

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
AMERICAN VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
AMERICAN BOARD OF VETERINARY SPECIALTIES**

April 2024

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I ABVS PREFACE

The American Board of Veterinary Specialties (ABVS) of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) recognizes and encourages the development of recognized veterinary specialty organizations (RVSOs) and recognized veterinary specialties (RVSSs) promoting advanced levels of competency in well-defined areas of study or practice categories to provide the public with exceptional veterinary service. The Policies and Procedures exist in part to improve communications and understanding between the AVMA, AVMA members, RVSOs, RVSSs, and the public. This manual will be particularly useful for specialty organizations seeking AVMA recognition. The Guidelines for Establishment and Recognition of Veterinary Specialties can be found in this document. Suggestions on how the Policies and Procedures can be improved are welcomed by the ABVS.

II HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION OF THE AMERICAN BOARD OF VETERINARY SPECIALTIES

In 1950, the AVMA Board of Directors received applications for recognition from the first two veterinary specialty organizations. These applications were from the American College of Veterinary Pathologists (ACVP) dated February 10, 1950, and from the American Board of Veterinary Public Health (ABVPH) (now the American College of Veterinary Preventive Medicine) dated July 31, 1950. The applications were referred to the Council on Education (COE) and the Association of Deans of American Veterinary Colleges for recommendations. In 1951, the AVMA House of Representatives approved criteria for recognition of veterinary specialty organizations. At the same meeting, the House of Representatives approved recognition of the ACVP and the ABVPH and assigned the responsibility of reviewing future applications to the COE and the AVMA Board of Directors (BOD). In 1957, upon the recommendation of the COE and the Board of Directors, the AVMA House of Representatives granted recognition to the American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine (ACLAM).

In 1959, the COE recommended, and the House of Delegates approved, the establishment of an Advisory Board on Veterinary Specialties. The resolution establishing the Advisory Board on Veterinary Specialties also specified its composition and outlined its duties and directed the COE to review and take action on recommendations submitted to it by the Advisory Board on Veterinary Specialties. The initial meeting of the Advisory Board on Veterinary Specialties occurred on February 20, 1960. In 1961, the House approved two documents developed by the Advisory Board on Veterinary Specialties: one was titled *Procedures for Establishment of Veterinary Specialty Organizations*, and the other, *Rules for Organization and Operation of the Advisory Board on Veterinary Specialties*. The Procedures document restated the criteria approved by the Board of Directors in 1951. The rules, criteria, and procedures have been updated, revised, and approved by the House of Delegates in 1969, 1981, 1985, 1988, 1990, 1991, and 1992. The Advisory Board of Veterinary Specialties was renamed the American Board of Veterinary Specialties (ABVS) in 1992. In 2016, the AVMA Board of Governance requested that the ABVS consider a separation of activities. In 2017, the AVMA BOD approved a motion that reformed the ABVS as the recognition entity for veterinary specialties and created the Veterinary Specialty Organizations Committee (VSOC) as the membership body for recognized veterinary specialties. The ABVS shall have autonomous authority to establish standards for evaluation of organizations conducting credentialing and board-certification in a distinct field of veterinary medicine and to make decisions regarding recognition of those organizations as veterinary specialties. The VSOC may provide input to the ABVS regarding establishment of standards and recognition of an organization but VSOC has no authority over ABVS decisions. The most recent update of the rules, standards, and procedures of the ABVS were approved by the ABVS in 2021.

III OPERATING PROCEDURES OF THE AMERICAN BOARD OF VETERINARY SPECIALTIES

A. Officers

1. The officers of the ABVS executive committee consist of the chair and the vice chair.
2. The chair must be a veterinarian and cannot serve as chair until the third year of their term.
3. The vice chair must be a veterinarian and may not serve until the second year of their term.
4. Nominations may come from the floor during the ABVS annual meeting.
5. Elections are by a simple majority of the ABVS members attending the annual meeting of the ABVS. Officers serve a one (1) year term.

B. Duties

1. Chair—Conducts the meetings of the ABVS and the Executive Committee (EC), approves reports to the AVMA BOD, develops meeting agendas with the assistance of the EC and AVMA staff, and handles other matters as appropriate. Term of office is one (1) year, beginning at the close of the annual session of the House of Delegates, which is held in conjunction with the AVMA annual convention.
2. Vice-chair—Serves as chair in the absence of the chair. Attends meetings of the EC and handles other matters as appropriate.

C. Committees

1. Executive Committee
 - a. Membership—The chair and chair-elect shall be elected annually for a one-year term.
 - b. Meetings—Meets as needed to conduct business via teleconference, electronic communication, or correspondence.
 - c. Charge:
 - i. Reviews policy and procedures.
 - ii. Develops recommendations for ABVS review.
 - iii. Serves as a long-range planning committee.
 - iv. Develops the agenda for the ABVS annual meeting.
 - v. Reviews the merits of complaints concerning RVSO/RVSs and makes recommendations to the ABVS regarding the RVSO/RVS specified in the complaint.
 - vi. Addresses other matters referred to it by the ABVS Chair.
2. Policies and Procedures Committee
 - a. Membership—Comprised of three ABVS members appointed by the chair, with the advice of the EC, following the annual session of the AVMA House of Delegates. Terms are staggered three years such that one person is replaced each year.
 - b. Meetings—Meets as needed to conduct business via teleconference, electronic communication, or correspondence.
 - c. Charge
 - i. Evaluates the *Policies and Procedures of the ABVS* for their applicability to current ABVS processes.
 - ii. Drafts proposed changes to the *Policy and Procedures of the ABVS* as directed by the EC or the ABVS.
3. Petitioning Specialty Reviewers – At least two ABVS members will be assigned ad hoc to review each

petition or report submitted to the ABVS by a petitioning organization or provisionally-recognized specialty organization.

- a. Appointment – ABVS members will be assigned to review petitions and/or reports by the Executive Committee as needed.
- b. Charge –
 - i. Evaluates petitions from prospective veterinary specialty organizations as to their appropriateness for submission to the ABVS for action. If deemed in order and the petition appears complete, the reviewers will forward the petition and their recommendations to the EC for inclusion in the ABVS agenda. If the petition is incomplete, the petition will be returned to the petitioning organization by the reviewers with recommendations for resubmission.
 - ii. Review the interim report for every provisionally recognized veterinary specialty organization. The reviewers shall prepare a recommendation, including a motion on the current status and future development of each provisionally recognized specialty organization, which is due at the AVMA no later than two weeks prior to the next ABVS meeting for inclusion on that meeting's agenda. When a provisionally recognized veterinary specialty organization applies for full recognition, the interim report and the reviewer's recommendation will be submitted along with its petition for full recognition.
 - iii. Review and evaluate petitions for full recognition from provisionally recognized veterinary specialty organizations. The reviewers will consider the stage of development of the veterinary specialty organization and determine from the petition whether the organization appears sufficiently mature and functional to be evaluated by the ABVS membership. The reviewers will make appropriate recommendations to the EC for further action on the petition and actions required by the veterinary specialty organization.

4. RVS/O/RVS Report Review Committee

- a. Membership—Comprised of two ABVS members appointed by the chair, with the advice of the EC. One member shall serve as the committee chair and the other as the vice-chair. Terms are two years and staggered so that one member is appointed annually.
- b. Meetings—Meets as needed to conduct business via teleconference, electronic communication, or correspondence.
- c. Charge - the committee will assign ABVS members to:
 - i. Review the three-year reports of fully recognized veterinary specialty organizations and recognized veterinary specialties and makes recommendations to ABVS regarding continued full recognition.
 - ii. Review 1-year follow-up reports from RVS/Os/RVSs required to submit such in response to issues identified and makes recommendations to ABVS regarding full recognition or probationary status.
 - iii. Review annual reports from provisionally recognized RVS/Os/RVSs and makes recommendations to ABVS regarding continued recognition.

D. Policies of the ABVS

1. Recognition of Veterinary Specialty Organizations (RSVO) and Veterinary Specialties (RVS).
 - a. An AVMA-recognized veterinary specialty organization is one that meets the standards used by the ABVS to recognize independent organizations that certify veterinarians in a specialized field of veterinary medicine.
 - b. An AVMA-recognized veterinary specialty conducts certification of veterinarians within a clearly defined unique subset of an RVS/O based upon a species, discipline, or system

- related to that of the parent RVSO.
- c. The standards that an RSVO or its independent certification board must meet in order to be recognized by the AVMA are delineated in Appendix 1.
 - d. The standards that an RVS or its independent certification board must meet in order to be recognized by the AVMA are delineated in Appendix 1.

2. Statements on Integrity

To encourage ongoing confidence in the review and recognition process for veterinary specialty organizations, both the specialty organizations and the ABVS must be assured that functions assigned to each, respectively, are clearly understood. The following are some of the areas where special efforts must be made to ensure integrity.

- a. American Board of Veterinary Specialties
 - i. Considerations regarding recognition of veterinary specialty organizations by the ABVS must be based on the guidelines for recognition outlined in the *ABVS Policies and Procedures* manual. Application of these standard guidelines must be unbiased.
 - ii. Review of all reports and deliberation toward the assignment of recognition status must be conducted with the highest ethical standards. The ABVS adheres to a conflict of interest policy shown in D.3.
 - iii. All material and discussion of the ABVS regarding specialty evaluation must be confidential. This implies that such discussions may be held in Executive Session during the ABVS annual meeting.
- b. RVSO/RVS
 - i. The veterinary specialty organization, veterinary specialty, or independent certification board associated with an RVSO or RVS must present accurate information to the ABVS in its initial petition for recognition, its annual or interim report, its three-year in-depth report, and any other report required in the *ABVS Policies and Procedures* manual.
 - ii. The RVSO must refrain from misleading advertisement of the organization or its memberships credentials and must correct any inaccuracy.
 - iii. If an RVSO releases information regarding its recognition status, the information must be correct. Should misinformation be released, the RVSO must correct the information in a timely manner.
- c. Training Programs – training programs are programs intended to provide experiences, skill development, and knowledge base in a specialized field of veterinary medicine such that those individuals completing such programs would be eligible for certification within that specialized field. The program should incorporate activities reflective of the scope and depth indicated by a job task analysis for a specialist within that field of veterinary medicine.
 - i. RVSOs requiring residency training for certification eligibility must establish and publish training program criteria in sufficient detail to enable an individual, with the assistance of the training institution, to meet the requirements for certification in that specialty.
 - ii. Individuals pursuing certification in a veterinary specialty should enter training programs that can verify that they provide all training requirements established by the certifying body for that veterinary specialty. Individuals pursuing an alternate pathway training program must follow the guidelines of the particular certifying organization for that specialty to develop an alternative program that will fulfill the training requirements for that specialty.

d. Advertising and Directory Listings

- i. Veterinarians may legally advertise in any way that is not false, misleading, or deceptive. Advertising guidelines and interpretations are discussed in the AVMA Principles of Veterinary Medical Ethics (<https://www.avma.org/KB/Policies/Pages/Principles-of-Veterinary-Medical-Ethics-of-the-AVMA.aspx>) and the AVMA Guidelines for the Identification of Board-Certified Veterinarians (<https://www.avma.org/KB/Policies/Pages/AVMA-Guidelines-on-the-Identification-of-Board-Certified-Veterinarians.aspx>).
- ii. Veterinarians must not in any way imply they are certified by an AVMA-recognized veterinary specialty organization (i.e., board or college) unless they are so certified. Use of the term 'specialist' may expose a veterinarian to charges of deceptive practice unless the veterinarian is board-certified by a veterinary specialty organization or has otherwise had sufficient training and experience to justify use of that term.
- iii. The use of the terms "board eligible" or "board qualified" as an indication of special qualification is potentially misleading to the public and should not be used in any public communication or other solicitation.
- iv. Individual RVSOs are encouraged to provide guidance to their members in matters pertaining to advertising and directory listings. Diplomates may choose one of the following formats, as described in the AVMA Guidelines for the Identification of Board-Certified Veterinarians. The appropriate format will depend on the number of recognized veterinary specialties and subspecialties.

