



For Immediate Release
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Apply for 2023 USDA Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program and Veterinary Services Grant Program Assistance

AUSTIN, TX – The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is now accepting Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP) applications and Veterinary Services Grant Program (VSGP) applications for the eight situations in Texas designated as having veterinary shortages.

"Both the VMLRP and VSGP provide excellent opportunities for rural areas to help incentivize and establish a food animal veterinarian to serve in their area," said Dr. Angela Lackie, Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) Assistant Executive Director of Animal Health Programs. "These programs support the importance of educating and/or providing critical food animal veterinarians, in both private and public practice, particularly in rural communities that may not be able to provide the funds to offset the high cost of a professional veterinary medical education."

The VMLRP is authorized by the National Veterinary Medical Services Act and helps qualified veterinarians offset a significant portion of debt incurred while pursuing their veterinary medicine degree in return for at least three years of service in a designated veterinary shortage situation.

To be eligible to apply to the VMLRP, an applicant must:

1. Possess a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM (or equivalent)) degree from a school of Veterinary Medicine accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) Council on Education (COE);
2. Have qualified educational loan debt with a combined minimum of \$15,000;
3. Are able to secure employment in a designated veterinary shortage situation within 90 days of award notification; and
4. Meet all other terms and conditions of the application process.

Please visit the [VMLRP website](#) for additional eligibility details.

Applications may be submitted through April 17, 2023. For more information about the VMLRP please visit the following webpages or [email](#) the VMLRP team with questions.

- [Application Information](#)
- [Annual Reports and Statistics](#)
- [Veterinary Shortage Situation Area Map](#)

While the TAHC does not administer this program, the Commission is designated to nominate and certify veterinary shortage situations identified by the USDA.



As a companion to the VMLRP, the 2014 Farm Bill authorized the establishment of the VSGP to incentivize service in veterinary shortage situations. The USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) Veterinary Services Grant Program (VSGP) now has \$4 million in funding for this program. The VSGP strives to support through Education, Extension and Training (EET) funds for accredited schools and organizations and through Rural Practice Enhancement (RPE) funds for veterinary clinics that provide services in veterinary shortage situations. This program aims to bolster the capacity of private practitioners to provide food animal veterinary services by developing, implementing and sustaining these services in designated rural veterinarian shortage situations.

Grants will be made available on a competitive basis to:

1. Establish or expand veterinary practices by equipping veterinary offices; sharing in overhead costs; and/or establishing mobile veterinary facilities in which a portion of the facilities will address education or extension needs.
2. Establish or expand accredited veterinary education programs, veterinary residency and fellowship programs, or veterinary internship and externship programs carried out in coordination with accredited colleges of veterinary medicine.
3. Provide continuing education and extension, including veterinary telemedicine and other distance-based education, for veterinarians, veterinary technicians, and other health professionals needed to strengthen veterinary programs and enhance food safety and public health.
4. Cover travel and living expenses of veterinary students, veterinary interns, externs, fellows, and residents, and veterinary technicians.
5. To expose students in grades 11 and 12 to education and career opportunities in food animal medicine.

The deadline for VSGP applications is March 29, 2023 at 5:00 PM EST. For more information regarding the VSGP, how to apply and details on who is eligible to apply, <https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/funding-opportunities/veterinary-services-grant-program-0>.

Visit the [VSGP Applicant webpage](#) for the grant application and more detailed instructions.

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The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) was established in 1893 as the Livestock Sanitary Commission and charged with protecting the state's domestic animals "from all contagious or infectious diseases of a malignant character." TAHC remains true to this charge while evolving with the times to protect the health and marketability of all Texas livestock and poultry. Learn more about the TAHC by visiting www.tahc.texas.gov.