

STATE OF WISCONSIN  
CLASSIFICATION SPECIFICATION

VETERINARIAN SPECIALIST

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose and Use of this Classification Specification

This classification specification is the basic authority under ER 2.04, Wisconsin Administrative Code, for making classification decisions relative to present and future positions located primarily within the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection's Division of Animal Health or the WI Veterinary Diagnostic Lab, functioning as diagnostic specialists or epidemiologists. This classification specification will not specifically identify every eventuality or combination of duties and responsibilities of positions that currently exist, or those that result from changing program emphasis in the future. Rather, it is designed to serve as the framework for classification decision-making in this occupational area.

Classification decisions must be based on the "best fit" of the duties within the existing classification structure. The "best fit" is determined by the majority (i.e., more than 50%) of the work assigned to and performed by the position when compared to the class concepts and definition of this specification or through other methods of position analysis. Position analysis defines the nature and character of the work through the use of any or all of the following: definition statements; listing of areas of specialization; representative examples of work performed; allocation patterns of representative positions; job evaluation guide charts, standards, or factors; statements of inclusion and exclusion; license or certification requirements; and other such information necessary to facilitate the assignment of positions to the appropriate classification.

B. Inclusions

This classification encompasses professional veterinary specialist positions found primarily in the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection's Division of Animal Health or WI Veterinary Diagnostic Lab, functioning as highly skilled and credentialed veterinary specialists with responsibilities for providing veterinary diagnostic services to many divisions of the department, as well as to outside entities, in one or more of the following recognized veterinary specialties/disciplines: bacteriology and mycology; pathology; epidemiology; immunology; toxicology; or virology.

Work involves: the performance of diagnostic investigations and examinations in one or more veterinary specialty areas with one or more disease emphases; developing and implementing new diagnostic procedures and modifying existing ones; implementing and evaluating quality assurance procedures; teaching and training laboratory staff and others in a variety of scientific disciplines; and participating in scientific symposia and conferences. Work is performed under general direction.

### C. Exclusions

Excluded by this classification series are positions responsible for spending a majority (i.e., 50% or more) of their work time in the performance of the following duties and functions:

1. Managing/supervising positions performing veterinary or technical field inspections fostering and enforcing laws, regulations, and standards pertaining to the food, meat, produce, and dairy industries.
2. Positions classified as Chemists, Microbiologists, or field Veterinarians.
3. Supervisory and managerial duties as statutorily defined.
4. All other positions which are more appropriately identified by other series.

### D. Entrance Into This Classification Series

Employees enter this classification series through competitive examination and must be credentialed, or eligible to be credentialed, as enumerated in Section III, below.

## II. DEFINITIONS

### **VETERINARIAN SPECIALIST - SENIOR**

This is responsible and complex professional veterinarian specialist work in the areas of **epidemiology or diagnostic veterinary medicine**. Positions allocated to this classification that function as **diagnostic specialists** perform duties such as the following: perform diagnostic examinations within a veterinary laboratory specialty area, on all species of animals, including poultry; select, collate and report all diagnostic procedures; provide diagnostic consultations to animal owners, veterinary practitioners, staff diagnosticians, and other agency personnel, and maintain appropriate quality assurance/quality control measures.

Positions allocated to this level that function as a **staff epidemiologists** perform duties such as the following: perform epidemiological investigations; function as program coordinators for all division programs and activities related to bovine, sheep, goat, swine, equine, poultry, aquaculture, mink, and rabies control programs and others that may be initiated in the future; and coordinate division emergency government programs.

Positions at this level function under the general supervision of the director or assistant director of a laboratory or bureau.

#### **Representative positions:**

Epidemiologist – Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection: Position serves as staff veterinary specialist, staff epidemiologist, and program coordinator for a variety of division programs, including those for which no regulatory program exist (e.g., animal welfare, rabies control, zoonotic diseases, small or exotic animals, etc.) The position provides expert veterinary consultation to a variety of organizations: local law enforcement agencies and humane officers, public health organizations, local units of government, other state agencies, and industry representatives such as private veterinarians, commercial breeders, etc. The position develops and presents training and educational seminars, provides recommendations for statute or administrative code changes, consults with other professional staff on necessary enforcement actions when disease issues arise, and coordinates emergency management groups. This position is responsible for planning, designing, and carrying out program projects, epidemiological investigations, or other work assignments within the confines of available resources, program goals, and division priorities. The position works under general supervision.

