



October 4, 2021

Ms. Lorelei Walker, Program Manager
Veterinary Board of Governors
WA State Dept. of Health
P O Box 47852
Olympia WA 98504-7852

Dear Ms. Walker

I would like to take this opportunity to provide you with information about the Committee on Veterinary Technician Education and Activities (CVTEA) of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA). The CVTEA serves as the accrediting body for veterinary technology programs throughout the United States. Accreditation is the voluntary process by which educational institutions are evaluated for quality based on conformity with established standards. Accreditation serves to enhance the profession and to protect the public by identifying goals and assisting institutions in achieving those goals.

The Accreditation Standards as outlined in the [Policies and Procedures Manual of the AVMA CVTEA](#) include curricular requirements that incorporate general education and veterinary technology specific content. Courses shall include basic medical science, communication, critical thinking, decision-making, and clinical application skills. In addition, integration of nursing, technical, and medicals skills must be incorporated using criteria that reflect contemporary veterinary practice within the curriculum. Course offerings to meet all curriculum requirements typically take a minimum of 18 months to 2 years to accomplish.

Furthermore, CVTEA requires an extensive list of over 240 essential skills which students must successfully complete prior to graduation. Many of these requisite skills are hands-on competencies which take time for students to develop a minimum level of proficiency. Veterinary technology programs are designed to meet the needs of the profession so that graduates enter the job market with essential entry-level skills. Programs must assure that students are knowledgeable and competent when they graduate to assure employer acceptance of graduates as potential employees. For your information, there are currently ten accredited programs offering degrees which may be completed using a remote modality.

CVTEA developed the enclosed document to help identify potential areas of non-compliance with the apprenticeship program as compared to the accreditation standards. It is the hope of CVTEA that this letter and document will illuminate the importance of educational quality and clinical preparation in accredited programs. Based on the CVTEA commentary and questions, it appears there are a significant number of differences and gaps for students completing the apprenticeship program versus graduation from an AVMA CVTEA accredited program. As such, the CVTEA believes creating an alternative pathway, such as the proposed apprenticeship program, would be a grave disservice to the veterinarians, veterinary technicians who are graduates of accredited programs, the public, and most importantly the pet and livestock owners in the state of Washington. Approval of such an initiative is a step backwards for the veterinary profession and certainly does not appear to protect the public by awarding a title and credentialing to under-qualified individuals.

The CVTEA highly encourages veterinary regulatory agencies to consider the benefits of AVMA CVTEA accreditation especially for the pet owners and public for whom they serve.

Please feel free to contact AVMA staff if we may be of further assistance with your decision.

Sincerely,

Tracy Blais

Ms. Tracy Blais, CVT, MEd, CVTEA Chair

Enclosure

AVMA Center for Veterinary Medical Accreditation