1) Examples for members of an RVSO with no RVS:

Name, Diplomate, American College of Veterinary Dermatology **or**
Name, Diplomate, ACVD **or**
Name, DACVD (generally reserved for publication in professional journals)

2) Examples for members of an RVSO with one or more RVS:

Name, Diplomate, American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine
(Cardiology) **or**
Name, Diplomate, ACVIM (Cardiology) **or**
Name, DACVIM (Cardiology)

3. Conflict of Interest

Avoidance of Conflict of Interest

To ensure that all matters dealing with recognition of veterinary specialties and veterinary specialty organizations are conducted in an unbiased manner, the ABVS has adopted a Conflict of Interest Policy. The policy extends and pertains to those ABVS members who have immediate family (parents, spouses, and siblings) in any of the potential conflict areas listed.

ABVS Members

No member of the ABVS shall participate in any way in recognition decisions who:

- Is a Diplomate of the specialty or specialty organization being evaluated.
- Is a Diplomate of a specialty or specialty organization that has identified significant conflicts or overlap with a new specialty or specialty organization being evaluated.

- Is, or has been, employed by the specialty or specialty organization being evaluated.
- Is, or has had, financial interest in the specialty or specialty organization being evaluated.
- Has reason to believe other conflicts of interest exist that have not been listed herein. (The member should communicate with the Chair of the Committee for clarification of any concerns.)

Conduct of ABVS Meetings

No member of the ABVS who has an identified conflict of interest shall participate in any way in recognition decisions. The individual shall leave the room when the report in question is being discussed. In cases where the existence of a conflict of interest is less obvious, it is the responsibility of any Committee member who feels a potential conflict of interest exists, to absent themselves from the room. This conflict of interest policy shall be limited to decisions regarding recognition and shall not infer conflict with other decision-making responsibilities.

E. Procedures for Determination of the Recognition of Veterinary Specialty Organizations (RVSOs) or Recognized Veterinary Specialties (RVSS) within RVSOs

Procedures for organizations to petition for ABVS recognition as an RVSO or RVS are found in Appendices 2 & 3, respectively.

The procedures that ABVS will follow to recognize either an RVSO or RVS are as follows:

1. The ABVS will not recognize duplicate or redundant organizations. In the event that two or more groups approach the ABVS concurrently for recognition for the same (or a very similar) specialty in veterinary medicine, the ABVS will encourage the two groups to communicate in order to determine if the groups will work together to create a unified petition for submission. Similarly, if a new group approaches ABVS for recognition in a specialty that is the same as (or very similar to) an already recognized ABVS specialty, the ABVS will encourage the two groups to communicate to determine if the new group can create a petition for recognition as an RVS under the umbrella of the currently recognized RVSO.
2. Upon receipt of a letter of intent (described in Appendices 2 & 3) from an organization petitioning for recognition as a new specialty, the ABVS will acknowledge its receipt in writing and either decide to accept the letter of intent, or request additional information, or communicate concerns about significant potential overlap with an existing RVS or RVSO as described in #1 above, or communicate that a petition from the group will not be considered. If the letter of intent is accepted, the ABVS chair will contact VSOC to identify two liaisons to mentor the emerging specialty during the petition process.
3. The ABVS will initiate a 90-day period for public comment on the proposed specialty to help determine the need for, and public acceptance of, a new veterinary specialty in the proposed field of veterinary medicine. The ABVS will solicit information and opinion through appropriate channels, which may include the following:
 - a. AVMA membership through an announcement in the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association and on the AVMA Web site.
 - b. Existing RVSOs.
 - c. Appropriate veterinary societies and academies.
 - d. Appropriate educational, research, governmental, military, commercial, and public bodies.
 - e. The ABVS will review the information and opinions gathered by public comment and forward it to the petitioning veterinary specialty organization. Concerns and issues raised by the public must be addressed by the petitioning organization in the formal petition for AVMA recognition.

2. The ABVS will receive annual updates from the VSOC regarding the status of the developing organizations.
3. Consideration of the initial petition (described in Appendices 2 & 3):
 1. Once the proposed specialty organization has submitted their initial petition, the chair of the ABVS will assign two reviewers (primary and secondary), one of which will be an ABVS member representing VSOC and the other a non-specialty veterinarian from the ABVS membership.
 1. The reviewers will evaluate the petition to assure that it meets the submission criteria as delineated in the contents of a petition as specified in Appendices 2 & 3 of the Policies of the ABVS. If complete, the reviewers will forward the petition to the ABVS EC, along with their recommendations; for inclusion on the next meeting agenda of the ABVS. Reviewers may ask the petitioning organization for more information or clarification prior to making a formal recommendation to the ABVS EC.
4. At ABVS discretion, a second period of public comment might be initiated.
5. ABVS will review the initial petition, and any public comments, and communicate to the petitioning organization information related to the strength of the petition and what, if any, gaps or weaknesses exist that the petitioning organization must correct in the final petition.
6. A complete, formal petition must be submitted to the ABVS within four years of receipt of the letter of intent and any revisions of the formal petition must be submitted within five years after receipt of the letter of intent. The ABVS will share the petition with the VSOC for review and comments.
 - a. The ABVS will consider the complete, formal petition for recognition as a veterinary specialty organization, as well as VSOC and public comments, at their annual meeting.
 - b. Following discussion, the ABVS will vote to accept or reject the formal petition.
 - c. If the petition is found to be incomplete, the ABVS will make appropriate suggestions to the organizing committee regarding additions or corrections. Revised petitions may be submitted within a period not to exceed five years after receipt of the letter of intent.
 - d. If the petition is found to be complete and the petitioning organization is found to meet all of the standards for recognition as described in the Policies and Procedures of the ABVS, the ABVS will consider awarding provisional recognition to the petitioning organization.
 - e. Organizations not attaining provisional recognition within five years of receipt of the letter of intent will not be given further consideration for recognition for an additional five-year period (that is, within 10 years after receipt of the letter of intent).
7. After a minimum of four years, but not more than 10 years, under provisional recognition, an RVSO or RVS may submit a request for full recognition to the ABVS. The ABVS may grant an extension of the 10-year time limit if an extension is requested in writing.
 - a. The ABVS will review the request for full recognition and make appropriate suggestions to the provisionally recognized veterinary specialty organization concerning any necessary additions or corrections. If the documentation indicates that the organization meets all of the standards for recognition and is functioning effectively, the ABVS will consider granting full recognition to the organization.
8. Adverse decisions regarding recognition of new, or existing, veterinary specialty organizations –
 1. At any point after receiving a letter of intent or during review of a petition for recognition of a veterinary specialty organization; or review of an existing AVMA-recognized veterinary specialty organization, adverse decisions may be rendered.

2. The ABVS should notify the organization of the adverse decision and the reasons for it within 30 days of the decision. The organization will be informed of its rights of appeal under the established appellate procedures of the ABVS.
3. The organization may take action to correct the deficiencies identified and re-submit a request for recognition within a time period not to exceed five years after receipt of the letter of intent or may appeal to the ABVS for reconsideration of the submitted petition. Organizations not satisfied by those results may appeal under the established appellate procedures of the ABVS.
4. Petitions for reconsideration or additional review must be made in accordance with the appellate procedures described in Appendix 4 of the ABVS P&P.

F. Maintenance of Approved and Provisionally Accepted RVSOs and RVSS

The ABVS will be responsible for assessment of RVSOs and RVSSs through review of the following.

1. Annual reports: RVSOs and RVSSs will submit updates annually for the purpose of tracking data related to the certification activities of the organization.
 - a. Submission
 - i. Each fully recognized veterinary specialty organization is required to provide an annual report for the ABVS. In the case of those RVSOs that have established an independent certification board, a report from that certification board will be required as a component of the annual report from the parent RVSO.
 - ii. A form for the annual report is provided (see Appendix 9). Reports are necessary to gather statistical data and to identify issues and potential problems and to ensure continued compliance with ABVS standards.
 - iii. Reports are due in the ABVS office by the date specified in the timeline in Appendix 6.
 - iv. Reports for fully recognized veterinary specialties must be submitted in conjunction with the report of the parent RVSO.
 - b. Review and approval
 - i. AVMA staff will mail electronic copies of the annual report forms (see Appendix 9) to the VSOC representative from each fully recognized veterinary specialty organization. It is the representative's responsibility to ensure that the annual report form is completed and returned to the ABVS on time. This includes the liaison with an independent certifying board for those RVSOs that have separated the credentialing process from the other activities of the RVSO. A summary of annual reports, including statistical information, will be developed by staff prior to the annual meeting of the ABVS and included in the agenda for this meeting.
2. Three-year in-depth reports: RVSOs and RVSSs will submit complete reports every three years detailing all activities of the RVSO/RVSS for the ABVS to assess assurance of compliance with standards for recognition. These reports will be in addition to the annual report, which must still be submitted by RVSOs and RVSSs.
 - a. Submission
 - i. Each fully recognized veterinary specialty organization (and their independent certification board, where such an entity exists) or recognized veterinary specialty is required to submit an in-depth report of its status and activities to the ABVS at three-year intervals following full recognition.
 - ii. The in-depth report must be organized as outlined in Appendix 10. Reports