OR

Position serves as staff veterinarian responsible for the development, evaluation, and improvement of programs and operational activities designed to prevent or eliminate threats to Wisconsin agriculture from emerging or newly introduced species and diseases. Position develops, plans, and tests emergency response exercises, systems, and related support mechanisms designed to respond to the introduction or outbreak of program and non-program animal diseases, and facilitates disease control and/or eradication; develops division emergency government programs and responses to animal emergencies not of a disease nature, i.e., environmental contamination fallout, etc.; educates and trains division staff on non-disease emergency response procedures and policies; provides education to livestock industry regarding the handling of animals in emergency situations; promulgates statewide procedures and instructions for responding to outbreaks and plans or conducts corresponding training courses; critiques and modifies plans after field exercises, as necessary; assesses and evaluates causation, risk factors, and current national and global animal disease status of non-traditional livestock or domestic animal species; designs state program systems and methods which prevent the introduction of disease; assists in the development of regulatory policies and administrative rules; conducts and coordinates research and/or analytical efforts to assess disease risks; and plans and implements programs and other activities to prevent, control, and eradicate animal diseases. Position receives general supervision from a bureau director or assistant director.

Diagnostician/Veterinary Diagnostic Pathologist: Position performs diagnostic investigations and consultations on a variety of animal species, including interviewing animal owners or veterinary practitioners for necessary information, conducting animal necropsies and processing other submissions, selecting postmortem samples showing pathologic processes and submitting them for supportive testing and performing histopathologic examinations; documents findings, interprets results and prepares reports for animal owners, veterinary practitioners, and department personnel; provides requested consultative and field investigation services; and participates in continuing education. Position receives general supervision from a bureau director or assistant director.

Veterinary Toxicologist: Position provides diagnostic consultation on diagnostic cases relative to toxicologic problems, including recommendations on test and sample selection, interpretation of laboratory results, and discussion of treatment and prevention; performs review and development of diagnostic methods in the area of veterinary toxicology; performs toxicologic surveillance; provides continuing education of staff and clients; and performs other diagnostic toxicology duties, e.g., special studies. Position is qualified to serve as an expert witness in the area of veterinary toxicology. Position functions under the general supervision of the bureau director or assistant director.

Veterinary Microbiologist (Bacteriologist or Virologist): Positions allocated to this level and functioning as a veterinary bacteriologist or virologist perform advanced, highly complex investigations of bacterial, mycotic, and viral infections of animals. These positions are responsible for the ongoing review of microbiological and related procedures at the Wisconsin Animal Health Laboratories; investigating and implementing new procedures or modifying existing microbiologic procedures; consulting with staff and laboratory users on diagnostic problems; and developing educational programs for staff and users.

## **VETERINARIAN SPECIALIST - ADVANCED**

This is responsible, highly complex and specialized professional veterinarian specialist work in the areas of epidemiology, pathology, bacteriology, toxicology, or virology. Positions allocated to this classification function as diagnostic specialists.

Positions allocated to this level functioning in the specialty of **veterinary pathology** which encompasses infectious, genetic, nutritional, toxicologic, and neoplastic diseases of animals, have particular emphasis on the infectious diseases of food-producing animals, and infer factors contributory to disease(s) by the

evaluation and description of gross and microscopic tissue changes, correlating them, when necessary, with microbiology and chemistry laboratory findings.

Positions allocated to this level and functioning as **veterinary toxicologists** are: responsible for the ongoing review of toxicologic and related procedures at Wisconsin's Animal Health Laboratories; investigate, modify and implement new or existing toxicological procedures; consult with staff and laboratory users on diagnostic problems; and develop educational programs for staff and users.

Positions allocated to this level and functioning as **veterinary epidemiologist** perform advanced, highly complex epidemiologic investigations related to a variety of animal diseases and animal species; and provide educational and consultative services to a variety of audiences.

Positions allocated to this level and functioning as a **veterinary bacteriologist or virologist** perform advanced highly complex investigations of bacterial and viral infections of animals.

**All positions allocated to this level are expected to:** develop and implement new laboratory procedures and methods, and to modify existing ones as appropriate, both within relevant discipline(s), and in the overall areas of quality assurance/quality control; regularly serve as consultants to veterinary practitioners and animal owners regarding veterinary health problems; and serve as expert witnesses in one or more recognized veterinary specialty areas on behalf of the division or department.

Positions function under the general supervision of a bureau director or assistant director.

**Representative positions:**

Veterinary Pathologist: Position diagnoses diseases occurring in a variety of species based on gross lesions and morphologic findings and assessment and interpretation of laboratory test results. Consults on cases with veterinary practitioners and animal owners; conducts necropsies; selects tissues for histopathology and tissues and fluid specimens for submission to other laboratory sections; conducts microscopic examinations of tissues and prepares comprehensive reports, correlating all laboratory findings, and conclude with a diagnosis or differential diagnoses of animal health problems. Position contributes to surveillance for foreign and other reportable diseases; recommends improvements and/or additions to current laboratory protocols and procedures; collaborates with other pathologists; conducts education and training for professional and other audiences/organizations to enhance their knowledge of animal disease and its diagnosis as well as the role of the Wisconsin Animal Health Laboratories; and prepares scientific reports for publication in scientific journals, newsletters, and trade publications. Position is qualified to serve as an expert witness in the area of veterinary pathology. Position functions under the general supervision of the bureau director or assistant director.

