



Texas A&M Agrilife Extension  
Veterinary Science Certificate Program  
**Veterinary Assistant Clinical Skills List**

### **1. Introduction to the Veterinary Profession**

#### *Veterinary Credentialing, Scope of Practice, and Level of Supervision*

- 1.1 Explain and describe the roles and responsibilities of each level of veterinary paraprofessional, including the level of supervision for each

#### *Veterinary Medical Terminology*

- 1.2 Understand and utilize basic medical terminology and abbreviations

### **2. Laws Related to Veterinary Medicine and Professional Ethics**

#### *Professional Ethics and Code of Conduct*

- 2.1 Demonstrate professional behavior with all clients and co-workers
- 2.2 Dress respectfully and in a manner appropriate to the tasks assigned
- 2.3 Practice professional communication at all times, verbally, non-verbally, and electronically to include cell phone usage, email, text messaging, social networking
- 2.4 Demonstrate ethical behavior in the veterinary setting
- 2.5 Demonstrate good workplace etiquette in the veterinary setting

### **3. Practice Management**

#### *Client and Employee Communications*

- 3.1 Demonstrate proper verbal communication including telephone communication, greeting/welcoming clients to the clinic, and admitting and discharging patients
- 3.2 Demonstrate in written and/or computer-based communication proper appointment scheduling
- 3.3 Demonstrate proper preparation of patient files including all appropriate documentation, supplying relevant handouts, and discharge instructions
- 3.4 Demonstrate the recognition and appropriate response to the notification of a veterinary medical emergency - (tele triage)
- 3.5 Demonstrate proper handling of client financial transactions including reviewing invoices with clients and processing payment transactions

#### *Veterinary Medical Records and Recordkeeping*

- 3.6 Demonstrate the basics of medical record keeping, retrieval, and filing whether paper based or electronic

#### *Inventory Control*

- 3.7 Demonstrate competency in basic inventory control measures
- 3.8 Recognize when inventory of veterinary supplies are low and know the proper process for notifying office management of the need to reorder
- 3.9 Demonstrate proper restocking techniques such as “first in, first out (FIFO)”, etc.



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#### **4. Safety in the Veterinary Workplace**

##### *Hazards in the Veterinary Workspace*

- 4.1 Understand hazards in the veterinary workspace, including chemical, physical, and biological and how to mitigate hazards
- 4.2 Identify personal protective equipment (PPE) and when to use it and understand the purpose of PPE
- 4.3 Understand the basics of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Standards and how those standards promote safe and healthy working conditions.

##### *Medical Waste Disposal*

- 4.4 Understand how to properly dispose of medical waste
- 4.5 Understand how to properly dispose of veterinary medical sharps waste

##### *Clinic Emergency Management Plan*

- 4.6 Locate and be familiar with the veterinary clinic or facility disaster preparedness plan

#### **5. Animal Identification and Movement of Animals**

- 5.1 Recognize common forms of identification for large animals, small animals, and common exotic species
- 5.2 Understand the intrastate requirements for movement of animals
- 5.3 Understand the interstate requirements for movement of animals
- 5.4 Understand what documentation is required for legal animal movement as described above

#### **6. Cleaning and Disinfection and Biosecurity**

- 6.1 Understand the basics of the different types of disinfectants
- 6.2 Understand the importance of proper cleaning and disinfection
- 6.3 Understand the basics of biosecurity practices in the prevention of spread of contagious disease, including isolation procedures
- 6.4 Recognize common zoonotic diseases
- 6.5 Understand the basic precautions necessary to prevent zoonotic disease

#### **7. Bedding and Housing for Patients**

- 7.1 Describe and selects the proper bedding for small, large and exotic animals
- 7.2 Understand the importance of proper temperature, humidity, and ventilation in the patient housing areas in veterinary facilities
- 7.3 Demonstrate an understanding of proper maintenance of patient cages, kennels, and stalls including proper handling of soiled bedding



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### 8. Breeds

- 8.1 Recognize common dog and cat breeds
- 8.2 Recognize common livestock breeds
- 8.3 Recognize common breeds of exotic animals seen in clinics

### 9. Behavior and Restraint

- 9.1 Demonstrate proper handling and restraint of patients, including the safe movement of patients into and out of cages, kennels, and stalls
- 9.2 Demonstrate the safe and proper use of muzzles in cats and dogs
- 9.3 Assist with lifting and positioning of patients to include standing, sitting, lateral, sternal, and dorsal restraint positions
- 9.4 Recognize and demonstrate the proper use of halters in horses and livestock
- 9.5 Recognize common types of equine and livestock restraint equipment and demonstrate proper and safe use of that equipment
- 9.6 Understand the basics of safe and proper restraint of small mammals, pet birds, and common reptiles
- 9.7 Understand the basics of normal animal behavior and how to respond when you recognize that an animal is displaying abnormal behavior
- 9.8 Demonstrate the ability to read body language and understand the importance of being able to do so.

