



VETERINARIAN

FOREIGN CREDENTIALS REFERRAL OFFICE



WELCOME

The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) is the national voice for the veterinary profession and is dedicated to serving and representing the veterinarians of Canada. The Association is committed to excellence within the profession and to the well-being of animals.

Canada has more than 12,000 veterinarians—highly skilled professionals who have devoted their professional lives to providing veterinary medical services to animals, including pets, livestock, birds, exotic animals and aquaculture.

Visit our website (www.canadianveterinarians.net) to learn more about veterinary medicine in Canada and the opportunities it has to offer.



CANADIAN VETERINARY
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE
DES MÉDECINS VÉTÉRINAIRES

Veterinary Medicine in Canada

A veterinarian in Canada is a doctor of veterinary medicine (DVM), a professional in animal health care who has completed a university degree at a veterinary college.

Almost 75% of Canada's veterinarians work in private practice. Close to 40% work exclusively with small animals, while approximately 35% work in large and mixed animal practice. Veterinarians are also involved in many other activities that protect both animal and human health. They provide important services:

- in federal and provincial regulatory practice, ensuring wholesome food and a healthy animal population;
- in zoos, marine parks, government wildlife services and aquaculture (fish farming);
- in the development and assessment of safe, effective animal health products;
- as teachers and researchers at Canada's five schools of veterinary medicine; and
- as partners in human health care.

The successful completion of a minimum of six years of university education is required to be certified as a doctor of veterinary medicine. Veterinarians may also choose to continue their studies in order to specialize in such areas as surgery, radiology, dentistry, ultrasound, oncology, nutrition, epidemiology, ophthalmology, cardiology and dermatology, to name a few.

It is important to note that the veterinarian profession is a regulated occupation. Each province and territory has its own licensing body. There are five veterinary colleges in Canada. For more information, you can use the link to the website of each college at www.canadianveterinarians.net/about-programs-structure-examining.aspx

To practise veterinary medicine in Canada, you must obtain a licence. The licensure of veterinary medicine is a provincial responsibility. Provincial veterinary licensing bodies establish and maintain standards of practice for veterinarians.

Before You Come to Canada

There are many important things you can do to improve your chances of success before you come to Canada.

The Foreign Credentials Referral Office (www.credentials.gc.ca) is an organization of the Government of Canada that provides you with helpful

resources, such as the *Planning to Work in Canada?* workbook and the Working in Canada tool (www.workingincanada.gc.ca). Use these resources to find important information and to develop your job-search plan.

Language skills are important for a successful career in Canada. You may need to improve your skills in English or French. This may require that you be assessed. If you need to improve your language skills in English or French, start before you come to Canada. The provincial regulator will specify which tests they, or employers, require. You can find more information at www.language.ca.

After you arrive in Canada, use the Government of Canada's free settlement services, which include language training, job-search help and, in some cases, job placements. You can find more about these services at www.servicesfornewcomers.cic.gc.ca.

Your official education, work and identity documents are important. It is much easier for you to gather your documents while still in your home country.

If your documents are neither in English nor in French, you will need to have them translated. Verify which documents and translation services are required for your occupation.

www.cic.gc.ca

It is important for you to learn about the steps you need to take to get your credentials and qualifications recognized in Canada. Citizenship and Immigration Canada also recommends that you review the resources on our website for helpful information about the immigration process and living in Canada.

Becoming a Veterinarian in Canada

To practise as a veterinarian in Canada, you must meet the requirements of the regulatory body in the province or territory where you intend to work.

The National Examining Board administers the examinations required to obtain a veterinary licence. The licensing examination process for graduates of non-accredited veterinary schools involves the successful completion of:

- the Basic and Clinical Sciences Examination (BCSE);
- the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination (NAVLE); and
- the Clinical Proficiency Examination (CPE).

The BCSE is designed to assess basic and clinical veterinary sciences knowledge. The NAVLE is designed to measure one's general knowledge base in the various scientific and clinical disciplines required in veterinary medicine. The CPE assesses the candidate's ability to handle actual medical, surgical and diagnostic problems in a clinical or hospital setting.

It is important to note that there is a fee for taking each of these examinations and to know when the examinations will be taking place. Visit the CVMA website for more information on the examination process at www.canadianveterinarians.net/about-programs-structure-examining.aspx.

Candidates who successfully complete the three examinations are granted a Certificate of Qualification (CQ), which is a prerequisite to apply for a veterinary licence in all the provinces and territories of Canada. Keep in mind that the licensing authorities in any province may require further examinations in addition to those required to obtain a CQ. Once you have obtained your CQ and met any other provincial requirement, you can apply for your licence.

Although the general requirements to obtain a licence to practise veterinary medicine are similar in all provinces, specific requirements, including examinations, may differ from province to province. Applicants are reminded to consult their provincial licensing body for those specific requirements.

Finding a Job in Canada

You should take time to research job requirements and make a plan for finding work as a veterinarian in Canada. Becoming a member of the CVMA is a helpful way to learn about the profession in Canada, to make contacts and to have access to useful resources.

Many health institutions post jobs on their websites. The Canadian Animal Health Institute posts job opportunities that might be helpful to you (www.cahi-icsa.ca/about-job.php). You can register to view job opportunities online at the CVMA's online recruitment website (www.canadianveterinarians.net). It may also be useful to visit the websites of Canada's five veterinary colleges to see if they have any jobs that may interest you.

Additional Resources

Citizenship and Immigration Canada
www.cic.gc.ca

Foreign Credentials Referral Office
www.credentials.gc.ca

Service Canada
www.servicecanada.gc.ca

Working in Canada Tool
www.workingincanada.gc.ca

Veterinarian colleges in Canada
www.canadianveterinarians.net/about-career-colleges.aspx

Various required examinations
www.canadianveterinarians.net/about-programs-structure-examining.aspx

Veterinary Associations and Organizations

To view veterinary associations and organizations, visit www.canadianveterinarians.net/links.aspx.

