

OAVT's 2019 Wage & Compensation Survey

Average Wage

\$22.42/hour

After five years of collecting annual wage data, the OAVT is now able to offer even more trends and information for RVTs to bring to their employers for honest and productive discussions about wages. The OAVT began an annual wage survey of Ontario RVTs in 2014, and over the last five years the average hourly wage has risen from \$19.05 (2014) to \$22.42 (2019). That marks an almost 18% raise in wages. Over the same time frame, the Bank of Canada's inflation calculator estimates that inflation rose just over 8%. When wage increases outpace inflation by nearly double - that's a great thing!

In 2019, the OAVT received over 1,000 responses to the Wage & Compensation Survey. Please take the time to go through all of the graphs and charts below. As you go through the different breakdowns, ask yourself:

Am I making a wage that is in line with others in the industry?

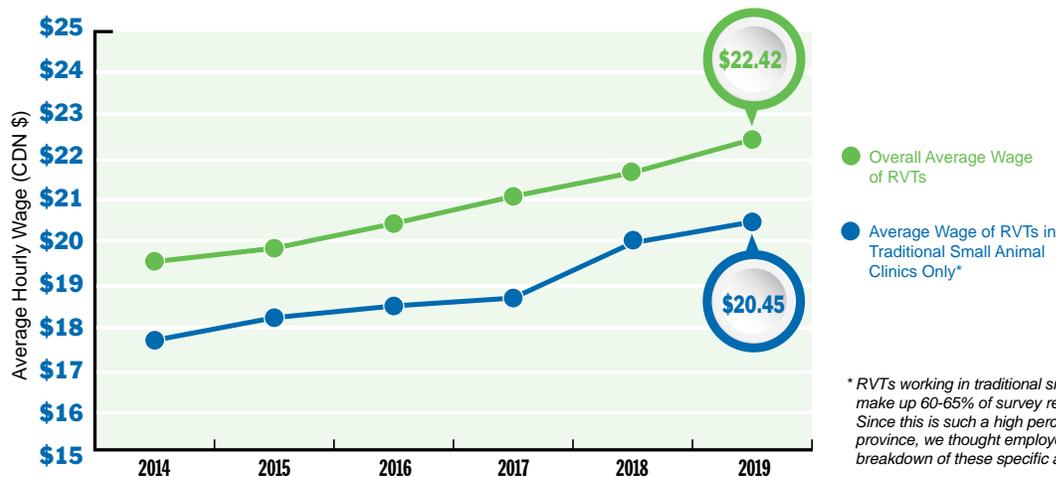
Do I get health benefits, OAVT dues paid for, or CE allowances that add value to my compensation beyond just wages?

Do I feel valued by my employer? Does my compensation reflect the value that I bring?

Negotiate. Understand your worth. Advocate for yourself.

Remember that the OAVT has no legal authority to raise wages. Veterinary clinics are privately owned, and employers have the right to pay their employees what they want (as long as it meets the province of Ontario's legal minimum wage criteria). Part of the OAVT's role is to promote the value that RVTs bring to any practice (**see *The Value of an RVT study*: www.oavt.org/Study**), and to provide RVTs with tools to engage their employers in a discussion about fair wages.

Average Wage Trends (2014-2019)



* RVTs working in traditional small animal clinics usually make up 60-65% of survey respondents each year. Since this is such a high percentage of RVTs in the province, we thought employers would appreciate a breakdown of these specific average wages.

Are all RVTs making enough to pay the rent?

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) has calculated what they call **the rental wage**.¹ This is the hourly wage needed to rent an average two-bedroom apartment (the most common type) without spending more than 30% of one's earnings. Keep in mind that this wage is calculated based on working full-time hours. The wage would have to be much higher if working less than full-time hours.

Ontario's overall rental wage is **\$27.43/hr**, but it is very different depending on which city you live in. Toronto, for example, has a rental wage of \$34/hour. That means an RVT would have to be making \$34/hr to be able to afford an average two-bedroom apartment and NOT use more than 30% of their earnings on rent alone.

Ottawa's rental wage is \$26/hr, London's is \$21/hr, Sudbury's is \$20/hr and Windsor's is \$18/hr.