- are necessary to gather current information and to assess compliance with the standards used by the ABVS as shown in Appendix 1.
- iii. Reports must be received in the ABVS office by the date specified in the timeline in Appendix 6 for consideration during a meeting of the full ABVS.
 - iv. Reports for RVSs must be submitted in conjunction with the report of the parent RVSO.
- b. Review and Approval
- i. ABVS will maintain a schedule of three-year report due dates for each RVSO/RVS and will forward that schedule to the VSOC for inclusion on the VSOC meeting agenda. To facilitate distribution of in-depth reports to the reviewers, each RVSO must submit an electronic copy of the completed report.
 - ii. The reports will be reviewed for accuracy, completeness, and compliance with the standards and procedures used for recognition of RVSOs/RVSs by members of the RVSO/RVS report review committee, as assigned by that committee's chair. Reviewers will contact RVSOs/RVSs for which any clarification of information within its report is necessary.
 - iii. Reviewers will complete a checklist and prepare a one- or two-page summary report for distribution to the ABVS. The criteria for recognition of veterinary specialties and specialty organizations are described in the standards for recognition listed in Appendix 1 and serve as a basis for review. Reviewers' reports must be received at AVMA headquarters as specified in the timeline in Appendix 6.
 - iv. Reviewers initiate and lead discussions and questioning of the representatives of the RVSO under review. The VSOC representative will be invited to the review if that individual is not one of the representatives on the ABVS.
 - v. One reviewer must be prepared to present a motion to the ABVS concerning the future recognition status of the RVSO under review.
 - vi. Decisions of the ABVS concerning recognition of an RVSO or RVS will be communicated to the RVSO or RVS within 30 days of the conclusion of the ABVS annual meeting.
 - vii. If an RVSO or RVS does not receive full recognition but instead receives probationary recognition or recognition with deficiencies, the RVSO or RVS must submit an interim report by November 1, to be reviewed by the Report Review Committee, which will make recommendations to the full ABVS at the next ABVS annual meeting.
3. Interim reports: Provisionally recognized RVSOs and RVSs must annually submit reports to the ABVS to assess progress of the organization towards full recognition.
- a. Submission
- i. RVSOs and RVSs (including those with independent certification boards) with provisional or probationary recognition by the AVMA are required to submit an interim report (see Appendix 11 or 12 for RVSOs or RVS's, respectively) each year that describes that RVSO's progress toward meeting the requirements for full recognition.
 - ii. This report must address progress toward meeting criteria (described in Appendix 1 of the ABVS) required for full recognition. The report must address any concerns that were raised in the previous year's review, if any.
 - iii. Reports are due as shown in the timeline in Appendix 6 for consideration during the spring meeting of the full ABVS.
 - iv. A form for interim reports, which is to be used by provisionally recognized RVSOs and RVSs, is included (see Appendices 11 and 12).

- v. Interim reports for veterinary specialties must be submitted in conjunction with the report of the parent RVSO.
- b. Review and approval
 - i. The reports will be reviewed for accuracy, completeness, and compliance with the standards and procedures used for recognition of RVSOs/RVSs by members of the RVSO/RVS report review committee, as assigned by that committee's chair. Reviewers will contact RVSOs/RVSs for clarification of information within the report.
 - ii. Reviewers will complete a checklist and prepare a one- or two-page summary report for distribution to the ABVS. The criteria found in Appendix 1 are the primary basis for assessment of the completeness, clarity, and adequacy of the report. Reviews must be received at AVMA headquarters by January 15.
 - iii. Reviewers initiate and lead discussions and questioning of the representatives of the RVSO under review. The VSOC representative will be invited to the review if not already a representative on the ABVS.
 - iv. One reviewer must be prepared to present a motion to the ABVS concerning the continued recognition status of the RVSO under review.

G. Recognition Reports

After each annual meeting, AVMA staff submits to the ABVS and the VSOC one or more reports, which may be in summary form, on recognition status for RVSOs or RVSs under review for full or provisional recognition to the AVMA BOD.

H. ABVS Reports to AVMA

After each ABVS meeting, AVMA staff prepares a report for distribution to the AVMA BOD and VSOC. The report will be reviewed by the ABVS and approved by the ABVS chair.

AVMA staff prepares an annual summary of ABVS and RVSO activity, including the number of current active members in each RVSO, which is included as part of the administrative report to the AVMA House of Delegates for review at its annual session.

I. Complaints

1. Against a Diplomat

- a. If the ABVS receives a complaint against a diplomate of an RVSO/RVS, the complaint will be referred to the executive director or secretary of the appropriate RVSO/RVS, and the person making the complaint will be notified of that referral.
- b. The complaint will be considered by the governing body of the RVSO/RVS.
- c. The RVSO/RVS will respond directly to the person issuing the complaint, with a copy of the response sent to the AVMA for ABVS records.
- d. A tally of complaints will be a part of the annual report of the RVSO/RVS.

2. Against an RVSO/RVS

- a. If the ABVS receives a complaint regarding the conduct of processes related to the certification program of an RVSO/RVS, the ABVS will consider that complaint and a response from that RVSO/RVS against published ABVS standards for recognition.

J. Disciplinary Actions

1. The ABVS is aware of the consequences of loss of recognition status, or failure to receive provisional recognition, and considers these matters seriously. Each situation that could result in adverse action by the ABVS will be considered individually. Upon findings of deficiencies during a review of a provisionally- or fully- recognized veterinary specialty organization (RVSO) or recognized veterinary specialty (RVS), or after investigation of a third-party complaint, the ABVS may recommend one of the following actions (such actions would automatically apply to any independent certification board which is affiliated with the parent RVSO or RVS):
 - a. Continued recognition with notice that deficiencies identified during the ABVS meeting must be corrected or addressed by a plan for correction, by the next regularly-scheduled meeting of the ABVS (the ABVS meets twice yearly, one in-person meeting in late winter and one teleconference in early fall). This outcome and the deficiencies identified will be communicated to the RVSO/RVS within 30 days after the ABVS meeting at which the matter was considered.
 - b. Assignment of probationary recognition status to an RVSO or RVS. Organizations receiving this status must develop a plan for correction of deficiencies within a timeframe established by the ABVS in which that correction is to occur, both of which are agreed upon by the ABVS. Organizations receiving this status should also notify all current and prospective candidates and training programs within 45 days of receiving notification from the ABVS.
 - c. Notice of intent to withdraw recognition of an RVSO or RVS. Organizations receiving this status should also notify all current and prospective candidates and training programs, as well as all current Diplomates, within 45 days of receiving notification from the ABVS. Withdrawal of recognition or change of status can result from:
 - i. Failure to meet, or maintain, standards for an RVSO or RVS as listed in Appendix 1.
 - ii. Failure to submit required reports by respective deadlines.
2. A specialty organization or specialty for which the decision to approve continued recognition was deferred pending a satisfactory response from the RVSO/RVS must be in full compliance with all criteria within a time frame directed by the ABVS. Failure to comply within this time frame will lead to a notice of intent to withdraw of ABVS recognition. Extensions of this time limit may, in rare circumstances, be considered by the ABVS in response to a written request if the organization has demonstrated significant progress to correct the deficiencies and has a solid, well-constructed plan to achieve full compliance.
3. The following procedures shall apply in considering a recommendation of intent to withdraw recognition by the ABVS:
 - a. Notice of a disciplinary action involving changes in recognition status will be communicated to an officer or CEO of the RVSO or RVS involved no less than 30 days prior to a regularly scheduled or special meeting of the ABVS at which the matter is to be considered. This notice will include a detailed outline of the complaint(s) received or alleged deficiencies. The notice will also be delivered to the VSOC representative of that RVSO or RVS.
 - b. An ABVS meeting will be convened, either in-person or by teleconference or web-based conference, at which at least 3/4ths of voting representatives to the ABVS must be present.

- c. Representatives of the RVSO or RVS will be given an opportunity to present relevant information and their views on the matter. Travel costs, if any, for representatives of the RVSO or RVS for in-person meetings will be at other than AVMA expense.
 - d. In executive session, and in the absence of all representatives of the RVSO or RVS involved, the ABVS will discuss appropriate action(s) to recommend. Possible actions include:
 - 1. Conclusion of the review with no further action.
 - 2. Decision that probationary recognition is assigned to the specialty organization.
 - 3. Decision that recognition of the specialty organization is withdrawn.
 - e. Any decision must be approved by a two-thirds majority of voting ABVS members present.
 - f. Any recommendation for action must include a full description of the reasons for the recommendation.
4. Organizations may appeal the assignment of probationary recognition status or the withdrawal of recognition status pursuant to the established appellate procedures of the ABVS, including a request for ABVS reconsideration of its decision pursuant to the appellate procedures.

Appendix 1

Standards for Recognized Veterinary Specialty Organizations (RVSOs) and Recognized Veterinary Specialties (RVSS)

A. Definitions

An RVSO is an AVMA-recognized veterinary specialty organization that meets the standards used by the ABVS to recognize independent organizations that certify veterinarians in a specialized field of veterinary medicine.

An RVS is an AVMA-recognized veterinary specialty that certifies a clearly defined unique subset of an RVSO based upon a species, discipline, or system related to that of the parent RVSO.

B. Standards for recognition of veterinary specialty organizations or veterinary specialties by the AVMA

For a veterinary specialty organization, veterinary specialty, or their independent certification board to be recognized by the AVMA, they must:

1. Demonstrate that improved veterinary medical services and knowledge will be provided to the public that advance the health and well-being of animals and/or people.
2. Serve a clearly defined need within the profession. This includes both a demonstration that there are a sufficient number of veterinarians who are interested in pursuing certification in the specialty, if established, as well as a demonstration that members of the public would value and utilize such service.
3. Have an adequate number of members to fulfill the functions and expenses required of a certification body, including verification of candidate credentials, examination development and administration, and provision of an appeal process independent from the credentialing and examination processes. ABVS recommends a minimum of 30 members for an RVSO and 18 for an RVS within a supporting RVSO to fulfill those functions. If diplomate numbers fall below these recommended amounts, the triennial report must provide a detailed description of how the needs of the college are being met and how the college is ensuring a sound and defensible examination process.
4. Represent a distinct and identifiable specialty of veterinary medicine, one that is supported by a base of scientific knowledge and practice that follows the tenets of evidence-based medicine. Strong consideration will be given to literature that provides evidence for efficacy or application. Randomized, controlled trials provide the best evidence, followed by other prospective studies and retrospective studies and, to a lesser degree, case reports.
5. Establish and abide by clearly stated standards for certification of diplomates.
6. The RVSO/RVS (or their independent certification board) must examine only veterinarians who:
 1. Have a degree necessary for the practice of veterinary medicine in some state, province, territory, or possession of the United States, Canada, or other country.
 2. Meet the education, training, and experience requirements established by the RVSO/RVS (or their independent certification board).
 3. Demonstrate unquestionable moral character and ethical professional behavior.

