



APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

2025/2026

The ALAVTN will be accepting Pre-Approval applications for all categories during the 2025/2026 cycle. The Pre-Approval application deadline is May 15, 2025 at 12:00 am PST. Acceptance or denial emails for application packet submissions will be sent by June 15, 2025. If approved, the application packet submission deadline is January 1, 2026 at 12:00 am PST. Skills and correlating cases cited in the application packet are to have occurred during 2025. Note that this is a change from previous years. Only well qualified applicants should apply.

All application and exam fees are to be paid online through PayPal via the ALAVTN website. Fees collected are non-refundable, for any reason.

- A pre-approval application fee of \$25.00 is due when the work history form is submitted.
- If your pre-approval application is approved, there will be an additional \$35.00 application packet fee due when you submit your full application by January 1, 2026.
- If you are approved to sit for the exam, there will be an exam fee of \$150.00 due before the exam takes place.

Unless otherwise stated, all application forms must be typed or word-processed

in Times New Roman or Calibri style, 12-point font

Pre-approval application Work Experience form requirements:

- A minimum of three (3) years (4,000 hours) of experience in laboratory animal practice with a minimum of 70% of that time spent in the applicable practice or specific category (Traditional, Non-Traditional, Research Anesthetist or Research Surgeon). All experience must be completed within four (4) years of the application.
- Work experience must be documented and will be verified with information provided on the Work Experience summary form or by contacting listed references.
- Only list experience obtained while working as a **credentialed** veterinary technician during the four years prior to the application submission date. For purposes of Academy reference, a **credentialed veterinary technician** is defined as having passed the VTNE or US state-specific veterinary technician credentialing exam, or an approved foreign exam. Work experience obtained prior to becoming credentialed **will not** be accepted. Provide all employers, even part time or per diem, where cases reflected in your case logs or skills list will be obtained.
- ADA testing accommodation requests should be included in the form of an attached letter.

The ALAVTN reserves the right to ask for verification of any hours claimed on the professional experience and history form. If there are any changes on this form (e.g. name, address, employment status) after application submission, then applicants **MUST** contact the Academy before the applicant receives notification of examination eligibility.

- If any documents indicate a maiden name, then **BOTH** the maiden and married name must be indicated on the information and experience form. Indicate the maiden name in parentheses after your full name. Be sure to fully fill out all sections of the form or it will be rejected. Designate which group of laboratory animal species (Traditional or Non-Traditional) or practice category (Anesthesia or Surgery) that constitutes the majority of your experience (> 70% of your work experience).
- List your employment history for your current **primary job(s) first, going in reverse chronological order**. Include all employers for the last 5 years. Gaps between employment greater than 30 days should be explained and may negatively affect the total number of hours necessary.

Save the work history form as **yourfirstname.lastname.workhistory (for example: Jane.Doe.workhistory.docx)**. The file should be saved as a PDF. There are character limitations to each text box. Do not attempt to change the text box size.

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Application Packet requirements:

Once your pre-application has been approved, you must submit your completed application packet by January 1, 2026 at 12:00 am PST. You may only apply for one category at a time.

Acceptance or denial emails will be sent by April 1, 2026. If you are approved to sit for the exam, you will not be permitted to apply to a different species or practice category for 3 years. If you have obtained a different VTS member credential from a different Academy, you may not apply until 3 years after your other VTS member credential.

Exam Date: We are transitioning to a proctored remote exam format only and the exam date will be held on multiple dates in the month of November.

The ALAVTN's goal is to assure the laboratory/research animal profession, and the public, that an ALAVTN-recognized VTS or VNS (LAM) possesses the knowledge, skills and experience needed to practice at an advanced level of competency and skill within their field of veterinary medicine. Although the Academy requirements are rigorous, they are not designed to be obstacles to prevent candidates from becoming a VTS or VNS and are in line with other already established clinical specialty Academies. Eligibility requirements for the examination are defined in the ALAVTN constitution and bylaws, which are available on our website. Certifying exams administered by the Academy include:

Nursing in one of the following categories:

Traditional Lab Animal Species: (Mammals) Including but not limited to: mice, rats, gerbils, hamsters, guinea pigs, chinchilla, ferrets, rabbits, primates, hedgehogs, naked mole rats, possums, felines, canines, squirrels, prairie dogs, goats, pigs, sheep, bovine, horses, llama, mule, donkeys, alpaca and deer, etc.

