

ICVA's North American Veterinary Licensing Examination (NAVLE®) Celebrates 25 Years of Advancing Veterinary Competency

This October–November testing window marks the 25th anniversary of the NAVLE®, a key milestone in veterinary licensing in the U.S. and Canada.

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October–November testing window marks the 25th anniversary of the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination (NAVLE®), a key milestone in veterinary licensing in the U.S. and Canada. Since its launch in 2000, the NAVLE has assessed the knowledge and skills needed for safe and effective veterinary practice, supporting animal health, animal welfare, and public health.

The International Council for Veterinary Assessment (ICVA)—

formerly the National Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (NBVME)—began development of the NAVLE in 1998. It replaced earlier standardized exams and introduced a computer-based format that set a new benchmark for veterinary licensing assessments when launched during the inaugural November–December 2000 testing window.

“Veterinary medicine plays an essential role in public health, animal health, and animal welfare. For 25 years, the NAVLE has helped set a global standard for entering the profession, and ICVA remains committed to advancing assessments that reflect the realities and responsibilities of modern veterinary practice.” – Dr. Heather Case, CEO, ICVA

Over the past 25 years, more than 108,000 candidates have taken the NAVLE, a single-best-answer multiple-choice exam historically offered twice annually. Beginning with the 2025–2026



25 Years of Excellence in
Veterinary Assessment

25 Years of Excellence in Veterinary Assessment

cycle, ICVA expanded the NAVLE to three annual testing windows to meet the needs of growing number of candidates.

“The new schedule with three NAVLE testing windows per year provides candidates with greater flexibility, assists candidates with non-traditional graduation dates, and helps graduated veterinarians become licensed more quickly.” – Dr. Helen Tuzio, 2025-2026 ICVA Board Chair

Over the years, the NAVLE has expanded to include competencies such as professional behavior and communication, reflecting the evolving responsibilities of veterinarians. These updates are the result of practice analyses, where thousands of practitioners from across veterinary medicine are surveyed about the knowledge and competencies required for their daily work. Additionally,

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hundreds of veterinary volunteers (many of them former NAVLE candidates) contribute as item writers, committee members, and subject matter experts, bringing real-world insight that keeps the assessment relevant for future veterinary professionals.

To celebrate the 25th anniversary, ICVA will highlight the NAVLE’s impact on veterinary assessment, practice, and public health and animal welfare throughout 2025 and 2026. In addition, ICVA is conducting its next NAVLE practice analysis, scheduled to conclude in 2026, as part of the continuous process to verify that the NAVLE blueprint

is updated and ensures exam content validity and fairness.

For more information on the NAVLE and ICVA, visit www.icva.net.

About ICVA

The International Council for Veterinary Assessment (ICVA) is a global leader in veterinary assessments. ICVA’s assessments, including the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination (NAVLE®), are administered in over 60 countries. The organization collaborates closely with valued partners in academia, licensing boards, and the veterinary profession to develop tools that effectively measure the knowledge and skills required for safe and competent



Participants in the June 2025 ICVA Communications Skills Assessment Rapid Blueprinting Meeting.

veterinary practice. ICVA's commitment to high-quality assessments supports public safety, animal health, and animal welfare.

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Volunteers from across veterinary medicine attending the ICVA NAVLE Practice Analysis Advisory Committee Workshop in October 2025.

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