



Mentoring the VTS Candidate

Each VTS candidate shall be supervised by a veterinarian who is certified in veterinary rehabilitation **or** is a diplomate of Veterinary Sports Medicine and Rehabilitation (DACVSMR) **or** is a veterinarian DACVSMR candidate-resident **or** is a VTS (Physical Rehabilitation). This “mentor” should be in the same locality as the candidate, the candidate be employed (or previously employed) and should be able to communicate at a minimum by video conferencing. VTS (Physical Rehabilitation) members are required to have an active membership in good standing and work under the supervision of a veterinarian who establishes a veterinary-client-patient relationship as required by veterinary state or local governing authority and determines the rehabilitative plan and prognosis. Failure to work with a veterinarian, prescribe treatment plans, prognose or otherwise perform duties of a veterinarian will result in immediate revocation of the VTS title and the applicant denied the ability to earn a VTS (Physical Rehabilitation) permanently. ***Credentialed Veterinary Technicians and Physical Therapists with rehabilitation credentialing will not be accepted for mentorship.***

The decision to become a mentor is an important step towards VTS (Physical Rehabilitation) recognition. The purpose of the mentor is to guide, supervise and evaluate the mentee through the processes of their training program, the submission of their credential materials, and the examination preparation. ***It is critical for the mentor to review application documents.*** Materials submitted by the mentee is a reflection of the mentor’s skill and knowledge in the field of veterinary physical rehabilitation and the mentor is attesting to the applicants ability to be recognized as a subject matter expert.

In addition to the mentor providing veterinary physical rehabilitation knowledge and expertise, mentorship requires time for evaluation of case treatments, and submission materials. This is a professional application and must be free of grammatical or spelling errors, with case reports of the caliber for submission to a peer reviewed journal. Mentors are encouraged to outline a plan to accomplish the credentialing process and communicate the structure to the applicant. Both the mentor and mentee should agree upon the planned outline. All mentors must provide verification of their credentials, level of experience, and brief description of how they will ensure the applicant will achieve their APRVT VTS requirements.

The VTS applicant is responsible for distributing the **Mentor Agreement/Request Form** and all other requested documents and signatures in the Application Packet. Applicants are responsible for their own application documents and submission of all required materials by the deadline of January 1st 11:59:59PM of the examination year.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Credentialing Chair – aprvtapplications@gmail.com



Questions to Ask Before Deciding to Mentor a VTS Candidate

1. Do I enjoy working with others and sharing my veterinary physical rehabilitation knowledge and skills?
2. Do I have the space to provide a work area for a mentee to study and perform physical rehabilitation skills?
3. Do I have time to evaluate the clinical performance of a mentee and the paperwork associated with it?
 - a. Applicants are required to submit logs and other documents to be evaluated and signed by the mentor. Forty (40) minimum specified required cases must be formally reviewed during the training program.
 - b. Four (4) case reports, written by the applicant, must be reviewed and evaluated by the mentor prior to submission to the Credentials Committee. ***This aspect of the application is the most challenging and will require mentor guidance. Case reports should be submitted of the caliber for peer-reviewed journals including appropriate references.***
4. Is the mentee legally qualified to perform physical rehabilitation in my hospital and will the practice owner allow it?
5. Can I maintain an objective professional relationship with an individual who may also be a friend? Honest evaluation and constructive criticism of work performance and materials are required for the advancement of high standards in veterinary physical rehabilitation. A mentor must be prepared to address program or mentee inadequacies and terminate a program if necessary.
6. Am I aware of my strengths and weaknesses in the training, experience and caseload of all major aspects of physical rehabilitation? Can the outline for mentorship accommodate these strengths and weaknesses by utilizing other APRVT colleagues or outside rotations, if necessary?
7. How well do you know each other? Are you familiar with the work of the applicant? Have you worked together at conferences or on cases before?
8. Is the applicant aware of the scope of the commitment involved in starting and completing the training period, credential application process and for the certifying examination preparation?
9. Is the applicant preparing or participating in other major professional or personal accomplishments?
10. Am I prepared to ensure the applicant will adhere to state/province/country veterinary practice acts after obtaining a VTS (Physical Rehabilitation)? The APRVT requires supervision VTS (Physical Rehabilitation) on a long term basis according to individual state/province/country regulations regarding the practice of animal physical rehabilitation.



Evaluating the VTS Candidate's Ability and Expertise

The requirements for the APRVT Veterinary Technician Specialty recognition are based on a 2 to 3-year time frame. Therefore, a successful and rewarding mentor-mentee relationship requires planning and agreement prior to the start. It is important to know as much as possible about the applicant, through review of their curriculum vitae, evaluation of the applicant's current level of physical rehabilitation skills and discussion of the applicant's desire and commitment toward advanced veterinary physical rehabilitation. Undertaking this process requires a great amount of involvement, time and money. The applicant must be familiar with and agree to all the credentialing requirements, and the prerequisites for admission to the certifying examination.

The mentee also must be aware of other time and financial commitments including (but not limited to):

1. An increase in their advanced physical rehabilitation caseload.
2. An ability and willingness to keep detailed records and logs and devote time to the other associated documentation requirements.
3. Travel (and time off work) for CE programs.
4. Preparation of admission materials and associated fees for application submission and the examination.
5. The applicant's willingness and ability to take time off from the clinical case load to study and practice for the certifying examination.
6. Financial investment for learning materials (e.g. literature, textbooks, models)

The mentor should communicate to the applicant the structure of the mentor program and also outline the review process. Discussion should also include information regarding mentor guidance and mentee evaluation. Although the mentor and applicant may be friends, one purpose of the mentor is to critique the applicant's work and submissions. The mentee should not take remarks personally. A mentor or mentee may recommend a provisional working period to see how the mentor/mentee relationship is going to work

KEY POINTS for Mentors

- Look over the skills list completely and only sign off on a skill if you feel confident that your technician meets the definition of mastery.
- All signed skills must be demonstrated in the case logs.
- Assist your technician in acquiring new skills for the application process (supervisors only).
- Send your technician to at least one national meeting a year to give them ample exposure to the most current information related to physical rehabilitation and allow them to accumulate continuing education credits.
- Review and critique case reports for accuracy, understanding of the condition, providing rationale for treatments, spelling, grammar and *critical thinking skills*.