



Can an LVT perform euthanasia?

Regulations that allow a licensed veterinary technician to induce and maintain anesthesia can be interpreted to also allow the LVT to use the same anesthetics to perform euthanasia on an animal. The regulations specifically provide for an LVT to induce and maintain anesthesia only under the onsite supervision of a veterinarian, which is the same level of supervision described in the Practice Guidelines for Veterinarians as "direct supervision," where "the veterinarian must be on the same premises as the person under supervision." This level of veterinarian supervision of an LVT will apply in the case of an LVT performing a euthanasia on an animal.

As with all duties delegated by the veterinarian to the LVT, the veterinarian must determine that the licensed individual has sufficient experience and training to perform the task. Tasks an LVT performs must be performed at the direction of the veterinarian, and that direction should be recorded in the animal's medical record. Remember that ultimately, the supervising veterinarian is responsible for the actions of the LVT working under their supervision.

Whether the veterinarian or an LVT is performing a euthanasia, the owner's written consent must be obtained and kept as part of the medical record.

It is wise to be cautious about performing a euthanasia because the NYSED Office of Professional Discipline receives numerous complaints from animal owners about euthanasias performed on their pets. Veterinarians have been disciplined not only for performing a euthanasia without the consent of the owner, but also for improper administration of a euthanizing drug.

A different rule for individuals who can perform euthanasias applies in an SPCA or a municipal animal control facility (pound or shelter) where a veterinarian is not present. In the absence of a licensed veterinarian, euthanasias in those facilities can be performed only by individuals certified and registered with the New York State Department of Health to perform euthanasia on animals. LVTs are qualified by their education and training to obtain that certification and registration, but must meet additional qualifications as well. A non-veterinarian registered or certified to perform euthanasia on animals must be employed by the SPCA or animal control facility, and must follow all Department of Health regulations relating to euthanasias performed on animals at SPCAs and animal control facilities, including required recordkeeping of the euthanasia and the drugs used in performing the euthanasia. (See Section 80.134 in the Department of Health Regulations).

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NYSVMS Mission Statement: The New York State Veterinary Medical Society is leading the veterinarians of New York State in the education, advancement and protection of animal well-being, public health and practice of veterinary medicine.



MEMBER QUESTION:

Our technician recently graduated, but has not passed the licensing exam. What role can they currently fill in our office?

NYSVMS: Once a student graduates from the veterinary technician program, but before he/she pass the licensing exam, he/she must be treated as an unlicensed technician. However, if he/she obtains a limited permit for the practice of veterinary technology (see below), he/she can perform duties reserved for a licensed veterinary technician while the limited permit remains in effect. The limited permit is automatically revoked if they fail the licensing exam.

Without a limited permit, until he/she is licensed he/she cannot perform tasks he/she may have performed in your practice during their preceptorship, under your supervision, if he/she was enrolled in one of the traditional programs; or as part of his/her curriculum, under your supervision, if he/she was enrolled in one of the distance learning programs. It is important to keep in mind the distinction between the teaching activities a student may perform and the regular duties that a licensed veterinary technician on your staff can perform.

§6711-a. Limited permits to engage in the practice of veterinary technology.

Permits limited as to eligibility, practice, and duration, shall be issued by the department to eligible applicants as follows:

1. Eligibility. Persons shall be eligible for a limited permit who fulfill all requirements for a license as a veterinary technician except those relating to the examination and citizenship or permanent residence in the United States.
2. Duration. A limited permit issued pursuant to subdivision one of this section shall be valid for one year or until the individual has had the opportunity to take the state veterinary technician licensing examination and receive the results of this examination, whichever shall occur first. It may be renewed once at the discretion of the department if the permit holder has not had a reasonable opportunity to take the state veterinary technician licensing examination during the period for which such limited permit was originally issued.
3. Fees. The fee for each limited permit and for each renewal shall be \$50.