

# 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.**

**Veterinary Shortage ID Code: AK112**

### 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: Kenai Peninsula  
(e.g., County, State/Insular Area)

Center of Service Area or  
Location of Position: \_\_\_\_\_  
(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 : Elk, Yak, captive wildlife operation

- Type III Shortage: Public Practice (at least 49 percent time\*)  
Employer: \_\_\_\_\_ Position Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Please select **one or more** specialty/disciplinary areas.
- Food Safety
  - Public Health
  - Epidemiology
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**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 objectives of this position will be to develop herd health management to an expanding number of beef cattle and small ruminant operations on the Kenai Peninsula (area ranging from Portage, 40 miles south of Anchorage to Homer, some 250 miles south). The issue with most areas of Alaska is the large distances between livestock operations; average farm size is 1,300 acres. The Kenai Peninsula has over 30 cattle, 9 hog and 53 small ruminant farms (NASS). The poultry operations are mostly small backyard flocks ranging in size from 10 to the largest of 500 birds. Due to the distribution of the farms this position would need to support a practice with small animal work to sustain an economically successful business.

There have been past efforts by the cattle operators to develop a local slaughter facility. The state is encouraging the producers to consider a mobile slaughter plant to serve the Kenai Peninsula as this would seem to fit the unique needs of this area. If this endeavor is successful there is the possibility that this veterinary position could perform contract work for FSIS to cover the seasonal operation of the plant, thus providing support for the producers and saving USDA FSIS the expense of staffing this position.

**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).**

Activities will be directed to support the larger established beef and hog operations and the one wildlife conservation center (housing a herd of elk, reindeer, bison) on the Kenai Peninsula. Secondary activities will be to support the numerous backyard or homestead farming operations. Since several cattle operations use horses to manage their herds this practitioner would also need to be able to provide equine services.

This position would also support emergency response to morbidity/mortality investigations and emergency response to any hazards that would impact animal health. (This area has experienced natural disasters in the past: earthquake, forest fire, and tsunami).

Most of these premises produce meat and poultry products for small communities (10 to 20 households) off the main thoroughfares and 50 to 70 miles from the nearest town. Future work may be to support operation of a seasonal mobile slaughter plant by contract with USDA-FSIS as support to this area would constitute a major financial and personnel issue to assign a USDA inspector.

**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).**

There are only 2 veterinary clinics serving this area. Both practices are actively recruiting for an associate that they hope to hire in the next two years. One practitioner is waiting for a local resident to finish their veterinary degree as they have made arrangements to expand the practice area and services to the local communities of Kenai and Soldotna.

**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).**

The primary risk to not retaining this position involves the lack of support to local communities to produce safe and sustainable local food production.

Due to climatic changes the state has noted an increase in invasive species (insect vectors, parasites) as well as an increase in certain animal and food borne diseases. Without support from veterinary practitioners in the field the state and agricultural industry will be ill prepared to identify and diagnose morbidity and mortality events that can have impact on animal and public health. In addition, without this position the state may not be able to effectively manage emergency response to a hazard that impacts domestic animals and animal health.

**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.**

NIFA is not requesting information in support of this type of agreements at this time.

Authorized State or Insular Area Animal Health Official or designee:

Name: Robert F Gerlach, VMD

Title: State Veterinarian

Organization: Dept of Environmental Conservation

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Telephone Number: (907) 375-8214  
(Area code required)

Public reporting for OMB control number 0524-0046 is estimated to average two hours, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information, unless it displays a current valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to NIFA, OEP, 800 9<sup>th</sup> St. SW, Washington, DC 20024, Attention Policy Section. Do not return the completed form to this address.

OMB Information Collection Approval No.: 0524-0046  
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