

Veterinary Technical Institute

Veterinary Receptionist Training Program Curriculum

The in-clinic Staff Training Program for Receptionists is broken down into the following units and sub-sections:

I. Unit 1 - Veterinary Front Office I: Veterinary Reception: This unit provides instruction in the duties and responsibilities of a veterinary receptionist. The following sections will be covered:

Section 1 - The Receptionist: This section covers the information form and practice brochure, the reception room, occupational stress and burnout, and professional appearance. At the end of the section the student should be able to:

- Supervise the completion of the client/patient information form.
- Understand the importance of the practice information brochure.
- Be familiar with the reception room and its equipment.
- Know the general procedures of opening and closing a clinic and apply security measures.
- Handle job stress and burnout and present a professional image, both in attire and attitude.

Section 2 - Telephone Procedures: This section covers answering the telephone, telephone protocol, taking messages, and handling emergency calls. At the end of the section the student should be able to:

- Receive and place telephone calls.
- Give an appropriate greeting to clients over the telephone.
- Understand when putting the caller on hold is acceptable and not acceptable.
- Name the eight pieces of information necessary for a call back message and take messages accurately.
- Apply caller screening techniques and handle emergency calls.

Section 3 - Appointments: This section covers the appointment schedule, acquiring client and patient information, coordinating delays / unexpected appointments, and goals of appointment scheduling. At the end of the section the student should be able to:

- Recognize and use common appointment scheduling abbreviations, symbols, etc.
- Choose an appropriate appointment time for each request (considering veterinarian and client time availability).
- Schedule veterinarian's personal appointments and meetings.
- Adjust an appointment schedule to accommodate an emergency, delays, or an unexpected appointment.
- Reserve surgical facilities and time necessary for scheduled surgeries and treatments.
- Respond appropriately to a client's questioning a delay in the appointment.
- Take action when an emergency appointment arrives.

Section 4 - Patient Records and Filing: This section covers the medical record, the physical examination, filing rules, and record control. At the end of the section the student should be able to:

- Use abbreviations, symbols, and terms in medical records with knowledge of their use and definition.
- Understand and organize the contents of a history and physical exam report.
- Properly make correction entries in chart notes.
- Abstract information from a patient medical record.
- File patient records using standardized alphabetizing rules and use color-coding in the filing system.
- Conduct a search for a lost medical record.

Section 5 - Front Office Management: This section covers office productivity, the office procedures manual, composing letters, posting payments and adjustments, and balancing the day sheets. At the end of the section the student should be able to:

- Compose a letter after abstracting information from a medical record.
- Describe uses of computers in the veterinary office.
- Establish a routine for maintaining an inventory of office supplies, veterinary supplies, medications, and equipment.
- Check invoices and purchase orders to purchased supplies.
- Set up and supervise a file for the maintenance of office machines and equipment.
- Promote good housekeeping practices.
- Handle payments and balance daily cash receipts.
- Describe methods of increasing office productivity and implement marketing techniques to increase cash flow.
- Compose reference pages for an office procedures manual.

Section 6 – Office Machine Skills: This section provides instruction in the use of typewriters, calculators, and computers, as needed in a veterinary clinic. The following areas will be covered:

- Typing skills and keyboard functions.
- Ten key skills and organize column tape running (recording).

Section 7 – Computer Skills: This section instructs in how to use general veterinary management software to perform the following functions:

- Enter client and patient information.
- Conduct computer record searches.
- Verify vaccination records in the computer.
- Enter services rendered and inventory dispensed / used.
- Check the computer inventory to the physical inventory, and adjust and update this system as needed.
- Handle payments: enter payments received, sales tax, verify the client's balance, enter credits.
- Print the daily totals from the computer.
- Total the daily receipts and match them to the computer generated balance sheets.
- Determine errors and omissions made in invoicing or accounts receivables / payables to balance day end totals.

II. Unit 2: Veterinary Front Office II: Animal Health Care Overview: This unit provides instruction in general animal health care. This information is important for understanding client concerns, clinic procedures, and case discussions. The following sections will be covered:

Section 8 - Anatomy and Physiology: This section provides an overview of canine and feline anatomy, physiology, and pathogenesis of diseases. At the end of the section the student should be able to:

- Identify the common bones of the skeletal system.
- Comprehend the general functions of the major organ systems: integumentary, respiratory, cardiovascular, hepato-digestive, reproductive, and immune systems.
- Understand the basics of breeding and gestation.

Section 9 - Nutrition: This section provides instruction in nutritional principles, dietary analysis and evaluation, and the nutritional requirements for the different life stages, obesity, and some specific diseases. The student should be able to:

- Read and understand commercial pet food labels.
- Determine and evaluate the nutritional elements of a diet.
- Understand the different non-energy and energy producing nutrients.
- The nutritional requirements for each life stage, obese animals, and animals with specific disease conditions.

Section 10 - Infectious, Parasitic, and Systemic Diseases: This section covers vaccination and vaccine protocol, common internal and external parasites, zoonoses, and common systemic diseases. At the end of the section the student should be able to:

- Understand the process of vaccination, immunity, and transmission.
- Describe canine and feline vaccine protocols.
- Understand the rabies virus and its human health concerns.
- Understand zoonoses and implement safety measures.
- Be familiar with the major internal and external parasites and describe flea control and heartworm prevention.
- Comprehend the major disorders of the following systems: eyes, ears, skin, gastrointestinal, cardiovascular, respiratory, urogenital, and endocrine systems.

Section 11 - Laboratory and Pharmacology: This section discusses general laboratory techniques performed in a veterinary lab and basic pharmacy principles. At the end of the section the student should be able to:

- Identify the common laboratory procedures performed in a veterinary clinic.
- Discuss the methods used to diagnose various internal and external parasites.
- Use pharmacy terminology and abbreviations.
- Read, fill, label, and package dispensed drugs correctly.
- Understand basic pharmacy principles.
- Identify the use of commonly used pharmacy drugs.

Section 12 - Common Surgical Procedures: This section provides information on routine surgical procedures, asepsis, preanesthetic considerations, and postsurgical recovery. At the end of the section the student should be able to:

- Be familiar with routine elective surgeries: how they are prepared for, performed, and possible complications.
- Understand the importance of aseptic technique during surgery.
- Describe to owners preanesthetic considerations.
- Describe to owners postsurgical recovery procedures, complications, and treatments.

Staff Training Program: Veterinary Receptionist—Program Materials

The program materials include:

- The *Veterinary Receptionist Training Program* step-by-step guide
- The *Veterinary Front Office I: Veterinary Reception* textbook, VTI, 2006
- The *Veterinary Front Office II: Animal Health Care Overview* textbook, VTI, 2006
- The *Veterinary Receptionist Training Program* Evaluation Exams and Answer Discussions (1-15)