Non-traditional Lab Animal Species: (Non-mammals) Avian species including, but not limited to: chickens, turkey, quail, pheasants, pigeons, ravens, crows, doves, owls, finches, etc; Reptile and Amphibian species such as, but not limited to: iguanas, corn snakes, bull frogs, axolotls, tiger salamanders, etc; Fish species, such as but not limited to: dogfish, zebra fish, carp, trout and salmon; Crustacean species, such as but not limited to: ghost shrimp and crawfish.

Practice categories in one of the following:

Research Anesthesia: Advanced level anesthesia provided in the research setting. The exam will focus on mammalian species of small and large animals but may include some non-mammalian

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questions. This is only for applicants that spend at least 70% of their time providing advanced level anesthesia for intense cases. Applicants that provide basic anesthesia monitoring and induction techniques for minimally invasive cases will not qualify or will likely have a very difficult time successfully completing the skills list.

Research Surgeon: This candidate will have spent at least 70% of their time performing surgery as a primary surgeon. The exam will only cover mammalian anatomy, physiology, and surgical techniques. Applicants whose cases do not enter a body cavity will have a difficult time successfully completing the skills list.

Documents should be scanned or saved in an appropriate format (PDF format, named as indicated in the instructions for each form).

Please send the PDF's to Stephen Niño Cital at alavtn@gmail.com

Include only the information requested. Extraneous documents will not be accepted and may result in the application being rejected. This is a professional application, and all efforts should be made to ensure it is an example of high-quality work. Only use the forms provided and follow instructions for the **CURRENT** application year; previous year's application forms and instructions are not valid and will not be accepted.

The following is a checklist for the ALAVTN Application packet:

- Proof of veterinary technician or nurse credential
- Copy of RLatg, CMAR or RMLAT active certificate or **email stating eligibility**
- Waiver and Release
- Log and proof continuing education (CE must be provided by a qualified individual)
- Letters of recommendation
- Case Census
- Case Reports
- Completed skills list for practice category

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Credential Requirements:

Applicants must be a graduate of an AVMA approved Veterinary Technology Program **or** legally credentialed to practice as a veterinary technician/nurse within the United States, province of Canada or other country. Below are the acceptable credentials we will accept from a country outside of the USA. Please contact the ALAVTN for specific information about credentialing if a country is not listed.

United Kingdom (UK): must submit a copy of the RCVS certificate. Candidates must hold a license to practice as an RVN and be in good standings with the RCVS. At this time the RCVS diploma is not required.

Australia: must submit a copy of the Certificate IV in veterinary nursing or a Bachelor of Applied Science in Veterinary Technology. At this time a diploma in veterinary nursing is not required.

Canada: must be credentialed to work as a veterinary technician in your province. This requires that you take and pass the VTNE.

For all of the above, a scanned copy of the **current** license must be included with the pre-application. If the current license does not indicate the original date of credentialing, documentation must accompany the license, which includes the date. If a state does not issue a paper license and has a voluntary credential process, an official letter from the state Veterinary Medical Board or state Veterinary Technicians Association stating the original date of credentialing and that the applicant is in good standing to legally practice as a veterinary technician must be included. Canceled checks and other documents will not be accepted as proof. *(If marriage or divorce has caused a name change, please provide proof of that event; marriage certificate, etc.)*

If you live in a state (CT, NJ, D.C.), commonwealth (e.g. Puerto Rico) or island (e.g. U.S. Virgin Islands) that has non-regulated jurisdictions without voluntary credentialing for veterinary technicians then at a minimum you must be a graduate of an AVMA approved Veterinary Technology program **AND** pass the VTNE. In this case, the pass date of the VTNE will serve as the original date of credentialing. For more information, please see <https://www.aavsb.org/vtne/>.

