

AMERICAN VETERINARY MEDICAL LAW ASSOCIATION



32ND CE PROGRAM & ANNUAL MEETING

**AUGUST 15-16, 2026
NASHVILLE, TN
SHERATON GRAND HOTEL**

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**AVMLA Annual Continuing Education
Program Schedule • August 15–16, 2026
Sheraton Grand Hotel in Nashville, TN**

SATURDAY, AUGUST 15

8:00–8:10 AM — Welcome & Opening Remarks

Robert Simpson, DVM, JD; Jim Wilson, DVM, JD

A welcome to attendees and overview of the two-day program.

8:10–9:00 AM — Veterinary Legislative Hotspots Across the United States

Angela Shuman, AVMA State Advocacy Division

(via Zoom) A national update on VCPR requirements, telemedicine definitions, and emerging regulatory trends.

9:00–10:15 AM — How Rising Veterinary Costs for Pet Owners Increase Risks for Veterinarians

Moderator: Jim Wilson, DVM, JD

Panelists: Robert Simpson, DVM, JD; Nathan Zilak, Esq. (ASPCA); Rod Finnegan (Vetinsure)

A discussion of noneconomic damages, family-law pet disputes, and legal trends increasing liability exposure.

10:15–10:30 AM — Break

10:30 AM–12:00 PM — Financial Pressures, Legal Exposure, and the Expanding Role of Attorneys in Veterinary Disputes

Moderator: Jim Wilson, DVM, JD

Panelists: Robert Simpson, DVM, JD; Lance Roasa, DVM, JD; Tony Mahan, JD; Rod Finnegan (Vetinsure)

How shelters, boarding facilities, and practices can respond to legislative and judicial trends.

12:00–1:00 PM — Box Lunch

1:00–3:00 PM — Pet Ownership: Determining Who Legally Owns the Animal

Moderator: Jim Wilson, DVM, JD

Panelists: Nathan Zilak, Esq. (ASPCA); Debra Hamilton, JD; Donna Kline, JD, PhD; Rachel Bergartt, DVM, JD

A review of statutes, microchip data, confidentiality, VCPR considerations, and common ownership disputes.

3:00–3:10 PM — Short Break

3:10–4:10 PM — Moral, Ethical, and Legal Challenges in Reportable Diseases, Prepurchase Exams, and Genetic Information

Moderator: Debra Hamilton, JD

Panelists: Andrew Jones, DVM; Donna Kline, JD, PhD;

Rachel Bergartt, DVM, JD

A discussion of reportable disease lists, confidentiality, and ethical dilemmas involving genetic information.

4:15–5:15 PM — AVMLA Annual Business Meeting

Open to AVMLA members.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 16

8:30–10:15 AM — Predatory Practice-Ownership

Models: How Associates Become Sharecroppers

Moderator: Tony Mahan, JD

Panelists: Charlotte Lacroix, DVM, JD (via Zoom); Lance Roasa, DVM, JD; Travis Potter, JD; Mary Mongoi, JD

An analysis of equity documents, parent-company structures, and restrictive employment contracts.

10:15–10:30 AM — Break

10:30 AM–12:15 PM — Associate Buy-Ins: Will Yours Be Beef Wellington or a Sharecropper's Supper?

Moderator: Jim Wilson, DVM, JD

Panelists: Charlotte Lacroix, DVM, JD (via Zoom); Travis Potter, JD; Tony Mahan, JD; Mary Mongoi, JD; Rod Finnegan (Vetinsure)

Valuation methods, lender options, attorney roles, compensation structures, minority-ownership challenges, and insurance considerations.

12:15–1:00 PM — Lunch Break

1:00–1:45 PM — Can You Win Animal Law and Welfare Cases with Science?

Andrew Knight, BSc/BVMS, PhD, MANZCVS, DipECAWBM (AWSEL), DipACAW, FRCVS, PFHEA

How systematic reviews and evidence-based welfare science strengthen legal arguments.

1:50–3:20 PM — AI in Veterinary Medicine: Legal Risks, Regulatory Gaps, and the Coming Wave of Liability

Moderator: Rob Simpson, DVM, JD

Panelists: Rachel Bergartt, DVM, JD; Beth Venit, VMD, MPH, DACVPM (AAVSB)

Legal risks associated with AI-generated diagnostics, treatment recommendations, dosage guidance, and automated medical-record creation.



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