

## **BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICINE**

### **Preceptorships and Externships for Veterinary Technician Students**

**Q:** How does an individual qualify for a preceptorship or 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”). The Board interprets “enrolled” to mean currently taking classes required for a final program degree.

**Q:** What duties may a VTP/E perform during a veterinary technology preceptorship or 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 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 may 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 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 or externship prior to graduation from the program?

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

- The student is enrolled and in good standing in a campus or distance learning veterinary technology program accredited or approved by AVMA;
- The student is supervised by a veterinarian who is licensed in Virginia and is assuming the overall responsibility of assuring appropriate supervision of the student;
- The student has received adequate instruction by the program prior to performing the activity; and
- The student is performing those duties at the same establishment where the preceptorship or externship occurred, or, if performing those duties in a subsequent establishment(s), the student is supervised by a veterinarian who is licensed in Virginia who assumes the overall responsibility of assuring appropriate supervision of the student and who is familiar with the activities performed during the preceptorship or externship.

**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 is no longer 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 Board allow a veterinary technology student to take the Veterinary Technician National Exam (VTNE) prior to graduation?

**A:** The Board 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 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.

**References**

[Va. Code § 54.1-3804](#)

[18VAC150-20-10](#)

[18VAC150-20-130](#)