

AMERICAN COLLEGE OF VETERINARY BEHAVIORISTS

A Texas Nonprofit Corporation

RESIDENCY POLICY

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 and 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) Residency Training Program Requirements

- a. All residencies are designed to educate residents primarily in veterinary behavioral medicine and related disciplines, including anatomy, clinical pathology, ethology, internal medicine, neurology, neuroscience, neurosurgery, pathology, pharmacology, physiology, and psychology.
- b. The ACVB Job Task Analysis (JTA) defines the educational requirements of the residency program, serves as the basis for the examination, and is the foundation of the Exam and residency programs. It would be expected that a veterinary behaviorist should have a thorough understanding of the tasks outlined in the JTA. The JTA can be found online.
- c. The emphasis should be divided with approximately 50% in behavioral medicine, 25% in related basic science, and 25% in related clinical science.
- d. All residents must finish their approved residency training program in no less than two (2) years and in no more than five (5) years from the time of registration.
- e. All residents must complete the entire certification process, beginning with registration, through training and credentialing, and pass the Exam within no less than two (2) years and no more than eight (8) years.
- f. Residency training programs that include training toward an M.S. or Ph.D. must be at least three (3) years in length, with at least 50% of the time devoted to clinical training. The following provide specific emphases of the residency program:
 - a) *Broad Background.* The residency should provide intensive training in behavioral therapy, including major responsibility for patient care. The candidate should acquire a broad working knowledge of anatomy, pathology of all body systems, physiology, internal medicine, and an in-depth knowledge of the nervous system and the physiological determinants of behavior. While clinical training will, in most cases, emphasize domestic and laboratory animals, experience with other species should be encouraged.
 - b) *Case Load.* A sufficient caseload must be available to provide experience with all types of problems and abnormal behavior across as many 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 hospital clinicians. 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 (Supervising Diplomate). Consultation with other qualified faculty should be encouraged but cannot replace the Supervising Diplomate's regular review. As part of the learning process, residents should observe the Supervising Diplomate as they progress through behavior cases, and these observations can count toward the individual's caseload. When observing a consultation as part of the caseload, the resident must be assigned primary responsibility for the case and be directly involved in all client communication and case follow-up. Without these components, the case cannot count as part of the Resident's caseload. If multiple residents are present for the observed case, only one resident can have primary responsibility for the case; e.g., the case cannot be counted toward the caseload of other observers.

- c) *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 through regular attendance and participation in seminars, rounds, and case conferences, and by attending one or more national meetings of relevant professional societies. Experience in teaching the specialty should be encouraged through conducting clinical specialty rounds, presenting patients to colleagues in seminars, and preparing lectures. Sufficient time free from clinical responsibilities should be available to the resident for attending seminars, conducting research, completing coursework, and self-study. Guidance and evaluation of these activities should come from an ACVB Diplomate.
- d) *Course Work.* A desirable comprehensive behavior residency requires training beyond casework. Residents are required to complete a minimum of six (6) training modules. Modules should include some combination of undergraduate, upper level, or 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 as delineated in the current resident packet; 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 recommended reading list is available online to the resident in the Resident/Candidate Resources section of the ACVB website, including standard texts on general animal behavior, behavioral therapy, and the behavior of domestic animals. Additionally, important current and past empirical, clinical, and review papers are available in the Resident/Candidate Resources section of the ACVB website.

- e) *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 scientific papers, but their publication should be encouraged.
- f) *Inquiries and Submission of Credentials.* All inquiries and requests for registration forms, lists of approved residency programs, and specialty credential packets should be directed to the Executive Director of the ACVB. Completed credentials packages (fees, case reports, letters of reference, etc.) should be submitted through the current online portal.

2) Guidelines for Approved Behavior Programs

- a. *Length.* The residency program shall be at least two (2) years in length following at least one (1) year of training (internship or its equivalent) in veterinary practice. Programs lasting two (2) years will be approved only for residents with sufficient previous education in animal behavior.
- b. *Qualification.* The Supervising Diplomate (SD) will determine whether an individual is qualified for a two-year residency program, based on guidelines developed by the ACVB Specialty Training Committee.
- c. *Location.*
 - a) *Institutional*
 - 1. The program should be at a facility with a veterinary behavior medicine program recognized by the Corporation.
 - b) *Individual*
 - 1. The program should be at a facility as approved by the STC in line with the resident's individual behavior residency program application.
- d. *Training.*
 - a) *Institutional*
 - 1. Behavior training must be directly supervised for at least 18 months by at least one ACVB Diplomate until the approved institutional behavior residency program is completed.
 - b) *Individual*
 - 1. An eligible candidate must participate in a mentored training program that includes experiences comparable to those expected in an institutional behavior residency program. These experiences include an

internship or equivalent experience, sufficient clinical behavior training in a mentoring relationship with an ACVB Diplomate, and other areas of emphasis described in this Policy.

e. *Program Evaluation.*

a) *Institutional*

1. Existing approved Institutional behavior residency programs will be periodically reevaluated by the ACVB Specialty Training Committee. University programs must be reevaluated every 10 years, while private practice programs must be reevaluated every 5 years.
2. 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.

b) *Individual*

1. The Specialty Training Committee of the Corporation is responsible for reviewing and evaluating individual behavior residency training programs. 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. This submission and evaluation should occur as soon as possible after registration with ACVB, in accordance with the guidelines set by the Specialty Training Committee.
2. Upon completion of training, the candidate must submit, with the application, a written statement containing all information necessary to judge their qualifications, including letters of evaluation from ACVB Diplomates, publications, and other evidence of professional experience, training, and competence, as required by the Specialty Training Committee and the Credentialing Committee.

3) ACVB Resident Packet Process

- a. It is the intent of the ACVB that the process for becoming a Resident be fair, transparent, and consistent and that each applicant follows the process in the current year's ACVB Applicant Packet ("Packet") and pays the relevant fees contained in ACVB Resident Schedule of Fees.
- b. No later than six (6) months before the effective date of a material change to the Resident Packet, ACVB will communicate any material change to the Resident Packet from a prior year to all individuals registered as residents with the ACVB.
- c. When an applicant joins an ACVB Residency program, they register with the ACVB. The published Resident Packet for the year of the resident's initial registration is considered to be the packet in effect (registered packet).

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- d. When changes are made to the ACVB Resident Packet, the resident may select the most current published packet as their registered Packet.
 - e. The Resident must give ACVB Executive Director and their Supervising Diplomate written notice through the current accepted channels no later than sixty (60) days after the release of the new Packet stating which Packet they intend to keep as their registered Packet.
 - f. If a resident chooses not to adopt the most current packet as their registered resident packet, the resident's residency will be governed by all aspects of the packet that was most recently registered with the ACVB by the resident except for any new communication processes, fees, or certification processes set forth in the most current ACVB Residency Documents.
 - g. Residents may not choose a previous ACVB Resident Packet instead of their current one.
- 4) In the event of a conflict between this Residency Policy and any Packet, this Residency Policy shall govern.