7. The RVSO/RVS (or their independent certification board) must certify only veterinarians who have fulfilled established training and/or experience requirements and who have attained acceptable scores on comprehensive examinations administered by the RVSO/RVS. Founding members of the RVSO/RVS may not be subject to the training requirements but will be required to pass the certification exam before being certified as a Diplomate.
8. Ensure that all training or experience requirements and all prerequisites for examination serve the purpose of assessing the competency of the candidate.
9. Establish routes through education, training, and experience to qualify candidates for examination. Information about these routes must be available to any potential candidate.
10. Not require any period that involves merely a passage of time (waiting period) between successful completion of formal training and eligibility to sit for examination. Experience requirements must be clearly defined, relevant to the objectives of the specialty, and amenable to evaluation. Knowledge of those requirements must be readily attainable by potential candidates.
11. Notify candidates promptly of any deficiencies in credentials that prevent their examination or certification by the RVSO/RVS (or their independent certification board). Applicants whose credentials are not approved must be notified of the Appeal procedure and deadline.
12. Adhere to the following examination procedures:
 - a. Examinations must reflect the professional competence expected of the diplomate based on a job task analysis. Job task analyses should focus on content regarding knowledge, skills, and/or abilities that is required for competent performance related to practice within the specialty. Job task analyses shall be performed at intervals determined by considerations including the rate at which knowledge in the field is evolving; the rate at which elements of the field are becoming obsolete; and/or the rate at which individuals in the field lose expertise in elements of the field. In any case, job task analyses shall be performed at least once every 10 years.
 - b. Examinations shall reflect the breadth and depth of the field for which certification is being awarded.
 - c. Time between final credentials decisions and the examination date must be sufficient (not less than 120 days) to permit adequate examination preparation or appeal of an adverse decision.
 - d. If a candidate's credentials are denied and an appeal is filed, the RVSO or RVS must review this appeal and inform the candidate of their decision at least 45 days prior to the examination date.
 - e. Candidates must receive a content outline (blueprint) of the exam and exam format prior to the exam. The exam blueprint must be an outcome of the job task analysis and should describe exam content categories and the percentage placed on each.
 - f. Passing points, or cut scores, shall not be set arbitrarily but rather shall be determined by psychometrically sound practices. The passing point may be adjusted lower than a previously published passing point, but not higher, after administering the exam.
 - g. Candidates must be informed prior to the examination of the passing point, or, if this is not determined in advance, the method of setting the passing point.
 - h. Avoid personal conflict, or the appearance of conflict, that could affect results of examinations.
 - i. All Candidates must be notified of their examination results simultaneously. Regardless of notification method, each candidate who took the examination must be notified of his/her result prior to notifying the general membership or the parent RVSO if certification is performed by an independent certification board. A

reasonable time limit must be established (not to exceed 45 days) for notifying candidates of the results of the examination.

- j. Candidates who do not successfully complete the examination (including any oral examination), must, upon request, be provided with an explanation of the deficiencies that prevented their passing the examination. The procedure for obtaining this review must be published by the veterinary specialty organization (or their independent certification board) prior to the examination.
- k. All candidates must be informed of their remaining eligibility and reapplication procedures.
- l. Accommodate reasonable requests from applicants with documented disabilities for special test considerations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Model language for ADA requests is provided in Appendix 13.
- m. Establish a formal appeal procedure for candidates in case of an adverse decision by the RVSO/RVS (or the independent certification board). The appeal procedure must appear in the constitution, bylaws, and/or policies and procedures documents (e.g., policy and procedure manuals, standard operating procedures) of the organization, and must accompany each application form and notification of an adverse decision. For those RVSOs with an independent certification board, the appeals process must be defined the same in the operation documents of both entities.

1. Each AVMA-recognized veterinary specialty organization must have a published procedure to ensure due process for appeal of adverse decisions.
2. The specific language of an acceptable appeal procedure is determined by the recognized veterinary specialty organization or specialty (RVSO or RVS, see Appendix 14 for suggested language).
3. Changes in appeal procedures must be reported to the ABVS in the RVSO/RVS's annual report.
4. The appeal procedure must be a part of the constitution or bylaws of the RVSO or RVS. In addition, it must be included on forms used by candidates who apply for certifying examinations.
5. The appeals process must be autonomous, that is, the committee considering and making a final decision for an appeal must not be comprised of individuals involved in the entity that made the adverse decision (e.g., credentials committee, examination committee, appeals committee, maintenance of certification committee, etc.), and must be distinct from that RVSO/RVS's current executive committee or board.
6. Upon acceptance of the report of the appeals committee, the executive committee board must act in a manner that is consistent with the decision of the appeals committee. The executive committee may only reverse a decision of the appeals committee if the decision is adverse to the appellant and not in accordance with fair procedure, contrary to applicable requirements, or otherwise arbitrary. The decision of the executive committee will be final.
7. Recognized veterinary specialty organizations are responsible for full implementation of their appeal procedures to ensure due process. The criteria for veterinary specialty organizations recognized by the AVMA should guide procedures and influence decisions in disputes between specialty organizations and dissatisfied candidates. These procedures and decisions must be fair and reasonable for all parties, in keeping with the objectives of RVSOs /RVSs and the goals of the AVMA.

13. Provide certification attesting to diplomate status:
 - a. There shall be one certification for each RVSO and/or recognized veterinary specialty (RVS), indicating the individual is certified in the AVMA-recognized specialty.
 - b. Certification of diplomate status will be issued by the certifying entity of the RVSO.
 - c. Certification is an assurance to the public that individuals have the knowledge and skills for the certification awarded.
 - d. Diplomate status should not be contingent upon membership dues in the organization issuing the certification. All Diplomates may be required to pay fees to maintain the processes related to the certification program.

14. Have a mandatory program for maintenance of certification (MOC). All awarded diplomate certification must be time dated. A MOC program requires actions by newly-certified diplomates to maintain their certification that includes an evaluation process by their RVSO/RVS to ensure compliance. For those RVSOs/RVSs with an independent certification board, the process for implementing MOC may be relegated to that board.

Each RVSO/RVS develops their own standards and protocols for their MOC program based on the following characteristics:

- a. Examinations may be used but are not required.
 - b. A point system may be used, and points may be accrued in a variety of ways (e.g., continuing education attendance or presentations, publications, serving on exam committees, etc.) as determined by the RVSO/RVS.
 - c. Evaluation of diplomates for MOC will occur a minimum of every 10 years from the date of their initial certification (or renewal of certification), but an RVSO may choose a shorter period of time if desired.
 - d. An honor system for compliance, with diplomates self-declaring completion of requirements, is acceptable. However, if an honor system is used, random audits of diplomate compliance must be performed at a frequency that can be justified by the RVSO/RVS.
 - e. MOC will not be retroactive to previously certified diplomates. That is, certificates awarded prior to the initiation of an MOC program (i.e., certificates that are not time dated) cannot be withdrawn for noncompliance with the MOC program.
 - f. RVSOs/RVSs are encouraged to initiate a system of voluntary replacement of original certificates that are not time dated with certificates requiring maintenance. Procedures for certification maintenance will be the same as those required for diplomates attaining certification after the program has been initiated.
 - g. For those diplomates for which it is applicable, MOC must be required to maintain diplomate status in an RVSO/RVS.
15. Encourage and implement special training beyond the professional veterinary degree to enhance the ability of candidates to meet certification requirements and to maintain the competence of diplomates. The RVSO/RVS may provide educational or training programs to enhance the preparation of candidates; however, the RVSO/RVS must not require candidates to complete educational or training programs provided by the RVSO/RVS for eligibility for certification.
 16. Avoid contracts or agreements leading to activities outside the scope of the stated objectives of the RVSO.

17. The constitution and/or bylaws and/or policies and procedures documents (e.g., policy and procedure manuals, standard operating procedures) of RVSOs and RVSs and any independent certification board created by an RVSO or an RVS must contain elements as specified in the Standards for Recognition in the Policies and Procedures of the ABVS. Organizations must notify the ABVS of all changes in the RVSOs, the RVSs, and the independent certification board's constitution, bylaws, and/or other policies and procedures documents at the time of the next annual report. Annual reports must include previous and newly accepted wording.

An RVSO with one or more RVSs may have:

1. One constitution delineating the operations of the RVSO and separate bylaws delineating the functions and operations of each RVS, or
 2. A single constitution and bylaws clearly delineating the operations of the RVSO and the functions and operations of each RVS, or
 3. A single bylaws clearly delineating the operations of the RVSO and the functions and operations of each RVS.
18. Be legally incorporated as a not-for-profit educational organization within a state or district of the United States, and have a determination made as to the federal tax status of the organization. Groups are encouraged to incorporate and secure tax exemption under section 501(C)(3) or 501 (C) (6) of the Internal Revenue Service code. An RVS need not be incorporated separately from the parent RVSO.

Appendix 2

Procedures for obtaining AVMA recognition of a veterinary specialty organization

Groups seeking ABVS recognition as a veterinary specialty organization should consult the timeline in Appendix 7 for important dates related to that process. Procedures include submission of a letter of intent and information to support a call for public comment, at least one period of public comment, submission of the results of a job task analysis and preliminary petition, and submission of a complete, formal petition for provision recognition. Provisional recognition will be for no less than four and no more than 10 years during which a request in support of full recognition will be submitted.

The ABVS will not recognize more than one specialty organization in a substantially similar field of veterinary medicine. In the circumstance that two or more groups approach the ABVS concurrently with the intent to seek recognition for the same (or a very similar) specialty in veterinary medicine, the ABVS will encourage the two groups to communicate to determine if the groups will work together to create a unified petition for submission. Similarly, a group approaching the ABVS for recognition in a field of veterinary medicine that overlaps substantially with an already existing RVSO/RVS will be directed to contact that organization to determine future direction or viability, if any.

