

Healthcare Practitioners and Technicians

Veterinary Technologists and Technicians

Veterinary Technologists and Technicians assist in and perform many of the tasks carried out by licensed veterinarians. While the jobs performed by technologists and technicians are virtually the same, they have different requirements for formal education and training.

Veterinary technologists and technicians work under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian in private clinics and perform medical and laboratory tests such as urinalysis and blood counts, treat and diagnose medical conditions, prepare tissue samples, draw blood, develop x-rays, keep patient records, discuss a pet's condition with its owner, and assist veterinarians in other tasks. Veterinary technologists and technicians typically work with small pets such as cats, dogs, mice, rats, and occasionally sheep, pigs, cattle, monkeys, birds, fish, and frogs.

Along with private clinics, veterinary technologists and technicians can be found in research facilities performing research to promote animal and human health under the direction of veterinarians or physicians. In a research facility technologists and technicians administer medications, prepare laboratory samples for examination, sterilize equipment, provide postoperative care, vaccinate animals, euthanize seriously ill, injured, or unwanted animals, and record information about an animal's genealogy, diet, weight, medication, food intake, and clinical signs of pain and distress. Veterinary technologists and technicians in research facilities aid scientists in research in areas such as gene therapy and cloning.

While veterinary technologists and technicians gain satisfaction from the work they do with animals, the job can be physically and emotionally demanding, and can include unpleasant and dangerous work. Technologists and technicians often work in loud environments where they clean cages, lift, hold, or restrain animals where they may be bitten or scratched, witness animal abuse, and euthanize animals. Technologists and technicians must have patience while working with members of the public in animal shelters, and must maintain a calm professional demeanor while enforcing animal care laws on owners who may be neglecting or abusing their animals.

Veterinary technologists and technicians typically work 40 hours per work, but are sometime required to work nights, holidays, and weekends if they work at a facility that requires a technologist or technician to be on duty 24 hours a day.

Education/Training

How to Obtain:

Most entry-level veterinary technicians have a 2-year associate's degree from an American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)-accredited community college program in veterinary technology. Graduation from an AVMA-accredited veterinary technology program allows students to take the credentialing exam in any State in the country. Currently, about 20 colleges offer 4-year bachelor degree programs in veterinary technology.

Every state requires a state exam following completion of an associate's degree at an American Veterinary Medication Association accredited program. Most states use the National Veterinary Technician (NVT) exam. Veterinary technologists and technicians are regulated by the American Association of Veterinary State Boards.

To become an entry-level veterinary technician, you must:

- Complete a program from an accredited community college in veterinary technology
- Pass the National Veterinary Exam. The exam consists of:
 - Seven primary areas of responsibility
 - Twenty-three task area statements
 - Forty-seven knowledge area statements

The specific requirements for licensure in the state of New York are:

- Being a graduate of an accredited veterinary technology program
- Passing scores on the NVT
- Being a United States citizen or legal resident
- Possessing good moral character

More Information on Licensing:

- National Veterinary Technician (NVT) Candidate Information:
<http://www.aavsb.org/PDF/VTNE/CandidateInformationBooklet.pdf>
- New York State Veterinary Technician Licensure Information:
<http://www.op.nysed.gov/prof/vetmed/vetlic.htm>
- American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA):
<http://www.avma.org/>
- National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America (NAVTA):
<http://www.navta.net/>

Average Costs:

The National Veterinary Exam costs \$300 which includes the Prometric seating fee. Each practice exam is \$45, which excludes additional study materials.

Costs of continuing education vary.