Applicants must provide a copy of an active certificate for the AALAS designation of RLATg or CMAR certifications. For Canadian applicants, the applicant must provide a copy of an active certificate for the CALAS RMLAT certification. If an applicant does not already have these certifications, they must provide proof in the form of an email from either association of their eligibility to take the exam- you do not need to take the exam, just prove eligibility.

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Continuing Education:

After graduating from an AVMA accredited veterinary technician school or becoming credentialed to practice as a veterinary technician or nurse, you must meet the following training requirements as specified using the continuing education form:

- A minimum of sixty (60) hours of continuing education with a minimum of 70% in the applicable practice category within the last five (5) years, either in person or online.
- Topics must be diverse and clinical medicine based. Topics covering management, operations, or having a majority of CE in a specific topic (i.e. breeding or enrichment) may result in application rejection.
- The name of the speaker with credentials, topic and length of talk is required for organized conference seminars or online platforms. The CE Certificate provided by the organization or speaker must be provided as proof of attendance. Canceled checks or other documents will not be accepted as proof of attendance.
- Lecture or lab providers for the continuing education course **must** be from:

1. A Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (Future applications may require the veterinarian to be a boarded specialist).

or

2. A **credentialed** technician or nurse with any of the already approved NAVTA VTS specialty designations or a credentialed veterinary technician/nurse with the Certified Veterinary Pain Practitioner (CVPP) credential.

Peer-reviewed journal article reading:

The title of an article or journal, the name of the qualified author, and the number of credits granted is required for CE from journal articles. Each article will count as 0.25 CE hours; therefore 4 articles will count as 1 CE hour. We will **not** accept more than 20 CE hours from this type of CE. A scanned copy of the title page of the article must be provided. We must be able to verify the author and their credentials, the title of the article and the full reference from where the article came from. Failure to provide this information will result in the CE hours being rejected.

In evaluating the CE log, the credential committee is looking for diversity in the percentage of CE obtained from in-house, online, and meeting/conference attendance. Diversity in the topics of

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CE should also reflect the species or practice category you are applying for. As an example, if you are applying for the Traditional Species category, 70% or greater should be on topics that include the species covered in that category.

If you are applying for the Anesthesia or Surgery category, your CE should reflect 70% or greater credits in those topics.

Save this form as **yourfirstname.lastname.CE**. The file should be saved as a PDF file.

Case Census: Candidates must submit a case census of at least **50** cases where the application provided at least 50% of care completed from **January 01, 2025 – December 31, 2025** that meet the ALAVTN requirements for the species or practice category the applicant is applying for.

The first 50 cases in the case census are considered your core census logs. The case census should be used to demonstrate your experience in laboratory animal medicine, and where applicable reflect a diversity of species. Cases that entail your mastery of advanced nursing/research skills, advanced anesthesia skills, or surgical expertise (depending on which category one is applying for) are preferred.

The case census entry should provide the species, procedure being performed, and your roll; or diagnosis of a patient and your role in the animal's care. **All cases included in the applicant's census must be completed at one of the facilities where the applicant is employed OR was listed on their work history form.**

Advanced Skills Form

The ALAVTN requires that a licensed veterinarian or a VTS/VNS who has mastered the skill, attest to your ability to perform the task within the last five years. Your testifier **must** sign at the bottom of the form to validate their initials throughout the form. Skills will be rejected if a signature is not present to confirm the initials. **Mastery is defined as being able to perform the task safely, with a high degree of success, and without being coached or prompted. Mastery requires having performed the task in a wide variety of patients and situations.** The applicant must demonstrate mastery of **80%** of the skills in the core section and **50%** in the supplemental section (when required) for whatever species or practice category one is applying for.

