Veterinary Assistants are entry-level healthcare professionals that work in many different veterinary settings. Most Veterinary Assistants work closely with Veterinarians and Veterinary Technicians to provide medical care for sick or injured animals. Some Veterinary Assistants develop careers in other areas of animal care such as pet sitting, behavioral training, grooming, and animal therapy.

If you love working with animals and believe they all deserve compassionate medical care, this first step towards a new career in the veterinary field with Northeastern Illinois University’s Veterinary Assistant Program provides students:

- Dedicated, knowledgeable, and experienced instructors
- Hands-on labs to prepare students for working with animals
- Curriculum in alignment with NAVTA Essential Skills for Veterinary Assistants
- Career prep and guidance for both medical and non-medical professions working with animals
- Externship placement in a small animal veterinary facility

Northeastern Illinois University is proud to announce Program Approval has been granted by The National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America (NAVTA), based on the MK Education curriculum. Students who successfully complete programs at NAVTA Approved campuses will be eligible to take the Approved Vet Assistant (AVA) Exam to earn the AVA credential.
**SALARY:**
Median annual wages, $26,140

Depends on location and experience. Detailed information may be found at: https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/veterinary-assistants-and-laboratory-animal-caretakers.htm

**Entry Level Veterinary Assistant**
$12.57 per hour

**Dog Walker / Pet Sitter**
$12 - $16 per hour

**Animal Trainer**
$11.13 per hour

Veterinary Assistant job outlook expected to grow by 19% through 2026.

**PREREQUISITES:**

- At least 18 years of age (prior to the start of externships)
- High school diploma or a G.E.D. equivalent
- Have suitable vision and hearing (normal or corrected)
- Have suitable psychomotor skills, hand-eye coordination, and fine motor ability
- Be able to stand for an extended period of time
- Proficiency in English (reading, writing and speaking skills)
- Proficiency in 9th-grade level algebra and arithmetic
- Basic computer skills
- Daily access to reliable internet and laptop (preferred) or tablet
- Able to lift 20-50 pounds unassisted; Greater than 50 pounds assisted
- Additional fees (up to $300) may be incurred by students, depending on potential externship site requirements:
  - Criminal background check and drug screening
  - Current immunizations required for externships
  - Personal health care and professional liability insurance

**AREAS OF STUDY INCLUDE**

- Office Practices & Medical Records
- Medical Terminology
- Animal Behavior & Handling
- Pharmacology
- Pet Loss & Grief
- Basic Animal Care Assisting
- Dental Assisting
- Surgical Assisting
- Diagnostic Imaging
- Critical Care Assisting & Triage
- Exotic & Large Animal Husbandry

**The NAVTA approved Veterinary Assistant Program prepares students to sit for the following certification exam:**

- Approved Veterinary Assistant (AVA) offered by the National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America (NAVTA) www.navta.net