AMERICAN COLLEGE OF VETERINARY BEHAVIORISTS  
A Texas Nonprofit Corporation,  

CERTIFICATION POLICY  

The American College of Veterinary Behaviorists (the “Corporation”) requires any person to be certified and credentialed in veterinary behavioral medicine before they can become a Diplomate, as defined in Section 3.2 of the Corporation’s Amended and Restated Bylaws (“Bylaws”). This Certification Policy (“Policy”) sets forth the Corporation’s required certification process. Capitalized terms used but not defined in this Policy shall have the meaning given to them in the Bylaws.  

1. Requirements for Admission to Examination for Certification  

a) A candidate must (a) be a graduate of a school or college accredited or approved by the American Veterinary Medical Association (“AVMA”), (b) have in his/her possession a certificate of accreditation in veterinary medicine from the Educational Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates (“ECFVG”) of the AVMA, or (c) be legally qualified to practice veterinary medicine in some state, province, territory, or possession of the United States, Canada, or other country.  

b) A candidate must meet the examination requirements established by the ACVB.  

c) Individuals applying to take the examination shall obtain, by written request to the Executive Director, a copy of the official application form and the prerequisites for taking the specialty examination.  

d) A candidate cannot submit credentials for certification earlier than October of the second year of a 2-year residency or October of the third year of a 3-year residency. The Credentials Committee shall review the suitability of the candidate's credentials.  

e) Completed application forms, supporting documents, and application fee shall be submitted to the Executive Director on or before the published deadline in the year in which the applicant intends to sit the examination.  

f) Candidates approved by the Corporation’s Credentials Committee to take the examination shall be notified and apprised of the date, time, place, and format of the examination at least 120 calendar days before the date of the examination.  

2. Certification Examination  

a) The certification examination will be offered once annually.  

b) The certificate examination will be given over one or two consecutive days. It will be a written examination which may include multiple choice, short and long answers. The questions on the examination will reflect the knowledge expected of the candidate based on the current role, delineation document, or job task analysis.
c) A minimum score as defined by the Examination Committee and approved by the Board of Regents must be achieved on the examination in order to pass.

d) All candidates will receive written notification of their performance on the examination within 45 calendar days of the examination. The Corporation shall send such notices to all candidates on the same day. Notice may be sent by electronic mail or similar technology.

e) The candidate must pass the examination for certification to become a Diplomate. If the candidate fails the examination, they may apply to retake the examination and must pay the appropriate fee.

f) Individuals must complete the entire certification process beginning with registration, through training and credentialing, and pass the examination in no less than 2 years and no more than 8 years.

3. **Recertification**

In order to maintain a currently certified status, Diplomates must meet recertification requirements as established by the Board of Regents.
The American College of Veterinary Behaviorists (the “Corporation” or “ACVB”) establishes the process by which a veterinarian may seek a residency in veterinary behavioral medicine. This Residency Policy (“Policy”) sets forth the Corporation’s guidelines for traditional and nontraditional residency programs, as well as requirements for all residency programs. Capitalized terms used but not defined in this Policy shall have the meaning given to them in the Corporation’s Amended and Restated Bylaws.

1. Guidelines for Traditional Behavioral Residency Programs

   a) **Length.** The residency program shall be a minimum of 24 months in length following at least one (1) year of training (internship or its equivalent) in veterinary practice. Traditional programs lasting two (2) years will be approved only for residents with sufficient previous education in animal behavior.

   b) **Qualification.** Determination of whether an individual is qualified for a two-year residency program is to be made by the mentor, based on guidelines developed by the ACVB Specialty Training Committee.

   c) **Location.** The program should be at a veterinary medical facility with a strong faculty in a variety of disciplines and specialties and a program of veterinary behavioral medicine recognized by the Corporation.

   d) **Training.** Behavior training must be directly supervised for at least 18 months by at least one ACVB certified Diplomate until the approved institutional program is completed.

   e) **Program Evaluation.** Existing recognized traditional behavioral residency training programs will be periodically reevaluated by the ACVB Specialty Training Committee. Programs should be reevaluated every 10 years. In addition, if the program director believes the program has substantially changed from the original proposal, or if a new program director is named, reevaluation is required.

