

# Veterinarian Shortage Situation Nomination Form

To be completed by the chief State or Insular Area Animal Health Official or his/her designee

**Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP)**

**Nomination of Veterinarian Shortage Situations for the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP) Authorized Under the National Veterinary Medical Service Act (NVMSA)**

**Note: Please submit one separate nomination form for each position. See solicitation for number of nominations permitted for your state or insular area.**

**Location of Veterinary Shortage Area for this Nomination**

Note: If this nomination is for a public practice position, please provide the location of the home office or the center of service area.

Location of Veterinary Shortage: State of New Mexico  
(e.g., County, State/Insular Area)

Center of Service Area or Location of Position: Navajo Nation: In portions of San Juan, McKinley, Sandoval, Rio Arriba, Sandoval, Cibola, Bernalillo, and Socorro Counties of the Navajo Tribal Reservation. Navajo Nation, Hwy 264 & BIA 12, (P.O. Box 4889), Window Rock, AZ 86515  
(e.g., Address or Cross Street, Town/City, and Zip Code)

**Type of Veterinary Practice Area/Discipline/Specialty**

Type I Shortage: Private Practice  
 Food Animal Medicine (at least 80 percent time)  
 Please select **one or more** specialties requested for this position:

- Beef Cattle
- Dairy Cattle
- Swine
- Poultry
- Small Ruminant
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Type II Shortage: Private Practice – Rural Area  
 Food Animal Medicine (at least 30 percent time)  
 Please select **one or more** specialties requested for this position:

- Beef Cattle
- Dairy Cattle
- Swine
- Poultry
- Small Ruminant
- Other : \_\_\_\_\_

Type III Shortage: Public Practice (at least 49 percent time\*)  
 Employer: Navajo Nation Position Title: Tribal Veterinarian(s)  
 Please select **one or more** specialty/disciplinary areas.

- Food Safety
- Public Health
- Epidemiology
- Other: Food Animal- Preventative health, Rural area Food Animal Practice: Beef Cattle, Swine, Small Ruminant.

**Please describe the objectives of a veterinarian meeting this shortage situation as well as being located in the community, area, state/insular area, or position requested above (limit your response to 200 words or less).**

The Navajo Nation covers a total of 27,000 square miles, has 345,800 head of livestock and extends into the state of New Mexico. The Navajo Nation Veterinary Program was established to provide low cost, quality veterinary services to the Navajo People. In 1982, the Window Rock Clinic was established, subsequently, clinics were opened in Tuba City (now closed), Crownpoint (closed in 1995), Shiprock (1989) and Chinle (1993). The objectives for a veterinarian in this shortage area would be to:

- Provide primary veterinary health services and extension education in remote communities
- Support public health activities including surveillance and community outreach
- Investigate and respond to foreign animal diseases and natural and man-made animal emergencies
- Support economic development of livestock resources on the Navajo Nation
- Protect the Navajo Nation from emerging diseases by enhancing regulation of livestock movement across borders in cooperation with the State, Federal and Navajo Nation agency veterinarians
- Investigate and diagnose possible disease outbreaks on the Navajo Nation
- Provide education and training on the proper methods and techniques for efficient livestock production and animal health
- Address issues of animal overpopulation, abuse and neglect issues, livestock overgrazing, and reduce animal bites

**Please describe the activities of a veterinarian meeting this shortage situation and being located in the community, area, state/insular area, or position requested above (limit your response to 200 words or less).**

A veterinarian in this shortage situation would conduct public health disease surveillance, educate livestock producers, diagnose and treat livestock diseases, participate in preventive medicine efforts—including livestock and companion animal vaccination, participate in emergency preparedness and response, investigate suspected foreign animal disease, support economic development of the Navajo Nation livestock industry through improving herd management practices and investigate plant poisonings. Other duties include fulfilling the roles equivalent to State and Federal Veterinarians including regulatory oversight, governmental consultation and disease outbreak investigation. In addition, some local public health research relevant to the Navajo Nation and veterinary medicine is occasionally undertaken by the tribal veterinarians.

**Please describe any past efforts to recruit and retain a veterinarian in the shortage situation identified above (limit your response to 100 words or less).**

Efforts have been made to increase tribal veterinarian salaries and benefits, yet as a governmental position there is a difficulty trying to maintain a competitive package, and tribal salaries are below state and federal veterinary starting salaries. Tribal veterinarian positions have been prone to high levels of turnover due to low pay, difficulty obtaining housing and the remote location of the positions. Two positions have gone unfilled for over seven years despite advertisement and recruitment efforts. Qualifying Navajo Government Tribal Veterinarians for the VMLRP will help in recruiting and retaining Tribal Veterinarians.

**Please describe the risk of this veterinarian position not being secured or retained. Include the risk(s) to the production of a safe and wholesome food supply and to animal, human, and environmental health not only in the community but in the region, state/insular area, nation, and/or international community (limit your response to 250 words or less).**

At full staffing, the Navajo Nation has four tribal veterinarians. For the last four years, there have been only two tribal veterinarians responsible for an area slightly larger than the state of West Virginia and a human population of ~300,000 (2010 census), and a livestock census of over 345,800 head of cattle, sheep, goats and horses. The area is already economically depressed and livestock production is a large part of the local economy. As a sovereign Nation, tribal veterinarians are often asked to act in the role of "State" and "Federal" veterinarians in addition to providing clinical medicine. The 50% staffing has detrimental effects on the health & moral of the currently employed veterinarians, and puts both the livestock economy at risk (due to reduced service delivery, potential disasters and foreign animal diseases), public health at risk (due to less surveillance and delayed treatment), and stretches already limited tribal resources. Furthermore, it puts the four neighboring states at risk by not having full staffing of local government and Foreign Animal Disease trained veterinarians able to respond in a rapid and direct manner during times of emergency.

Please indicate whether you consider this situation/position a candidate for a "service in emergency" agreement (limit your response to 100 words or less). Please see solicitations for additional information regarding the obligation of participants who enter into the "Service in Emergency" agreement.

Authorized State or Insular Area Animal Health Official or designee:

Name: Dave E. Fly, DVM

Title: State Veterinarian

Organization: New Mexico Livestock Board

Email: dave.fly@state.nm.us

Telephone Number: (505) 841-6161  
(Area code required)

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