. The performance by any person of or over the age of eighteen of any of the following operations, that is to say –
  - (a) the castration of a male animal or the caaponising of an animal, whether by chemical means or otherwise;
  - (b) the docking of the tail of a lamb;
  - (c) the docking of the tail of a dog before its eyes are open;
  - (d) the amputation of the dew claws of a dog before its eyes are open.
5. The performance, by any person of the age of seventeen undergoing instruction in animal husbandry, of any operation mentioned in paragraph 4(a) or (b) above and the disbudding of a calf by any such person or by a person of or over the age of eighteen undergoing such instruction, if, in each case, either of the following conditions is complied with, that is to say –
  - (a) the instruction in animal husbandry is given by a person registered in the register of veterinary surgeons or the supplementary veterinary register and the operation is performed under his direct personal supervision;
  - (b) the instruction in animal husbandry is given at a recognised institution and the operation is performed under the direct personal supervision of a person appointed to give such instruction at the institution.

In this paragraph "recognised institution" means –

- (i) as respects Great Britain, an institution maintained or assisted (in England and Wales) by a local education authority or (in Scotland) by an education authority or in either case an institution for the giving of further education as respects which a grant is paid by the Secretary of State or an institution recognised for the purposes of this paragraph by the Secretary of State; and
- (ii) as respects Northern Ireland, an agricultural college maintained by the Department of Agriculture for Northern Ireland.

PART II  
EXCLUSIONS FROM PROVISIONS OF PART I

Nothing in section 19(4)(b) of this Act shall authorise –

- (a) the castration of a male animal being –
  - (i) a horse, pony, ass or mule,
  - (ii) a bull, boar or goat which has reached the age of two months,
  - (iii) a ram which has reached the age of three months, or
  - (iv) a cat or dog;
- (b) the spaying of a cat or dog;
- (c) the removal (otherwise than in an emergency for the purpose of saving life or relieving pain or suffering) of any part of the antlers of a deer before the velvet of the antlers is frayed and the greater part of it has been shed;
- (d) the desnooding of a turkey which has reached the age of 21 days;
- (e) the removal of the combs of any poultry which have reached the age of 72 hours;
- (f) the cutting of the toes of a domestic fowl or turkey which has reached the age of 72 hours;
- (g) the performance of a vasectomy or the carrying out of electro-ejaculation on any animal or bird kept for production of food, wool, skin or fur or for use in the farming of land;
- (h) the removal of the supernumerary teats of a calf which has reached the age of 3 months; or
- (i) the dehorning or disbudding of a sheep or goat, except the trimming of the insensitive tip of an ingrowing horn which, if left untreated, could cause pain or distress.”

**Revocation**

3. The Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 (Schedule 3 Amendment) Order 1982(a) is hereby revoked.

In Witness whereof the Official Seal of the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food is hereunto affixed on 15th March 1988.



*John Selwyn Gummer*  
Minister of State,  
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

14th March 1988

*Sanderson of Bowden*  
Minister of State, Scottish Office

11th March 1988

*Peter Walker*  
Secretary of State for Wales

Sealed with the Official Seal of the Department of Agriculture for Northern Ireland on 15th March 1988.

*W. H. Jack*  
Permanent Secretary

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(a) S.I. 1982/1885.

## EXPLANATORY NOTE

*(This note is not part of the Order)*

This Order amends the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 ("the Act") by substituting a new Schedule for Schedule 3 to the Act (article 2).

The new Schedule 3, like the old, contains exemptions from the restrictions on the practice of veterinary surgery by unqualified persons contained in section 19(1) of the Act; Part I lists the treatment and operations which may be given or carried out by unqualified persons and Part II lists exclusions from the exemptions provided in Part I.

The changes of substance made in the new Schedule 3 are –

(1) the treatment which can be given to an animal by its owner and by members of his household is limited to minor medical treatment (paragraph 1 of Part I);

(2) the treatment which can be given to an animal used in agriculture by its owner or by a person engaged or employed in caring for any such animal is limited to any medical or minor surgical treatment (not involving entry into a body cavity) (paragraph 2 of Part I);

(3) the disbudding of a calf can now be performed by a person of the age of seventeen or over who is undergoing instruction in animal husbandry (paragraph 5 of Part I); and

(4) the spaying of a cat or dog is added to the exclusions from the provisions of Part I listed in Part II, and the limitation as to age is omitted in relation to the exclusion from Part I of the castration of a cat or a dog (paragraphs (a)(iv) and (b) of Part II).

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