

Ready or Not: “Veterinary Technician Workforce Enhancement Act”

By Dr. Al Balay, Chair, MVMA Veterinary Technician Committee

In this article #10 in the series, we share an update of where we are in the legislative process, timeline for implementation of licensure if the legislation is passed this year, and an invitation to be in an AVMA pilot study of veterinary technician utilization. During the 2021 legislative session, the MVMA Veterinary Technician Committee introduced legislation proposing licensure of Veterinary Technicians in the Minnesota House ([House File #2553](#)). A bill was recently introduced in the Minnesota Senate in February 2022 ([Senate File 2935](#)). The bills have bipartisan support in both Legislative Chambers and we are hopeful this legislation will go to various committees with possible passage in 2022. There are two infographics available on the website. [The first encompasses the information for the veterinary community](#) and [the second informs the Legislators who want to know how licensure will impact public safety](#).

We are cautiously optimistic that the legislation can pass successfully in 2022. MVMA and MAVT leadership will reach out to you when it is time to contact your legislator to encourage them to support the legislation. If the bill is passed into law, the Board of Veterinary Medicine has indicated that they will need 12 to 18 months for rule writing. The soonest that the licensure process could start is 2024 and likely into 2025. It is important to note that licensing is NOT mandatory. If a veterinary technician chooses not to pursue licensure, they can continue to do what they have been doing. The difference would be that the title “Licensed Veterinary Technician” would be protected by the Veterinary Practice Act. The title “Certified Veterinary Technician” would cease in Minnesota and no longer be valid to use. The proposed legislation identifies those not licensed as veterinary technicians to be titled veterinary assistants. Working with the Board of Veterinary Medicine (BVM), the following table shows the proposed costs of licensure and continuing education requirements. These are preliminary estimates for licensing CVT’s in good standing and non CVT’s who meet eligibility requirements in comparison to the current voluntary certification costs and current continuing education requirements.

Comparisons	BVM (Licensure) Proposed	MVMA (Certification) Current
Initial Application fee	\$25 - \$50	\$75.00
Criminal Background Check	\$33.25	N/A; some employers do require and will perform at their expense
<i>Required Exams:</i> VTNE	N/A until sunset window ends	\$330
Jurisprudence exam (open book exam testing knowledge of veterinary laws in MN)	\$25.00	N/A
Initial 2 year credential	\$100	\$75 (online); \$90 (mail in); \$115 (late)
Continuing Education credits for renewal (due every two years)	15 credits proposed, with similar percentage of Medical requirements as MVMA	10 credits Minimum 7 medical Maximum of 5 Non-Interactive 15 credits for late renewals Minimum 12 medical Maximum of 5 Non-Interactive

The AVMA is coming out with a new tool to evaluate the utilization of veterinary technicians in practice. Minnesota has been asked to be a pilot group to improve and try out this new tool. The Veterinary Technician Utilization Inventory (VTUI) is a series of 65 questions identifying who in a practice completes certain tasks including cognitive skills/tasks. For more information, please go to the MVMA website. If you're interested in being in the pilot study, please contact [Maria Nellesen](#) at MVMA to be put on the list so that she can forward the VTUI link when it becomes available.

MVMA and MAVT leadership believes the time is NOW to define our paraprofessional staff and to provide the opportunity to license veterinary technicians. We feel that this is a necessary first step to help retain them in the career field. It is believed that licensure will attract applicants to veterinary technician programs and promote greater numbers of graduates sitting for the Veterinary Technician National Examination leading to more technicians exhibiting entry-level competency.