Veterinary Toxicologist: Position provides diagnostic consultation relative to toxicologic problems, including recommendations on test and sample selection, interpretation of laboratory results, and discussion of treatment and prevention; performs review and development of diagnostic methods in the area of veterinary toxicology; performs toxicologic surveillance; provides continuing education for staff and clients; and other diagnostic toxicology duties, e.g., special studies. Position is qualified to serve as an expert witness in the area of veterinary toxicology. Position functions under the general supervision of the bureau director or assistant director.

Veterinary Microbiologist (Bacteriologist or Virologist): Position allocated to this level and functioning as a veterinary bacteriologist or virologist performs advanced, highly complex investigations of bacterial, mycotic, and viral infections of animals. The positions is responsible for the ongoing review of microbiologic and related procedures at the Wisconsin Animal Health Laboratories; investigating and implementing new procedures or modifying existing microbiologic procedures; consulting with staff and laboratory users on diagnostic problems; and developing educational programs for staff and users. Position is qualified to serve as an expert witness in the areas of veterinary bacteriology or virology.

Epidemiologist – Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection: Position serves as staff veterinary specialist, staff epidemiologist, and program coordinator for a variety of division programs, including those for which no regulatory program exist (e.g., animal welfare, rabies control, zoonotic diseases, small or exotic animals, etc.). The position provides expert veterinary consultation to a variety of organizations: local law enforcement agencies and humane officers, public health organizations, local units of government, other state agencies, and industry representatives such as private veterinarians, commercial breeders, etc. The position develops and presents training and educational seminars, provides recommendations for statute or administrative code changes, consults with other professional staff on necessary enforcement actions when disease issues arise, and coordinates emergency management groups. This position is responsible for planning, designing, and carrying out program projects, epidemiological investigations, or other work assignments within the confines of available resources, program goals, and division priorities. The position works under general supervision.

OR

Position serves as staff veterinarian responsible for the development, evaluation, and improvement of programs and operational activities designed to prevent or eliminate threats to Wisconsin agriculture from emerging or newly introduced species and diseases. Position develops, plans, and tests emergency response exercises, systems, and related support mechanisms designed to respond to the introduction or outbreak of program and non-program animal diseases, and facilitates disease control and/or eradication; develops division emergency government programs and responses to animal emergencies not of a disease nature, i.e., environmental contamination fallout, etc.; educates and trains division staff on non-disease emergency response procedures and policies; provides education to livestock industry regarding the handling of animals in emergency situations; promulgates statewide procedures and instructions for responding to outbreaks and plans or conducts corresponding training courses; critiques and modifies plans after field exercises, as necessary; assesses and evaluates causation, risk factors, and current national and global animal disease status of non-traditional livestock or domestic animal species; designs state program systems and methods which prevent the introduction of disease; assists in the development of regulatory policies and administrative rules; conducts and coordinates research and/or analytical efforts to assess disease risks; and plans and implements programs and other activities to prevent, control, and eradicate animal diseases. Position receives general supervision from a bureau director or assistant director.

### III. QUALIFICATIONS

The qualifications required for this classification will be determined on a position-by-position basis at the time of recruitment. Such determinations will be based on an analysis of the goals and worker activities performed and by an identification of the education, training, work, or other life experience(s) which provide reasonable assurance that the knowledge and skills required upon appointment have been acquired.

Positions allocated to this classification **must have** the following: a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine or equivalent degree from a College of Veterinary Medicine accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association; the possession of, or eligibility for, a valid license to practice veterinary medicine in the State of Wisconsin; and State-Federal Accreditation.

### IV. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

This classification series was created to describe positions located primarily within the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection which perform veterinary diagnostic services. This classification series was created as a result of the Professional Science Personnel Management Survey, was made effective November 14, 1993, and was announced in Bulletin CC/SC-3. The classification

specification was modified effective November 9, 1997, in order to identify an additional representative position in the area of epidemiology (see Bulletin CC/SC-78).

The classification specification was modified effective December 15, 2013 and was announced in Bulletin OSER 0348.-MRS/SC. The changes made removed the additional education requirements for the Senior and Advanced levels to address programmatic positions at the DATCP; this also updates the class spec due to the movement of the diagnostic lab to the UW in 2000.

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