



2021 Academic Internship Salaries Offered through the VIRMP Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges April, 2021

Introduction

According to the annual Senior Surveys conducted by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) 24.4% percent of 2019 graduates pursued additional training by internship (Bain, Hansen, Ouedraogo, Radich & Salois, 2020). Recent graduates report receiving additional hands-on training and mentoring, as well as pursuing specialized experience as reasons for pursuing internships. A smaller number of these professionals go on to pursue residency training with the goal of earning additional degrees and/or board certification.

Historically, post-DVM training programs have paid salaries far lower than the national average for recent graduates. In 2020, AVMA reported new graduate veterinarians earned an average annual full-time salary of \$70,045 (Bain, et al 2020). The AVMA report goes on to report an average salary of \$34,029 for all interns in training programs in the United States; for interns specifically entering training programs at academic institutions the mean salary was \$28,372 (Greenhill, 2020).

In an effort to broaden the profession's understanding of trainee salaries, the AAVMC has partnered with the American Association of Veterinary Clinicians (AAVC) to study the full complement of residencies and internships offered through a matching program. This publication focuses exclusively on salaries for academic internship programs in the United States.

Methodology

The American Association of Veterinary Clinicians (AAVC) sponsors the annual Veterinary Internship and Residency Matching Program (VIRMP). The purpose of the program is to "expedite the selection of interns and residencies for participating veterinary colleges and private veterinary practices." (AAVC, 2020). The VIRMP allows academic institutions and private practices to submit training positions to be filled and applicants to submit their applications and rankings to the VIRMP. Program coordinators review the applications and rank the applicants. Proprietary software used by the VIRMP determines the best matches based on the rankings and notifies the applicants and the program coordinators.

This process begins annually in September of each year when the training program coordinators from individual residency and internship training programs enter their program information into the matching program's website (www.virmp.org). Program coordinators enter detailed information about the positions being offered; the salary being offered is entered as a free-text field.

In the spring of 2021, this data was provided to AAVMC for analysis. Prior to analysis, all free text entered salary information was standardized using US currency formatting. The position entry data included the state location, the name of the institution offering each position, and the number of positions offered through the match program. These data were organized using regional variables.

Descriptive and ANOVA analyses were conducted using SPSS 22.

Definitions

Clinical interns are defined as individuals participating in a one year rotating or specialty clinical training program in veterinary medicine. The internship provides practical experience in applying knowledge gained during formal professional education and offers the opportunity for recent graduates to obtain additional training.

Summary of Findings for Internship Positions Filled Through the Match Program

The number of internship positions offered in the United States through the VIRMP for the 2021-2022 training year was 371 across 29 academic institutions. The amount of academic internship positions offered through the VIMRP increased from 345 to 371 when compared to 2020-2021 data. Additionally, the mean starting salary increased from \$28,372 to \$30,306, an increase of 6.8%.

Academic internship positions listed through the matching program were most often located in the South (41.8%) and the Midwest (35.3%). Positions in the Western and Northeast regions offered higher salaries than in other regions, at \$32,738 and \$33,330, respectively. This statistically significant difference ($p < .001$) can be explained by the differences in the cost of living across in these areas.

A breakdown of average salary by region can be found in Table 1.

Table 1:

Average Salary Offered for Academic Internship Positions by Region				
Region	N of Positions Listed	Percentage of Positions Listed	Mean Salary	Median Salary
Midwest	131	35.3%	\$29,493	\$27,500
Northeast	50	13.5%	\$33,330	\$35,568
South	155	41.8%	\$29,469	\$29,743
West	35	9.4%	\$32,738	\$31,601
Total	371	100.0%	\$30,306	\$29,050

Mean salaries by state are shown in Table 2.

Table 2:

Average Salary Offered for Academic Internship Positions by State				
State	Mean	Median	N	% of Total N
Alabama	\$25,706	\$26,000	17	4.6%
Arizona	\$35,000	\$35,000	4	1.1%
California	\$44,786	\$44,786	4	1.1%
Colorado	\$29,286	\$28,000	14	3.8%
Florida	\$33,500	\$33,500	18	4.9%

Georgia	\$29,743	\$29,743	17	4.6%
Illinois	\$26,142	\$26,153	20	5.4%
Indiana	\$29,050	\$29,050	8	2.2%
Iowa	\$26,000	\$26,000	16	4.3%
Kansas	\$34,432	\$34,432	13	3.5%
Louisiana	\$26,348	\$26,660	16	4.3%
Massachusetts	\$28,631	\$28,631	17	4.6%
Michigan	\$32,500	\$32,500	15	4.0%
Minnesota	\$27,857	\$28,000	14	3.8%
Mississippi	\$27,000	\$27,000	12	3.2%
Missouri	\$27,500	\$27,500	15	4.0%
New York	\$36,000	\$36,000	14	3.8%
North Carolina	\$32,000	\$32,000	23	6.2%
Ohio	\$35,604	\$35,604	16	4.3%
Oklahoma	\$27,107	\$27,008	15	4.0%
Oregon	\$32,776	\$32,776	5	1.3%
Pennsylvania	\$35,568	\$35,568	19	5.1%
Tennessee	\$30,000	\$30,000	13	3.5%
Texas	\$27,415	\$26,937	14	3.8%
Virginia	\$36,000	\$36,000	10	2.7%
Washington	\$31,601	\$31,601	8	2.2%
Wisconsin	\$27,500	\$27,500	14	3.8%
Total	\$30,306	\$29,050	371	100.0%

An analysis of application requirements revealed that 12.7% of intern positions required at least one previous year’s internship or comparable experience. There was no significant correlation between internships with previous experience requirements and mean salary. Mean salary offers featuring experience requirements were 1.4% higher than salaries without the requirement (Table 3).

