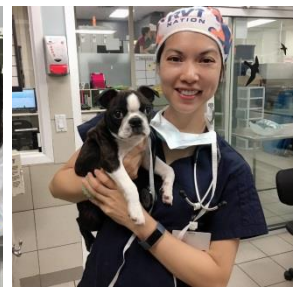
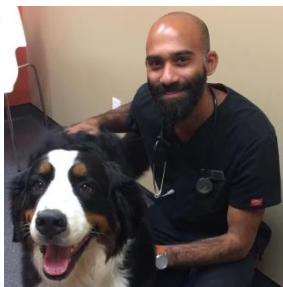


July 2021

National Standards of Practice

For the Registered Veterinary Technologist
and Technician Profession in Canada



Registered Veterinary Technologists and Technicians of Canada

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
National Standards of Practice for the Profession	3
Defining the Profession	4
Professional Ideals	5
Federal Laws Pertaining to the Profession	6
Foundation Competencies and Professional Development	7
Restricted Acts	8
Resources	8

Introduction

As a national professional association, the mission of the Registered Veterinary Technologists and Technicians of Canada (RVTTT) is to unite, advance, and strengthen the RVT profession. Veterinary technology has a proud history of service to the animals of Canada, the veterinary industry, and the public. The public expects competent Registered Veterinary Technologists and Technicians (RVTs) to provide the best standard of care for patients while maintaining public safety.

In Canada, the distinct title RVT is recognized nationally for identifying professionally educated and skilled members of the veterinary team. This title is a significant accomplishment that is highly valued and celebrated.

National Standards of Practice for the Profession

The RVTTT National Standards of Practice acts as a guide, containing statements about the expectation of RVTs to professional practice and performance. This National Standards of Practice:

- Reflects the values of the veterinary technology profession,
- Identifies what the profession expects of RVTs, and
- Represents the criteria against which veterinary professionals, and the public, measure the veterinary technology profession in Canada.

It is essential to acknowledge the highly dynamic nature of the veterinary technology profession. The education, regulation, and practice of RVTs has developed through the evolving demands of animal and environmental health needs, advancements in medical knowledge and technology, and expectations of animal owners and the general public. In Canada, veterinary medicine is regulated provincially; therefore, slight variations in language and processes are inevitable (e.g., technologist vs. technician). Despite these variations, the guiding values and principles shared in this document reflect the national level of expectations.

The National Standards of Practice is used by RVTs, the public, employers, the RVTTT, and other stakeholders to promote, guide, and direct professional practice as follows:

Registered Veterinary Technologists and Technicians

- Better understand their professional obligations.
- Support their continuing competence and professional development.
- Explain what veterinary technology is and the role of the RVT in the veterinary industry.
- Advocate for changes to policies and practices.

The Public

- Understand the expectations for RVTs.
- Recognize the contribution of RVTs in providing quality animal health care.

Employers

- Design systems that support RVTs in the workplace including the requirement for Continuing Education.
- Outline RVT employee orientation programs.
- Develop job descriptions that identify performance expectations that maximize skill utilization.
- Create RVT employee performance appraisal tools.

Responsibility for the National Standards of Practice

The responsibility for ensuring the National Standards of Practice are adhered to rests with RVTs, employers, and provincial regulatory bodies. RVTs are responsible for acting professionally and being accountable for their own practice. All RVTs are responsible for understanding the National Standards of Practice and applying them appropriately, regardless of their setting, role, or area of practice. The policies of employers, or other organizations, cannot relieve individual RVTs of accountability for their actions or their primary obligation to meet these National Standards of Practice, though employers are responsible for providing essential support systems to allow RVTs to practice to the standards described.

***Note:** RV TTC is not a regulatory body. Please refer to the provincial regulatory body within your province for specific regulatory details.*

Defining the Profession

An RVT is a person who has:

- Graduated from an accredited post-secondary Animal Health, Veterinary Technology, or Veterinary Technician program.
- Passed the Veterinary Technician National Examination (VTNE); and
- Been awarded and maintains valid current registration/license from their regulator or licensing body.

Education Requirements

Accreditation of post-secondary Animal Health and Veterinary Technology, or Veterinary Technician, programs are the responsibility of the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA), and/or the Ontario Association of Veterinary Technicians (OAVT) where it is recognized. Veterinary Technology or Technician graduates who received their education internationally must contact their residing provincial regulatory or licensing body regarding requirements to practice.

