

Veterinary Technician Licensure Initiative FAQ's

WHAT:

What is the Practice Act?

- Every state has a law that determines how veterinary medicine will be regulated and practiced in that state. In the Minnesota Veterinary Practice Act (VPA) only the Licensed Veterinarian is defined.

What is the exact difference between credentialing vs licensing, certification and registration?

- Some states define the credential for technicians as either Licensed, Registered, Certified, or Licensed Veterinary Medical Technician (Tennessee). Those that have these designations are allowed to call themselves credentialed veterinary technicians.
- Certified Veterinary Technician's (CVT) in good standing with MVMA are credentialed, but this credential is voluntary. Anyone can refer to themselves as a veterinary technician and being certified is not a requirement to work as a Veterinary Technician in Minnesota.
- In the future, a Licensed Veterinary Technician (LVT) must be a graduate of an accredited Veterinary Technology program and pass both the Veterinary Technician National Exam (VTNE) and MN Jurisprudence Exam.

What would you say is the biggest difference or benefit to a CVT vs an LVT in MN and why now?

- We believe these efforts will benefit and advance the Veterinary Technician profession in MN.
- We have been working on this for many years. Fifteen years ago, Minnesota was one of 18 states that did not define credentialed Veterinary Technicians in the Veterinary Practice Act. Minnesota is now one of 10 states.
- There are many supporting documents listed on the [MVMA website](#) that can help explain the benefits.

WHY:

Why should Veterinary Technicians and Veterinary Assistants be included in the practice act?

- The main objective of this initiative is to retain Veterinary Technicians in the profession. We believe that the opportunity for licensure will lead to less career turnover, greater retention, and less shortages of veterinary technicians. Licensure will simultaneously safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the public, increase career opportunities, and ensure the highest degree of professional conduct.
- This will ultimately benefit the practice of veterinary medicine in the areas of [public health and safety](#), especially with issues such as [zoonotic diseases](#), infectious diseases, biosecurity and terrorism, and food safety becoming concerns with the general public.
- More tasks delegated to the Licensed Veterinary Technician (LVT) may help free up the veterinarians time and ultimately help with the staff shortages. Economic [studies](#) show that practices that utilize veterinary technicians and assistants to the full extent of their education consistently have more financial success than practices that do not utilize team members properly.
- LVT's could be held accountable for any complaints that are reported to the Board of Veterinary Medicine. After investigation and if found guilty of wrong-doing (such as not submitting adequate CE credits or writing a forged prescription for a controlled substance), there could be disciplinary actions which could range from administrative penalties to relinquishing a license.
- Those wishing to participate in national disasters will now be able to travel to states that require a regulated credential to work as a veterinary technician.

WHO:

Who does this impact and what will happen to non-Certified Veterinary Technicians and Veterinary Assistants that have been working as Veterinary Technicians?

- Opportunity for licensure may impact the entire veterinary team. Definitions of LVT's and Veterinary Assistants will clarify requirements and responsibilities. Moving forward, title protection will mean that anyone using the LVT designation has reached the same level of training and competency requirements (graduate of an accredited vet tech program and successful completion of examinations – VTNE and MN Jurisprudence exam).
- A lenient grandfather clause has been submitted and will be determined by the Legislators.
- The initial goal is to have licensure which allows the LVT to have more supervisory responsibility in the practice of veterinary technology. At the same time, we do not want to negatively impact veterinary practices who may have a difficult time recruiting a LVT. We do not want to interfere with the practice of veterinary medicine but would like to enhance how a practice could operate by having a LVT.
- LVT's will not need to purchase additional personal liability insurance. The DVM delegates tasks to staff and their insurance covers the liability just as it does now.

HOW:

How do you become licensed?

- The details are not completely determined but we believe that a CVT in good standing with MVMA or a person meeting the grandfather criteria would need to apply to the Minnesota Board of Veterinary Medicine.
- An application fee, a criminal background fee, and a fee to take the jurisprudence exam would be required. (The jurisprudence exam is an open book test that helps to ensure that licensed veterinary technicians are aware of the laws and know the regulations). For more details, please view the [5th Article](#) of "Getting to the Bottom of the Veterinary Technician Shortage in MN".

How much will licensure cost compared to certification?

- There will not be a significant increase in the renewal of licensure compared with current MN certification renewal (\$75 - \$90, \$115 if late).

How many CE credits will be required for license renewal compared to certification?

- We do anticipate that CE requirements will increase. The MVMA currently requires 10 CE credits/2 years (15 credits for late renewals). DVM's need 40 credits/2 years. We are proposing an increase to 15 CE credits for every 2 year license renewal.

How will this change our daily jobs?

- A defined list of duties for LVT's and Veterinary Assistants is not being proposed at this time. Instead, the proposal is to allow the LVT to have more supervisory responsibilities over unlicensed staff.

WHEN:

When will this change occur?

- Draft documents were submitted to Legislators in the 2021 Legislative session. A Bill is needed in both the House of Representatives and the Senate. After being sent to the Reviser's office to be "jacketed", Bill numbers were received. See [HF 2553](#) and [SF 2935](#).
- We have been told that the bills will not be heard in committees in 2022. The bills will be reintroduced in the 2023 Legislative session.

- It may take a few years before this Legislation is approved. Once approved the Board of Veterinary Medicine will need between 12 – 18 months for the rule writing process. We have been assured by the Board of Veterinary Medicine that there will be a period for public comment including time for input from the veterinary community. If the proposed rules are controversial, the Legislature would become involved.

Once approved and in place, there is a recommendation of a 2-year window (sunset clause) to allow those seeking licensure via the grandfather clause to submit their application before the new Law becomes effective.

OTHER FAQ'S

Could this potentially lead to an increase in pay differential moving from CVTs to LVTs? And then again between those that are Veterinary Assistants?

- Compensation is determined by the individual businesses and how they choose to utilize staff. The definitions will help to better define the responsibilities and roles of the veterinary health care team.

What happens when Licensed Veterinary Technician's transfer to different states? Are their credentials still recognized?

- Transfer of credential depends on the individual state's requirements. Currently a credentialed veterinary technician moving to MN is required to have their VTNE score transferred, letter from the state board of credential history, and application to MVMA for certification.

Does this initiative align with the NAVTA Veterinary Nurse Initiative?

- Veterinary Nurse Initiative would involve a National credential of all Veterinary Technicians in the US being referred to as a Registered Veterinary Nurse.
- Many human nurses in the US are against this initiative as their state regulations may include title protection with the term nurse/nursing being limited to human patients.