



Essential Skills for Assistant Training (Effective May 1, 2017)

I. Office and Hospital Procedures

A. Front Desk

1. Greet Clients
2. Demonstrate proper Appointment Scheduling and make appointments
3. Prepare appropriate forms and certificates for signature
4. Admit patient
5. Discharge Patient
6. Perform basic filing and retrieving of medical records
7. Perform basic veterinary medical record keeping procedures
8. Demonstrate elementary computer skills
9. Utilize basic medical terminology and abbreviations
10. Perform basic invoicing, billing, and payment on account procedures

B. Telephone

1. Answer and direct phone call
2. Recognize and respond appropriately to veterinary medical emergencies by notifying the appropriate hospital personnel
3. Request records and information from other veterinary facilities

C. Maintain basic cleanliness and orderliness of a veterinary facility

1. Inventory supplies
2. Restock Shelves
3. Perform basic filing and retrieving of medical records, radiographs, lab reports, etc.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of basic sanitation and disinfection techniques of animal kennels and bedding, examination rooms, hospital facilities, and surgical suites.

II. Communication and Client Relations

A. Develop effective Client communication skills.

B. Professional communication (written and electronic) with clients and colleagues.

C. Understand ethical conduct in relationship to the day to day operations of a vet hospital.

D. Describe the roles and responsibilities of each member of the veterinary health team and the important part that each play in the delivery of excellent care.

E. Professional Conduct

1. Understand the human-animal bond and responding to clients in various stages of grief
2. Demonstrate professional and appropriate appearance and language in the workplace

3. Demonstrate appropriate use of ethical electronic communication in the workplace (cell phone usage, text messaging, social networking, digital photography, etc.)

III. Pharmacy and Pharmacology

A. Legal Issues

1. Recognize legal issues involving all drugs (controlled and non-controlled) in the workplace
2. Recognize general types and groups of drugs and demonstrate proper terminology
3. Differentiate prescription drugs from over-the-counter drugs and describe proper prescription label requirements

B. Filling medications and inventory control

1. Label and package dispensed drugs correctly.
2. Store, safely handle, and dispose of biological and therapeutic agents, pesticides, and hazardous waste.
3. Perform inventory control procedures including restocking supplies and checking expiration dates.

C. Vaccinations

1. Reconstitute vaccines and be familiar with proper protocols.
2. Describe possible routes and methods of drug and vaccine administration that the veterinarian or veterinary technician may choose and demonstrate appropriate small animal restraint for such protocols.

IV. Examination Room Procedures

A. Restrain Patients

1. Small Animals

- a. Place and remove small animals from cages
- b. Place and restrain small animals on tables and floor
- c. Apply dog and cat safety muzzle
- d. Apply Elizabethan collar
- e. Apply restraint pole
- f. Demonstrate standing, sitting, lateral, sternal, and dorsal restraint positions
- g. Recognize when to alter normal restraint for compromised patients in the exam room (i.e. Ringworm, Contagious diseases, Ectoparasite infestation) and describe appropriate action or personnel to notify

2. Restrain Birds, Rabbits, Pocket Pets, Reptiles, and other Exotics (Optional)

3. Large Animals (Optional)

- a. Halter, tie, and lead horses
- b. Restrain cattle & horses
- c. Apply twitch
- d. Operate cattle chute (group)
- e. Restraint of sheep & swine
- f. Load large animals

B. Basic Procedures

1. Determine and record temperature, pulse, respiration, body condition score, and weight of patients.
2. Trim nails (Required: Cats and Dogs. Optional: Birds and Exotics)
3. Express anal sacs using the external method
4. Recognize AKC dog breeds and CFA cat breeds.
5. Be able to properly identify the gender of small animal species, particularly felines.
6. Perform exam room grooming: i.e. trimming nails, external ear canal cleaning, etc.
7. Be familiar with small animal nutritional requirements, therapeutic diets, pet food labeling standards, dry matter basis calculations, and the differences between pet food products
8. Apply ear medication
9. Apply eye medication
10. Take an accurate history and report chief complaint