1. A group of veterinarians seeking AVMA recognition for a veterinary specialty organization must submit a letter of intent before the date listed in the timeline in Appendix 7 containing the following information:
 - a. Acknowledgement that the organizing group has read and understands the standards that the ABVS uses as basis for AVMA recognition.
 - b. A statement that the organizing group has read the procedures for obtaining AVMA recognition.
 - c. A brief (1 paragraph) description of the scope of practice intended for recognition as well as justification that the proposed specialty organization is distinct from presently recognized RVSOs or their RVSSs.
 - d. Specify if there is going to be an affiliated, independent certifying body and, if so, the proposed relationship between the RVSO or RVS and the certifying agency.
 - e. A list of the organizing committee members and their qualifications based upon the criteria below (including current CV). A separate letter of agreement to serve on the organizing committee from each individual identified should accompany the letter of intent.

A veterinary specialty organization seeking AVMA recognition must designate an organizing committee limited in number to those essential to conduct the business of the specialty and to achieve provisional recognition. Members of the organizing committee must be veterinarians recognized as exceptionally qualified and who meet one or more of the following criteria:

- a. Be a professor practicing or teaching the proposed specialty in a college or department of veterinary medicine.
- b. Be an author of important publications relevant to the emerging specialty resulting from research or practice in the specialty.
- c. Have at least 10 years of experience in the specialty and, by teaching, research, or practice, have contributed substantially to the development of the specialty.

- d. Have advanced training in the specialty and have demonstrated competency through teaching, research, or practice in the specialty to which most of the individual's professional time is devoted.

Members of the organizing committee:

- a. Should be no fewer than 30 for a veterinary specialty organization and no fewer than 18 for a veterinary specialty.
 - b. Should include representatives from academia, research, industry, government, and the private sector where appropriate.
 - c. Should come from diverse geographical areas.
 - d. May include diplomates of another RVSO to assist in the organization of the new specialty but who do not wish to become a diplomate of the new specialty.
 - e. Will be "founders" of the RVSO but not be considered diplomates unless, or until, completion of the certification requirements of the RVSO.
 - f. May submit credentials and if accepted, sit the certification examination to become diplomates of the new specialty organization upon its recognition through examination.
2. Organizations seeking ABVS recognition must submit yearly progress reports until submission of their petition. Petitions for provisional recognition must be submitted to the ABVS within four years of receipt of the letter of intent.
3. VSOC liaisons and public comment:
Upon acceptance of a letter of intent from an emerging new specialty, the chair of the ABVS will encourage the emerging specialty to work with VSOC-appointed liaisons who will help the organizing committee of the emerging specialty to prepare the petition. The organizing committee will be asked to submit a one-page description of the proposed specialty organization that will serve as the basis for solicitation of public comment. The primary purposes of public comment are to gauge both the distinctiveness of the proposed specialty from currently recognized RVSOs and RVSs as well as the public need for, and potential acceptance of, a veterinary specialty in the intended facet of veterinary medicine.
- a. The ABVS will review the letter of intent at their spring meeting and, if accepted, the period of public comment will begin shortly thereafter. The ABVS will solicit information and opinion from the following groups:
 - i. The AVMA membership through an announcement in the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* and on the AVMA Web site.
 - ii. Existing RVSOs.
 - iii. Appropriate veterinary societies and academies.
 - iv. Appropriate educational, research, governmental, military, commercial, and public bodies.
 - b. The ABVS will review the information and opinions gathered by public comment and forward it to the petitioning veterinary specialty organization. Concerns and issues raised by the public must be addressed by the petitioning organization in the formal petition for AVMA recognition. The period of public comment is used to gauge the need for, and public acceptance of a new veterinary specialty from diverse stakeholders.

4. Submission of an initial petition for provisional recognition of a veterinary specialty or specialty organization.
 - a. Once the proposed specialty organization is ready to move forward with their petition, the organizing committee of the petitioning veterinary specialty organization must submit the information specified below in the contents for a petition for recognition by the deadline shown in Appendix 7.
 - b. If the petition is complete, a second period of public comment may be initiated at ABVS discretion before the complete, formal petition is submitted.

5. Contents for a petition for recognition of a new veterinary specialty organization
 - a. The petition must contain a curriculum vitae for each member of the organizing committee.
 - b. The petitioning organization must document that it meets the standards for a veterinary specialty organization recognized by the AVMA as specified in the Policies and Procedures of the ABVS. Each item must be specifically addressed.
 - c. The petitioning organization must document the number of individuals anticipated to pursue diplomate status of the specialty and convince the ABVS that, within a reasonable period of time, growth of the veterinary specialty organization will result in a number of specialists that will have an impact on organized, private, corporate, academic, industrial, or governmental veterinary medicine and the public.
 - d. The petitioning organization must justify its role in fulfilling a recognizable need and demonstrate that its existence is acceptable to the profession and the public.
 - e. The petitioning organization must identify the base of scientific knowledge and practice that forms the basis for recognition as a specialty and distinguishes it from all existing RVSOs. It will be necessary to:
 - i. Define the scientific basis of the proposed specialty, and particularly the evidence supporting efficacy for petitioning organizations with a clinical basis.
 - ii. Relate the subject matter to current professional and postgraduate veterinary medical curricula.
 - iii. Describe how diplomates would be employed in public, institutional, and private practice (including the approximate number employed in each category, and the scientific disciplines relevant to each category).
 - iv. Describe current or proposed continuing education programs.
 - f. There must be a description of relationships and commonalities with existing RVSOs.
 - g. There must be an explanation of why the relationships and commonalities with existing organizations are insufficient to warrant inclusion as a veterinary specialty or veterinary subspecialty of an existing organization.
 - h. There must be a job task analysis. This information will be used to determine the breadth and depth of the proposed specialty; how much, if any, overlap there may be with an existing recognized veterinary specialty; and to establish that the proposed specialty will provide a veterinary need.

- i. A copy of the proposed constitution and/or bylaws and all available policies and procedures documents must be submitted, which shall contain within these documents, at minimum:
 - i. The name of the RVSO/RVS.
 - ii. A statement of objectives.
 - iii. Titles, election procedures, and duties of officers.
 - iv. A description of membership categories, including duties, privileges, and method of selection for each.
 - v. Descriptions of qualifying routes, within and outside of standard residency or degree programs, to qualify candidates for examination in a timely manner. Descriptions must include required education, experience, publications, teaching, research, nature of supervision of the candidate, and the qualifications of the mentor(s).
 - vi. A description of the scope and nature of certifying examinations.
 - vii. Procedures for establishing and amending dues and fees.
 - viii. Causes and procedures for censuring or suspending diplomates or canceling certification.
 - ix. Procedures for appealing adverse decisions.
 - x. Procedures for conducting business and meetings.
 - xi. Procedures for amending the constitution and/or bylaws.
 - xii. A letter of intent regarding creation of an RVS independent certification board, if such an entity is planned, describing how that entity will be related to the parent RVSO and how its independence in the certification process will be sustained.

- j. There must be a description of how the specialty plans to organize and initiate its functions (e.g., how the initial officers will perform their duties, how examinations will be prepared, administered, and monitored, and how training programs will be established). This will include a description of the relationship between the proposed RVSO and the RVS or their independent certification board if one is to be created.

- k. There must be evidence that facilities and programs are available for advanced training of veterinarians that will lead to certification in the veterinary specialty. A description of existing educational programs, including established postgraduate educational programs and the number of people in these programs must be provided. Objectives, measures of competence, and expected contributions and measurements of the success of such programs should be specified. Evidence for the continued existence and growth of educational programs in the veterinary specialty must be included.

- l. A list of current and past officers of the organizing agency and a list of proposed founders of the veterinary specialty must be included, if applicable. Founders must be members of the organizing committee.

- m. There must be a financial statement.

- n. Any organization seeking new AVMA recognition as an RVSO or RVS, must represent to the AVMA that it is the owner of its name and logo and is entitled to use its name, logo and acronym in commerce; and that to the best of its knowledge and belief, no other person, firm, corporation, or association has the right to use its name in commerce, either in identical form or in such near resemblance thereto as to be likely to cause confusion, mistake, or deception.

6. Submission of the final petition for provisional recognition of a veterinary specialty or specialty organization.
 - a. The final petition must be submitted to the ABVS within four years of receipt of the letter of intent. It must be submitted by the deadline shown in Appendix 7 to be included at the next meeting of the ABVS.
 - b. The petition will consist of the contents of the initial petition, with revisions noted to address concerns addressed by ABVS review and concerns raised through the public comment period.
 - c. Representatives of the organizing group will be invited to attend, at their own expense, the meeting of the ABVS when their petition will be considered.

7. Provisionally recognized veterinary specialty organizations
 - a. If provisional recognition has been granted, the newly recognized veterinary specialty organization may be given direction by the ABVS for future growth and enhancement of processes and should take any necessary steps to complete formalization of its structure and proceed to function under its constitution and/or bylaws, including the creation of an independent certification board if that was outlined in their approved petition. The RVSO/RVS (or their independent certification board) may examine and certify candidates, collect dues, send a representative to VSOC meetings, and conduct other business as specified in its constitution and/or bylaws, and/or other policies and procedures documents.
 - b. Only those individuals completing the credentialing requirements and certification examinations after provisional recognition is achieved shall be considered board certified specialists in the RVSO field of veterinary medicine. This includes founders.
 - c. Provisionally recognized RVSS or RVSOs will be required to submit interim progress reports (Appendix 11) to the ABVS on an annual basis.
 - d. After provisional recognition is awarded, only those individuals completing the credentialing requirements and certification examinations as stipulated in the petition shall be considered board certified specialists in the RVSO field of veterinary medicine. In no case shall individuals be 'chartered' as diplomates without meeting the examination requirements of other candidates for board-certification in that specialty.
 - e. After a minimum of four years, but not more than ten years, under provisional recognition, a veterinary specialty organization may submit a request for full recognition to the ABVS.
 - i. The ABVS may grant an extension of the 10-year time limit, if an extension is requested in writing.
 - ii. A petition for full recognition must be organized in the format described under the guidelines above and must indicate that the organization is fully functional and fulfilling its stated objectives.
 - iii. The ABVS will review the request for full recognition and either consider granting full recognition or make appropriate suggestions to the provisionally recognized veterinary specialty organization in regard to areas of concern.

8. Adverse decisions regarding recognition of veterinary specialty organizations.
 - a. At any point after receipt of a letter of intent or during review of a petition

for recognition of a veterinary specialty organization adverse decisions may be rendered.

- b. The ABVS will notify the organization of the adverse decision and the reasons for it within 30 days of the decision. The organization will be informed of its rights of appeal under the established appellate procedures of the ABVS.
- c. The organization may: take action to correct, when possible, the deficiencies identified and resubmit a revised petition for recognition within a 5-year period after submission of the letter of intent; petition the ABVS for reconsideration; or appeal under the appellate procedures of the ABVS.
- d. Petitions for reconsideration or additional review must be made in accordance with the established appellate procedures described in Appendices 4 or 5 of the ABVS P&P.