These forms will need to be scanned once all signatures have been obtained. The combined skills list should be saved as **one PDF file** consisting of **ALL** pages of the combined skills list (core and supplemental).

This file should be saved as **yourfirstname.lastname.skills**.

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Case Reports Instructions

Select **six** cases from your case census that best demonstrate your expertise in nursing care or a research case management to submit as case reports. For the nursing categories you may include one case report for an anesthetic event. It will only be accepted with an anesthesia monitoring form provided by the ALAVTN or your facilities monitoring form with the same information on the ALAVTN form. The case reports should demonstrate your knowledge, skills and abilities in **advanced** medical or research case management. All drug amounts should be listed as dose (mg or mcg) or dosage (mg/kg or mcg/kg). All values included in the reports should contain the appropriate units (e.g. HR: 56bpm, MAP: 84mmHg, TP: 7.6g/dL, etc.). Case reports are also a place to share what you might have done differently if you had full autonomy and no restrictions. We want to see your critical thinking skills.

The case report should describe, in detail, how the patient was evaluated and managed. It is important that the information in your case report be clearly understood. Present each case in a logical manner, check your spelling and grammar; use generic drug names, and define any abbreviations. It is important to show that you participated in the evaluation and management of the patient and were not just an observer. Consider some of the following ways of demonstrating your knowledge and experience:

- Show how your observations, physical examination and history taking assisted the veterinarian or investigator with the case or research protocol.
- Explain why an observation was important or why you asked a certain question during the case.
- Describe how an observation and response by you helped to avoid a complication.
- Describe the procedures you performed or with which you assisted.
- Explain why the procedure was performed.
- Explain your reasoning for the physiological monitoring used.
- Explain how you helped determine whether the patient's anesthetic plan and pain management strategy was effective if applicable.
- Explain how your observations and monitoring helped the veterinarian modify the patient's or treatment.
- Explain your role in planning the patient's care and variables it may cause the project.

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- Briefly show your understanding of the problem being treated.
- Explain your contingency plans for all anticipated problems.
- Describe an appropriate pain management and enrichment plan.

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Case reports that do not meet these requirements will be rejected. The case reports must be the original work of the applicant.

For the anesthesia or surgical category applicants must include a legible, scanned **copy of the anesthesia record or surgical report** for each of the six case reports. You may use your facility's anesthetic record. If you choose to use your facility's record it must provide the same information contained on the ALAVTN Anesthesia record by adding an addendum for the parameters or information not covered on your facilities anesthesia sheet.

Surgical reports should include approach, techniques, suture patterns, suture or ligature types used, devices used, complications, potential complications and final outcome. The case reports for both the anesthesia and surgical category must also include a postoperative pain management plan if it was a survival procedure. **Please be careful to redact any sensitive data such as: ID numbers, address, phone numbers, etc..**

The case reports should be saved as **yourfirstname.lastname.casereport1-4**. Save these reports as PDF files.

Letters of Recommendation: You must obtain **two letters** of recommendation for the application.

- One letter must be from a **diplomat** of one of the American or European veterinary colleges or a VTS member (any academy).
- The second letter must be from your supervising veterinarian or a human medical doctor.
- If you do not work with a diplomate from one of the American or European veterinary colleges or a VTS, one more letter, for a total of 3, can be submitted from either a medical doctor or another veterinarian. You must also explain in your application your circumstance if this method is used. The letters should include details on training, ethical behavior, and quality of skills.

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- **The letter writer MUST sign ALL letters of recommendations.** If the letter writer chooses, they may submit their letter of recommendation directly to the ALAVTN email with the subject line reading "Credentials Committee LOC- Name of Applicant". If the applicant submits the letters of recommendation, then they should be saved as **yourfirstname.lastname.letter1, yourfirstname.lastname.letter2, etc.** These files shall be saved as PDF files. Letters submitted by the applicant will be rejected if NOT signed by the letter writer.

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