

UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2008 RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 20 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY AND
VETERINARY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT MATTER: REVIEW OF COMPENSATION FOR RESEARCH AND
DIAGNOSTIC VETERINARIANS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Veterinarians with advanced scientific training, including advanced degrees and board certification credentials, are critically needed for the prevention 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 developed. In order to attract and retain these scientists additional compensation is required.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) recommends that in order to appropriately compensate and retain veterinary scientists with advanced degrees or board certification in high priority research and diagnostic fields that state and federal agencies review veterinarian salaries for parity with other health professional salaries, especially those established by Title 42 for the National Institute of Health (NIH), to retain scientific staff.

In addition, Title 42 pay adjustments should be available for use by all state and federal agencies employing these critical veterinary scientists.

RESPONSE:

USDA, APHIS, Veterinary Services

While Veterinary Services (VS) does not have the authority to adjust the salaries of veterinarians in the research and diagnostics fields, we recognize the United States Animal Health Association's (USAHA) concerns. We also understand that in programs such as the One Health Initiative, the expertise of veterinarians will become even more valuable as animal health and human health become increasingly linked. VS supports appropriate compensation and streamlined hiring processes for veterinarians. VS and the Office of Personnel Management have begun to discuss ways to make Federal service more attractive to veterinarians, and we will keep USAHA informed as talks progress.

Homeland Security

DHS supports the intent of Resolution 20: Review of Compensation for Research and Diagnostic Veterinarians, as written but does not take a position on whether Title 42 for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) should be implemented and used within the Department to retain scientific staff at this time. Retaining qualified and well trained veterinarians is essential to ensuring the safety the Nation's food and agriculture critical infrastructure. To make the Federal government an employer of choice for veterinarians, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) should implement a uniform process for the recruitment, hiring, and retention of veterinarians throughout the Federal government. OPM is examining the use of Title 42 across the Federal government and DHS will pursue options within the final OPM determination once it is released.

We continually work to ensure the Nation has access to safe and contained laboratory space for the early detection of and countermeasures to biological threats