

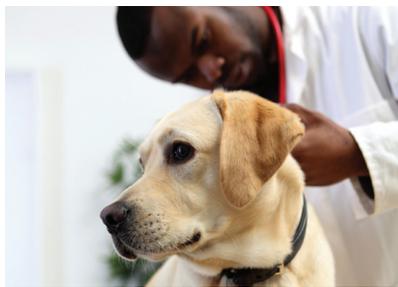
# Careers in Veterinary Medicine

## PVMA FACT SHEET

### Careers in Veterinary Medicine

Whether they're pets, livestock or working animals, animals matter to individuals and society. Every community needs veterinary professionals to provide animal health care, but veterinarians also do many other kinds of jobs. They make sure the nation's food supply is safe. They work to control the spread of diseases. They conduct research that helps both animals and humans. Veterinarians are at the forefront of protecting the public's health and welfare.

Besides medical skills, veterinarians often take a holistic approach to human well-being and animal welfare that, combined with communications and problem-solving skills, makes veterinarians uniquely qualified to fulfill a variety of roles. Many veterinarians, of course, provide care for companion animals through private medical practices, but veterinarians are also involved in promoting the health and welfare of farm animals, exotic animals, working animals (like those in the equine industry), and those that need a healthy environment in which to thrive.



Outside of companion animal practice, the largest employer of veterinarians in the United States is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service, but veterinarians are found throughout government in roles where they contribute to public health, the environment, and even homeland security, as well as working in research and public policy.

Many veterinarians are engaged in work at the intersection of both human and animal health. For example, veterinarians play an important role in food safety, where epidemiological research is crucial to forecasting the threat of food-borne diseases and outbreaks. They work to keep cattle and other food animals healthy by developing and testing various farm control methods that help to detect, limit, and prevent the spread of food that might be contaminated by salmonella, e coli or other pathogens.

Unmet needs for veterinary expertise exist in some sectors of veterinary medicine, such as public health, biomedical research, and food safety. To help address the lack of veterinarians in biomedical research, the AAVMC is a co-sponsor of the Meriel Veterinary Scholars Program. The program's mission is to expose veterinary medical students in their first or second year of veterinary school to biomedical research and career opportunities in research. The program culminates in the Meriel NIH National Veterinary Scholars Sympo-

sium, where veterinary students participating in the program gather from all over the United States and Canada to present their research findings and share experiences from their various programs.

### Exploring Veterinary Career Options

The following list is not exhaustive but provides an overview of careers where graduates of veterinary medical schools can effectively apply their Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) degrees.

- Private practice, either general practice or (with advanced training and experience) a specialty field, such as ophthalmology, orthopedics, and many more.
- Corporate veterinary medicine with corporations that provide veterinary care, test human drugs for safety, or produce animal-related products.
- The Federal Government employs veterinarians through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), National Institutes of Health (NIH), Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and Food and Drug

Administration (FDA) working on biosecurity, environmental quality, public health, meat inspection, regulatory medicine, and agricultural animal health, or the investigation of disease outbreaks.

- The U.S. Army Corps and U.S. Air Force offer career opportunities in areas such food safety and military working dog veterinary medicine.
- Research, either in a university setting or with companies that produce animal-related products or pharmaceuticals.
- Teaching, either in academia or non-professionals schools.
- Public Health, particularly with governmental agencies such as the United State Public Health Service, which works to control the transmission of animal-to-human (zoonotic) diseases.
- Food supply medicine, with either the government or a food animal company.
- Global Veterinary Medicine, in private practice or with international agencies working in areas such as food production and safety or emerging diseases.
- Public Policy, working for governments on animal and zoonotic diseases, animal welfare, public health issues, or as consultants with non-governmental agencies.
- Shelter medicine, working with communities, and private or public agencies to ensure the health and well being of animal populations housed in shelters.



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