

Update on the National Veterinary Accreditation Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) established the veterinary accreditation program in 1921 so that accredited private practitioners could assist Federal veterinarians in controlling animal diseases and facilitating the movement of animals.

The mission of the National Veterinary Accreditation Program (NVAP) is to ensure the health of the Nation's livestock and animal population and to protect the public health and well-being.

Accredited veterinarians work cooperatively with USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and State animal health officials to protect and improve the health, quality, productivity, and marketability of U.S. animals by preventing, controlling, and eradicating livestock diseases. Businesses that transport and export animals also rely on the expertise of accredited veterinarians to help ensure that exported animals will not introduce diseases into other States or countries.

The United States depends extensively on accredited veterinarians to carry out many of its animal health programs and services—including animal inspections, testing, and certifications. Accredited veterinarians serve as the first line of defense in ensuring the health of the Nation's livestock.

More than 80 percent of all U.S. veterinarians, or about 71,000, are accredited.

Working Together in Regulatory Medicine

The NVAP is a voluntary program. Participation is not mandated by the Federal government; however, accredited veterinarians who participate in the NVAP must work according to the standards for accredited veterinarian duties in Title 9, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 161.

The NVAP is based on the mutual respect and the professional partnership between APHIS, accredited veterinarians, and State animal health officials. With the development of a more global economy, these partners work increasingly closer to support American agriculture by:

- Understanding the responsibilities of the program,
- Administering the program uniformly and consistently,
- Preserving the integrity of the program,
- Keeping up-to-date with animal health issues, and
- Mobilizing to assist APHIS with foreign animal disease incursions.

Benefits of Accreditation

By becoming accredited, you can offer additional services to your clients. For example, large animal practitioners can certify animal and herd health, which facilitates producers' access to domestic and international markets. Small animal practitioners can use their accreditation to certify companion animals for domestic and international movement.

Important Changes in the National Veterinary Accreditation Program

APHIS has changed the accreditation program to address the needs of the increasingly complex and fast-paced world of animal health, business, trade, and travel. Key components of the program, including important changes, are described below.

1. Election to Participate in the NVAP Under the New Program

- Veterinarians who are already accredited as of February 1, 2010, must elect to participate in the NVAP as a Category I or Category II veterinarian (see number 4 below "Accreditation Categories"). Failure to do so will result in the expiration of that veterinarian's accreditation. Election to participate may only be accomplished by completing an application (VS Form 1-36A) and submitting the application to USDA, APHIS, VS, NVAP Staff, 4700 River Road, Unit 64, Riverdale, MD 20737 Telephone: 301-734-NVAP (6827) or Fax: 301-734-3641 or Email: NVAP@aphis.usda.gov

2. Initial Accreditation Requirements Before July 1, 2011

- **Complete core orientation**
Complete the core orientation program presented by the APHIS Veterinary Services (VS) Area Office for the State in which an applicant wishes to perform accredited duties. Contact information for the Area Office for each State can be

found at:

- http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/area_offices.
 - **Be licensed or legally able to practice**
Graduate with a doctorate of veterinary medicine (DVM) or equivalent degree, and be licensed or legally able to practice veterinary medicine in one State.
 - **Submit NVAP application (VS Form 1-36A)**
Complete the NVAP application (VS Form 1-36A), which is available through VS Area Offices and online at www.aphis.usda.gov/nvap/. Send the completed form to the VS Area Office for the State in which you wish to perform accredited duties. The form must include your original ink signature, so it may not be sent electronically. When completing the application, you must certify that you are able to perform the necessary tasks for your chosen accreditation category. Tasks lists may be viewed at www.aphis.usda.gov/nvap/ and may also be found in the Code of Federal Regulations [9 CFR 161.1 (g)].
 - **Complete State-specific training if required**
You may be required to attend a State-specific orientation program about animal health issues that are important in the State of application.
 - **Obtain written approval**
Upon approval of your application, APHIS will send an approval letter that includes your renewal date and your National Accreditation Number. You may not perform accredited duties until you receive an approval letter. Your accreditation authorizes you to perform accredited duties only in the State in which you are accredited.
- 3. Issuance of Six-digit National Accreditation Numbers for Accredited Veterinarians**
National Accreditation Numbers are randomly generated, and have no correlation to your State license number(s). Your National Accreditation Number will be required on all official documents that call for an "accreditation number." For veterinarians accredited prior to February 2010, the new National Accreditation Number will replace all accreditation numbers previously assigned by State or Federal authorities.
- 4. Accreditation Categories**
On the NVAP application (VS Form 1-36A), you must choose an accreditation category, based on the species on which you wish to perform accredited duties.
Category I animals: All animals except: food and fiber species, horses, birds, farm-raised aquatic animals, all other livestock species, and zoo animals that can transmit exotic animal diseases to livestock
Category II animals: All animals
- 5. Accreditation Renewal**
Your accreditation must be renewed every 3 years for as long as you wish to perform accredited duties.
If you have provided an e-mail address on your most recent NVAP application (VS Form 1-36A), APHIS will e-mail you a reminder before your accreditation expires. If you did not provide an e-mail address, a reminder will be mailed to your home address. To renew your accreditation, you must complete the NVAP application to update all contact and State license information and to report all required APHIS-approved supplemental training you have completed.
The form must be received on or before your renewal date or your accreditation will expire. Mail the completed NVAP application to: USDA, APHIS, VS, NVAP Staff, 4700 River Road, Unit 64, Riverdale, MD 20737. Do not send the form for renewal to your VS Area Office. Doing so may substantially delay the processing of your renewal, which may result in the expiration of your accreditation.
- 6. Supplemental Training Requirements**
You must complete the APHIS-approved supplemental training that is required for your accreditation category: three units of supplemental training per renewal period for Category I veterinarians, and six units for Category II veterinarians. APHIS-approved supplemental training is available online at no charge. A list of APHIS-approved supplemental training units may be accessed at: www.aphis.usda.gov/nvap/. For veterinarians without Internet access, other training options (e.g., CD-ROM or paper) are available at a minimal cost to cover production, shipping, and handling. Requests for non-Web based supplemental training materials may be made by calling NVAP Headquarters at (301) 734-NVAP (6827).

Note: Organizations offering accreditation-relevant training through meetings may apply to have such training added to the list of APHIS-approved supplemental training. Requests for APHIS approval must be received by NVAP Headquarters Riverdale, MD, at least 90 days prior to such training.

7. Authorization to Perform Accredited Duties in Additional States

Once accredited in one State, you may apply for authorization to perform accredited duties in each additional State in which you are licensed or legally able to practice. Simply complete VS Form 1-36A and submit it to the VS Area Office servicing the State in which you wish to apply.

8. Initial Accreditation Requirements After July 1, 2011

Beginning July 1, 2011, applicants for accreditation will need to complete specific APHIS-approved initial accreditation training through a U.S. college of veterinary medicine or through the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges. The training will need to be completed with a passing score of 80 percent or higher. A certificate of completion of the training will be required to be admitted to a core orientation program. Information about the initial accreditation training is available at www.aphis.usda.gov/nvap/. The requirements for completing core orientation, being licensed or legally able to practice, submitting the NVAP application (VS Form 1-36A), completing State-specific training if required, and obtaining written approval before beginning accredited duties are the same as before July 1, 2011.

Other Uses of VS Form 1-36A

VS Form is a multiple-use form. To update your contact information (name, address, telephone, etc.), request a change of accreditation category, request reinstatement after expiration, or to be reaccredited after revocation, you must complete a VS Form 1-36A and submit it to your local VS Area Office. As an accredited veterinarian, it is your responsibility to keep your contact information current.

Summary

This table below shows the basic requirements for initial accreditation, authorization in different States, and renewing your accreditation.

Requirements	Initial Accreditation	Authorization in additional States	Accreditation 3-year Renewal
Have a DVM or equivalent degree from a college of veterinary medicine	Yes	Yes	Yes
Submit a completed VS Form 1-36A	Yes	Yes	Yes
Be licensed or legally able to practice in the State of application	Yes	Yes	Yes
Complete initial accreditation training	Yes Applicants after July 1, 2011	Yes	Yes
Complete a core orientation program	Yes	No	No
APHIS-approved supplemental training every 3 years: Category 1 = 3 Units, Category 2 = 6 Units	No	No	Yes
Notify the AVIC of each additional State where seeking to do accredited work	N/A	Yes	No

To learn more about the NVAP, contact your local VS Area Office or NVAP headquarters staff:

NVAP Headquarters Staff

USDA, APHIS, Veterinary Services

4700 River Road, Unit 64

Riverdale, MD 20737-1231

Telephone: (301) 734-NVAP (6827)

Fax: (301) 734-3641

E-mail: nvap@aphis.usda.gov

Web Site: www.aphis.usda.gov/nvap/

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