



2024 Academic Internship Salaries Offered through the VIRMP Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges April 2024

Introduction

According to the annual Senior Surveys conducted by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) 25.4% percent of 2022 graduates pursued additional training by internship (Bain, Hansen, Ouedraogo, 2023). 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. Only 2.2% of 2022 graduates entered residency programs immediately after completing their veterinary degree.

Historically, post-DVM training programs have paid salaries far lower than the national average for recent graduates. In 2023, AVMA reported new veterinarians in the class of 2022 earned an average annual full-time salary of \$114,027 (Bain, Hansen, Ouedraogo, 2023) By comparison, last year, the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC) reported an average salary of \$39,354 for all interns in training programs in the United States; for interns specifically entering training programs at academic institutions the mean salary was \$34,309 (Polisetti & Greenhill, 2023).

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 winter of 2023, 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 statistical analyses were conducted using Microsoft Excel.

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 2024-2025 training year was 437 positions across 34 academic institutions. Of the different types of academic institutions available, 100% of the academic internships available were offered by colleges or schools of veterinary medicine. The amount of academic internship positions offered through the VIMRP decreased from 455 to 437 when compared to 2023-2024 training year data. Additionally, the mean starting salary increased to \$37,513.

Academic internship positions listed through the matching program were most often located in the South (38.2%) and the Midwest (34.3%). Positions in the Northeastern (m = \$40,031) regions offered on average higher salaries than positions in the Midwestern and Southern regions. Positions in the Western (m = \$44,270) regions also offered on average higher salaries than positions in the Midwestern and Southern regions. These differences are likely attributable to differences in the cost of living across regions.

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	150	34.3%	\$36,302	\$35,500
Northeast	64	14.6%	\$40,031	\$38,000
South	167	38.2%	\$35,369	\$35,000
West	56	12.8%	\$44,270	\$50,000
Total	437	100.0%	\$37,513	\$37,500

Mean salaries by state are shown in Table 2. An analysis of position offerings by practice area reveals that Illinois offers the highest percentage of positions at 5.7% of the total positions offered. California offered the highest mean salary of \$50,706, which is 29.9% higher than the national average.

Table 2**Average Salary Offered for Academic Residency Positions by State**

State/Metropolitan Area	Percentage of All Positions	N of All Positions	Mean	Median
Alabama (Auburn-Opelika) (Montgomery)	3.7% (3.0%) (0.7%)	16 (13) (3)	\$30,906 (\$30,885) (\$31,000)	\$30,750 (\$30,500) (\$31,000)
Arizona (Phoenix)	1.6% (1.6%)	7 (7)	\$50,000 (\$50,000)	\$50,000 (\$50,000)
California (Sacramento)	1.4% (1.4%)	6 (6)	\$50,183 (\$50,183)	\$50,183 (\$50,183)
Colorado (Denver)	3.9% (3.9%)	17 (17)	\$50,706 (\$50,706)	\$50,000 (\$50,000)
Florida (Gainesville) (Ocala)	5.0% (4.8%) (0.2%)	22 (21) (1)	\$44,000 (\$44,000) (\$44,000)	\$44,000 (\$44,000) (\$44,000)
Georgia (Athens)	3.7% (3.7%)	16 (16)	\$34,175 (\$34,175)	\$34,175 (\$34,175)
Illinois (Champaign-Urbana)	5.7% (5.7%)	25 (25)	\$32,243 (\$32,243)	\$32,243 (\$32,243)
Indiana (Lafayette)	3.0% (3.0%)	13 (13)	\$33,500 (\$33,500)	\$33,500 (\$33,500)
Iowa (Ames)	3.9% (3.9%)	17 (17)	\$40,000 (\$40,000)	\$40,000 (\$40,000)
Kansas (Manhattan)	3.4% (3.4%)	15 (15)	\$42,485 (\$42,485)	\$42,485 (\$42,485)
Louisiana (Baton Rouge)	5.5% (5.5%)	24 (24)	\$27,460 (\$27,460)	\$27,460 (\$27,460)
Massachusetts (Framingham-Natick)	5.0% (5.0%)	22 (22)	\$38,545 (\$38,545)	\$38,000 (\$38,000)
Michigan (Lansing)	3.4% (3.4%)	15 (15)	\$32,500 (\$32,500)	\$32,500 (\$32,500)
Minnesota (Minneapolis) (St. Paul)	3.0% (0.5%) (2.5%)	13 (2) (11)	\$39,000 (\$39,000) (\$39,000)	\$39,000 (\$39,000) (\$39,000)
Mississippi (Tupelo)	2.7% (2.7%)	12 (12)	\$35,500 (\$35,500)	\$35,000 (\$35,000)
Missouri (Columbia)	4.6% (4.6%)	20 (20)	\$31,000 (\$31,000)	\$31,000 (\$31,000)
New York (Ithaca)	4.1% (4.1%)	18 (18)	\$45,000 (\$45,000)	\$45,000 (\$45,000)
North Carolina (Raleigh)	5.3% (5.3%)	23 (23)	\$40,000 (\$40,000)	\$40,000 (\$40,000)
Ohio	3.7%	16	\$44,000	\$44,000

