



UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Resolution

114th Annual Meeting ~ November 11-17, 2010

Minneapolis, MN

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 17 APPROVED

SOURCE: USAHA/AAVLD COMMITTEE ON DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY AND VETERINARY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT MATTER: REVIEW OF COMPENSATION FOR RESEARCH AND DIAGNOSTIC VETERINARIANS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Veterinarians are employed in the United States Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Homeland Security, Health and Human Services, Interior, and Veterans Affairs and in the Environmental Protection Agency, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Smithsonian, and the United States Agency for International Development.

Veterinarians with advanced scientific training and expertise, including advanced degrees and board certification credentials, are critically needed for the prevention, control and eradication of animal diseases, as the first line responders for many human health issues and as a workforce for ensuring a safe global food supply. The research and diagnostic testing they conduct ensures animal diseases are rapidly identified and vaccines are developed. In order to attract and retain these scientists, additional compensation is required.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association urges the United States Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Homeland Security, Health and Human Services, Interior, Veterans Affairs, and the Environmental Protection Agency, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Smithsonian, and the United States Agency for International Development to adjust salaries to achieve parity with other health professional salaries in order to appropriately compensate, recruit and retain veterinarians with advanced degrees or board certification, in high priority research fields, diagnostic fields, and disease surveillance, prevention and control.

RESPONSE:

Department of Health & Human Services

The DHHS as a whole, including the NIH, regularly performs salary surveys and benchmarks with outside organizations and other federal agencies in order to remain competitive as we strive to recruit and retain veterinarians with advanced degrees and/or board certifications. Employing and retaining high quality scientists, clinicians, and veterinarians is a top priority as it allows us to further the mission of our agency.

US Environmental Protection Agency

EPA employs two full-time and one advisory board consultant veterinarian in research related capacities. We have reviewed their compensation status and have ensured that they are being compensated fully in accordance with applicable Federal pay schedules and position classification criteria. In addition, EPA has experienced no turnover issues in conjunction with this occupational area that would justify the payment of special salary rates or special incentives.

NASA

As with other Federal Agencies, compensation for veterinarians employed at NASA is based on guidelines set by the Office of Personnel Management and take into account the qualifications and experience of the individual, and the level and requirements of the position.

USDA Secretary

Federal veterinarians play a critical role in protecting animal health, safeguarding the Nation's food supply, and responding to animal disease emergencies, among other things. Like you, we at the Department of Agriculture value their contribution to U.S. agriculture and are committed to finding new ways to recruit and retain veterinarians to public service.

You may be interested to know that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM)—the office responsible for establishing compensation rates for Federal employees—is facilitating a veterinary medical officer (VMO) Talent Management Advisory Council. Among other things, the Council is tasked with making recommendations to Federal Departments for improving the compensation of Federal VMOs. Accordingly, I am forwarding a copy of your letter to OPM officials for review.