

AMERICAN COLLEGE OF VETERINARY NUTRITION CERTIFYING MANUAL

The information contained in this “Manual” was submitted for publication on March 14, 2021 and it becomes effective on March 31, 2021. It represents the current policies, procedures and requirements for individuals interested in certification by the American College of Veterinary Nutrition (ACVN® or the “College”).

MISSION STATEMENT

The primary objective of the American College of Veterinary Nutrition is to advance the specialty area of veterinary nutrition and increase the competence of those who practice in this field by establishing requirements for certification in veterinary nutrition, encouraging continuing professional education, promoting research, and enhancing the dissemination of new knowledge of veterinary nutrition through didactic teaching and postgraduate programs.

The ACVN is the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) recognized certifying organization for a Board Certified Veterinary Nutritionist®. The ACVN undergoes a comprehensive evaluation by the American Board of Veterinary Specialties (ABVS) every three years to ensure that we are maintaining the required standards in our certification process.

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This first edition of the ACVN Certifying Manual was formerly the Article VI Bylaws. The only additions are information regarding the new Training Benchmark system and Section 6: Maintenance and Annual Review of the ACVN Certifying Manual. The case report system is now designated as only pertaining to residents who began training programs prior to the institution of this manual.

The policies and procedures outlined in this edition of the ACVN Certifying Manual are in effect for all residency program sites planning to train residents and for all residents.

Section 1: Requirements for eligibility to sit for the examination for certification as a Diplomate of the College shall be as follows:

- a. Applicants shall procure, by written request to the Secretary, a copy of the official application procedures and submit the completed application, along with other required documents and fees to the Secretary and Treasurer, respectively, by the designated deadline.
- b. To be declared eligible for examination, each applicant must satisfy the following requirements in addition and shall have graduated from a college or school of veterinary medicine accredited by the AVMA; or possess a certificate issued by the Educational Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates (ECFVG); or be legally qualified to practice veterinary medicine in some state, province, territory, or possession of the United States, Canada, or other country.
 1. Have completed, prior to initiation of training one year of general clinical experience (e.g., internship, residency, or practice) or equivalent.
 2. Have completed either:
 - a. A minimum of two years of training in a Standard Training Program previously reviewed and recommended by the Training and Credentials Committee and approved by the Board, with emphasis in veterinary nutrition. The program should include clinical, teaching and research activities, but must include at least 52 weeks of on-clinic time in veterinary nutrition under the supervision of a Diplomate of the College. Program approval is required prior to initiation of training. The trainee must register with the Secretary no later than 90 days after beginning the training program. At least one-half of the training program (e.g., for a two-year program, at least one year of training, including at least 26 weeks of on-clinic time) must be completed prior to submission of credentials.; or

- b. A minimum of two years of training in an Alternate Training Program previously reviewed and recommended by the Training and Credentials Committee and approved by the Board as equivalent in training and experience to a Standard Training Program. The program should include clinical, teaching and research activities, but must include at least 52 weeks of on-clinic time in veterinary nutrition under the supervision of a Diplomate of the College, or under the supervision of a Diplomate of the European College of Veterinary and Comparative Nutrition. If the Alternate Training Program is to be completed under the direction of a Diplomate of the European College of Veterinary and Comparative Nutrition, then a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Nutrition must also serve as a co-mentor on the candidates training program. The co-mentor shall share responsibility with the ECVCN Diplomate for determining the training program and approving satisfactory progress of the candidate. Program approval is required prior to initiation of training. A response to the application for an Alternate Training Program (approval, disapproval, request for further information or clarification, or indication of program changes required for approval) shall be issued no later than 90 days after the application is submitted. After being approved by the Board, an Alternate Training Program shall not be subject to any additional requirements that might be imposed by the College at a future time unless mandated by the ABVS due to a legal or regulatory requirement update(s) or change(s). The trainee must register with the Secretary no later than 90 days after beginning the training program. At least one-half of the training program (e.g., for a two-year program, at least one year of training, including at least 26 weeks of on-clinic time) must be completed prior to submission of credentials.
3. Have published, or have provided proof of acceptance for publication, one scientific report in the area of veterinary nutrition as follows:
 - a. The applicant must be first or sole author. The publication must have resulted from the applicant's research or clinical investigation.
 - b. If published, a copy of the published manuscript showing the date of publication must be submitted with the credentials application. The date of publication cannot be more than five years old by the deadline for credentials applications.
 - c. If unpublished at the time of credentials application, proof of manuscript submission must be submitted to the Secretary no later than October 15 of the year credentials are submitted. Proof of acceptance for publication, along with a copy of the accepted version of the manuscript (including all images, tables and figures), must be received prior to issuance of the certificate. An e-mailed letter of acceptance from the editor of the publication can be submitted in lieu