2. Guidelines for Non-Traditional Behavioral Training Programs

   a) The Specialty Training Committee of the Corporation is responsible for the review and evaluation of individual non-traditional training programs.

   b) The candidate is responsible for submitting their proposed program for evaluation by the Specialty Training Committee. Proposed programs must include clinical specialty practice devoted to diagnosing and treating clinical veterinary behavior cases. This submission and
evaluation should occur as soon as possible after registration with ACVB under the guidelines set by the Specialty Training Committee.

c) An eligible candidate must participate in a mentored training program that includes experiences similar to those expected in a traditional program. These experiences include an internship or equivalent experience, sufficient clinical behavior training in a mentoring relationship with an ACVB Diplomate, as well as other areas of emphasis as described under Section 3, Residency Training Program Requirements, of this Policy.

d) Upon completion of training, the candidate must submit, with the application, a written statement containing all information necessary and required to judge their qualifications including letters of evaluation by ACVB Diplomates, publications, and other evidence of professional experience, training and competence as required by the Specialty Training Committee and Credentialing Committee.

3. Residency Training Program Requirements

a) All residencies are designed to educate the resident primarily in veterinary behavioral medicine and also in the related disciplines of anatomy, clinical pathology, ethology, internal medicine, neurology, neuroscience, neurosurgery, pathology, pharmacology, physiology, and psychology. The emphasis should be divided with approximately 50% in behavioral medicine, 25% in related basic science, and 25% in related clinical science. Residency training programs which include training towards an M.S. or Ph.D. must be at least three (3) years in length with at least 50% of time devoted to clinical training. The following provide specific emphases of the residency program:

i. **Broad Background.** The residency should provide intensive training in behavioral therapy including major responsibility for the care of patients. The candidate should acquire a broad working knowledge of anatomy, pathology of all body systems, physiology, internal medicine, an in-depth knowledge of the nervous system, and physiological determinants of behavior. While clinical training will, in most cases, emphasize domestic and laboratory animals, experience with other species should be encouraged.

ii. **Case Load.** A sufficient case load must be available to provide experience with all types of problem and abnormal behavior in as many different species as possible. The exact number of cases required will be established by the Specialty Training Committee. The resident should have primary responsibility for cases, including receiving, diagnosis, management, client communication, and case follow-up. The resident should be encouraged to provide consultation on behavioral problems faced by members of other services and clinicians of the hospital. Patient care and case work-up should constitute 65-75% of the resident's time. Behavior cases under the care of a behavior resident must be reviewed regularly by an ACVB Diplomate. Consultation with other qualified faculty should be encouraged, but cannot replace regular review by the Diplomate.
iii. **Attendance at Seminars; Teaching Experience.** In-depth knowledge of a specialty cannot be gained by patient care alone. Comprehensive knowledge of the field should be gained by regular attendance and participation in seminars, rounds, and case conferences, and by attendance at one or more national meetings of relevant professional societies. Experience in teaching the specialty, by conducting clinical specialty rounds, presentation of patients to colleagues in seminars, and preparation of lectures should be encouraged. Sufficient time free from clinical responsibilities should be available to the resident for attending seminars, developing research, course work, and self-study. Guidance and evaluation of these activities should come from an ACVB Diplomate.

iv. **Course Work.** Desirable comprehensive behavior residency needs training beyond case work. Residents are required to complete a minimum of six (6) training modules. Modules should include some combination of college upper division/graduate level offerings in animal behavior (zoology or psychology departments), comparative psychology, developmental psychology, physiological psychology, neuroscience, learning theory, behavior modification, psychopharmacology, and client counseling; clinical experiences in specialty level services; and off-site courses where appropriate. An organized self-study program should be developed by the resident, in consultation with the supervising Diplomate. A comprehensive reading list should be provided by the supervising Diplomate to the resident at the start of the program including standard texts in general animal behavior, behavioral therapy, and behavior of domestic animals. Important current and past empirical, clinical, and review papers should be recommended.

v. **Research.** Experience in research, either clinical or laboratory, is valuable in fostering habits of scholarship and critical thinking. Development of a suitable research project, including design, execution, evaluation, and publication is essential. Publication or proof of acceptance of at least one scientific paper as first author in the area of animal behavior to a refereed journal is required for acceptance of credentials. Single case reports will not be allowed as substitutes for a scientific paper, but their publication should be encouraged.