Appendix 3

Procedures for obtaining AVMA recognition of a veterinary specialty (RVS) within an RVSO

Groups seeking ABVS recognition as a veterinary specialty should consult the timeline in Appendix 7 for important dates related to that process.

1. A veterinary specialty seeking recognition as an RVS under the auspices of an existing RVSO may:
 - a. Be recognized by the ABVS under the procedures described for recognition of an RVSO in Appendix 2 with the following exceptions to those procedures:
 - i. An RVS need not be incorporated separately.
 - ii. An RVS is represented on VSOC by the representative of the parent RVSO.
 - iii. An RVSO with one or more RVSs may have
 - a) One constitution delineating the operations of the RVSO and separate bylaws delineating the functions and operations of each RVS, or
 - b) A single constitution and bylaws clearly delineating the operations of the RVSO and the functions and operations of each RVS, or
 - c) A single bylaws clearly delineating the operations of the RVSO and the functions and operations of each RVS.
 - b. The petitioning organization must identify members of the organizing committee, which should be at least 18 individuals but limited in number to those essential to conduct the business of the veterinary specialty and to achieve provisional approval. Each founding member must:
 - i. Be a diplomate of the parent RVSO, or
 - ii. Be a diplomate of another RVSO recognized by the AVMA, or
 - iii. Have demonstrated competency through teaching, research, or practice of the veterinary specialty and meet the criteria for members of an organizing committee as specified in Section II, Part D1 of the Policies of the ABVS.
 - c. A petition for immediate full recognition may be submitted by a veterinary specialty arising from a restructuring of a parent RVSO or a parent RVS. Petitions for immediate full recognition may be submitted by veterinary specialties arising from a restructuring of a parent RVSO. The petition for full recognition will undergo the same review process required for an RVSO. Results of this review must indicate that the veterinary specialty is immediately able to become fully functional and can fulfill its stated objectives. The petition must:
 - i. Provide a statement outlining the reasons for, and benefit(s) of restructuring the RVSO or the RVS into the described veterinary specialties.
 - ii. Describe the process by which existing RVSO diplomates may be

- reclassified into the respective veterinary specialty(ies).
- iii. Include an organizational chart showing the present and proposed relationships of the veterinary specialties within the RVSO.
2. Letter of Intent - Veterinarians seeking AVMA recognition of a new specialty organization wishing to be incorporated as a veterinary specialty within existing RVSO must submit a letter of intent to the ABVS. The letter should contain a statement that the organizing group has read and understands the standards that the ABVS applies for recognition of an RVS (Appendix 1); that the organizing group has read the procedures for obtaining AVMA-recognition; that the organizing group has the agreement of the RVSO under which they will organize; a brief (1 paragraph) description of the scope of practice intended for recognition as well including justification that the proposed specialty organization is distinct from presently recognized RVSOs or their RVSs; and a list of the members (and their credentials) of the organizing committee.
 3. Organizations seeking ABVS recognition must submit yearly progress reports until submission of their petition. Petitions for provisional recognition must be submitted to the ABVS within four years of receipt of the letter of intent.
 4. VSOC liaisons and public comment:

Upon acceptance of a letter of intent from an emerging new specialty, the chair of the ABVS will encourage the emerging specialty to work with VSOC-appointed liaisons who will help the organizing committee of the emerging specialty to prepare the petition. The organizing committee will be asked to submit a one-page description of the proposed specialty organization that will serve as the basis for solicitation of public comment. The primary purposes of public comment are to gauge both the distinctiveness of the proposed specialty from currently recognized RVSOs and RVSs as well as the public need for, and potential acceptance of, a veterinary specialty in the intended facet of veterinary medicine.

 - a. The ABVS will review the letter of intent at their spring meeting; and if accepted, the period of public comment will begin shortly thereafter. The ABVS will solicit information and opinion from the following groups:
 - i. The AVMA membership through an announcement in the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* and on the AVMA Web site.
 - ii. Existing RVSOs.
 - iii. Appropriate veterinary societies and academies.
 - iv. Appropriate educational, research, governmental, military, commercial, and public bodies.
 - b. The ABVS will review the information and opinions gathered by public comment and forward it to the petitioning veterinary specialty organization. Concerns and issues raised by the public must be addressed by the petitioning organization in the formal petition for AVMA recognition. The period of public comment is used to gauge the need for, and public acceptance of a new veterinary specialty from diverse stakeholders.
 5. Submission of an initial petition:
 - a. Once the proposed specialty organization is ready to move forward with their petition, the organizing committee of the petitioning veterinary specialty organization must submit the information specified below in the

- contents for a petition for recognition by the deadline shown in Appendix 7 in order to be included on the agenda of an ABVS late fall meeting.
- b. If the petition is complete, a second period of public comment may be initiated at ABVS discretion before the complete, formal petition is submitted.
6. Contents for a petition for recognition of a new veterinary specialty:
- a. The petition must contain a curriculum vitae for each member of the organizing committee.
 - b. The petitioning organization must document that it meets the standards for a veterinary specialty organization recognized by the AVMA as specified in the Policies and Procedures of the ABVS. Each item must be specifically addressed.
 - c. The petitioning organization must document the number of individuals anticipated to pursue diplomate status of the specialty and convince the ABVS that, within a reasonable period of time, growth of the veterinary specialty organization will result in a number of specialists that will have an impact on organized, private, corporate, academic, industrial, or governmental veterinary medicine and the public.
 - d. The petitioning organization must justify its role in fulfilling a recognizable need and demonstrate that its existence is acceptable to the profession and the public.
 - e. The petitioning organization must identify the base of scientific knowledge and practice that forms the basis for recognition as a specialty and distinguishes it from all existing RVSOs. It will be necessary to:
 - i. Define the scientific basis of the proposed specialty, and particularly the evidence supporting efficacy for petitioning organizations with a clinical basis.
 - ii. Relate the subject matter to current professional and postgraduate veterinary medical curricula.
 - iii. Describe how diplomates would be employed in public, institutional, and private practice (including the approximate number employed in each category, and the scientific disciplines relevant to each category).
 - iv. Describe current or proposed continuing education programs.
 - f. There must be a description of relationships and commonalities with existing RVSOs.
 - g. There must be an explanation of why the relationships and commonalities with existing organizations are insufficient to warrant inclusion as a veterinary specialty of an existing organization.
 - h. There must be a job task analysis. This information will be used to determine the breadth and depth of the proposed specialty; how much, if any, overlap there may be with an existing recognized veterinary specialty; and to establish that the proposed specialty will provide a veterinary need.
 - i. A copy of the proposed constitution and/or bylaws and all available policies and procedures documents must be submitted, which must contain within these documents, at minimum:
 - i. The name of the RVSO/RVS.
 - ii. A statement of objectives.
 - iii. Titles, election procedures, and duties of officers.
 - iv. A description of membership categories, including duties, privileges, and method of selection for each.

- v. Descriptions of qualifying routes, within and outside of standard residency or degree programs, to qualify candidates for examination in a timely manner. Descriptions must include required education, experience, publications, teaching, research, nature of supervision of the candidate, and the qualifications of the mentor(s).
 - vi. A description of the scope and nature of certifying examinations.
 - vii. Procedures for establishing and amending dues and fees.
 - viii. Causes and procedures for censuring or suspending diplomates or canceling certification.
 - ix. Procedures for appealing adverse decisions.
 - x. Procedures for conducting business and meetings.
 - xi. Procedures for amending the constitution and/or bylaws.
 - xii. A letter of intent regarding creation of an RVS independent certification board, if such an entity is planned, describing how that entity will be related to the parent RVSO and how its independence in the certification process will be sustained.
- j. There must be a description of how the specialty plans to organize and initiate its functions (e.g., how the initial officers will perform their duties, how examinations will be prepared, administered, and monitored, and how training programs will be established). This will include a description of the relationship between the proposed RVSO and the RVS or their independent certification board if one is to be created.
- k. There must be evidence that facilities and programs are available for advanced training of veterinarians that will lead to certification in the veterinary specialty. A description of existing educational programs, including established postgraduate educational programs and the number of people in these programs must be provided. Objectives, measures of competence, and expected contributions and measurements of the success of such programs should be specified. Evidence for the continued existence and growth of educational programs in the veterinary specialty must be included.
- l. A list of current and past officers of the organizing agency and a list of proposed founders of the veterinary specialty must be included, if applicable. Founders must be members of the organizing committee.
- m. There must be a financial statement.
- o. Any organization seeking new AVMA recognition as an RVSO or RVS, must represent to the AVMA that it is the owner of its name and logo and is entitled to use its name, logo and acronym in commerce; and that to the best of its knowledge and belief, no other person, firm, corporation, or association has the right to use its name in commerce, either in identical form or in such near resemblance thereto as to be likely to cause confusion, mistake, or deception.
7. A complete, final petition must be submitted to the ABVS within four years of receipt of the letter of intent.
- a. The final petition should be submitted as indicated in the timeline in Appendix 7.
 - b. The petition will consist of the contents of the initial petition, with revisions noted to address concerns addressed by ABVS review and concerns raised through the public comment period.
 - c. Representatives of the organizing group will be invited to attend, at their own expense, the meeting of the ABVS when their petition will be considered.

- d. If provisional recognition is granted, the newly recognized veterinary specialty organization may take any necessary steps to complete formalization of its structure and proceed to function under its constitution and/or bylaws, including the creation of an independent certification board if that was outlined in their approved petition. The RVSO/RVS (or their independent certification board) may examine and certify candidates, collect dues, send a representative to VSOC meetings, and conduct other business as specified in its constitution and/or bylaws, and/or other policies and procedures documents.
- e. Only those individuals completing the credentialing requirements and certification examinations after provisional recognition is achieved shall be considered board certified specialists in the RVSO field of veterinary medicine. This includes founders.

