

Veterinary Assistant

Turn your love of animals into a rewarding career.

Veterinary Assistants are an important part of the veterinary medical team. Working with veterinarians and veterinarian technicians, they help provide medical care to sick and injured animals. This Digital Badge program can help you enter the field or advance your career if you already work as a veterinary assistant in a private practice, animal shelter or animal control facility. Topics covered include communicating effectively with clients and co-workers in the clinic setting, ethics in veterinary medicine, basic animal handling, critical thinking when dealing with animals, veterinary clerical responsibilities, diagnostics, pharmacy, patient treatment, and an overview of surgery, anesthesia and emergency care.

Harper College is proud to be one of a handful of schools approved by The National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America (NAVTA).

As a graduate from the Harper program, you will be eligible to take the national Approved Veterinary Assistant test to gain the AVA designation and be recognized for your educational accomplishment.

Planning to continue your education to become a Vet Tech? The Veterinary Medical Technology Program at Joliet Junior College accepts Harper College's Veterinary Assistant program in place of the 100 hours of veterinary experience needed as part of their admissions.

Requirements

- Introduction to Veterinary Assistant
- Veterinary Assistant, LAG0008

Prerequisites

- Pass Introduction to Veterinary Assistant
- High school diploma or GED
- Minimum age of 18
- Pass a criminal background check
- Proof of current health insurance
- Pass a random drug screen

Attend an Information Session

If you'd like more information on this exciting program, reserve your seat at an upcoming information session. Visit our "Pet and Animal Care" program page at ce.harpercollege.edu for details.

Frequently Asked Questions

Are there specific requirements for the program?

Students must successfully pass Introduction to Veterinary Assistant, including attending and participating in all class sessions. Once enrolled in the Veterinary Assistant full program, students must attend and participate in all class sessions (only 2 absences are allowed for the full program) and complete 150 hours at an assigned clinic site.

How do I get started?

Enroll in the Introduction to Veterinary Assistant Course.

How much does the program cost?

Introduction to Veterinary Assistant is \$140 and the Veterinary Assistant course \$2,334, which includes the textbook, a scrub top for clinic and course supplies.

What are the aptitudes, qualities and physical demands needed to be successful?

Functional abilities for Veterinary Assistants include:

- The ability to stand for long periods of time
- The ability to reach, bend, climb and crouch without difficulty
- The ability to lift and carry 50 pounds without assistance
- The ability to see and hear sufficiently to make observations about animals
- The ability to communicate effectively in English with both clinic employees and clients
- To possess sufficient arm and hand steadiness and finger dexterity to operate equipment and restrain and work with animals

How much does a veterinary assistant earn?

Veterinary Assistants can expect to earn \$9 - 10/hour starting salary (\$20,000/year full-time) and approximately \$14/hour (\$28,000/year full-time) as an experienced Veterinary Assistant.

After I pass the Intro class, how do I get into the 16-Week Veterinary Assistant class?

Be ready to register on the day CE Registration opens; the details for the next Digital Badge class were given during the Intro class.

After I pass the Veterinary Assistant Program, when do I get my Digital Badge?

Digital Badges will be issued electronically within 1-2 weeks of the completion of the course. Instructions for claiming your badge will be sent to the email address on file.

After I pass the Veterinary Assistant Program, how do I take the NAVTA test?

Instructions will be emailed approximately 2-3 weeks after the last day of class.

How do I get into the Veterinary Assistant Program if I didn't pass the Intro class?

You must retake the Introduction to Veterinary Assistant course and pass successfully to enroll in the full program.

Is the program accredited?

The program is approved by the National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America (NAVTA). As such, all students who pass the Veterinary Assistant course at Harper College are eligible to sit for the Approved Veterinary Assistant exam and use the designation "Approved Veterinary Assistant" (AVA) upon successfully passing that exam.

Is there job placement?

We do not have a formal job placement program; however, we do receive job opening notices from local employers interested in hiring our graduates and we pass that along to students who have completed the course. Also, students are occasionally hired at the location where they completed their clinic assignment.

I work at a clinic, can I do my clinical assignment there?

No, you may not complete your clinical assignment at your place of employment. You will be assigned to a clinic and you must complete your clinical hours at this clinic in order to pass the course.