of a paper letter from the editor, provided that the following conditions are met:

- i. The e-mail must contain the date of acceptance in the body of the message (not simply in the header);
 - ii. The e-mail must indicate the name of the manuscript; and
 - iii. The printout of the e-mail must show all routing information in the message header.
 - d. The manuscript must be published in a refereed, scientific, medical or veterinary publication. The topics of these publications should be relevant to the discipline of nutrition. Original research, retrospective studies, and prospective studies are examples of potentially acceptable publications. A refereed publication is one that is governed by policies and procedures established and maintained by a standing editorial board that requires critical review of all papers and approval of at least one recognized authority on the subject. Mainstream journals of major disciplines are acceptable providing the journals adhere to the principles of peer review, and the subject of the paper is relevant to nutrition. It is the candidate's responsibility to include a letter from the editor of that journal that outlines the editorial process in detail, should potential question exist with respect to rigor of peer review process (e.g., unfamiliar journal). If the letter does not adequately document to the Training and Credentials Committee that the journal is acceptable, the publication will be rejected without further review. Any questions concerning the acceptability of a publication or journal should be directed to the Secretary in writing, at least 12 weeks prior to the credentials deadline to allow for committee action on the request.
 - e. Papers such as expanded abstracts, book chapters, proceedings, review articles and case reports are not acceptable.
 - f. The information in the publication must not have been published previously by the same author, other than in abstract or proceedings form.
 - g. The publication must be written in or fully translated to the English language.
4. Have completed 4 Training Benchmarks prior to acceptance of credentials to sit the examination. For individuals completing their Training Program who have not passed the examination, 4 benchmarks must be completed prior to the acceptance of credentials to sit the examination. Residents and Resident Advisors may request and complete more than 4 benchmarks by notifying the Training and Credentials Committee who will make additional benchmarks available to them as they are released.

Benchmarks Summary Description

Training Benchmarks are educational (training) tasks assigned by the Training and Credentials Committee. Training Benchmarks are not intended to be graded in the traditional sense of a right or wrong answer. The intent of Training Benchmarks is to provide a vehicle for Residents and Resident Advisors to continuously compare the level of training against a set standard and to verify and reinforce the knowledge and/or skills of a Resident. Training Benchmarks ensure regular and continuous progress toward completion of the Training Program, preparation for examination, and provide Residents and Resident Advisors examples of the depth and breadth of information pertinent to the veterinary nutrition specialty. Training Benchmark assignments might include (but are not limited to) monographs on current topics, multi-part essay questions, multiple choice questions, and short answer questions.

Composition of Training Benchmarks

Benchmarks should enable the resident to demonstrate consolidation of knowledge and problem-solving skills to guide appropriate decision-making as a specialist. Benchmarks are designed to provide a framework of self-assessment by the Resident, a mechanism for discussion between the Resident and the Advisor, and a means for the Advisor to assess the Resident's abilities for critical thinking, research, and synthesis of information. As such, benchmarks should be framed as case vignettes that include pertinent history, clinical findings and diagnostic test results that allow residents to formulate problem lists, diagnostic plans and differential diagnoses. The benchmark should also explore their knowledge of the pathophysiology of diseases, nutritional issues, and diagnostic tests leading to disease and nutritional management.

