

Veterinary Assistant

INDUSTRY FACTS



What do veterinary assistants do?

The best veterinary assistants have the uncanny ability to relate to animals in surprising ways. They're calming. They're practical. And they're incredibly empathetic. Veterinary assistants mostly work in private practices, animal hospitals, after-hours facilities, and labs. A snapshot of daily life varies, and the hours can take a toll—both physically and emotionally. But it's rewarding, essential work that anyone with a soft spot for our furry friends will enjoy.

- Feeding, bathing, and exercising animals
- Cleaning and disinfecting cages, kennels, and examination and operation rooms
- Restraining animals during examination and laboratory procedures
- Maintaining and sterilizing surgical instruments and equipment
- Monitoring and caring for animals after surgery
- Helping to provide emergency first aid to sick and injured animals

Where do veterinary assistants work?

Veterinary assistants are found in veterinary practices and clinics nationwide. As many clinics and animal hospitals are open 24/7, night and weekend schedules are often available.



How much do they earn?

You'll be happy to learn that this specific career path allows you to do meaningful work caring for animals. Pay rates for veterinary assistants vary by employer, geographic location, and experience. The U.S. Department of Labor reports that the median annual wage for veterinary assistants is \$34,740.*

How's the job outlook?

Veterinary assistants are part of the rapidly growing pet industry—and that growth doesn't seem to be impacted by recent world events. In fact, The U.S. Department of Labor Statistics estimates the demand for veterinary assistants will grow by 20% through 2032.*

*Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor. "Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretakers" Occupational Outlook Handbook. Accessed March 25, 2024.

Statements found in the United States Department of Labor Occupational Outlook Handbook are not a guarantee of any post-graduation salary, in part because the data used to create the Occupational Outlook Handbook includes workers from differing educational backgrounds, levels of experience, and geographic areas of the country.

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PROGRAM DETAILS

Get Hands-On Experience

Our training is developed by industry professionals with years of real-world experience. Visually rich course materials include guest lectures, webinars, and practical exercises to help you learn new concepts and gain the knowledge and skills needed to work alongside veterinarians and veterinary technicians.

You'll also have the opportunity to get hands-on experience in a real veterinary clinic through a required externship! This allows you to apply what you learn online to real-world situations that are common in practices and animal hospitals. To complete your externship, you'll work with our externship coordinators to find a site near you and complete any necessary paperwork.*

Get Certified

We'll help you prepare you to take nationally recognized exams so you can explore greater opportunities in your area.

Approved Veterinary Assistant (AVA)

- This training program can help you prepare to sit for the AVA exam offered through NAVTA, one of the most recognized vet assistant certifications.

Receive Coaching and Guidance

When you train with CareerStep, we back you every step of the way—from sign-up through course completion. Plus, you'll learn from industry professionals with first-hand knowledge of what it takes to be a successful veterinary assistant.

- Learner support
- Technical support
- Career support

Program Outline

Courses

Program Orientation: Veterinary Assistant

Veterinary Office Procedures and Medical Record Keeping

Digital Technology

Microsoft Office 2019: Foundations Course

Animal Behavior and Restraint

Animal Anatomy and Disease

Introduction to Veterinary Pharmacology

Introduction to Animal Nursing

Externship Readiness Skills

Introduction to Veterinary Surgical Assisting

Grief, Pet Loss and Euthanasia

Veterinary Radiology

Veterinary Laboratory Procedures

Introduction to Large & Exotic Animal Assisting

Veterinary Emergency Care and Triage

Final Exam

Applying for Your Required Externship

Clinical Externship*

Course Completion: Veterinary Assistant

*CareerStep does not guarantee externships.

A learner's placement in and completion of an externship is solely the learner's responsibility and may be subject to additional requirements, such as a background check and successful completion of a CareerStep course. This is particularly important for learners seeking to complete their externship in Alabama, District of Columbia, Indiana, Louisiana, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nevada, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Washington, and Wyoming. Please note that CareerStep will not sign agreements with sites in the above-referenced states or provide evidence of insurance to those sites.