

Whether you are returning to practice or seeking licensure in a new jurisdiction, this guide tells you what to expect from the Species-Specific Examination in **Companion Animal Medicine** or **Equine Medicine** — what it covers, how it is administered, and how your result is reported — so you can prepare with confidence.

100 ITEMS
2 HOURS
2 FORMS

ABOUT THE EXAMINATIONS

The ICVA administers the Species-Specific Examinations at the request of veterinary licensing boards throughout the United States and Canada. They are used by licensing agencies to evaluate a veterinarian's knowledge of companion animal or equine medicine.

Two forms of each examination are available:

- 01 **Companion Animal Medicine** — questions related to canine, feline, pet bird, and other small animals such as aquatic life, reptiles and pocket pets.
- 02 **Equine Medicine** — questions related to equine practice.

REQUESTING AN EXAM

The examinations may be requested only by a state, provincial, or territorial licensing agency, for licensing-related purposes determined by the licensing board. Boards may use the results in disciplinary cases, or to assess the competencies of a veterinarian previously licensed elsewhere who is now applying in a new state or province.

Each exam is \$400 (USD) per form and is ordered directly through the ICVA, so your board will arrange the appointment on your behalf. If you have questions along the way, you or your board may [contact us](#).

WHAT TO EXPECT

FORMAT

100 multiple-choice questions. Each item presents a question or statement with one best answer. Some options may be partly correct — choose the most accurate one.

ADMINISTRATION

You have 120 minutes (2 hours). The exam is web-based and taken via computer, with a board-appointed proctor monitoring progress — in person at the board office or remotely via software such as Teams or Zoom.

SCORING

The test system scores your exam and reports the score, the correct answers, and the percentage to the licensing agency, which shares the result with you. Each form carries an ICVA-recommended minimum passing score.

HOW THE EXAMINATIONS ARE BUILT

Items are written, reviewed and approved by veterinarians under the guidance of test development experts. The ICVA convenes test development committees of veterinarians representing companion animal and equine practice, who review each examination against the test content outlines, assuring the highest standards of fairness and accuracy, making updates and substitutions as necessary. After a final editorial review, the examinations are published for use by licensing agencies.

ABOUT THE PASSING STANDARD

Each form of each examination carries a minimum passing score recommended by the ICVA. The standard is established through a formal standard-setting study in which panels of content-expert veterinarians judge, item by item, the performance expected of a minimally proficient practitioner. Standards are reviewed and revised through this same standard-setting process whenever the examinations are revised, and your licensing board determines how the recommended standard is applied to your result.



COMPANION ANIMAL

- 01** In the management of a cat diagnosed as having diabetes mellitus, it may be necessary to administer insulin twice in each 24-hour period in order to:
- (A) maintain blood glucose at acceptable levels.
 - (B) minimize allergic reactions to the insulin.
 - (C) overcome insulin resistance.
 - (D) avert development of ketoacidosis.
 - (E) facilitate regeneration of pancreatic islet cells.
- 02** An 8-year-old female Toy Poodle has a history of a severe, dry, honking cough induced by excitement or exercise. Which of the following is the most likely diagnosis?
- (A) Mitral insufficiency
 - (B) Collapsing trachea
 - (C) Infectious tracheobronchitis
 - (D) Heartworm disease
 - (E) Bronchopneumonia

EQUINE

- 03** A 7-month-old quarter horse filly is presented with a mucopurulent nasal discharge, anorexia, and depression. The filly is stabled where 4 other young horses are affected. No adults seem to be affected. A physical examination reveals swollen lymph nodes, retropharyngeal swelling, and a fever. Which of the following is the most likely diagnosis?
- (A) Actinobacillosis
 - (B) Equine influenza
 - (C) Enzootic lymphangitis
 - (D) Strangles
 - (E) Vesicular stomatitis
- 04** A 3-year-old gelding is presented because after a few minutes of exercise, he becomes sore and unwilling to move forward. The horse's condition worsens with additional exercise. An immediate physical examination reveals the horse to be sweating, anxious, and reluctant to move; his urine is dark. Which of the following is the most likely diagnosis?
- (A) Fibrotic myopathy
 - (B) Acute epiphysitis
 - (C) Acute laminitis
 - (D) Acute colic
 - (E) Rhabdomyolysis

ANSWER KEY

1 A 2 B 3 D 4 E