The main purpose of the case vignette is to give context for the questions that follow, rather than lead the resident to a specific diagnosis and/or treatment plan. In other words, benchmarks are not written as a formative evaluative tool; rather they are written to provide a framework for discussion and debate including nutritional controversies. For example, a case vignette may center on a case of a dog with poor appetite and poor body condition as a result of concurrent IRIS Stage 3 chronic kidney disease and chronic pancreatitis. Residents could be asked to describe the physiology of appetite control, mechanism of action of appetite stimulants, techniques to assess lean body mass or body fat estimation, pathophysiology of calcium and phosphorus regulation, renal physiology, IRIS staging and nutritional modification at each stage, diagnostics relating to pancreatitis, nutrients of concern with pancreatitis, or placement of feeding tubes, comparative aspects of CKD or pancreatitis between dogs and cats, etc. Residents can be asked to create lists, tables, figures or compose focused short-answers or essays. Residents are expected to research topics and provide references that support their answers. Benchmarks can also have multiple choice questions of the type they can expect on the Certifying Examination. Questions for benchmarks can be derived and

refined from previous exam questions that the Examination Committee release from question banks. The main sources for the benchmarks will align with the ACVN Certifying Manual.

Assessment of Benchmarks

Approximately one month after release of the Benchmarks to the Residents and Mentors, the key to that Benchmark will be released to the Mentor. Mentors and Residents will have approximately one month to review the Resident's completed Benchmark and compare it with the Key. The intent is to spark in-depth discussion about the questions and responses and may include topics not specifically presented or covered in as great of detail in the Benchmark and Key. Mentors can and are encouraged to review Benchmarks with more than one Resident to foster discussion.

Schedule for Benchmarks

Training Benchmark assignments will be sent to Residents and Advisors twice a year. Answer Keys to Benchmarks will be made available to Resident Advisors approximately 30 days after release of benchmarks.

It may not be possible for residents who have completed their training program but are not yet credentialed to complete Benchmarks with their Resident Program Mentor. In this situation, the Resident may identify another ACVN Diplomate to accomplish this requirement or the Resident may contact the Training and Credentials Committee Chairperson who will facilitate identifying a surrogate mentor. In either situation, the Resident must request this change and this change must be approved by the Training and Credentials Committee.

Residents who have taken the Certifying Examination but have not successfully passed all sections may request access to additional Benchmarks. The Resident and Mentor must request access with the Training and Credentials Committee. If the Mentor is not available to assist the Resident, the Resident may identify another ACVN Diplomate to accomplish this requirement or the Resident may contact the Training and Credentials Committee Chairperson who will facilitate identifying a surrogate mentor. In either situation, the Resident must request this change and this change must be approved by the Training and Credentials Committee.

Schedule for Benchmarks (during transition from case reports starting in 2021)

Current residents** in training programs or candidates who have completed their training programs but have not had their credentials application package accepted due to an inadequate number of accepted case reports, may choose to complete benchmarks rather than submit case reports as described in the calendar below.

- For individuals who have no case reports accepted, 4 benchmarks must be completed
- For individuals who have 1 or 2 case reports accepted, 2 benchmarks must be completed

****NOTE:** this does not apply to residents or candidates who start their residency or training program after July 14, 2021.