Examination and Regulatory/Licensing Requirements

- Graduate from an accredited Animal Health, Veterinary Technology, or Veterinary Technician program.
- Pay all applicable fees (e.g., examination fee, provincial association membership fee).
- Pass the Veterinary Technician National Examination (VTNE); and
- Fulfill any further provincial association requirements (e.g., criminal record check, ethics course, apply for licensure by the licensing/regulatory body, etc.).

Maintenance of Registration or Licensure

- Remain a member in good standing with the provincial association.
- Fulfill all continuing education requirements of the provincial association; and
- Follow an ethical and professional code of conduct.

Note: *In provinces where RVTs are not legally regulated, membership is considered voluntary. In provinces where RVTs are legally regulated, membership is a mandatory licensure requirement.*

Professional Ideals

A professional code of ethics reflects the core values and beliefs of an RVT, as well as their commitment to the public, their patients, and the profession. RVTs instill and maintain the public's confidence and trust in the profession by acting with honesty and integrity, and taking accountability for their actions. They protect the public from unethical and unprofessional conduct and have a responsibility to act and advocate for change to enhance animal welfare. RVTs promote public health and safety, sharing information on zoonotic diseases and how the public can protect themselves and their animals.

RVTs provide excellence in medical care to their patients. They act in their patient's best interest while respecting and strengthening the bond between the animal and their family. RVTs augment the lives of the patients they care for, improving animal welfare.

RVTs maintain the profession's respect, elevating their value and recognition by contributing to the veterinary medical profession through excellence in skills and knowledge. RVTs are committed to continuously advancing and educating themselves and others, enhancing professional practice standards, and creating a progressive future as a valued member of the medical team.

The RVT's commitment to their patients, the public, and the profession is expressed in greater detail within each provincial association's code of ethics and conduct process. Please refer to the provincial associations' website for their published documents on professional deportment.

Federal Laws Pertaining to the Profession

Each provincial governing or licensing body maintains and mandates its individual legislation and regulations. Individuals are encouraged to become familiar with their provincial legislature. Federal laws pertaining to the practice of an RVT may, in some instances, supersede provincial laws on specific topics, including:

(i) Cruelty to Animals Act

In accordance with section 444 to 447 of the Canadian Criminal Code, this act provides protection for animals and birds, from the abuse/neglect/mistreatment from humans.

(ii) Controlled Drug and Substances Act

It is an offense for anyone to possess controlled drugs and substances listed in Schedules I, II, and III of this Act. Some exceptions allow Veterinarians to possess narcotics, as set out within the schedule, as long as they maintain use and traceability as laid out within the regulations. It is an offense to traffic (selling, administering, giving, transferring, transporting, sending, or delivering) any substance within Section I, II, III, and IV. The Narcotic Control Regulations under this act require a hospital to keep appropriate records of receiving and dispensing narcotics. A report must be made within ten (10) days of discovery in the event of any loss or theft.

(iii) Privacy Act/Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA)

This act offers protection for personal information, defined by any recorded information, that can be used to identify an individual. Although PIPEDA is a federal law, Alberta, British Columbia, and Quebec have general private-sector laws that have been deemed comparable to PIPEDA.

(iv) Human Rights Act

This act aims to prevent discrimination in the way of race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and age. It prohibits a person from being discriminated against by employers and fellow employees.

(v) Food and Drugs Act

This act prohibits the sale of a drug that has been manufactured, prepared, preserved, packaged, stored under unsanitary conditions, or has been adulterated. It is unlawful for a drug to be labeled, packaged, treated, processed, sold, or advertised in a false, misleading, or deceptive manner; or is likely to be misinterpreted in regards to its character, value, and quantity, composition, merit, or safety.

Foundation Competencies and Professional Development

Foundation Competencies

All RVTs in Canada have developed a minimum standard of knowledge and skills by graduating from an accredited post-secondary program and successfully passing the VTNE. Veterinary medical training for RVTs includes nine primary subject areas: anesthesia, emergency medicine, pharmacy and pharmacology, pain management and analgesia, dentistry, laboratory procedures, diagnostic imaging, animal care and nursing, and surgical nursing.

The CVMA Essential and Recommended Task List, and/or the OAVT Delegated Tasks and Curriculum Topics, as appropriate based on post-secondary accreditation, further define the foundation competencies of an RVT. While skill sets and knowledge may vary based on an RVT's experience, additional certifications, and specialty designation, these standards reflect the expectations of foundation knowledge and competencies of an RVT in Canada.

