

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: Calhoun, Chickasaw, Clay, Mississippi
(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): State Highway 15 in Houston, MS in Chickasaw County
(e.g., Address or Cross Street, Town/City, and Zip Code)

Overall Priority of Shortage: High 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: _____

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.

50 %

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).

The primary objective of a veterinarian serving this area is to address a critical shortage of food animal veterinary services. There are over 81,500 cattle/calves in the area, 40,000 swine (NASS 2011 estimates) and only 2 practicing large animal veterinarians. There are over 830 total livestock operations (beef, dairy, sheep, goat, swine and poultry) in the tri-county area. This veterinarian would be expected to dedicate at least 50% of their time in food animal practice. It is designated as Type II shortage area since the veterinarian will likely provide some equine and companion animal services. The veterinarian is expected to be based within 50 miles of Houston. Accessibility to other larger communities such as Tupelo (30 mi) and Memphis (125 mi) is available.

Another objective of this position is for the veterinarian to become a long-term resident of the community and contribute to the local economy. The counties provide an economic base for many agriculture-related businesses. Chickasaw county is home to the third largest furniture manufacturer in the US and the largest furniture store in the state of MS. Five of the top 100 companies in MS are located in Chickasaw county or have their headquarters there.

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).

Routine veterinary care would include herd health consultations (including vaccination and parasite control planning, pregnancy examinations and breeding soundness exams), regulatory services in accordance with state and federal health programs, issuance of interstate health papers and animal identification, and emergency veterinary services. The veterinarian will also work with the local livestock auction barns. They will also be expected to demonstrate and educate others on proper animal handling and promote animal welfare according to scientifically-based industry standards.

The veterinarian would be expected to work with Extension and 4-H livestock personnel and provide guidance and education in the areas of animal health and public health, and serve as a model for future food animal veterinarians. This veterinarian will not only serve as a valuable animal health resource to the community, but will also serve as a front line of defense in the recognition of potential emerging and exotic animal diseases. Furthermore, a veterinarian in this area would be able to provide guidance in areas of disaster preparedness and agrosecurity for both large and small animal veterinary clients. Its proximity to Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine (MSU-CVM) (approximately 45 miles southeast), will allow for ample continuing education, referral and mentoring opportunities.



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).

The two practicing mixed animal veterinarians in the tri-county area have had a difficult time recruiting and hiring associates. Both are within a few years of retirement. The only large animal veterinarians in Clay County are non-practicing. CVM externship records show that local practices have hosted several students on externships, and several recent graduates have considered the area for prospective employment. However, there are few incentives for graduates to join or establish practices in this area. Livestock producers and members of allied industries have also expressed a need for additional veterinarians to continue to provide services in the area.

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).

Agriculture is Mississippi's number one industry, with agricultural receipts close to \$4.9 bil. There are approximately 1.2 mil food animals in MS, with only 100 large animal veterinarians to service them (NASS, AVMA estimates). This tri-county area has large cow-calf and stocker populations, and veterinary services are critical for the economic stability of the area. Large order-buying facilities and stocker operators are located here, shipping thousands of calves a week interstate, requiring regulatory services. Veterinary services available from adjacent counties are limited and expansion of their coverage areas is not practically or economically feasible.

Risks of a veterinarian not being secured or retained include: increased livestock morbidity and mortality, improper animal treatments, improper animal handling and increased threats to animal welfare, and failure to recognize foreign and emerging animal diseases, some of which may be zoonotic. Food safety concerns may also arise when drugs or chemicals are used improperly or when improper drug withdrawals are followed. Environmental health can also be threatened with the lack of product or waste disposal guidance. Therefore the lack of a food animal veterinary professional in this region may threaten the entire US and international communities by failure to detect and respond to potential animal and public health concerns.

Veterinary students visit the local veterinarians, farms, and livestock auctions during clinical rotations and members of the livestock industry constantly express the need for someone to return to the area. Lack of veterinary support is therefore can also negatively impact student recruitment, mentoring and educational opportunities.

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: James A. Watson

Title: State Veterinarian

Organization: Mississippi Board of Animal Health

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Telephone Number: 601-359-1170
(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.