RVT Wages: By Sector, Years of Experience and Location

RVT Wages, by Years of Experience

Years as an RVT	Number of Respondents	Average Wage (Per Hour)
< 1	29	\$18.08
1-2	141	\$19.17
3-4	130	\$20.05
5-6	125	\$20.77
7-8	110	\$21.36
9-10	94	\$22.79
11-14	128	\$23.68
15-18	90	\$25.50
19-24	97	\$25.73
25-30	42	\$25.25
31 or more	15	\$27.35

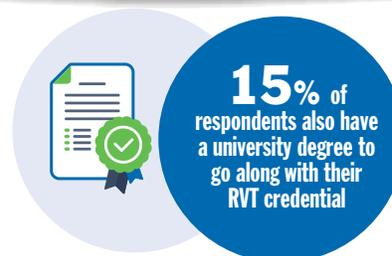
RVT Wages, by Location

Location	Number of Respondents	Average Wage (Per Hour)
Brant County	13	\$20.01
Chatham-Kent	10	\$21.58
Durham Region	43	\$21.99
Eastern Ontario (Prescott, Russell, Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry)	10	\$19.89
Elgin – St. Thomas	11	\$19.83
Grey-Bruce / Huron / Perth	36	\$19.66
Haldimand-Norfolk	10	\$20.66
Halton Region	54	\$22.77
Hamilton-Wentworth	34	\$23.56
Hastings-Prince Edward	10	\$20.13
Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox & Addington	37	\$19.98
Lambton	10	\$21.34
Leeds, Grenville & Lanark	17	\$19.57
Middlesex-London	61	\$22.61
Niagara Region	20	\$21.92
North Bay-Parry Sound	12	\$19.60
Ottawa-Carleton	93	\$21.90
Oxford County	12	\$20.35
Peel Region	48	\$23.48
Peterborough	23	\$21.41
Renfrew	10	\$19.53
Simcoe-Muskoka / Haliburton-Kawartha-Pine Ridge (HKPR)	75	\$20.58
Sudbury / Algoma	14	\$20.48
Thunder Bay/ Northwestern	14	\$24.40
Toronto	110	\$26.03
Waterloo Region	55	\$22.02
Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph	57	\$25.88
Windsor-Essex	32	\$20.19
York	74	\$23.99

RVT Wages, By Sector*

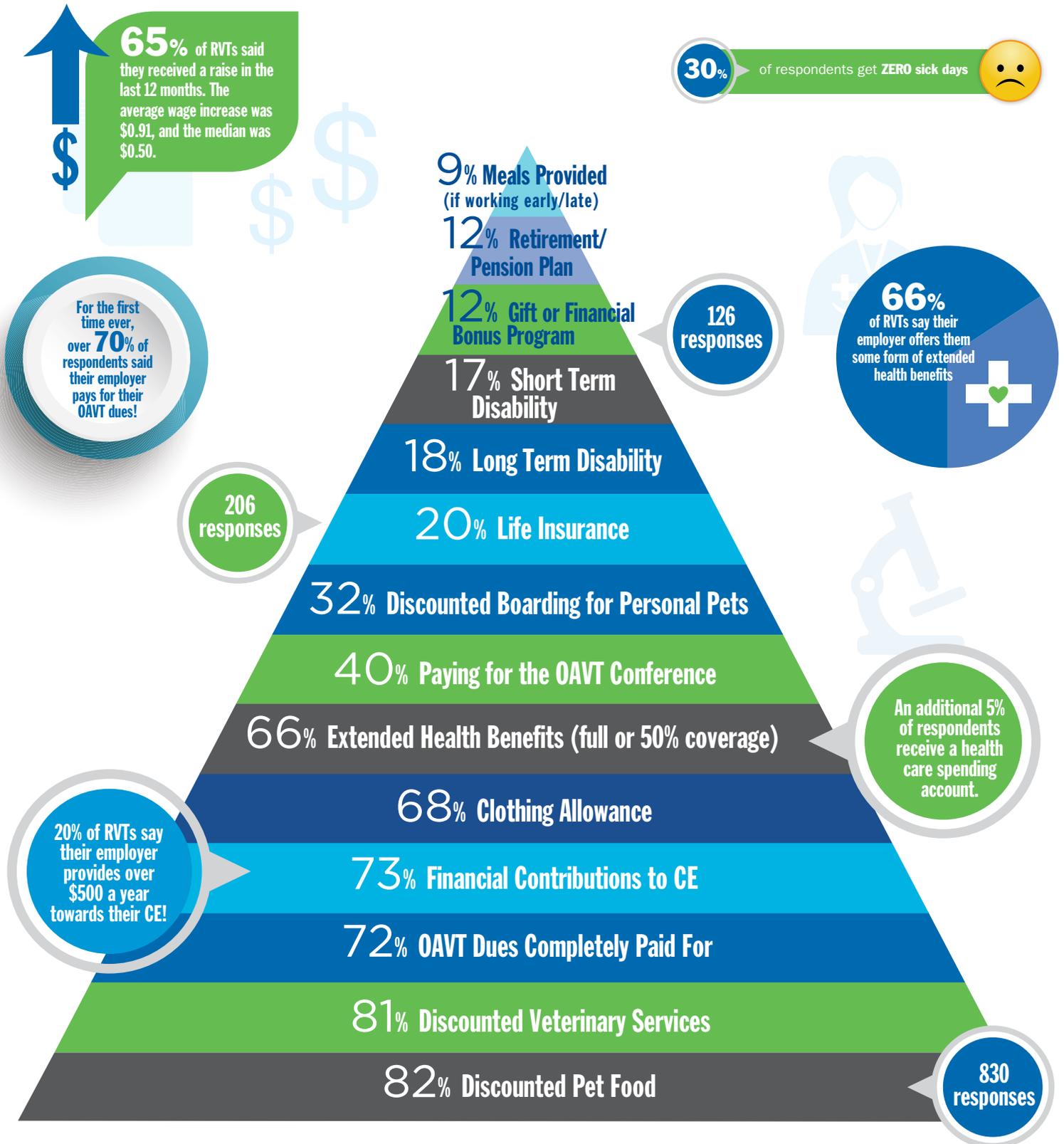
Sector	Number of Respondents	Average Wage (Per Hour)
Small Animal Veterinary Hospital -Including Exotics/Birds/Pocket Pets	620 (61.3%)	\$20.45 (up 50¢ from 2018)
Emergency/ 24 Hour Veterinary Hospital	103	\$22.79
Specialty / Referral Practice	53	\$26.38
Mixed Animal Veterinary Hospital - Equine, Food Animal, and Small Animal	47	\$19.95
Lab Animal Science	43	\$30.23
Office/Practice Manager	28	\$26.57
Shelter Medicine – Not for Profit/Charity	21	\$20.76
Industry Sales / Marketing	20	\$33.46
Educator – Veterinary Technology Program	13	\$31.06
Veterinary Teaching Hospital	12	\$31.17
Large Animal Veterinary Hospital (equine only, or food animal only)	12	\$21.25
Shelter Medicine – Municipality	11	\$40.59

