

JOB SHADOWING/EXTERNSHIPS

What is a job shadow? A job shadow is an opportunity which allows students with an interest in veterinary medicine to observe firsthand veterinary daily tasks, responsibilities, and work environment. The job shadow is a short term unpaid learning experience which gives students the opportunity to:

- explore their career interest outside the classroom setting
- evaluate the different types of veterinary careers
- ask Thumb Veterinary Services (TVS) employees questions related to their position, experience, and education
- celebrate the human-animal bond with the TVS team
- Small animal shadows may include: observing surgical procedures, inpatient nursing procedures, laboratory testing, and other procedures that may be scheduled that day. Students under 18 are not allowed to be present while radiographs are being taken.
- Large animal shadows may include observing surgical procedures, rectal palpation for pregnancy, nutrition and general health consultation, sick cow diagnosis and treatment, small ruminant work, and other procedures that may be scheduled that day.
- Job shadowing is primarily observation, but as time allows and where safety permits, students may be allowed to have some hands-on experiences.

How may I be considered to job shadow/extern?

- We are a large, mixed animal veterinary clinic. We want to give students with an interest in veterinary medicine the opportunity to experience the job, but obviously our first priority is caring for our clients and patients. We get **MANY** requests for job shadows/externships, so we give preference to students who are already in vet school or technician school. Next, we give preference to students in college who are interested in applying to vet school or technician school, and finally we give preference to high school students that are 16 and older. Small animal job shadows are a bit easier to coordinate; our large animal division only has 1-2 days a week available for scheduling job shadows.
- All potential Job Shadow/Extern candidates must submit the Application as well as the Waiver and Release of Liability/Confidentiality Agreement. Both forms are available on our website. Please include copies of the requested documents as well! If the student is under 18 the application must also be signed by a parent or guardian.
- If accepted, you will be contacted by TVS to confirm acceptance. Please do not assume acceptance until you have been contacted. We do approved job shadows on a first come, first serve basis, and will reach out as time allows. There is no guarantee that you will be approved for a job shadow/externship.

Additional information for externs:

- We do not do externships for students in an online vet/tech program, unless you have a specific veterinarian who is willing to sponsor you.
- Please let us know if you need housing. One of our veterinarians may be able to house you, or we may have low-cost housing options available.

What are the rules for job shadowing?

- Job shadow candidates must be between 16-26 years of age. (Parents, please consider your child's level of maturity and ability to follow instructions before submitting a Job Shadow application).
- Job shadows will be for one day only.
- Job shadows must wear appropriate clothing. Please see the guidelines section below for clothing items considered appropriate.
- Students will be expected to follow all instructions given to them by any employee of TVS. Students who interfere with patient care or do not respond to requests intended to ensure their safety or the safety of our employees/patients will have their Job Shadow experience terminated and their parent/guardian will be called to pick them up.
- Students may not remove any patients from their kennels/on-farm pens without explicit permission from an TVS employee.
- Students are allowed to have their cell phones with them, but they may not photograph/video our patients, farms, or any medical procedures.
- Students must abide by TVS's confidentiality policy which they have signed as part of the application process.
- Tobacco/vaping products are prohibited at the hospital. The entire complex is a non-smoking facility. This includes any TVS vehicle.

What are the guidelines for job shadows?

General Guidelines

- Students will be given the opportunity to see veterinary medicine in real life. They are encouraged to ask questions and become involved in procedures to the extent they may safely participate. These activities cannot take place while students are texting or talking on their phones, therefore use of cell phones is strongly discouraged except during planned breaks or lunch.
- BE ALERT AT ALL TIMES. Agitated, sick, or sedated animals may act unpredictably and can be dangerous. It is important to be fully focused and aware of your surroundings when around animals to avoid potential injury.
- Show up on time!
- Be respectful during appointments/farm calls. When you are introduced to clients, a short greeting is appropriate. Say "hello" and smile. Although it is important to be friendly, please remember that most veterinarians are on a tight schedule, and talking too much during the appointments can make it harder for the vet to stay on time. So, say a quick greeting when introduced and then watch respectfully.
- If you have questions regarding a procedure or process, please wait until after the client/farm visit to discuss it with the veterinarian.
- Be upfront if you are queasy and don't want to observe a specific task. There is no shame in disliking needles at first or opting not to watch surgery. We would rather have you speak up than watch something that causes you to feel faint.
- Have a positive attitude, stay engaged, stay near the veterinarian at all times, ask questions and act in a professional manner. Have fun.

Small Animal Guidelines

- If you own a pair of scrubs, wear them. If not, don't worry, just dress in a neat and professional manner. Jeans or khakis are fine as long as they are clean and don't have holes or rips. We

recommend a polo shirt or buttoned shirt. A solid-colored T-shirt without words or graphics is also acceptable. No tank tops or crop tops are allowed. Whatever you wear, make sure you don't mind getting pet hair, blood, etc. on it. Job shadows MUST wear closed-toed, non-slip shoes (no flip-flops or sandals).

- Job shadows may bring a sack lunch to the hospital and eat in our break room. Refrigerator and microwave are available in the clinic.
- If you have arranged an equine job shadow, dress appropriately for the weather. Horses may be outside or in unheated buildings. You should also bring tall rubber boots or work boots. Boots must be clean. Also, make sure to pack lunch! Sometimes the vets have time to stop and buy something to eat, but that is not always the case.

Large Animal Guidelines

- Call our office the morning before your scheduled job shadow. We will see which vet is available and let you know what time/where to meet the veterinarian you will be spending the day with.
- Ask for directions if needed and please make sure you are on time – our veterinarians cannot wait for you if you are late!
- Plan to stay the entire day. Some days all the work might be done in the early afternoon, but other days we may not finish until after 5 pm. We cannot accommodate students who can only be with us for part of the day or need to leave early because we don't know what the day will bring.
- Don't forget to pack lunch! Most of our vets eat on the road in their truck. Sometimes the vets have time to stop and buy something to eat, but that is not always the case.
- Job shadows should wear clean jeans or khakis along with boots. Tall rubber boots are best. You should try to bring coveralls as well. Boots and coveralls can be purchased at Tractor Supply, Family Farm and Home, or online at a website such as Pella Vet.
- Dress appropriately for the weather! Layers will be your best friend. Don't forget your hat, gloves, scarf, ski mask, thick socks, and/or hand warmers – whatever will keep you comfortable in the elements.