(Columbus)	(3.7%)	(16)	(\$44,000)	(\$44,000)
Oklahoma (Stillwater)	0.9% (0.9%)	4 (4)	\$31,700 (\$31,700)	\$30,000 (\$30,000)
Oregon (Eugene)	2.3% (2.3%)	10 (10)	\$39,000 (\$39,000)	\$39,000 (\$39,000)
Pennsylvania (Wilmington) (Philadelphia)	5.5% (1.4%) (4.1%)	24 (6) (18)	\$37,667 (\$37,500) (\$37,722)	\$37,500 (\$37,500) (\$37,500)
Tennessee (Knoxville)	3.7% (3.7%)	16 (16)	\$35,000 (\$35,000)	\$35,000 (\$35,000)
Texas (Houston)	4.6% (4.6%)	20 (20)	\$32,750 (\$32,750)	\$33,000 (\$33,000)
Virginia (Blacksburg) (Roanoke) (Winchester)	3.2% (2.3%) (0.2%) (0.7%)	14 (10) (1) (3)	\$39,321 (\$37,500) (\$37,500) (\$46,000)	\$37,500 (\$37,500) (\$37,500) (\$46,000)
Washington (Seattle) (Spokane)	3.7% (0.2%) (3.4%)	16 (1) (15)	\$36,000 (\$36,000) (\$36,000)	\$36,000 (\$36,000) (\$36,000)
Wisconsin (Madison)	3.7% (3.7%)	16 (16)	\$35,500 (\$35,500)	\$35,500 (\$35,500)
Total	100%	437	\$37,513	\$37,500

An analysis of application requirements revealed that 22.4% of intern positions required at least one previous year's internship or comparable experience. This is a slight decrease from last year, but still comparable. There was no significant correlation between internships with previous experience requirements and mean salary. Mean salary offers requiring prior experience were 0.01% 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	77.6%	339	\$37,512	\$37,500
Previous Internship Required	22.4%	98	\$37,516	\$37,000
Total	100.0%	437	\$37,513	\$37,500

An analysis of position offerings by practice area reveals that the bulk of positions are in Small Animal Rotating (57.2%). The area of Clinical Nutrition offered the highest mean salary of \$42,485, which is 12.4% higher than the national average. Table 4 shows the mean salaries offered by practice area.

Table 4:

Average Salary Offered for Academic Internship Positions by Practice Area				
Practice Area	N of Positions Listed	Percentage of Positions Listed	Mean	Median
Ambulatory	3	0.7%	\$36,000	\$31,500
Anesthesiology	7	1.6%	\$31,595	\$31,000
Cardiology	3	0.7%	\$38,000	\$40,000
Clinical Nutrition	1	0.2%	\$42,485	\$42,485
Dermatology	1	0.2%	\$32,243	\$32,243
Diagnostic Imaging and Radiology	4	0.9%	\$35,371	\$34,000
Emergency Medicine/Critical Care	18	4.1%	\$38,736	\$36,000
Equine	2	0.5%	\$41,122	\$41,122
Exotic/Wildlife/Zoo	20	4.6%	\$40,834	\$40,000
Farm Practice/Production Animal Medicine	5	1.1%	\$37,149	\$36,000
Food Animal	9	2.1%	\$34,880	\$35,000
Large Animal Surgery	4	0.9%	\$39,625	\$39,500
Neurology	8	1.8%	\$35,267	\$35,588
Oncology	12	2.7%	\$38,895	\$38,000
Other	9	2.1%	\$36,273	\$38,500
Rotating-Equine	20	4.6%	\$35,531	\$33,622
Rotating-Large Animal	23	5.3%	\$37,625	\$37,500
Rotating-Small Animal	250	57.2%	\$37,687	\$37,500
Shelter Medicine	9	2.1%	\$39,135	\$36,800
Small Animal Internal Medicine	4	0.9%	\$37,044	\$33,338
Small Animal Surgery	23	5.3%	\$35,804	\$36,000
Sports Medicine and Rehabilitation	2	0.5%	\$41,250	\$41,250
Total	437	100.0%	\$37,513	\$37,500

An analysis of position offerings by position classification reveals that the bulk of positions are classified as “Other” (46.2%). The classification of “Other” was used when the positions weren’t able to be organized into the other categories. Positions classified as Post-Docs offered the highest mean salary of \$41,378, which is 9.8% higher than the national average. Table 6 shows the mean salaries offered by position classification.

Table 6

Average Salary Offered for Academic Residency Positions by Position Classification				
Previous Experience Requirements	Percentage of Positions Listed	N of Positions Listed	Mean Salary	Median Salary
Faculty	70	16.0%	\$36,990	\$32,500
Graduate Student	44	10.1%	\$33,825	\$34,175
Other	186	42.6%	\$37,279	\$37,500
Post-Doc	45	10.3%	\$41,378	\$40,000

Staff	92	21.1%	\$38,257	\$38,000
Total	437	100%	\$37,513	\$37,500

Limitations

The salary data acquired from the VIRMP only represents a portion of available internship positions offered at academic institutions within the United States. 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

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References

Bain, Bridgette, et al. American Veterinary Medical Association, Schaumburg, IL, 2023, pp. 1–55, AVMA Report on the Economic State of the Veterinary Profession.

Polisetti, Sraavya and Lisa Greenhill. "2023 Academic Internship Salaries Offered through the VIRMP." Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges. February 2023. Web.

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