Type of Veterinary Practice

Many different areas of the animal health care industry utilize RVTs. Therefore, the post-graduate RVT will build on their foundation knowledge and competencies to gain specific individualized skill sets related to their field of practice. Examples of focused areas of practice may include, but are not limited to: small animal, food animal, equine, mixed animal, zoological animal, laboratory animal, and industry or government work. Within these broader categories, RVTs may also further focus or specialize. The influence of the differing types of employment means that while all RVTs begin with similar foundation knowledge and competency, the type of employment will result in the RVT developing additional skills specific to the area of veterinary medicine which they practice. Ongoing development of advanced skills allows for further diversification of the role of RVTs within the animal health care industry.

Professional Development and Veterinary Technician Specialties

Continuing education provides a structured format for an RVT to continually advance their knowledge and skills. These sessions must meet specific criteria for professional development credits by the RVT's provincial veterinary association. Recognized continuing education can include post-graduate certifications, which reflect additional knowledge of the RVT in a particular field. Some of these certifications may be developed or supported by technician societies, which are created to support RVTs interested in specific areas of veterinary medicine. Often, a society may also work with a specialty academy. Specialty academies develop pathways that an RVT Veterinary Technician Specialist (VTS) candidate must follow to achieve the designation of VTS in their specific area of practice. An RVT with a VTS designation has completed a formal process of education, training, experience, and testing to qualify themselves as an expert in their area of practice. These RVTs have the most advanced knowledge and skill set in their respective fields. As an RVT completes continuing education, certifications, and VTS designation, their role in their place of employment should continue to evolve to utilize their advancing skill set and knowledge.

Continuing education advances the knowledge and skills of an RVT, and must meet specific criteria for continuing education/professional development credits.

Note: VTS academies are overseen by the National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America.

Restricted Acts

As per provincial veterinary legislation, bylaws, and policies, specific tasks exist within veterinary medicine that are performed exclusively by a Doctor of veterinary medicine (DVM). The following tasks cannot be performed by, or delegated to, an RVT:

- Prescription of treatment, drugs, medications, or modalities,
- Diagnose or prognose conditions; and
- Perform surgery or apply surgical techniques.

Within these regulations is a list of non-restricted acts that may be performed by an RVT **only under the supervision of a licensed DVM**. Please refer to provincial regulatory information for specific details.

Resources

Alberta Veterinary Medical Association (ABVMA)

www.abvma.ca

Alberta Veterinary Technologist Association (ABVTA)

www.abvta.com

American Association of Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB)

www.aavsb.org

American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)

www.avma.org

Association des Techniciens en Santé Animale du Québec (ATSAQ)

www.atsaq.org

British Columbia Veterinary Technologists Association (BCVTA)

www.bcvta.com ***

Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA)

www.canadianveterinarians.net

College of Veterinarians of British Columbia (CVBC)

www.cvbc.ca

College of Veterinarians of Ontario (CVO)

www.cvo.org

Eastern Veterinary Technician Association (EVTA)

www.evta.ca

Government of Nunavut, Department of Health and Social Services

www.gov.nu.ca

Government of the Northwest Territories,
Department of Health and Social Services

www.hss.gov.nt.ca

Manitoba Veterinary Medical Association (MVMA)

www.mvma.ca

Manitoba Veterinary Technologists Association (MVTA)

www.mymvta.ca

National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America (NAVTA)

www.navta.net

New Brunswick Veterinary Medical Association (NBVMA)

www.nbvma-amvnb.ca

Newfoundland and Labrador College of Veterinarians
(NLVETCOLLEGE)

[www.sites.google.com/
site/nlvetcollege/](http://www.sites.google.com/site/nlvetcollege/)

Nova Scotia Veterinary Medical Association (NSVMA)

www.nsvma.ca

Ontario Association of Veterinary Technicians (OAVT)

www.oavt.org

Ontario Veterinary Medical Association (OVMA)

<https://www.ovma.org/>

Ordre des Médecins Vétérinaires du Québec

www.omvq.qc.ca

Prince Edward Island Veterinary Medical Association (PEIVMA)

www.peivma.com

Saskatchewan Veterinary Medical Association (SVMA)

www.svma.sk.ca

Saskatchewan Association of Veterinary Technologists (SAVT)

<https://www.savt.ca>

**** RVTs practicing in the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and the Yukon Territory who wish to voluntarily register with a veterinary technology association can complete new registrations with the BCVTA; or in the case of renewals, can maintain registration under their previously registered provincial association, as appropriate.*