CALENDAR FOR TRANSITION FROM CASE REPORTS TO BENCHMARKS

Year	Date	Action
2021	May 1	Release benchmark #1
	June 1	Release benchmark #1 key
	June 7-8	ACVN Certifying Examination
	July 1	Benchmark #1 assessment due
	July 15	New residents begin
	August 1	Release benchmark #2 - This would be the first benchmark for residents who started in July 2021
	August 15	Credentials application due including case reports
	September 1	Release benchmark #2 key
	October 1	Benchmark #2 assessment due - Residents with 1 to 2 accepted case reports would not need additional accepted case reports if completed benchmarks #1 and #2. Release benchmark #3 - Only to residents who have no accepted case reports and are transitioning from case reports to benchmarks
	October 15	Proof of publication submission due Credentials application packets review
	November 1	Release Benchmark #3 key
	December 1	Benchmark #3 assessment due Release Benchmark #4 - This would be the fourth benchmark for residents who do not have any accepted case reports; this would be the second benchmark for residents who started in July 2021
2022	January 1	Release Benchmark #4 key
	February 1	Benchmark #4 assessment due - Residents who have no accepted case reports would not need to complete case reports or additional benchmarks if they have completed Benchmarks #1, #2, #3, and #4
	February	Candidates notified of eligibility to sit examination (120 days prior to examination date)
	June	ACVN certifying examination
	August 1	Release Benchmark #5
	August 15	Credentials application due including case reports
	September 1	Release Benchmark #5 key

	October 1	Benchmark #5 assessment due
	October 15	Proof of publication submission due Credentials application packets review
	December 1	Release Benchmark #6
2023	January 1	Release Benchmark #6 key
	February 1	Benchmark #6 assessment due
	February	Candidates notified of eligibility to sit examination (120 days prior to examination date)
	June	ACVN certifying examination
	August 1	Release Benchmark #7
	August 15	Credentials application due including case reports
	September 1	Release Benchmark #7 key
	October 1	Benchmark #7 assessment due
	October 15	Proof of publication submission due Credentials application packets review
	December 1	Release Benchmark #8
2024	January 1	Release Benchmark #8 key
	February 1	Benchmark #8 assessment due
	February	Candidates notified of eligibility to sit examination (120 days prior to examination date)
	June	ACVN certifying examination
	August 1	Release Benchmark #9
	August 15	Credentials application due including case reports
	September 1	Release Benchmark #9 key
	October 1	Benchmark #9 assessment due
	October 15	Proof of publication submission due
	December 1	Release Benchmark #10

The Resident must complete ALL assigned Training Benchmarks using the following procedure:

1. Initial completion of the assignment by the Resident within 30 days of the Resident receiving the Benchmark.
2. Review of completed assignment by the Advisor, with appropriate corrections and additions discussed with the Resident.
3. Corrections made by the Resident.
4. Final review and discussion by the Advisor and the Resident.
5. Approval by the Advisor when the assignment is complete.
6. Notification of approval by the Advisor to the Training and Credentials Committee within 30 days of the Answer Key to the benchmark being released to the Advisor.

Completion is recorded by the ACVN Secretary and a record must be kept by the Resident. This information is provided to the Training and Credentials Committee. ALL Training Benchmark assignments must be completed to fulfill Training Requirements.

5. Have submitted reports of three clinical cases or herd problems having significant nutritional component(s) and in which the applicant has personally handled the nutritional management. Each report shall pass acceptability criteria as dictated by the Training and Credentials Committee. This requirement pertains to residents who began training programs before July 14, 2021. These residents have the option to move to the Training Benchmark system instead, using the transition calendar described above.
6. Have submitted a letter from the supervisor of the Standard or Alternate Training Program stating that the applicant has successfully completed at least one-half of the training program, including at least one-half of the required on-clinic time at the time of credentials submission, and endorsing the applicant for his or her qualifications to sit for the examination.

Section 2: Examination

- a. The Diplomate Certification Examination will be offered once annually, usually in conjunction with the annual meeting of the College. The Candidate must pass all sections of the examination no later than six years after his or her eligibility to sit for the examination was determined.
- b. Candidates deemed eligible by the Board to sit the Diplomate Certification Examination shall be notified of the date and format of the examination no later than 120 calendar days before the date of the examination.
- c. The examination, given over two consecutive days, will consist of three sections, with the latter two oriented to the track (comparative, small animal or large animal) selected by the candidate at the time of application.
- d. The sections of the examination will be as follows:
 1. Section 1 is a general four-hour examination covering principles of nutrition and related aspects of biochemistry, physiology, pathophysiology, general medicine and metabolic aspects of surgery. It will consist of 100 to 125 multiple choice questions and be given the morning of the first day;
 2. Section 2 is a four-hour examination covering aspects of practical nutrition (feeding and nutritional management), clinical nutrition and nutritional pathology. This section will be track-oriented as per candidate's request and

consist of 100 to 125 multiple choice questions given the afternoon of the first day;

