

Veterinarian Shortage Situation Nomination Form

To be submitted under the authority of the chief State or Insular Area Animal Health Official

Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP)

This form must be used for Nomination of Veterinarian Shortage Situations to the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP), Authorized Under the National Veterinary Medical Service Act (NVMSA)

Note: Please submit one separate nomination form for each shortage situation. See the State Animal Health Official (SAHO) section of the VMLRP web site (www.nifa.usda.gov/vmlrp) for the number of nominations permitted for your state or insular area.

Location of Veterinary Shortage Area for this Nomination

Location of Veterinary Shortage: Runnels, Taylor, Coke, Nolan, Concho, and Coleman counties
(e.g., County, State/Insular Area; must be a logistically feasible veterinary practice service area)

Approximate Center of Shortage Area
 (or Location of Position if Type III): 619 E. Broadway, Winters, TX 79567
(e.g., Address or Cross Street, Town/City, and Zip Code)

Overall Priority of Shortage: Moderate Priority High Priority Critical Priority

Type of Veterinary Practice Area/Discipline/Specialty (Choose only one Type)

Type I Shortage: Private Practice
 Food Animal Medicine (awardee obligation: at least 80 percent time or 32 hr/week)

Must cover (check at least one)

- Beef Cattle
- Dairy Cattle
- Swine
- Poultry
- Small Ruminant
- Other: _____

May cover

- Beef Cattle
- Dairy Cattle
- Swine
- Poultry
- Small Ruminant
- Other: _____

Type II Shortage: Private Practice – Rural Area
 Food Animal Medicine (awardee obligation: at least 30 percent time or 12 hr/week)

Must cover (check at least one)

- Beef Cattle
- Dairy Cattle
- Swine
- Poultry
- Small Ruminant
- Other: _Ranch horses

May cover

- Beef Cattle
- Dairy Cattle
- Swine
- Poultry
- Small Ruminant
- Other: _____

Type III Shortage: Public Practice (awardee obligation: at least 49 percent time or 19.6 hr/week)
 Employer: _____ Position Title: _____

Please select **one or more** specialty/disciplinary areas:

- Food Safety
- Public Health
- Epidemiology
- Other: _____

Please describe the **importance and objectives** of a veterinarian filling this shortage situation as well as being located in the community, area, state/insular area, or position requested above (limit your response to 200 words or less).

Due to the limited number of veterinarians willing or able to practice herd health/production and emergency medicine on livestock, incentivizing young veterinarians to stay in this underserved area and provide large animal care is vital to the health of this agrarian society. This seven-county area has a beef cattle population of 220,000, a sheep population of over 105,000, spans over 7,500 square miles, and has three practices currently performing a significant amount of large animal medicine. Two of those practices are owned by veterinarians within 10 years of retirement age. A young veterinarian recently obtained employment with the practice in Winters and is interested in partial ownership, however, the veterinarian must be financially secure enough to support his family and pay back substantial student loan debt before he is able to consider tenure. A practice about 30 miles away does equine work, but Winters sees a significant food animal clientele with needs for veterinary care. They are 50-60 miles from neighboring Abilene or San Angelo. The objective of a veterinarian in this area is to provide diagnosis and treatment of food animals in a manner that does not require animals to be hauled long distances.

Please describe the **activities** of a veterinarian meeting this shortage situation in the community, area, state/insular area, or position requested above (limit your response to 200 words or less).

A veterinarian practicing in this area must have certain physical and mental skill sets in order to perform his or her duties adequately. Most livestock veterinarians in the area are also required to work on small animals and horses, meaning they must be well-versed in many areas of medicine. This means these veterinarians must be able to be on-call 24-hours a day: handling physically taxing reproductive emergencies, drawn-out cases of equine colic, and mentally and emotionally stressful pet emergencies. Many times, the veterinarian must deal with after-hours care following a 12-hour or more day of work. The diversity of practice also requires the practitioner to stay knowledgeable enough in different areas to provide education for members of the community, ranging from producers, to 4H groups, to shelter/rescue groups. In the food animal portion of a mixed practice in this area, the veterinarian is a key stalwart in the recognition, containment and treatment of numerous diseases that can be economically crippling to the agricultural economy. This area is of special interest due to the amount of Mexican cattle and horses entering this part of the state and the recent re-emergence of several reportable diseases.

Please describe any past efforts to recruit and retain a veterinarian in the shortage situation identified above (limit your response to 100 words or less).

The current solo practitioner in Winters has offered healthy compensation packages to new graduates and has had several part and full-time associates over the past seven years, but has been unable to retain help for an extended period of time. The veterinarian in this area cites relatively lower pay than practices in larger metropolitan areas, lack of desire or experience living in a rural area with a population of less than 2,000 people, and difficulty securing employment for a spouse in this area as factors contributing to the inability to retain previous associates or recruit new ones.

Please describe the risk of this veterinarian position not being secured or retained. Include the risk(s) to the production of a safe and wholesome food supply and to animal, human, and environmental health not only in the community but in the region, state/insular area, nation, and/or international community (limit your response to 250 words or less).

If another veterinarian is not retained, the workload will be unmanageable for the current solo practitioner, as well as other mixed practitioners in surrounding areas. Several nearby practices have older practitioners that will be either retiring or decreasing their workload in the next 10 years. The workload will likely intensify due to the ever-increasing value and global demand for beef. Producers are more willing and financially able to utilize the services of a veterinarian as their product becomes more valuable. In addition, as the younger generation of ranchers tends to be more technologically minded, there is a desire for constant information, particularly in the areas of animal welfare and increased return on investment. According to the current Texas Almanac, farming

and ranching (mostly beef cattle, sheep and goats) are some of the top economic sectors in much of this area, with total agriculture accounting for a market value of over \$190 million. From a regulatory standpoint, large animal veterinarians are responsible for recognizing such zoonotic health risks as anthrax, rabies, and West Nile virus; economically devastating diseases like foot and mouth disease, Texas cattle fever, Chronic Wasting Disease, and others. Currently, the cattle population is at its lowest number in decades, both locally and nationally, making the potential damage of a foreign animal disease outbreak even greater.

(Optional) If the nominator wishes to specify a service time for this shortage situation that is higher than the minimum required for the shortage type checked on Page 1, please specify the percent time in the box below (based on a 40-hour work week). Leave the box blank if the service time for this shortage situation is for the minimum percent time of the shortage type indicated.

%

Minimum Service time required for each shortage type

Type I: 80 percent time or 32 hours/week

Type II: 30 percent time or 12 hours/week

Type III: 49 percent time or 19.6 hours/week

SAHO nominator must check both boxes below in order for NIFA to consider this nomination for official designation

- By checking this box, I affirm that this form represents a nomination and is subject to NIFA review and approval.

- By checking this box, I affirm that it is my professional opinion that this is a bona fide food supply or public health-related veterinary shortage situation. I affirm due diligence has been invested to identify this area as a shortage situation of at least moderate priority (severity).

Authorized State or Insular Area Animal Health Official or designee:

Name: Dee Ellis, DVM, MPA
(point of contact Holly Hughes-Garza, DVM)

Title: State Veterinarian/Executive Director

Organization: Texas Animal Health Commission

Email: comments@tahc.texas.gov

Telephone Number: 800-550-8242 x718
(Area code required)

Public reporting for OMB control number 0524-0046 is estimated to average two hours, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information, unless it displays a current valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to NIFA, OGF, 800 9th St. SW, Washington, DC 20024, Attention Policy Section. Do not return the completed form to this address.

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