8. Provisionally recognized veterinary specialties

- a. If provisional recognition has been granted, the newly recognized veterinary specialty organization may be given direction by the ABVS for future growth and enhancement of processes and should take any necessary steps to complete formalization of its structure and proceed to function under its constitution and/or bylaws, including the creation of an independent certification board if that was outlined in their approved petition. The RVSO/RVS (or their independent certification board) may examine and certify candidates, collect dues, send a representative to ABSO meetings, and conduct other business as specified in its constitution and/or bylaws, and/or other policies and procedures documents.
- b. Provisionally recognized RVSO's or RVS will be required to submit interim progress reports (Appendices 11 and 12) to the ABVS on an annual basis.
- c. After provisional recognition is awarded, only those individuals completing the credentialing requirements and certification examinations as stipulated in the petition shall be considered board certified specialists in the RVSO field of veterinary medicine. In no case shall individuals be 'chartered' as diplomates without meeting the examination requirements of other candidates for board-certification in that specialty.
- d. After a minimum of four years, but not more than ten years, under provisional recognition, a veterinary specialty organization may submit a request for full recognition to the ABVS.
 - i. The ABVS may grant an extension of the 10-year time limit, if an extension is requested in writing.
 - ii. A petition for full recognition must be organized in the format described under the guidelines for three-year in-depth reviews (see Appendix 10) and must indicate that the organization is fully functional and fulfilling its stated objectives.
 - iii. The ABVS will review the request for full recognition and make appropriate suggestions to the provisionally recognized veterinary specialty organization concerning any necessary additions or corrections. If the documentation indicates that the organization meets all of the standards for recognition described in Appendix 1, the ABVS will consider granting full recognition.

9. Adverse decisions regarding recognition of veterinary specialties

- a. At any point after receipt of a letter of intent or during review of a petition for recognition of a veterinary specialty organization or review of an existing AVMA-recognized veterinary specialty organization, adverse decisions may be rendered.
- b. The ABVS will notify the organization of the adverse decision and the reasons for it within 30 days of the decision. The organization will be informed of its rights of appeal under the established appellate procedures of the ABVS.
- c. The organization may take action to correct, when possible, the deficiencies identified and resubmit a request for recognition; petition the ABVS for reconsideration; or appeal under the appellate procedures of the ABVS.
- d. Petitions for reconsideration or additional review must be made in accordance with the appellate procedures described in Appendices 4 or 5 of the ABVS P&P.

Appendix 4

Procedures Governing Reconsideration of, and Appeals from, Adverse ABVS Decisions for Veterinary Specialties or Specialty Organizations seeking AVMA recognition

1. Adverse Decisions.

- a. Organizations failing to earn AVMA recognition as a veterinary specialty or specialty organization may seek review of the ABVS decision to deny recognition pursuant to the following procedures.
- b. The ABVS shall notify the petitioning organization of its decision by email. The notice shall include a description of the reasons for the adverse decision. All petitioning organizations must agree, as a condition of recognition, to communicate with ABVS via email and provide and maintain a valid email address with ABVS for this purpose.

2. Reconsideration

- a. A organization that is the subject of an adverse decision may notify ABVS of its intent to seek reconsideration of the adverse decision by submitting a petition for reconsideration within 14 calendar days after the date of the email providing notice of the adverse decision.
- b. The basis for a petition for reconsideration is limited to whether the adverse decision: 1) misapplied the ABVS Standards for Recognition, 2) failed to follow ABVS procedures, and/or 3) failed to adequately consider the evidence and documentation presented. The petitioning organization may also document any corrective action that it has taken to remedy the deficiencies on which the adverse decision was based.
- c. The organization seeking reconsideration must submit all documents supporting its petition for reconsideration within 30 calendar days after the date of the email providing notice of the adverse decision. The petition may also include a request for a hearing.
- e. In acting on a petition for reconsideration, the ABVS may, in its sole discretion, consider any corrective action that the organization has taken between the time of submission of its petition for recognition and the date of receipt by the ABVS of documents supporting the petition for reconsideration of an adverse decision.
- f. The ABVS shall determine, in its sole discretion, whether to grant a request for a hearing on the petition for reconsideration. If it grants a hearing, the ABVS will determine whether the hearing will be in person, by telephone, or by other electronic medium such as video conferencing. Within two weeks after deciding whether to grant a hearing, the ABVS shall notify the organization of its decision on the request for a hearing, including the time and place (or electronic hearing details) of any hearing.
- g. The ABVS shall determine the length of time that representatives of the organization will be given to make its presentation – and shall also determine the procedure to be followed at the hearing. Prior to the hearing, ABVS shall notify the organization of the time that will be allotted for the presentation as well as the procedures to be followed.
- h. The organization shall determine who will represent it at any hearing. It may, at its option, choose to be represented by counsel and/or by members of the organization. However, the ABVS may impose a limit on the number of individuals associated with the organization that can be present at the hearing.
- i. Within 4 weeks after a hearing – or within 4 weeks after informing the organization that it has determined not to hold a hearing, the ABVS shall issue a written decision setting forth its ruling on the petition and the reasons for that ruling.

j. The petitioning organization shall bear all of its expenses associated with any petition for reconsideration, including costs associated with an in-person or electronic hearing.

3. Appeals

a. An organization that has petitioned for reconsideration and is dissatisfied with the decision on reconsideration may file an appeal. No appeal may be filed unless the organization has submitted a petition for reconsideration and received an adverse decision from the ABVS. The basis for the appeal will be limited to whether the adverse decision: 1) misapplied the ABVS Standards for Recognition, 2) failed to follow ABVS procedures, and/or 3) failed to adequately consider the evidence and documentation presented.

b. To file an appeal, an organization must send to the ABVS a notice of intent to appeal within 14 calendar days after the date of the written decision on the petition for reconsideration. The organization must submit all documents supporting its appeal within 30 calendar days after the date of the email providing notice of the decision on the petition for reconsideration. The appeal may also include a request for a hearing.

d. Any appeal shall be considered by an Appeals Committee consisting of the AVMA Board of Governors.

e. An appeal is not a *de novo* review of the adverse decision, but a review of the decision based on the evidence before the ABVS at the time of its decision. The Appeals Committee may either affirm, amend, or reverse an adverse decision, or remand the adverse decision to the ABVS for further consideration. If the Appeals Committee reverses or amends the adverse decision, the Appeals Committee decision will provide the ABVS with specific instructions to implement the Appeals Committee decision. The adverse decision should not be reversed or amended by the Appeals Committee without sufficient evidence that the decision misapplied the ABVS Standards for recognition, was not in accordance with ABVS procedure, or was not based on substantial evidence. The Appeals Committee should not substitute its judgment for that of the ABVS merely because it would have reached a different decision had it considered the matter originally.

f. In ruling on an appeal, the Appeals Committee shall consider only those actions that were taken by the organization prior to submission of the petition for reconsideration.

f. The Appeals Committee shall determine, in its sole discretion, whether to hold a hearing on the appeal. If a hearing will be held, the Appeals Committee will determine whether the hearing will be in person, by telephone, or by other electronic medium such as video conferencing. Within two weeks after deciding whether to hold a hearing, the Appeals Committee shall notify the organization and the ABVS of its decision, including the time and place (or electronic hearing details) of any hearing.

g. The Appeals Committee shall determine the length of time that representatives of the organization and the ABVS will be given to make their presentations – and shall also determine the procedure to be followed at the hearing. Prior to the hearing, the Appeals Committee shall notify the organization and the ABVS of the time to be allotted for the presentation as well as the procedures to be followed.

h. The organization and the ABVS shall determine who will represent them at any hearing. The parties may, at their option, choose to be represented by counsel and/or by members of the party. However, the Appeals Committee may impose a limit on the number of individuals associated with either party that can be present at the hearing.

i. Within 6 weeks after a hearing – or within 6 weeks after informing the parties that it has determined not to hold a hearing, the Appeals Committee shall issue a written decision to both parties setting forth its ruling on the appeal and the reasons for that ruling.

j. The petitioning organization shall bear all of its own expenses associated with any appeal, including costs associated with an in-person or electronic hearing.

k. There shall be no right of appeal to the Board of Directors of the AVMA. The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be final – except that the Appeals Committee shall report its decision to the Board of Directors of the AVMA. The Board of Directors of the AVMA shall have the right, in its sole discretion, to modify or reverse any decision of the Appeals Committee that is adverse to the RVSO or the RVS if the Board concludes that modification or reversal would be in the interests of justice.

l. A petitioning organization that has received an adverse decision may not reapply for recognition for a period of 12 months after the decision, or for 12 months after an adverse decision arising from a petition for reconsideration or an appeal if the organization has filed those actions. Petitioning organizations failing to gain recognition and seeking to reapply must begin the procedures for obtaining recognition again as described in Appendices 2 or 3 in the ABVS P&P.

Appendix 5

Procedures Governing Reconsideration of, and Appeals from, Adverse ABVS Decisions for current AVMA-recognized Veterinary Specialties or Specialty Organizations

1. Adverse Decisions.

a. The ABVS may make either of two adverse decisions with respect to a currently recognized RVSO or RVS: (i) assignment of probationary recognition status; or (ii) withdrawal of recognition.

b. An RVSO or RVS that is assigned probationary recognition status or that has had recognition withdrawn shall be notified by email. The notice shall include a description of the reasons for the adverse decision. All RVSOs and RVSs must agree, as a condition of recognition, to communicate with ABVS via email and provide and maintain a valid email address with ABVS for this purpose.

c. The ABVS may also grant continued recognition of an RVSO or RVS subject to notice that specific deficiencies must be corrected or addressed by a plan of correction within a specified time. This action shall not be considered an adverse decision and is not subject to reconsideration or appeal. However, the RVSO or RVS shall be notified by email. The notice shall include a description of the specific deficiencies and the time by which they must be addressed to the satisfaction of the ABVS.

2. Reconsideration

a. An RVSO or RVS that is the subject of an adverse decision may notify ABVS of its intent to seek reconsideration of the adverse decision by submitting a petition for reconsideration within 14 calendar days after the date of the email providing notice of the adverse decision.

b. The basis for a petition for reconsideration is limited to whether the adverse decision: 1) misapplied the ABVS Standards for Recognition, 2) failed to follow ABVS procedures, and/or 3) failed to adequately consider the evidence and documentation presented. The RVSO or RVS may also document any corrective action that it has taken to remedy the deficiencies on which the adverse decision was based.

c. The RVSO or RVS seeking reconsideration must submit all documents supporting its petition for reconsideration within 30 calendar days after the date of the email providing notice of the adverse decision. The petition may also include a request for a hearing.

d. The timely submission of a petition for reconsideration shall not stay any requirement for notification as specified in Section J of the ABVS Policies and Procedures by the RVSO or the RVS of the adverse decision.

e. In acting on a petition for reconsideration, the ABVS may, in its sole discretion, consider any corrective action that the RVSO or RVS has taken between the time of its initial 3-year report submission and the date of receipt by the ABVS of documents supporting the petition.

f. The ABVS shall determine, in its sole discretion, whether to grant a request for a hearing on the petition for reconsideration. If it grants a hearing, the ABVS will determine whether the hearing will be in person, by telephone, or by other electronic medium such as video conferencing. Within two weeks after deciding whether to grant a hearing, the ABVS shall notify the RVSO or RVS of its decision on the request for a hearing, including the time and place (or electronic hearing details) of any hearing.

g. The ABVS shall determine the length of time that representatives of the RVSO or RVS will be given to make its presentation – and shall also determine the procedure to be followed at the hearing. Prior to the hearing, ABVS shall notify the RVSO or RVS of the time that will be allotted for the presentation as well as the procedures to be followed.

h. The RVSO or RVS shall determine who will represent it at any hearing. It may, at its option, choose to be represented by counsel and/or by members of the RVSO or RVS. However, the ABVS may impose a limit on the number of individuals associated with the RVSO or RVS that can be present at the hearing.

i. Within 4 weeks after a hearing – or within 4 weeks after informing the RVSO or RVS that it has determined not to hold a hearing, the ABVS shall issue a written decision setting forth its ruling on the petition and the reasons for that ruling.

j. The RVSO or RVS shall bear all of its expenses associated with any petition for reconsideration, including costs associated with an in-person or electronic hearing.