3. Section 3 is a four-hour case-based essay examination covering nutritional assessment of an animal or group; assessment of food and feeding practice and development of a nutritional plan for an animal or group. Diet evaluation and formulation, specialized nutritional support, and nutritional problem solving situations will be expected. The problem-solving format will provide appropriate clinical case information and expect the candidate to determine a differential diagnosis, identify potential nutritional components to the problem, make therapeutic and dietary preventive recommendations, and discuss their rationale for case management. The species orientation of the essay questions will be the same as for Section II of the exam for the candidate. This section will consist of 3 total cases and will usually be given on the morning of the second day.
- e. Candidates taking the examination for the first time shall take all parts in the same year.
 - f. A minimum score, determined by psychometrically sound practices by the Examination Committee, approved by the Board, and communicated to candidates prior to examination must be achieved on each section in order to pass the examination.
 - g. Candidates shall be sent written notification of the results of the examination no later than 45 calendar days after the examination. All candidates shall be sent such notification on the same day.
 - h. Requirements for candidates failing one or more sections of the examination:
 1. A candidate taking the full examination but failing to pass only one section may re-take that section at the next scheduled examination without fulfilling other prerequisites, with the exception that he or she must submit a letter of intent to the Secretary and pay the examination fee for only that one section of the examination to the Treasurer. If it has been over six years since the candidate was first deemed eligible to take the examination, he or she must submit a new application with all required documentation, including new case reports (if applicable) or 4 Training Benchmarks and fees, to the Secretary and Treasurer, respectively, for review by the Training and Credentials Committee and approval by the Board, and if deemed eligible, must take the entire Diplomate Certification Examination.
 2. A candidate taking the full examination but failing to pass more than one section, or a candidate taking only one section of the examination but failing it a second time must re-take the entire examination. Such candidates must submit a letter

of intent, updated curriculum vitae, and examination fee to the Secretary and Treasurer, respectively. If it has been over six years since the candidate was first deemed eligible to take the examination, he or she must submit a new application with all required documentation, including new case reports (if applicable) or 4 Training Benchmarks and fees, to the Secretary and Treasurer, respectively, for review by the Training and Credentials Committee and approval by the Board, and if deemed eligible, must take the entire Diplomate Certification Examination.

Section 3: Certification

- a. Candidates passing all sections of the Diplomate Certification Examination shall be granted Diplomate status by the Board upon consideration of the recommendation by the Examination Committee.
- b. Diplomate certificates shall be issued to successful candidates by the Board no later than 90 calendar days after Diplomate status is granted.
- c. For those Diplomates who did not submit a letter showing completion of the training program in full at the time of credentials submission, the supervisor of the Diplomate's Standard or Alternate Training Program shall submit a letter verifying the Diplomate's successful completion of the training program prior to issuance of the certificate.
- d. Maintenance of Certification
 1. Certificates issued in 2016 or later shall be valid for a period of ten years from the date of the certificate. Certificates shall be reissued for additional ten-year periods to those Diplomates demonstrating continued professional activity in the field of veterinary nutrition.
 2. The Education Committee shall set minimum requirements for demonstration of continued professional activity in the field. Such requirements shall be published and available to all Diplomates.
 3. The Diplomate shall be responsible for maintenance of documentation sufficient to demonstrate compliance with requirements as set forth by the Education Committee. Documentation shall be subject to review and acceptance by the College prior to reissuance of a certificate.
 4. Diplomates receiving certificates issued prior to 2016, as well as Honorary Members and Emeritus Diplomates, shall not be subject to Maintenance of Certification requirements. However, Diplomates with certificates issued prior to 2016 are encouraged to voluntarily relinquish them for replacement with certificates that are subject to the Maintenance of Certification requirements. The replacement certificates shall be valid for a period of ten years from the date of the certificate.

