

SESSION 10

VETERINARY TECHNICIAN (RVT, AHT)

DESCRIPTION OF SESSION

This session provides participants with an understanding of veterinary technicians and their role in supporting veterinarians in all career fields in providing service of medical/surgical care to animals. The veterinary technician is the “nurse” of veterinary medicine.

CATEGORY

- Health
- Veterinary Medicine

ADVISOR NOTE

A veterinary technician with formal training and accreditation is signified as either a registered veterinary technician (RVT) or an animal health technician (AHT). This individual has a similar role to a nurse in medicine for humans.

As you engage your post in activities each meeting, please include comments, discussions, and feedback to the group relating to **Character, Leadership, and Ethics**. These are important attributes that make a difference in the success of youth in the workplace and in life.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand the role of the veterinary technician in the field of veterinary medicine.
- Understand the training and certification required to become a certified RTV or AHT.

SUPPLIES

- Laptop computer or equipment to view videos

ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 1

Speaker: Introduction to Veterinary Technicians

- Show videos related to veterinary technicians, covering subjects such as training, job performance, or employment options. Select videos from a reputable online source or other resource. View videos in advance to make sure they are appropriate.
- Discuss the role the veterinary technician plays in the field of veterinary medicine.
- Have the speaker demonstrate how to accurately calculate and measure out medication, properly make prescription labels for the medication, and ensure proper documentation of the medication in the patient’s record. Practice calculating the math

for dosing (deciding how much to give) a 30-pound dog with a medication that requires 5 milligrams (mg) per pound, to be given three times a day, and is packaged as a liquid in 250 milligrams per milliliter (mL).

- Have the speaker demonstrate the proper way to restrain a dog and cat.
- Give a demonstration of the various types of equipment used in the practice you are visiting. Learn how this equipment is maintained.
- Observe a demonstration of how to run a fecal exam and how to do a urinalysis, heartworm test, and skin scraping.
- Demonstrate how to collect a blood sample, make a blood smear, stain it, and observe the slide under a microscope to identify the different types of blood cells.
- Have a discussion with a veterinary technician about why good communication skills are important in their job.
- Discuss the various employment opportunities open to veterinary technicians, including private practice, military, schools, biomedical research, zoos, diagnostic laboratories, government, food inspection, drug and feed companies, humane societies, and animal shelters.
- Discuss the educational requirements to become a veterinary technician, including high school and college or technical school courses that would be beneficial.

ADVISOR NOTE

Some sample questions are below. They are designed to help the participants apply what they have learned to their own interests. You are welcome to use these questions or develop your own questions that relate to your post or specific area of focus.

REFLECTION

- *Which aspects of the veterinary technician session interested you the most?*
 - *What ethical concerns will a veterinarian technician encounter in various types of veterinary health care?*
 - *What did you learn during this session about the career of a veterinary technician and the role of this profession within veterinary health care?*
 - *What can you do now, during your time as a student, to prepare yourself for a career in veterinary medicine? Why is this topic important?*
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