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throughout the United States and Canada. Most AVMA CVTEA-accredited programs lead to an Associate degree after two years but some lead to a four-year Baccalaureate degree. Veterinary technicians with Baccalaureate degrees usually receive higher salaries and a higher level of job responsibilities.

A period of clinical experience in a veterinary practice is required for all students in an AVMA CVTEA-accredited veterinary technology program. This period of hands-on training is called a preceptorship, practicum, internship or externship and is a critical component of the veterinary technology program.

DISTANCE LEARNING

To accommodate work and family obligations, distance learning is an option for students wishing to earn a degree in veterinary technology on a flexible schedule. The AVMA CVTEA accredits several distance-learning programs that meet the same standards of accreditation as traditional programs and include a clinical component.

SALARY

Salaries vary according to experience, responsibility, geographic location, and employment type.

PROFESSIONAL REGULATION

The majority of states have regulations that provide for credentialing (certification, licensure, or registration) of veterinary technicians. Candidates are typically tested for competency through an examination regulated by the state veterinary board. Most states require candidates to pass the Veterinary Technician National Examination (VTNE).

VETERINARY TECHNICIAN SPECIALTIES

Some veterinary technicians decide to specialize in an area of expertise. According to the National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America (NAVTA), an academy is a group of credentialed veterinary technicians who have completed a formal process of work experience, specialized training, testing, and certification. The recognized academies include specialties in the following:

- Anesthesia
- Behavior
- Clinical pathology
- Clinical practice
- Dental technology
- Dermatology
- Emergency and critical care
- Equine nursing
- Internal medicine
- Nutrition
- Surgery
- Zoological medicine

Visit the NAVTA site (www.navta.net) for a complete list of veterinary technician academies.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Most state licensing boards require a certain number of hours of continuing education (CE) to renew professional licenses. In addition, with ongoing advances in technology and veterinary medical care, most veterinary technicians find it important to participate in continuing education opportunities to keep their skills and knowledge up-to-date.

For more information, visit:

www.avma.org

www.navta.net



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VETERINARY TECHNICIANS

*Brought to you by your veterinarian
and the American Veterinary Medical Association*



TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICE,

today's veterinary team utilizes the skills of trained professionals known as *veterinary technicians*.

If you care about animals, enjoy working with your hands, are good at basic math and decision-making, and like working with people and handling a variety of responsibilities, then the challenging career of veterinary technology may be just right for you.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The veterinary technician is an integral member of the veterinary health care team. Veterinary technicians have been educated in the care and handling of animals, the basic principles of normal and abnormal life processes, and in many laboratory and clinical procedures. Veterinary technicians work under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian. While a veterinary technician can assist in performing a wide variety of tasks, they cannot diagnose, prescribe, perform surgery, or engage in any activity prohibited by a state's veterinary practice act.

IN PRIVATE PRACTICE

A veterinary technician employed in a veterinary clinic or hospital handles many of the same responsibilities that nurses and other professionals perform for physicians. They are trained to:

- Obtain medical histories
- Collect specimens and perform laboratory procedures
- Provide specialized nursing care
- Prepare animals, instruments, and equipment for surgery
- Administer and monitor anesthesia
- Perform diagnostic and medical procedures
- Assist in surgical procedures

- Perform diagnostic imaging
- Educate clients
- Supervise practice personnel
- Perform dental prophylaxes

IN RESEARCH

In addition to the responsibilities above, veterinary technicians employed in a biomedical research facility perform other duties under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian, a biomedical research worker, or other scientist:

- Supervise the humane care and handling of research animals
- Assist in the implementation of research projects

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

While the majority of veterinary technicians are employed in private practice, the demand for technicians is rapidly expanding to include new employment opportunities in human and animal health-related areas and specialties such as:

- Military service
- Food safety inspection
- Veterinary technology education
- Zoo animal and wildlife care
- Diagnostic laboratories
- Veterinary supply sales and service
- Animal shelters and humane societies
- Livestock health management
- Colleges or schools of veterinary medicine
- Veterinary practice management

EDUCATION

Students interested in a career in veterinary technology must have an aptitude for general science, math, and biology, and demonstrate excellent decision-making and strong communication skills.

The American Veterinary Medical Association Committee on Veterinary Technician Education and Activities (AVMA CVTEA) accredits more than 230 veterinary technology programs



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