



# Health Careers In Alaska

[www.HealthCareersInAlaska.Info](http://www.HealthCareersInAlaska.Info)

## Veterinarian

Veterinarians are trained to care for animals by maintaining health and preventing and treating diseases. They also have important roles in human health, especially in areas of public health and food security. Many veterinarians are involved with research and address biomedical problems that afflict humans and animals.

Pet owners and those who raise animals for commercial purposes usually need veterinary services. Veterinarians frequently specialize in the care of certain types of animals, whether they are small family pets or large commercial or

farm animals. Humans also benefit from the expertise and activities of veterinarians. They are active in the control of diseases in animals that also affect humans (known as zoonoses). Rabies, brucellosis, and salmonellosis are examples. Possibly the most important human benefit of veterinary care is the elimination of disease from animal products. Because of the efforts of veterinary medicine, meat, poultry, eggs, and milk are relatively safe for consumption in North America. (Note: many countries do not have this infrastructure and food supply is less secure.)

## Veterinarian Facts:

### Where do veterinarians work in Alaska?

Most veterinarians work in private practice. An increasing number have established practices in the larger regional centers in rural Alaska. Many veterinarians live in either an urban or regional center and travel to outlying villages to provide service on a scheduled basis. A few veterinarians are employed by local, state, or governmental agencies to study or control disease in wild animals, or to control the spread of disease from animals to humans.

### Educational Requirements

- Graduation from high school with a strong college preparatory background in English, science (especially biology and chemistry), and math.
- Completion of at least two years of college with courses in biology, chemistry, and physics. Competition for acceptance into veterinary school is very high, so a bachelor's degree is common and grades must be very good to excellent.
- Completion of four years of veterinary school. The degree awarded is the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) for most institutions.
- DVMs require a license to practice in a specific state and this is issued by the state where the work takes place.
- Veterinarians who practice in public health related positions may wish to complete a master's degree in public health.
- Specialty degrees can be obtained after graduation from veterinary school. Most take three to four years.

### Hourly Wage Range:

\$30.88-\$58.00 (Mean \$42.05)

### Years in School:

8 years (after high school graduation).

### Academic Programs in Alaska

Alaska does not have a College of Veterinary Medicine, but UAF offers a pre-veterinary medicine focus for students planning to apply to a college outside of Alaska. For more information, contact:

**Institute of Arctic Biology, University of Alaska Fairbanks**  
Todd O'Hara, DVM, PhD, Associate Professor of Wildlife  
Email: [tmohara@alaska.edu](mailto:tmohara@alaska.edu)  
Web site: <http://www.uaf.edu/advising/preprof/vetmedicine/>

**A new Veterinary Sciences certificate program is being offered through CRCDC's Interior-Aleutians and Chukchi Campuses. For more information, visit the following website:**  
<http://www.uaf.edu/drumbeats/veterinary-science/>

### National Contact:

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