

VETERINARY ASSISTANT

JOB DESCRIPTION

Veterinary assistants handle routine animal care and help veterinarians and veterinary technicians. They:

- Feed, bathe and exercise animals
- Clean and disinfect cages and exams and operating rooms
- Restrain animals during exams and procedures
- Sterilize surgical instruments and equipment
- Care for animals after surgery
- Provide emergency first aid to sick and injured animals
- Give medication or immunizations prescribed by veterinarian
- Assist in collecting blood, urine, and tissue samples

PAY

\$37,320 median annual wage (\$17.94/hour) as of May 2024

JOB OUTLOOK

19% (Much faster than average) 2023-33

EDUCATION/TRAINING

Most workers have a high school diploma and receive short-term on-the-job training.

VET TECHS & VET ASSISTANTS NEED SIMILAR SKILLS:

- **Communication skills**—To communicate with staff and effectively explain instructions and procedures to animal owners.
- **Compassion**—To treat animals with kindness and sensitivity when dealing with owners of sick pets.
- **Detail-oriented**—in order to follow instructions exactly as directed.
- **Manual dexterity**—To carefully handle animals, medical instruments, and laboratory equipment.
- **Physical strength**—To handle, move, and restrain animals.

VETERINARY TECHNICIAN

JOB DESCRIPTION

Registered veterinary technicians (RVTs) provide a wide range of care for animal patients. Their duties are a combination of the veterinary equivalent of a nurse, surgical technician, anesthetist, medical technologist, dental hygienist, pharmacy technician, and x-ray technician. They:

- Observe the behavior and condition of animals through patient assessments
- Provide nursing care or emergency first aid to recovering or injured animals
- Bathe animals, clip nails or claws, and brush or cut animals' hair
- Restrain animals during exams or procedures
- Administer anesthesia to animals and monitor them
- Take x rays
- Collect and perform laboratory tests, such as urinalysis and blood counts
- Prepare animals, instruments and equipment for surgery
- Prepare, dispense and administer medications, vaccines, and treatments prescribed by a veterinarian
- Perform dental cleaning and simple extractions
- Educate clients about home care for wounds, bandages, dental health, etc.
- Assist with emergency care
- Collect and record animals' case histories

PAY

\$45,980 per year (\$22.11/hour) as of May 2024

JOB OUTLOOK

19% (Much faster than average) 2023-33

EDUCATION/TRAINING

A two-year associate degree is needed in Ohio, along with successful completion of the Veterinarian Technician National Exam (VTNE).

LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

Must be licensed with the Ohio Veterinarian Medical Licensing Board (OVMLB) to practice in Ohio.

CERTIFICATE/DEGREE PROGRAMS

A vet tech program is not meant to be a “stepping stone” to another program. Vet tech coursework does not transfer to a veterinarian degree. It is much like a program for an RN compared to an MD on the human side. At The Ohio State University, for example, veterinary technology courses do not qualify as entrance requirements for The Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine, nor do they apply toward a veterinary degree there.

The following Associate degree programs are fully accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association. Graduates are eligible to take the Veterinary Technician National Exam (VTNE).

CUYAHOGA COMMUNITY COLLEGE *(Western Campus, Parma)*

Associate of Applied Science degree in Veterinary Technology (2-year program)

24 students per year are accepted into the program. Typically there is a waitlist. Accepted vet tech full-time students attend Tri-C's Western Campus for five semesters of study.

www.tri-c.edu/programs/health-careers/veterinary-technology/index.html

KENT STATE TRUMBALL & TUSCARAWAS REGIONAL CAMPUSES *(Warren & New Philadelphia)*

Associate of Applied Science degree in Veterinary Technology (2-year program)

Prepares students with hands on learning and experiences in a wide variety of settings.

catalog.kent.edu/colleges/ap/veterinary-technology-aas/#text

PURDUE UNIVERSITY DISTANCE LEARNING

Associate of Applied Science degree in Veterinary Nursing

The 70-credit hour program includes online, asynchronous didactic courses and clinical mentorships. The Veterinary Nursing Distance Learning (VNDL) program was designed to be taken on a part time-time basis. <https://vet.purdue.edu/nursing/distance-learning/>

STAUTZENBERGER COLLEGE *(Brecksville, on-campus and online)*

- ***Veterinary Technician Associate Degree*** (2-year program)
- ***Animal Welfare Administration diploma program*** (9 months on-line) with option to continue to earn an ***Animal Welfare Business Administration Associate Degree*** (additional 7 months)
- ***Veterinary Assistant and Grooming Diploma*** (12-month on-line program)

https://www.sctoday.edu/programs/animal_science

VALLEY COLLEGE *(Cleveland)*

Associate of Applied Science degree in Veterinary Technology

This is a 19-month hybrid program. <https://valley.edu/on-campus-programs/>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

What is a Vet Tech? Video from Tri-C: www.youtube.com/watch?v=12V1AG6lJuo

Ohio Association of Vet Technicians: ohiorvt.org/index.htm | **FAQs:** ohiorvt.org/faq.htm

American Veterinary Association including long distance learning options: www.avma.org/