

# 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](http://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: Kodiak Island and the Aleutian Islands, Alaska  
(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): Kodiak Island  
(e.g., Address or Cross Street, Town/City, and Zip Code)

Overall Priority of Shortage: Moderate Priority

### Type of Veterinary Practice Area/Discipline/Specialty (select one) :

Type II: Private Practice - Rural Area, Food Animal Medicine (awardee obligation: at least 30% FTE or 12hr/week)

#### For Type I or II Private Practice:

**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: elk, reindeer, yak, bison

#### For Type III Public Practice:

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_ Position Title: \_\_\_\_\_

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

- Food Safety
- Public Health
- Epidemiology
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

(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 above, 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.

%

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 1500 characters).

Provide service to livestock producers (beef, small ruminant, backyard poultry, possibly reindeer, elk, yak, bison) on Kodiak Island, Sitkinak Island, and several of the Aleutian Islands. There are half dozen grazing operations on several of the islands; the largest is on Umnak Island (7,000 beef, 6,000 reindeer, and a small bison herd). According to NASS there are 11 farms with a total of over 11,500 beef cattle grazing on the largest open grass land in the state. This position could provide support as a consultant and advisor to the management of the remote island herds. There are numerous homestead farms, back yard operations, and "cow and goat share" operations providing food for local families and farm market in the city of Kodiak. This position would provide service to these small farms and backyard poultry operations and consult to the larger livestock operations on Kodiak Island. Several of the Aleutian Islands from Sand Point to Sitkinak support beef herds. Many of these operations use horses to manage the beef herds so equine experience would be needed.

There are slaughter facilities on both Kodiak and Umnak Islands and a mobile slaughter plant that services Sitkinak Island. This mobile facility allows cattle owners on site slaughter and processing and the ability to market fresh and retort products. The plant has successfully operated on Sitkinak Island for the last four years.

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 1500 characters or less).

Position would provide services for a mixed animal practice; 70% domestic pets, equine and 30% food producing animals (herd health to livestock, poultry producers and 4-H groups). There are several cattle ranches on the island as well as a few game ranches. Several of the livestock operations use horses to work the herds of elk and cattle. In order to sustain an economically viable practice the practitioner will need to provide equine and small animal services. Routine health care operations at a clinic or mobile operation, as well as, a mobile large animal practice to possibly extend to island herds in the immediate vicinity of Kodiak Island. Herd health consultation to remote island herds (Umnak, Sand Point, and Sitkanak). This position would interact with University of Fairbanks Cooperative Extension officers for forage analysis and nutritional management. There are a few hunt operations (elk and bison) that operate on the island and have requested veterinary support for herd health and CWD testing.

This position would also support the Kodiak Agriculture Fair and Rodeo, as well as, emergency response to morbidity/mortality investigations and emergency response to any hazards that would impact animal health. This area has experienced different natural disasters such as: earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanic emissions.

Please describe any past efforts to recruit and retain a veterinarian in the shortage situation identified above (limit your response to 750 characters or less).

No previous efforts to recruit veterinary services have been made from this office other than the position nomination through this program. The only veterinary clinic on the island is a small animal practice providing very limited service to livestock. Farmers must rely on long distance (phone, radio) consultation for herd management support. Livestock operators have made requests of this office and University Cooperative Extension for support for beef and small ruminant dairy with meat and fiber production. The University of Fairbanks has developed Veterinary Program and has hired a livestock extension veterinarian that will be of support for this position in serving the livestock producers.

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 2000 characters or less).

Risk for not securing a food animal practitioner for these remote communities food security is major concern, as well as, food safety for livestock products sold in local farm markets or farm gate sales. In addition, emergency response to a disease outbreak with the threat to livestock confined on the islands and risk of spread to the wild life populations that native subsistence hunters rely for food. The elimination of local production of food would further restrict these island communities to solely rely on products being shipped in for sale and distribution and the extreme weather conditions make both ocean and air transport unreliable. Without veterinary support producers will be limited in their ability to efficiently raise livestock and more producers will possibly cease production. On site veterinary support and herd health management consultation utilizing digital or telemedicine support could increase production and profit for producers and so expand the market for the free range organic beef and reindeer raised on the remote island grasslands.

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: Robert F Gerlach

Title: Alaska State Veterinarian

Organization: Alaska Dept of Environmental Conservation

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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 9<sup>th</sup> St. SW, Washington, DC 20024, Attention Policy Section. Do not return the completed form to this address.