



LOUDOUN CAMPUS ADMISSION APPLICATION

VETERINARY ASSISTANT PROGRAM



NOVA's brand new approved Veterinary Assistant program prepares students to assist and support licensed veterinary technicians and veterinarians in the health and handling of small domestic animals and exotic species.

NOVA is one of 18 community colleges in the United States that has received approval through the National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America (NAVTA).

Upon successful completion of the course, students will sit for the AVA National Exam administered by National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America (NAVTA).

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the Veterinary Assistant Program through the Workforce Development Division at Northern Virginia Community College, Loudoun Campus. This information packet contains all the pertinent information and requirements you need to know. Acceptance into the program will be based on the applicant's ranking and meeting the basic admission criteria.

Definition of the Profession

While every position within the veterinary practice team is important, veterinary assistants play a pivotal role, literally. In the course of a single day, an assistant provides help to veterinarians and veterinary technicians which in turn allows those team members to perform the tasks and responsibilities of their positions. The next minute, the assistant may be helping a client understand why having their pet's teeth cleaned is so important or providing a receptionist with a second set of hands at the front desk. Helping to fill scripts, keeping exams rooms cleaned and prepped, setting up lab work, helping with inventory, updating medical records, assisting with nursing care - there are more things that veterinary assistants do in a day than most people realize.

Scope of Practice

The Virginia Board of Veterinary Medicine determines the scope of practice a veterinary assistant may perform in Virginia. Please read *18VAC150-20-172. Delegation of duties* for more information.

Program Prerequisites

All applicants must have the following:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Submit proof of high school diploma, GED or college degree/transcripts
- Proof of current Tetanus, Diphtheria & Pertussis (Tdap) Vaccination or booster within the past 10 years.

Program Physical, Emotional & Mental Requirements

The veterinary assisting career is a physically demanding occupation.

Veterinary Assistant students must be able to:

- Cope with animal death (e.g. surgical complication, euthanasia, illness, etc)
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- Work under stressful conditions
 - Handle being present during all surgical situations (e.g. seeing and possibly handling of blood, body tissues and organs)
 - Stand for long periods of time
 - Perform moderately heavy physical labor
 - Able to handle and restrain live animals
 - Lift 40 lbs unassisted
 - Carry heavy animals

Please contact the school if you need ADA accommodations or cannot meet these physical needs **prior to enrolling**.

Occupational Safety

Be aware that as part of your job as a Veterinary Assistant you will be handling dangerous substances and animals. Every day we deal with potentially hazardous materials such as anesthetic gases, radiation, insecticides, disinfectants, preservatives, chemotherapeutic agents, etc. All of these substances can be handled safely when you know how and one of the goals of the program is to teach you these safety precautions.

Despite all of our best efforts however, there is an **inherent risk in handling and restraining animals**. There is often no way to predict how a scared and/or injured pet will behave. This is especially of concern with large animals, which can be dangerous just because of their size. You could be kicked, bitten, gored, scratched, run-over, or pawed to name a few types of serious injuries. Always keep an eye on the animal and on what is going on around you. If you do not understand what is expected of you or how to do something then ask! With a little common sense, we should be able to keep injuries from occurring. NOVA does not cover any medical expenses if you are injured and students are advised to obtain and maintain their own health insurance throughout the program.

In addition, although adults can tolerate low-level exposure to many chemicals, x-ray radiation and therapeutic laser, a **baby** cannot. If the developing fetus is exposed to any of these substances or radiology equipment in use, there is a potential for birth defects. Due to potential risks to the unborn there are labs, rotations and field trips in which pregnant students may be prohibited from participating. Therefore, if you are engaged in family planning or become **pregnant** while you are a student in the program, it is highly recommended that you further discuss reproductive concerns immediately with your healthcare provider and assume any and all risks associated with this.

If you would like to transfer to a LVT or Veterinarian program, you will be required at some point to obtain a pre-exposure Rabies Vaccination. You may want to start exploring cost and coverage with this vaccine. <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/rabies/prevention&control/preventi.htm>

Program Clinical Requirements & Travel

Clinical externship hours will consist of 100 hours with a 100% attendance. Clinical hours will vary based on availability, so therefore flexibility is key. If you are employed you may need to complete clinicals during work hours so please be aware. If your schedule is not flexible, this program may not be for you. Times and placement will be provided in class throughout the duration of the course. If you already work in a Veterinary practice or hospital, with instructor permission we will allow you to complete some skills with your employer.

You must provide you own reliable transportation. You may be required to travel all throughout the Northern Virginia regions up to 50 miles.

Attendance Policy

Attendance and class participation is a major part of your grade. Students must attend 90% of the class and 100% attendance for clinical. If you are more than 20 minutes late to class, you will be marked tardy. Being tardy 3 times is equivalent to 1 absence. There is no distinction between “excused” and “unexcused” absences, use your absences wisely in case an emergency occurs. You cannot miss more than 15 hours of class. If you do, you will be dropped from the class and receive a failing grade. There are no refunds.

What is Included in Tuition?

All books and National Exam fee are included in tuition.

What do I need to buy for class?

Simple basic stethoscope, plain scrubs of any color free of logos or prints, plain white lab coat and pocket sized slip leash. Details will be provided in class.

Are you ready?

Now that you have been informed of the hazards and some of the expectations, are you ready to apply?

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1. Letter of Intent- Typed, dated, and signed letter (format should be double-spaced, 12pt font, minimum 1-page) describing your background including your academic, work experience, life skills, and your interest in becoming a Veterinary Assistant. Do you plan on furthering your education to becoming a Licensed Veterinary Technician or a Veterinarian? Do you own a pet? Please include your name, phone number and email address on letter.
 2. Proof of current Tetanus, Diphtheria & Pertussis (Tdap) Vaccination or booster within the past 10 years.
 3. Proof of high school diploma, GED or college degree/transcripts.
 4. Submit all documents to WorkforceHealthcare@nvcc.edu applications will be returned if all 3 documents are not submitted together.
 5. Once your application has been accepted, you will be contacted for an in person interview.
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