vi. **Inquiries and Submission of Credentials.** All inquiries and requests for registration forms, lists of traditional residencies, and specialty credentials packets should be made through the Executive Director of the ACVB. Completed credentials packages (fees, case reports, letters of reference, etc.) should be mailed directly to the ACVB Executive Director.
The American College of Veterinary Behaviorists (the “Corporation” or “ACVB”) is the preeminent organization for veterinarians who specialize in veterinary behavioral medicine. As such, the Corporation expects its Diplomates and Members to maintain their credentials and to operate at high professional standards. Further, any registered resident who aspires to become a Member or Diplomate must follow the Corporation’s standards for conduct and competence. This Discipline and Appeals Procedure Policy (“Policy”) sets forth the Corporation’s ability to discipline its Diplomates and Members who fail to comply with the Corporation’s terms for membership and registered residents who fail to meet the Corporation’s standards for conduct and competence and how such persons may appeal the Corporation’s disciplinary actions. Capitalized terms used but not defined in this Policy shall have the meaning given to them in the Corporation’s Amended and Restated Bylaws.

1. Discipline

   a. Disciplinary Action Against Diplomates, Members, and Registered Residents

      i. Diplomates, Members, and registered residents may be disciplined by the ACVB when the individual’s actions have been contrary to, or in violation of any provision and or ethical standards of the ACVB.

      ii. Diplomates may be disciplined if they fail to maintain an acceptable degree of competence in the practice of clinical behavioral medicine.

      iii. Discipline can include but is not limited to a letter of reprimand, fines, suspension, and dismissal from membership in the ACVB.

   b. Allegations of Improper Behavior. If any Member becomes aware that by unethical conduct, incompetence, fraud, or for other reasons any other Member has brought discredit upon the Corporation, that person should present their signed allegations in writing to the Board of Regents.

   c. Board Investigation. The Board of Regents shall investigate any signed written allegation received by ACVB. If investigation reveals that the evidence warrants action, the accused Member or registered resident shall be notified by the Board of Regents in writing of the details of all charges brought against them. The accused shall have full opportunity to reply in writing and to appear before the Board. The Board of Regents shall weigh the evidence and with the concurrence of a majority of the members of the Board of Regents, recommend suitable disciplinary action.
2. **Appeals Procedure**

   a. **Procedure for Appeal of Adverse Decision**

      i. If the Board of Regents decides that the conduct of a Member, Diplomate or registered resident warrants discipline, the Corporation’s actions may include, but are not limited to:

         1. Denial of certification of an individual;
         2. Denial of adequacy of credentials;
         3. Denial of a proposed residency program;
         4. Suspension of certification; or
         5. Failure of the examination.

      ii. In the event of an adverse decision by the Corporation, the Corporation shall advise the appellant or the mentor of the affected residency program of the procedure for appealing the adverse decision. An affected party desiring to appeal the adverse decision must adhere to the following procedure:

         1. **Grounds for Reconsideration or Review**: The affected party may petition for reconsideration or review of the Corporation's decision on the grounds that the Corporation has ruled erroneously by:

             a. Disregarding the established Corporation criteria for certification or approval;
             b. Failing to follow its stated procedures; or
             c. Failing to consider relevant evidence and documentation presented.

         2. **Petition for Reconsideration**

             a. An affected party may petition the Corporation to reconsider its decision by filing with the Corporation a written petition for reconsideration which shall include a statement of the grounds for reconsideration and documentation, if any, in support of the petition.

             b. Such petition must be received in the Corporation’s Executive Director's office within 30 days of the date the adverse decision is announced.

             c. The President shall name an Appeals Panel of three (3) Diplomates to review the petition. Diplomates named to the panel must have no conflict of interest with the appellant. The Panel may review only written materials, meet by telephone
conference or electronically, or at the discretion of the Chair of the Appeals Panel may call a special meeting to hear arguments from both sides of the issue. The affected party must pay for their travel costs and all other costs relating to their appeal.

d. The Appeals Panel will meet in executive session to reach a final decision. This decision will be transmitted to the Board of Regents for information. The decision will then be delivered in writing to the appellant, mentor or educational institution within 30 days of the date that the appeal was received by the office of the Corporation’s Executive Director.