*Many RVTs identified other sectors (zoo/wildlife, self-employed, Public Health, diagnostic imaging, etc.) however the data was not included here as there were less than 10 respondents in each of those sectors



Additional Compensation

Benefits and other incentives from an employer can help improve workplace culture, and limit employee turnover. They can also be more enticing to potential employees than simply boasting a higher wage. Here is a breakdown of the percentage of respondents who reported having additional compensation from their employers (aside from wages).



Digging Deeper

Taking a closer look at some of the data collected from RVT respondents.



A closer look at our biggest city: 110 RVTs from Toronto responded to the survey. Using their data, the average wage was \$26.03, the median was \$25.00, and the average broken down for each region is as follows:

- Central Toronto - **\$24.23**
- Downtown - **\$27.38**
- East York - **\$23.00**
- Etobicoke - **\$23.57**
- North York - **\$29.57**
- Scarborough - **\$22.84**
- West Toronto - **\$25.93**



Average vs. Median:

While the average wage of all RVTs in Ontario was \$22.42, the median was exactly \$21.00. (The median is up from \$20.00 in 2018.)

Did you know?

Roughly 2% of respondents have a Veterinary Technician Specialty (VTS). Having a VTS is quite the achievement: there are currently less than 1,200 VTS-es (spread across 16 Academies) in the WORLD.



Should I stay or should I go:

The majority of respondents (58%) have been in their current workplace for less than five years. Roughly 17% of respondents have been employed by their current workplace for less than one year, 23% for one to two years, and 18% three to four years. About 18% of respondents have been with their current employer for more than 10 years.



Snapshot of the RVT Workforce: Of our 1,011 respondents...

- 9% reported being on maternity/paternity leave at some point over the last 12 months (same percentage as 2018)
- 4% reported being on medical leave at some point over the last 12 months – and of that 4%, **over half of them work in traditional small animal clinics**
- Only 49.5% of respondents received some sort of performance review in the last 12 months. That number is virtually unchanged from 2018.
- 8% of respondents reported being unemployed at some point over the last 12 months.
- The majority of respondents (75%) get two or three weeks of vacation each year



Sick days: The majority of respondents (65%) have three sick days or less. In fact, 30% of respondents have **zero sick days**.

About 20% of respondents have four or five sick days, and 15% have more than five sick days.

Investing in CE:

There is a disparity between employers who invest in their employees' continuing education, and those who do not. Roughly 20% of RVTs said their employer does not offer them any paid CE. On the other hand, 32% receive \$200-\$300 worth of CE each year, and 33% receive \$500 or more!