V. Small Animal Nursing (Large Animal Nursing--Optional)

A. Safety Concerns

1. Demonstrate knowledge of basic normal and abnormal animal behavior
2. Utilize patient & personnel safety measures
3. Identify potential Zoonotic diseases
4. Describe isolation procedures
5. Describe hazardous waste disposal
6. Describe basic sanitation as associated with animal handling and clinical care
 - a. Clean and disinfect cages and kennels (stalls optional)
7. Be familiar with OSHA standards

B. Animal Care

1. Provide routine record-keeping, and observation of hospitalized patients, i.e. stress importance of notations made when cleaning and feeding
2. Demonstrate a basic understanding of:
 - a. small animal anatomy
 - b. common diseases
 - c. common medical conditions
3. Monitor/restrain patients for fluid therapy and record observations
4. Perform hand pilling (dog, cat)
5. Administer oral liquid medication (dog and cat)
6. Demonstrate understanding of a treatment plan
7. Apply and remove bandages to healthy animals - (equine leg and tail wraps - optional)
8. Perform therapeutic bathing, basic grooming, and dipping of small animals
9. Clean external ear canals
10. Prepare food & prescription diets - be aware of any special dietary needs
11. Provide care & maintenance of nursing equipment (i.e., otoscope, ophthalmoscope, thermometer, etc.)
12. Demonstrate an understanding of euthanasia and post mortem care
13. Capillary refill time and normal mucous membrane evaluation

VI. Surgical Preparation and Assisting

- A. Assist in performing surgical preparations
 1. Prepare surgical equipment/supplies
 2. Sterilize instruments & sanitize supplies using appropriate methods
 3. Operate and maintain autoclaves
 4. Identify common instruments
 5. Identify common suture materials, types, and sizes
 6. Assist the veterinarian and/or veterinary technician with preparation of patients using aseptic technique
 7. Assist with positioning of surgical patients
 8. Aid the veterinarian/and or veterinary technician with physical monitoring of recovering surgical patients
 9. Maintain the Surgical Log
- B. Surgical Suite and Equipment Cleanliness
 1. Maintain proper operating room conduct and asepsis
 2. Perform post-surgical clean up
 3. Fold surgical gowns and drapes
 4. Maintain operating room sanitation and care

VII. Laboratory Procedures

- A. Assistance in the laboratory
 1. Collect voided urine samples
 2. Determine physical properties of urine including color and clarity
 3. Assist in the collection of blood samples with restraint and supply preparation
 4. Identify common blood tubes used in veterinary medicine
 5. Collect voided fecal samples for examination
 6. Prepare fecal flotation solutions and set up fecal flotations and direct smears
 7. Understand the role of the veterinary assistant in necropsy procedures
 8. Explain how to handle rabies suspects & samples safely
 9. Handle disposal of deceased animals
 10. Identify external parasites: mites, lice, fleas, and ticks.
 11. Assist in the preparation of various specimen staining techniques
 12. Prepare and spin microhematocrit tubes for evaluation by DVM or Veterinary Technician
- B. Laboratory Record Keeping
 1. Ensure all laboratory results are accurately recorded
 2. Stock laboratory supplies
 3. File laboratory reports
 4. Maintain laboratory log

VIII. Radiology & Ultrasound Imaging

- A. Follow recommended safety measures.
- B. Assist the veterinarian and/or the veterinary technician in the completion of diagnostic radiographs and ultrasound including the restraint, preparation, and positioning of patients.
- C. Maintain quality control
- D. Label, file, and store film and/or digital radiographs
- E. Properly care for radiography equipment
- F. Care and maintenance of film cassettes and screens (optional)
- G. Know safety techniques for handling processing chemicals (optional)
- H. Process diagnostic radiographs using:
 - 1. Manual dipping tank processing OR
 - 2. Automatic Processor OR
 - 3. Digital processing
- I. Maintain X-Ray log