

USDA-APHIS Animal Care is tasked with managing pet and service animal issues in disasters. When owners do not evacuate, they keep themselves and their animals in danger's path, pull responders into harm's way, and drain scarce response resources. Ours is very much an integrated public health and animal health mission.

We are interested in starting an internship program for pre-veterinary and veterinary students, with the first starting 1 June 2009. We anticipate the internships to be modestly paid, and flexible in terms of duration, time of year, and location. We prefer to have interns located at one of our National or Regional Headquarters (Riverdale MD, Raleigh NC, or Fort Collins CO) in order to work shoulder-to-shoulder with an Emergency Programs Manager, as well as to begin the important task of building a professional network.

Please email us if you are interested in participating. Thank you.

Jeanie Lin, DVM, MPH, MLA jeanie.lin@aphis.usda.gov
Animal Care National Emergency Programs Manager

FAQs

Q: What are the activities/projects in which students can participate?

A: Interns will be assigned some professional development tasks. They will also work shoulder-to-shoulder with our staff on activities such as:

- build and collect content for a CD to be distributed at large meetings
- review and compile best practices and technical bulletins on emergency pet sheltering, transport, decontamination, search & rescue
- attend ongoing meetings with mission partners
- develop and test training curriculum and individual modules to train field staff who form the volunteer cadre for planning and response
- develop career development outreach methods and materials
- develop a national animal emergency management resource guide and contacts list
- develop a retrospective statistical analysis of evacuated pets

- identify available equipment caches for training and response
- evaluate animal welfare considerations in foreign animal disease response

Q: How do I apply?

A: Although there is official paperwork (potentially including a resume) further in the process, at this time, we would like students to start the process by sending us a brief list of their background, skills, goals for the internship, and availability. If a school has special requirements, we encourage students to work closely with their school officials.

Q: Is this a clinical experience in Emergency Care?

A: No, this is an internship in Emergency Management, which is a different discipline than Emergency Clinical Care or Emergency Medicine. While we understand that a pet hit by a car is an emergency, this type of situation lies outside our scope of work. Emergency Management is sometimes called Disaster Management, and involves planning, response, and recovery to mitigate effects from disasters. Our program works within the structure of the National Response Framework, which also covers disaster types such as wildland fires, weather disasters, large scale chemical spills, and intentional large-scale attacks.

Q: How long are the internships? Is there an application deadline?

A: We realize that schools have different terms schedules and clinical rotations schedules. At this time, we are able to be flexible on applications deadlines and internship dates, dependent on student availability throughout the year. The internships will vary in length depending on the availability of the students and the activities and projects in which they will be involved.

Q: Is there funding?

A: The internships will be paid at a Federal GS-3 step 1 level, roughly \$10.31 hourly. Note that this is a wage, which is taxable. There may be locality adjustments depending on duty station. For more information, visit http://www.opm.gov/oca/09tables/html/g_s_h.asp

The program will not fund student travel to and from the duty station, housing, or other non-work expenses.

Q: Who is eligible?

A: Currently enrolled DVM students, students of Public Health, and similar professional degree college students. If

a student does not meet these requirements, we still encourage them to contact us to explore options. Projects will be adjusted based on student skill level. This is not a traditional post-DVM clinical internship.

Q: What is your website?

A: We are working on major website updates. Until that time, please refer to these FAQs and the program factsheet. Please use Dr. Jeanie Lin as the point of contact: jeanie.lin@aphis.usda.gov

For information on APHIS under USDA, please visit <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/>

For information on USDA internships (under which our program falls) please visit http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/tut/p/_s.7_0_A/7_0_10B?navid=INTERN_SCHOLAR

For information on Emergency Management at APHIS please visit

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/emergency_response/

APHIS' Role in Household Pet Evacuation and Shelter

Planning for an emergency is one of the most important actions a family, organization, or government can take. At the Federal level, the National Response Framework (NRF) is the document that describes the Federal Government's coordination with State, local, and Tribal governments and the private sector during a crisis. The framework identifies 15 different Emergency Support Functions (ESF), or areas of potential need that could arise during a national emergency. Federal resources and actions are grouped under the various ESFs to meet the needs of each in the event of an emergency.

Disaster Response for Household Pets

Traditionally, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's (APHIS) emergency preparedness responsibilities have involved primarily agricultural issues in ESF 11, "Agriculture and Natural Resources." The most recent framework, however, added the safety and well-being of household pets as a primary function of ESF 11. Consequently, APHIS has a new role—planning and coordinating disaster response efforts for household pets. APHIS' Animal Care (AC) program is largely responsible for carrying out this role.

APHIS' Animal Care Program

The AC program is a staff of animal experts responsible for enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) and the Horse Protection Act (HPA). In enforcing the AWA, AC issues licenses and registrations to certain animal businesses and researchers and regularly conducts inspections to ensure that animals are provided with care that meets AWA regulations. To enforce the HPA, AC inspects exhibited horses for signs of soring. Soring is the practice of inflicting pain on a horse's limbs to cause the animal to walk using a higher step. In addition to inspections, AC conducts a variety of educational activities to encourage compliance with both the AWA and the HPA.

AC professionals have experience handling a diverse range of animals in many different situations. In fiscal year 2007, AC performed 16,487 inspections at more than 9,000 businesses with animals ranging

from guinea pigs and rabbits, to dogs and tigers. The expertise of AC's employees is proving particularly useful in meeting APHIS' obligations under ESF 11.

Animal Care and ESF 11

AC's responsibilities concerning household pets under ESF 11 are twofold. Prior to an emergency, AC staff will work with individual States to help them incorporate pet issues into their State emergency plans. During an emergency, AC will provide technical advice and expedite States' requests for assistance from the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The AC staff is already working on these new responsibilities. In June 2008, AC organized an exercise to evaluate pet transport during emergencies, and throughout the year has assisted in emergency planning efforts in States such as Louisiana and Delaware. During the recent Iowa floods, AC experts evaluated shelter suitability and registration protocols for pets and their owners. AC is encouraging additional States to use AC as a resource in these areas.

Additional Information

Beginning in the fall 2008, AC will distribute materials aimed at helping States, the public, Federal partners, and other stakeholders to better understand the program's role in emergency management. AC will also continue working diligently to reach out to its partners in emergency planning to promote continued communication about its role and responsibilities under ESF 11.

To learn more about AC's role before or during emergency events, please call Jeanie Lin, AC National Emergency Programs Manager, at (301) 734-0906. For information about the AC program, the AWA, and the HPA, please visit the program's Web site at www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_welfare.

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