

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, DC

FSIS NOTICE

17-20

4/3/20

FISCAL YEAR 2020- CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR PUBLIC HEALTH VETERINARIANS

I. PURPOSE

This notice announces the Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20) FSIS Continuing Education Program (CEP) for Public Health Veterinarians (PHVs) and Veterinary Medical Officers (VMOs) in the Office of Field Operations (OFO). The employee eligibility and training requirements have been revised. Veterinarians assigned to an establishment in the field, veterinarians in Frontline Supervisor (FLS) positions, and District Veterinary Medical Specialists (DVMSs) are eligible to participate in the FY20 PHV CEP. Reimbursement is now being offered for training in Veterinary Medicine (VM) and food safety related fields of study. The training requirements are detailed in Section III B. The FY20 PHV CEP is effective October 1, 2019, through September 30, 2020, and eligible employees may qualify for training reimbursement completed during this time. Applications are currently being accepted. The deadline for submitting FY20 applications is October 15, 2020.

II. BACKGROUND

A. This program was launched in 2018 as a retention incentive for PHV/VMOs and supports the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan's Goal 3, Outcome 3.1, Maintain a Well-Trained and Engaged Workforce. Under the FY20 PHV CEP, eligible PHVs may qualify for up to \$500 per FY maximum reimbursement to attend training.

B. The FY20 PHV CEP is not a licensure, certification, or degree program and does not require participants to have or to earn active licenses, certifications, or degrees. The program may be used to:

1. Help support current licensure requirements;
2. Help complete a board certification, certificate program, or degree program; or
3. Support current job functions.

III. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE FY20 PHV CEP

A. The employee is to pay out of pocket for the training and will be reimbursed up to a maximum of \$500 per FY toward training registration costs only. Travel will not be compensated.

B. Employee eligibility requirements for participation in the FY20 PHV CEP:

1. Participants are to be a PHV/VMO in the OFO assigned to an establishment (in-plant), in a FLS position, or in a DVMS position;

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All Field Employees

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2. Participants need to be full-time permanent employees in good standing, (i.e., rated fully successful or better, have worked a minimum of 1 year of service with FSIS); and
3. Supervisory notification and approval is required if training interferes with tour of duty.

C. Training requirements for participation in the FY20 PHV CEP:

1. Training includes professional meetings, conferences, webinars, short courses, and college courses related to one of these core fields of study:
 - a. Veterinary Medicine (VM);
 - b. Food safety;
 - c. Food science;
 - d. Animal science; and
 - e. Meat science
2. Although participants are not required to have or to earn licenses or certifications in VM, preparation courses for licenses will be reimbursed;
3. CE credits in VM are to be earned from approved programs and providers of continuing education;
4. College-level courses must be from nationally accredited institutions; and
5. Participants are to submit proof of successful completion of training along with a PHV CEP Application Form so the training can be recorded in the employee's AgLearn record.

IV. HOW TO APPLY FOR FY20 PHV CEP TRAINING REIMBURSEMENT

A. After the training is completed, to be reimbursed, the employee is to provide to the CEP Manager of the Office of Employee Experience and Development (OEED) the following documentation:

1. PHV CEP Application and Approval Form;
2. A completed Optional Form 1164 (OF-1164), Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business;
3. Proper Receipt;
4. Proof of successful completion of training:
 - a. CE earned in VM – provide documentation of CE units earned;
 - b. College credit hours earned – provide transcript showing passed with C grade or better;
 - c. Certificate earned – provide certificate showing successful completion;
 - d. Preparation courses for Veterinary license examinations – registration statement, course description, and proof of completion (if available);

5. Employees can obtain the PHV CEP Application and Approval Form (e-form) and the OF 1164 in the following ways:
 - a. Request by e-mail at PHVCEP@usda.gov; or
 - b. Download from IPP Help <https://fsishelp.fsis.usda.gov/ipphelp/cep/phvcep/phvcep.htm>.

NOTE: If using Windows 10, Microsoft Edge may be incompatible with PDF documents. Fire Fox Browser is recommended.

B. The employee is to digitally sign the PHV CEP Application with their LincPass and submit as an e-form.

C. OF-1164 are to be submitted as an e-form and include:

1. Training name;
2. Start and end dates of the training;
3. Cost of training registration;
4. Amount to be reimbursed (not to exceed \$500 per FY);
5. An e-signature (digitally sign with LincPass);
6. Proof of payment with a proper receipt which is to include:
 - a. Participant name;
 - b. Method of payment;
 - c. Amount paid; and
 - d. Training name.

NOTE: Financial Service Center (FSC) requires supplemental documentation if the receipt does not list training name. Example: an e-mail confirming training registration that lists training name.

D. The CEP Manager will process applications and reimbursement paperwork. Upon approval, the CEP Manager will submit an employee's OF 1164 directly to FSC for remittance to employee.

E. E-mail all required documentation (outlined above) to the CEP Manager at: PHVCEP@usda.gov;

F. Deadlines for submitting FY20 applications for reimbursement:

1. Applications for reimbursement for trainings completed during FY20 will not be accepted after October 15, 2020.
2. Participants are encouraged to submit requests for reimbursement throughout FY20 as trainings are completed.

V. TIME AND ATTENDANCE RECORD FOR ATTENDING CEP-APPROVED TRAININGS OR MEETINGS

- A. Attending a CEP-approved training or meeting during normal duty hours is considered an excused absence for which PHVs will be allowed to record administrative leave (Code 66) up to 3 days at 8 hours per day (maximum of 24 hours) excluding travel time. Employees are to request excused absence through their supervisory chain.
- B. Travel time to and from a training will not be compensated even if it occurs during regular work hours.
- C. If training occurs outside of the normal tour of duty, employees may request a schedule change from his or her immediate supervisor.
- D. PHVs are to contact their supervisor or District Resource Manager for additional guidance on T&A completion.

VI. QUESTIONS

Refer questions to the CEP Manager at PHVCEP@usda.gov or 301-344-0734. Questions may also be referred to the OEED/TTDL at 1-800-336-3747. PHV CEP Applications, OF 1164 Reimbursement Forms, and other program information can be found at: <https://fsishelp.fsis.usda.gov/ipphelp/cep/phvcep/phvcep.htm>.



Acting Assistant Administrator
Office of Policy and Program Development