5. First-year Diplomates shall be required to submit questions for future certifying examinations as instructed by the Examination Committee within one year of passing the examination.

Section 4: Appeals

- a. An institution whose Standard Training Program was denied may appeal this decision within 30 calendar days of the postmarked date of the notification.
 1. The appeal must be made in writing to the Chair of the Appeals Committee and shall include a statement of the grounds for reconsideration and appropriate documentation.
 2. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Chair of the Appeals Committee shall notify the President of the Board and the Chair of the Training and Credentials Committee.
 3. The Chair of the Training and Credentials Committee shall submit to the Appeals Committee documentation indicating the reasons for denial of the Standard Training Program, including, but not necessarily limited to, the complete application package of the institution and all available documentation pertaining to the Training and Credentials Committee's review of the application and recommendations to the Board.
 4. The Appeals Committee shall review the appeal and provide a decision to the Board and the appellant no later than 60 calendar days after receiving necessary documentation.
- b. An applicant whose Alternate Training Program was denied may appeal this decision within 30 calendar days of the postmarked date of the notification.
 1. The appeal must be made in writing to the Chair of the Appeals Committee and shall include a statement of the grounds for reconsideration and appropriate documentation.
 2. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Chair of the Appeals Committee shall notify the President of the Board, the Chair of the Training and Credentials Committee.
 3. The Chair of the Training and Credentials Committee shall submit to the Appeals Committee documentation indicating the reasons for denial of the Alternate Training Program, including, but not necessarily limited to, the complete application package of the applicant and all available documentation pertaining to the Training and Credentials Committee's review of the application and recommendations to the Board, except that such documentation shall be redacted to preserve anonymity of the appellant.
 4. The Appeals Committee shall review the appeal and provide a decision to the Board and the appellant no later than 60 calendar days after receiving necessary documentation.

- c. An applicant denied eligibility to sit the Diplomate Certification Examination may appeal this decision within 30 calendar days of the postmarked date of the notification.
 - 1. The appeal must be made in writing to the Chair of the Appeals Committee and shall include a statement of the grounds for reconsideration and appropriate documentation.
 - 2. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Chair of the Appeals Committee shall notify the President of the Board and the Chair of the Training and Credentials Committee.
 - 3. The Chair of the Training and Credentials Committee shall submit to the Appeals Committee documentation indicating the reasons for denial of eligibility to sit for the examination, including, but not necessarily limited to, the complete application package of the applicant and all available documentation pertaining to the Training and Credentials Committee's review of the application and recommendations to the Board, except that such documentation shall be redacted to preserve anonymity of the appellant.
 - 4. The Appeals Committee shall review the appeal and provide a decision to the Board and the appellant no later than 60 calendar days after receiving necessary documentation.

- d. A candidate failing to pass the Diplomate Certification Examination may appeal this decision within 30 calendar days of the postmarked date of notification.
 - 1. The request for appeal must be made in writing to the Chair of the Appeals Committee and shall include a statement of the grounds for reconsideration and appropriate documentation.
 - 2. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Chair of the Appeals Committee shall notify the President of the Board and the Chair of the Examination Committee.
 - 3. The Chair of the Examination Committee shall submit to the Appeals Committee a written statement of the reasons for the failure of the candidate. The Chair of the Examination Committee shall submit to the Appeals Committee the examination and scores of the candidate, the complete list of scores of all candidates on that examination, and a statement as to the criteria used for the Committee's recommendation for success or failure, except that such documentation shall be redacted to preserve anonymity of both the appellant and the other candidates.
 - 4. The Appeals Committee shall review the appeal and render a decision to the Board and appellant no later than 60 calendar days after being appointed.
 - 5. If an appeal is unsuccessful and the petitioner wishes to reapply to sit for the Diplomate Certification Examination, the deadline for application shall be extended three months from its designated date.