Table 3:

Average Salary Offered for Academic Internship Positions by Experience Requirements				
Previous Experience Requirements	Percentage of Positions Listed	N of Positions Listed	Mean Salary	Median Salary
No Previous Internship Required	87.3%	324	\$30,253	\$29,397
Previous Internship Required	12.7%	47	\$30,675	\$29,000
Total	100.0%	371	\$30,306	\$29,050

An analysis of position offerings by practice area reveal that the bulk of positions are in small animal rotating (57.1%). The single anesthesiology internship position offered the highest salary of \$35,604, which is 17.5% higher than the national average. A total of 5 positions for candidates from historically underrepresented and/or marginalized backgrounds were listed in the 2020 match, denoted by the *Diversity* label. Salary analysis revealed that mean salaries for the *Diversity* positions fell below the mean for the same positions offered to the general population of applicants. This finding does not necessarily mean the salary at the local level is different from the salary of interns in the same practice area at the same institution; however, it should be noted that such salary differentials may result in future salary disparities within the practice area.

Table 4 shows the mean salaries offered by practice area.

Practice Area	N of Positions Listed	Percentage of Positions Listed	Mean	Median
Agricultural Practices	1	0.3%	\$31,601	\$31,601
Ambulatory	3	0.8%	\$28,162	\$29,743
Anesthesiology	1	0.3%	\$35,604	\$35,604
Avian	2	0.5%	\$27,000	\$27,000
Cardiology	1	0.3%	\$34,432	\$34,432
Clinical Nutrition	1	0.3%	\$34,432	\$34,432
Community Practice	3	0.8%	\$31,210	\$32,500
Dermatology	5	1.3%	\$29,110	\$27,500
Diagnostic Imaging & Radiology	2	0.5%	\$30,966	\$30,966
Emergency Medicine/Critical Care	14	3.8%	\$34,370	\$31,601
Equine	23	6.2%	\$28,074	\$27,000
Exotic/Wildlife/Zoo	15	4.0%	\$30,368	\$30,000
Farm Practice/Production Animal Medicine	1	0.3%	\$33,500	\$33,500
Food Animal	9	2.4%	\$30,312	\$28,000
Large Animal Rotating	11	3.0%	\$31,287	\$30,000
Large Animal Rotating (Diversity)*	1	0.3%	\$30,000	\$30,000
Large Animal Surgery	2	0.5%	\$28,066	\$28,066
Neurology	6	1.6%	\$27,634	\$26,576
Oncology	14	3.8%	\$31,068	\$32,250
Other	4	1.1%	\$28,479	\$28,239
Shelter Medicine	11	3.0%	\$32,136	\$33,500
Small Animal Internal Medicine	5	1.3%	\$30,021	\$27,500
Small Animal Rotating	212	57.1%	\$30,211	\$29,050
Small Animal Rotating (Diversity)*	4	1.1%	\$29,525	\$29,525
Small Animal Surgery	18	4.9%	\$30,248	\$30,872
Sports Medicine & Rehabilitation	2	0.5%	\$31,622	\$31,622
Total	371	100.0%	\$30,306	\$29,050

Limitations

The salary data acquired from the VIRMP only represents a portion of available internship positions offered at academic institutions within the United States. There were 1,123 internships offered through the match to private practice training programs in addition to the 371 academic internships explored in this paper. Although it is believed that the match data represents the majority of internships offered; it is unclear how many positions are offered to new and recent graduates of the professional DVM program. Because of this, the authors are unable to claim that these data are wholly definitive of the salary ranges that may be offered to residents in the United States.

Conclusion

Interns are offered salaries less than half the national average earned by new graduates, however, there is a notable range of salaries within those offered. Finally, salaries are influenced by numerous things including location, practice area and whether the position is offered by an academic institution or a private practice.

Acknowledgements

The AAVMC acknowledges the contributions of the staff of the VIRMP for providing access to the match data.

References

Bain, Bridgette; Hanson, Charlotte, Ouedraogo, Frederic, Radich, Rosemary, and Salois, Matt. *2020 AVMA Report Economic State of the Veterinary Profession*. Schaumburg: American Veterinary Medical Association, August 2020.

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Please cite as:

Polisetti, Sraavya and Lisa Greenhill. "2021 Academic Internship Salaries Offered through the VIRMP." Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges. April, 2021. Web.