

VIRGINIA BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

Preceptorships and Externships for Veterinary Technician Students

Applicable Laws and Regulations

§ 54.1-3804. Specific powers of Board.

In addition to the powers granted in § 54.1-2400, the Board shall have the following specific powers and duties:

2. To establish and monitor programs for the practical training of qualified students of veterinary medicine or veterinary technology in college or university programs of veterinary medicine or veterinary technology.

18VAC150-20-10. Definitions.

The following words and terms when used in this chapter shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Preceptorship or externship" means a formal arrangement between an AVMA accredited college of veterinary medicine or an AVMA accredited veterinary technology program and a veterinarian who is licensed by the board and responsible for the practice of the preceptee. A preceptorship or externship shall be overseen by faculty of the college or program.

18VAC150-20-130. Requirements for practical training in a preceptorship or externship.

A. The practical training and employment of qualified students of veterinary medicine or veterinary technology shall be governed and controlled as follows:

2. A veterinary technician student who is enrolled and in good standing in a veterinary technology program accredited or approved by the AVMA may be engaged in a preceptorship or externship. A veterinary technician preceptee or extern may perform duties that constitute the practice of veterinary technology for which he has received adequate instruction by the program and only under the on-premises supervision of a licensed veterinarian or licensed veterinary technician.

Guidance

Q: How does an individual qualify for a preceptorship/externship in Virginia?

A: In order to be considered a veterinary technician preceptee or extern (VTP/E), an individual must be enrolled and in good standing in a campus or distance learning veterinary technology program accredited or approved by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA).

Q: What duties may a VTP/E perform during a veterinary technology preceptorship/externship?

A: A VTP/E may perform duties that constitute the practice of veterinary technology for which he has received adequate instruction by the program and under the on-premises supervision prior to receiving a license from the Virginia Board of Veterinary Medicine.

Q: May a VTP/E have access to Schedule II through V drugs?

A: The Regulations specifically state that only the veterinarian, veterinary technician, pharmacist, or pharmacy technician shall have access to Schedule II through V drugs. Therefore, students may not have access (keys, combinations, etc.) to Schedule II through V drugs.

Q: May a VTP/E administer rabies vaccinations?

A: Pursuant to Virginia Code § 3.2-6521, a rabies vaccination is to be administered by a licensed veterinarian or licensed veterinary technician who is under the immediate and direct supervision of a licensed veterinarian on the premises. A VTP/E is unlicensed and may not administer a rabies vaccination.

Q: What are the supervision requirements for a VTP/E?

A: Duties may only be performed under the on-premises supervision of a licensed veterinarian or licensed veterinary technician. It is the responsibility of the supervising licensed veterinarian or licensed veterinary technician and the VTP/E to obtain information from the campus or distance learning program to determine whether the preceptee or extern has received adequate instruction by the program.

Q: What does “formal arrangement” found in the definition of preceptorship and externship mean?

A: A licensed veterinarian or veterinary technician may provide on-premises supervision of a VTP/E. However, a licensed veterinarian who is assuming the overall responsibility of assuring appropriate supervision of a VTP/E must have a formal arrangement with the faculty of a campus or distance learning program. A formal arrangement is a written document/arrangement that includes, but is not limited to, supervision expectations. The supervising veterinarian and the VTP/E are jointly responsible for obtaining the necessary oversight by faculty of the campus or distance program. The lack of documentation related to a preceptorship or externship may result in disciplinary action.

Q: May a veterinary technology student continue to do activities that constitute the practice of veterinary technology after conclusion of a preceptorship/externship.

A: A veterinary technology student may continue to do activities that constitute the practice of veterinary technology if the following conditions are met:

- Must be enrolled and in good standing in a campus or distance learning veterinary technology program accredited or approved by AVMA;
- Have a supervising veterinarian who has a formal arrangement with the faculty of the campus or distance learning program; and

- Have received adequate instruction by the program prior to performing the activity.

Q: May a graduate of a veterinary technology campus or distance learning program perform duties that constitute the practice of veterinary technology if the requirements of the supervising veterinarian are met.

A: Once a student has graduated, the “enrolled and in good standing” requirement cannot be satisfied. Therefore, the graduate of a veterinary technology program may not perform activities that constitute the practice of veterinary technology in Virginia until properly licensed.

Q: Will the Virginia Board of Veterinary Medicine allow a veterinary technology student to take the Veterinary Technician National Exam (VTNE) prior to graduation?

A: The Virginia Board of Veterinary Medicine will approve students enrolled and in good standing in a Virginia veterinary technology program or a resident of Virginia to take the VTNE prior to graduation.

Q: May a veterinary technology student submit an application for licensure prior to having received school transcripts and national examination scores?

A: The Board of Veterinary Medicine will accept applications for licensure submitted prior to receipt of transcripts and national examination scores. Following the receipt of all required documents and the application is deemed complete, a license is generally issued within 24 hours.

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