



# Veterinarian

4

## Job Description:

Veterinarians treat animal health problems. They work to prevent, control, and cure animal diseases.

## Wages:

Average median yearly pay is about \$80,000 a year in Utah.

**Schedule:** Regular office hours but may work evenings, nights, or weekends. On-call for emergencies.

## Education & Experience:

- ◆ Completed High School
- ◆ Two years of Pre-Veterinary study
- ◆ Graduation from Veterinary Medical School (4 years)
- ◆ Doctorate degree preferred
- ◆ State Licensing exam

## High

## School Courses:

- ◆ Anatomy and Physiology
- ◆ Animal Science
- ◆ Computer Applications
- ◆ Food & Nutrition
- ◆ Safety and First Aid

## Work Conditions:

- ◆ Have a high level of social contact. They talk with animal owners and other animal health workers.
- ◆ Are often placed in conflict situations with animal owners.
- ◆ Often work as a group or as part of a team.
- ◆ Are exposed to diseases and infections from the animals on a daily basis.
- ◆ Make decisions on a daily basis that strongly impact animals and owners.

**Travel:** May travel between office and farms and ranches.

## Gross Monthly Income:

\$6,500

## Advancement:

Most veterinarians begin as employees or partners in established practices. They can advance by seeing more animals or opening their own practices. Those who teach or do research may become managers.

## Job Outlook:



Small

## Hours a Week:

50

## Leisure Time:

Low

## Knowledge:

- ◆ Biology
- ◆ Customer and Personal Service
- ◆ Medicine & Dentistry
- ◆ Mathematics
- ◆ Chemistry
- ◆ Administration & Management
- ◆ Sales & Marketing
- ◆ Psychology

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4



## Overview

The first official Iditarod race was held in 1973. Individual teams of sled dogs and a "musher" - the human leader - race over 1,000 miles from Anchorage to Nome, Alaska.

Each dog team consists of 12 to 16 dogs, all bred and trained for the arduous trip. The Iditarod - often called the "last great race on earth" - has become so famous that veterinarians from several countries volunteer to check the sled dogs at each race checkpoint. They check the dog's heart, lungs, and overall attitude to make sure that they are holding up well and getting enough rest and nutrients. Incidentally, the rate of injury to the dogs is very low.

Most of the time, veterinarians work with sick, injured, and healthy animals located close to home.

Veterinarians examine animals regardless of their health, and ask owners questions. They give animals shots to protect them against diseases such as distemper and rabies. In addition, veterinarians talk to owners about the care and feeding of their animals. They also keep detailed records about animals and their treatments.

For animals that are sick, veterinarians perform lab tests in addition to exams. They explain test results and review treatment options with animal owners. If more than one treatment is available, veterinarians help owners decide which option to choose. They often prescribe medicines for animals that are ill. Veterinarians stay in contact with animal owners to monitor the condition of animals. If necessary, they make changes in the treatment. Sometimes veterinarians operate on animals. They also treat injuries such as wounds and broken bones. Occasionally, veterinarians euthanize animals that are seriously ill or injured (putting an animal to "sleep"). They may examine dead animals to determine what caused them to die.

Many veterinarians work with pets, such as dogs, cats, ferrets, and lizards. Some work with pigs, goats, horses, and other livestock. In addition to taking care of the health of these animals, veterinarians may offer owners advice about animal breeding. They may also care for animals when they are giving birth. A few veterinarians treat both large and small animals. Some specialize in animal dentistry, surgery, or eye or skin problems.

Veterinarians assign tasks to technicians. They consult with other animal care professionals. In private practice, veterinarians may oversee the business aspects of running an office. For example, they hire and train new employees, keep track of supplies, and pay employees.

Veterinarians may do research to prevent diseases in humans and animals. Some veterinarians are meat inspectors at food processing plants. They check the live animals for diseases. Others work in wildlife management. Some veterinarians teach in universities and colleges. A few veterinarians care for animals in zoos, aquariums, or labs. They trade information with people at other zoos and aquariums to keep records of all kinds of animals.

Pathway:

**Agriculture**