- e. A Diplomate failing to fulfill Maintenance of Certification requirements may appeal this decision within 30 calendar days of the postmarked date of notification.
 1. The request for appeal must be made in writing to the Chair of the Appeals Committee and shall include a statement of the grounds for reconsideration and appropriate documentation.
 2. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Chair of the Appeals Committee shall notify the President of the Board and the Chair of the Education Committee.
 3. The Chair of the Education Committee shall submit to the Appeals Committee a written statement of the reasons for denying recertification of the Diplomate. The Chair of the Education Committee shall submit to the Appeal Committee all documentation considered in that review and a statement as to the criteria used for the Committee's recommendation.
 4. The Appeals Committee shall review the appeal and render a decision to the Appellant and the Board no later than 60 calendar days after notification of the appeal.
 5. If an appeal is unsuccessful, the appellant may reapply for recertification beginning one year later.

Section 5: Nominations and supporting documentation for Honorary Members must be received by the Secretary no later than 90 calendar days before the annual meeting of the College.

- a. The name of the nominee and supporting documentation shall be distributed to voting members no later than 60 calendar days before the annual meeting.
- b. A ballot shall be distributed to the membership no later than 30 calendar days before the annual meeting.
- c. Appropriately identified ballots must be returned to the Secretary so that they are received no later than 15 calendar days before the annual meeting. The Secretary shall tally the vote and announce the result at the annual meeting.
- d. If a nominee is elected as an Honorary Member, that person shall be invited to the annual meeting to receive his or her certificate.

Section 6: Development, Maintenance and Annual Review of ACVN Certifying Manual

1. Development and ongoing maintenance and annual review of the ACVN Certifying Manual will be the task of the Training and Credentials Committee.

2. The ACVN Certifying Manual will undergo an annual 30-day review on April 1st by the Training and Credentials Committee, and electronically announced to the membership.
 - a. Any proposed changes from the membership will be submitted in a written format to Secretary before the end of the 30-day review period (May 1st).
 - b. The Training and Credentials Committee will coordinate this process and be responsible for determining minor vs. major changes as follows:
 - i. A change determined to be "minor" and acceptable by the Training and Credentials Committee can be instituted into the next edition of the ACVN Certifying Manual. Minor changes are defined as changes of the technical aspects of The Manual, i.e., wording, spelling or punctuation edits, updating the date/year of deadlines, and/or section reorganization within the document.
 - ii. A change determined by the Training and Credentials Committee to be "major" is defined as a change in current training, credentialing, certification, or examination, i.e., waiving or adding requirements. Major changes must be approved by the Board prior to presentation to the membership for a vote.
 - c. A proposed major change must be explained and discussed with the membership via one scheduled Town Hall, which will then result in an electronic membership vote.
 - iii. A vote will be a written or electronic ballot to the appropriate voting membership, which will close in 10 business days. Eligible members not voting within the 10 business day deadline will not have their vote counted. An approval vote is a simple majority with no less than one-half of the eligible ACVN members participating in that vote.
 - b. The first annual review will occur after The Manual has been approved and followed for 1 year.
 - c. Should an issue with The Manual arise during the year between annual reviews, then the process described in Section 6.2.b will be followed.
3. Additionally, a change in the ACVN Certifying Manual may be recommended by ACVN legal counsel or mandated by the policies and procedures of the American Board of Veterinary Specialties (ABVS) in order for the ACVN to remain in compliance with requirements for full recognition as a veterinary specialty organization. In such cases, approval by the Chair of the Training and Credentials Committee and the Board will be sufficient to implement those changes. The Training and Credentials Committee Chair will notify the membership and all residents electronically of the change and the updated version of the Manual will be posted on the website.

Notification of Changes to The Manual

After this annual review process, the membership and all residents will be electronically notified that the new edition of the ACVN Certifying Manual has been reviewed, updated and the next edition will be posted on the website. The following statement will be updated:

“The policies and procedures outlined in this document are in effect for Residency Program sites planning to train residents and for residents whose Candidate Training Program starts between _____ and _____. (Example July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022) Policies and procedures are subject to change as mandated by the ABVS due to a legal or regulatory requirement update(s) or change(s).”