

## DEA License

Any veterinarian who orders, dispenses, prescribes, or administers controlled substances should be registered with the [Drug Enforcement Agency \(DEA\)](#).

DEA rules permit an associate veterinarian to act as an agent of the registered veterinarian (or practice) in lieu of getting his or her own license. However, this is not advisable.

While an associate would save the cost of the DEA registration fee, it isn't a good idea for most practices for several reasons:

- As an agent for the practice or registered veterinarian, you can administer or dispense a controlled substance from the practice's supply, but you **cannot** order or write prescriptions to be filled outside of the practice. Only a registered practitioner can execute a prescription.
- A registered practitioner is required by law to conduct a background check of any person they authorize to order, dispense, prescribe, or administer a controlled substance. This can be time consuming and comes at a cost – something that not all practices are willing to do.
- The registered practitioner's license would be at risk if the agent were to misuse or divert controlled substances and the registered practitioner did not have sufficient safeguards in place to prevent this from occurring.