

UMass Amherst

The Commonwealth's Flagship Campus

Job Title: Seasonal Surveillance Technician
New England Regional Center for Vector-Borne Diseases (NEWVEC)/
Department of Biostatistics and Epidemiology

Proposed Start/End date: 5/10/2026 – 8/25/2026

Position Description:

The aim of our work this summer is to better understand the tick populations in areas where people in Western MA are spending time outdoors. The long-term tick surveillance locations have been identified using data from a spatial case-control study. We have identified tick risky areas in Western MA and now we are monitoring tick populations in those locations.

With support and guidance from Andrew Lover (Associate Professor of Epidemiology, SPHHS & Deputy Director, NEWVEC) and Johanna Ravenhurst (PhD candidate in Epidemiology, SPHHS), and direct supervision from Veronica Bobskill (Tick Surveillance Manager, NEWVEC) this position will entail:

- Following standardized protocols for tick collection and processing
- Accompanying the tick surveillance manager to field sites off-campus in wooded and grassy habitats
- Navigating obstacles while outdoors in varied natural settings
- Dragging a tick collection cloth while maintaining a consistent pace
- Identifying ticks to species and life stage after training
- Scanning documents, organizing files, and uploading field collected data into a central database
- Reading and interpreting scientific literature
- Collaborating with lab members and occasionally attending lab meetings
- Assisting with additional research tasks as appropriate based on level of experience

Compensation:

This is an hourly position at \$20 per hour. 10-15 hours/week based on project needs. Work schedule will be set in collaboration with the tick surveillance manager. Outdoor work is weather dependent.

Required skills:

Must be able to walk over uneven terrain while dragging a cloth to collect ticks. Ability to lift 40 lbs. Attention to detail and fine motor skills. Ability to follow a tick collection protocol after training as directed. Demonstrated punctuality, dependability, and compliance with work schedules. Interest in infectious disease epidemiology and/or ecology is a plus. Strong independent problem-solving skills. Ability to work as part of a team.

Application Instructions:

Please email a **cover letter**, **resume**, and **your availability** to alover@umass.edu, jravenhu@umass.edu, and vbobskill@umass.edu by **Sunday, April 26th, 2026**. We are accepting applications from both work-study and non-work-study applicants, **please provide documentation if you have been awarded work-study status** by the financial aid office.

NOTE: You must have a large block of availability on at least **2 weekdays every week** to conduct sampling in the field. Please list your availability in your application.