### 10. Animal Nutrition

- 10.1 Understand the basics of essential food nutrients
- 10.2 Understand feeding recommendations for different life stages
- 10.3 Understand the role of dietary management in the treatment of health conditions
- 10.4 Understand proper feed storage to prevent spoilage and degradation and to prevent insect and rodent infestations

### 11. Normal Animal (Anatomy & Physiology)

- 11.1 Demonstrate a basic understanding of animal anatomy and physiology
- 11.2 Be able to properly identify gender
- 11.3 Utilize proper terminology for gender and age of animals

### 12. Exam Room Essentials

- 12.1 Recognize normal temperature, pulse, and respiration (TPR) by age and by species
- 12.2 Demonstrate the ability to obtain a proper history on a patient
- 12.3 Demonstrate the determination and calculation of capillary refill time (CRT)
- 12.4 Demonstrate proper bathing and grooming techniques
- 12.5 Understand the basics of proper hoof and nail care



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- 12.6 Demonstrate the proper administration of eye and ear medications
- 12.7 Demonstrate an understanding of methods of drug administration, including the correlated abbreviation
- 12.8 Demonstrate the proper administration of medications to veterinary patients by various routes
- 12.9 Demonstrate an understanding of needle gauge and syringe size
- 12.10 Demonstrate proper technique when drawing up an injectable medication

### **13. Immunology and Vaccines**

- 13.1 Demonstrate an awareness of veterinary vaccines and their routine applications
- 13.2 Demonstrate competency in preparing vaccines for administration
- 13.3 Demonstrate an understanding of methods of vaccine administration, including the correlated abbreviations

### **14. Preventative Care**

- 14.1 Demonstrate a basic understanding of common infectious and non-infectious diseases
- 14.2 Demonstrate a basic understanding of both internal and external parasite control in veterinary patients
- 14.3 Demonstrate a basic understanding of dental care in veterinary patients
- 14.4 Demonstrate a basic understanding of general grooming care in veterinary patients

### **15. Patient Management**

- 15.1 Demonstrate the recognition and appropriate response to the notification of a veterinary medical emergency - (Triage)
- 15.2 Understand the importance of maintaining proper patient records, including but not limited to water consumption, urine output, food consumption, quality and quantity of fecal output, evidence of vomiting or regurgitation
- 15.3 Understand the basics of proper bandaging techniques
- 15.4 Demonstrate the proper use and reason for the use of Elizabethan collars.
- 15.5 Recognize signs of pain or distress in patients and understand how and when to report that to the veterinary medical team

### **16. Pharmacology and Drug Calculations**

- 16.1 Recognize common veterinary drugs and recognize the significance of different categories of drugs (controlled drugs, non-controlled drugs, chemotherapy drugs, etc.)
- 16.2 Understand labeling requirements for veterinary prescriptions and common abbreviations
- 16.3 Demonstrate the ability to properly package and label veterinary prescriptions
- 16.4 Recognize the difference between dose and dosage
- 16.5 Demonstrate the ability to calculate drug dosages



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**17. Laboratory Skills**

- 17.1 Demonstrate the ability to properly collect a voided urine sample
- 17.2 Demonstrate the ability to identify and collect a proper fecal sample (both quality and quantity)
- 17.3 Demonstrate the ability to prepare fecal flotations and direct smears
- 17.4 Demonstrate the ability to correctly identify common external parasites such as ticks, fleas, mites, and lice and the common skin conditions they can cause
- 17.5 Demonstrate the ability to correctly identify common gastrointestinal parasites

**18. Diagnostic Imaging**

- 18.1 Understand radiation safety in the veterinary setting
- 18.2 Recognize appropriate use and storage of radiation personal protective equipment (PPE)

**19. Surgery**

- 19.1 Demonstrate how to properly fold surgical gowns and drapes when preparing a surgical pack
- 19.2 Demonstrate how to properly prepare a surgical pack for sterilization
- 19.3 Demonstrate how to properly open a surgical pack for the veterinary surgeon
- 19.4 Demonstrate the ability to prepare a surgical field properly aseptically
- 19.5 Demonstrate the ability to properly position the patient for surgery
- 19.6 Demonstrate an understanding of the significance of the sterile field in the surgical suite
- 19.7 Demonstrate the ability to correctly identify common surgical equipment
- 19.8 Demonstrate how to properly assist in monitoring surgical patients in the post-operative period
- 19.9 Demonstrate how to safely and properly clean the surgical suite post-operatively
- 19.10 Demonstrate proper cleaning and disinfection technique for surgical instruments
- 19.11 Demonstrate common ways to sterilize instruments

**20. End of Life Concerns**

- 20.1 Demonstrate an understanding of the human-animal bond
- 20.2 Demonstrate an understanding of euthanasia and post-mortem care
- 20.3 Demonstrate an understanding of disposal options for all species

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Skills Completion \_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Clinic Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Clinic Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*By signing above, I certify that the student named above has showed competency in all 100 skills listed*