3. Appeals

a. An RVSO or RVS that has petitioned for reconsideration and is dissatisfied with the decision on reconsideration may file an appeal. No appeal may be filed unless the RVSO or RVS has submitted a petition for reconsideration and received an adverse decision from the ABVS. The basis for the appeal will be limited to whether the adverse decision: 1) misapplied the ABVS Standards for Recognition, 2) failed to follow ABVS procedures, and/or 3) failed to adequately consider the evidence and documentation presented.

b. To file an appeal, an RVSO or RVS must send to the ABVS a notice of intent to appeal within 14 calendar days after the date of the written decision on the petition for reconsideration. The RVSO or RVS must submit all documents supporting its appeal within thirty calendar days after the date of the email providing notice of the decision on the petition for reconsideration. The appeal may also include a request for a hearing.

c. The submission of an intent to appeal will not stay any requirement for notification as specified in Section J of the ABVS Policies and Procedures by the RVSO or the RVS of the adverse decision.

d. Any appeal shall be considered by an Appeals Committee consisting of the AVMA Board of Governors.

e. An appeal is not a *de novo* review of the adverse decision, but a review of the decision based on the evidence before the ABVS at the time of its decision. The Appeals Committee may either affirm, amend, or reverse an adverse decision, or remand the adverse decision to the ABVS for further consideration. If the Appeals Committee reverses or amends the adverse decision, the Appeals Committee decision will provide the ABVS with specific instructions to implement the Appeals Committee decision. The adverse decision should not be reversed or amended by the Appeals Committee without sufficient evidence that the decision misapplied the ABVS Standards for recognition, was not in accordance with ABVS procedure, or was not based on substantial evidence. The Appeals Committee should not substitute its judgment for that of the ABVS merely because it would have reached a different decision had it considered the matter originally.

f. In ruling on an appeal, the Appeals Committee shall consider only those actions that were taken by the RVSO or RVS prior to submission of the petition for reconsideration.

f. The Appeals Committee shall determine, in its sole discretion, whether to hold a hearing on the appeal. If a hearing will be held, the Appeals Committee will determine whether the hearing will be in person, by telephone, or by other electronic medium such as video conferencing. Within two weeks after deciding whether to hold a hearing, the Appeals Committee shall notify the RVSO or RVS and the ABVS of its decision, including the time and place (or electronic hearing details) of any hearing.

g. The Appeals Committee shall determine the length of time that representatives of the RVSO or RVS and the ABVS will be given to make their presentations – and shall also determine the procedure to be followed at the hearing. Prior to the hearing, the Appeals Committee shall notify the RVSO or RVS and the ABVS

of the time to be allotted for the presentation as well as the procedures to be followed.

h. The RVSO or RVS and the ABVS shall determine who will represent them at any hearing. The parties may, at their option, choose to be represented by counsel and/or by members of the party. However, the Appeals Committee may impose a limit on the number of individuals associated with either party that can be present at the hearing.

i. Within 6 weeks after a hearing – or within 6 weeks after informing the parties that it has determined not to hold a hearing, the Appeals Committee shall issue a written decision to both parties setting forth its ruling on the appeal and the reasons for that ruling.

j. The RVSO or RVS shall bear all of its own expenses associated with any appeal, including costs associated with an in-person or electronic hearing.

k. There shall be no right of appeal to the Board of Directors of the AVMA. The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be final – except that the Appeals Committee shall report its decision to the Board of Directors of the AVMA. The Board of Directors of the AVMA shall have the right, in its sole discretion, to modify or reverse any decision of the Appeals Committee that is adverse to the RVSO or the RVS if the Board concludes that modification or reversal would be in the interests of justice.

l. An RVSO or RVS against whom an adverse action has been taken may not apply for removal from probationary status or reinstatement of recognition for a period of at least 12 months from the time of the final decision regarding the adverse action. The final decision may be on the petition for reconsideration or the appeal, if the RVS or RVSO files an appeal.

Appendix 6

ABVS Timeline for Receipt of Materials from Currently Recognized Veterinary Specialties and Specialty Organizations

February 1 – Receipt of Annual Reports (all RVSOs)

March – Full meeting of ABVS – consideration of fall 3-year reports, interim reports, new letters of intent, other business

May 1 – Receipt of spring 3-year reports and interim reports

June 30 – Review of spring 3-year reports and interim reports

September – ABVS Phone Conference – consideration of spring 3-yr reports, interim reports

Nov 1 – Receipt of fall 3-year reports and interim reports

Dec 31 – Review of fall 3-year reports and interim reports

Appendix 7

ABVS Timeline of Deadlines for New Petitioning Specialties/Specialty Organizations

Jan 15 – Letter of intent due

February/March – Full meeting of ABVS – consideration of new letters of intent, petitions for recognition

April 1 – June 30 – Public comment period for new organizations

Nov 1 – Petitions for Recognition due for consideration at the next ABVS meeting

Dec 31 – VSOC comments on petitioning organization and liaison report due

Appendix 8

Definitions of Terms Applied to Veterinary Specialization

- A. *Academy*—An exclusive body of learned persons with the objective of promoting scholarship and service. Membership is based on scientific or scholastic achievement and exercise of professional skills. An academy is not a recognized veterinary specialty organization.
- B. *Alternate*—A member of VSOC will be chosen by VSOC to serve on ABVS in the event that one of the elected VSOC members cannot attend the annual ABVS meeting. The alternate travel will be paid by the AVMA and the alternate will have full voting rights afforded the VSOC member that that person is representing.
- C. *Association*—An organization of veterinarians with the objective of advancing mutual professional interest(s).
- D. *Board*—The term “board” has two distinct and differing uses by ABVS and VSOC.
- A small group of members designated by a recognized veterinary specialty organization (RVSO) for a special purpose (e.g., Board of Regents or “certification board”, the latter of which are entities created by an RVSO solely for the purpose of credentialing candidates for the parent RVSO.
 - An organization of specialists having the objective of examining candidates for certification. Some RVSOs have used the term “board” synonymously with the broader concept of college. This use of the term has been accepted by the ABVS. In such a case, within the parent RVSO there may be both a “College” (the parent organization) and a “Certification Board” which is affiliated with the college and certifies candidates seeking diplomate status within the college.
- E. *Certificate*—Various organizations issue documents (certificates) attesting to attendance or participation in an educational program or series of programs. Some certificates are awarded after an individual demonstrates accomplishment of intended learning outcomes of a specific topic or skill by passing an examination based upon the information provided by the organization. The issuance of these certificates is not a diploma and should not be confused with the board-certification process (i.e., certificate holders are not ‘certified in’ the field) and is not comparable to the recognition of specialists in veterinary medicine.
- F. *Board Certification*—The process of determining whether a veterinarian has successfully completed a training program and examination process designed to assess the knowledge and skills required for providing high quality professional services and patient care in a specialty. Individuals successfully completing such programs will be awarded Diplomas and are considered Diplomates of that veterinary specialty. See also Maintenance of Certification
- G. *Board-Certified in*—The AVMA limits the use of “board-certified” by an AVMA-recognized specialty organization to those individuals who hold and maintain such designation.
- H. *Certification Board—(Independent)*—In some circumstances an RVSO may create an independent certifying agency, typically referred to as a board, which will be affiliated with the parent RVSO from the perspective of reporting to ABVS, but whose sole purpose is the credentialing and examination of candidates for the RVSO. The decisions and determinations of this certification board will be independent of influence from the associated RVSO.
- I. *Charter Diplomates*—A historical term used to indicate a member of an RVSO organizing committee that was granted diplomate status, generally without examination. Often referred to as

“grandfathered” diplomates, the term became obsolete in 2017. See Founder.

J. *Clinical Training Program*—see training program.

K. *College*—An organization of veterinarians that has as its objectives the establishment of standards for the education and experience necessary for qualification as a specialist, and the examination and certification of veterinarians in the specialty. (see also definition of Board).

L. *Degree program*—A degree program is an educational program leading to an MS, PhD, or equivalent degree that may or may not be combined with residency training.

M. *Diploma*—A document awarded to an individual upon successful completion of the training and examination requirements established by a board of experts in a specific field of veterinary medicine, indicating that the individual has been board-certified in that field.

N. *Diplomate*—A veterinarian who is certified as a specialist in a particular discipline by one of the AVMA-recognized veterinary specialty organizations. An individual may be required to maintain their diplomate status on an ongoing basis by specified requirements of the organization, including payment of certification program fees (see Maintenance of Certification). Membership within the certifying organization should not be required to maintain certification status and the terms ‘active’ and ‘inactive’ to indicate membership status should not be used in conjunction with ‘Diplomate’ as the latter might confuse the public as to a Diplomate’s certification status.

O. *Discipline*—A field of study or expertise definable as a distinct area of veterinary medicine.

P. *Distinguished member*—A diplomate of a recognized veterinary specialty organization (RVSO) who is acknowledged as distinguished based on criteria established by that organization.

Q. *Dues* – Fees charged to a Diplomate for membership in an RVS/RVSO, and not to maintain recognition as an individual certified by that specialty college. Diplomate status should not be contingent upon membership in the specialty college.

R. *Emeritus diplomate*—A diplomate of a recognized veterinary specialty organization (RVSO) who either reaches an age designated by the RVSO or has retired from active practice of the recognized veterinary specialty.

S. *Fellow*—In regard to specialty veterinary medicine, a fellow is considered to be an individual completing a fellowship subsequent to completion of a training program leading to board-certification in a veterinary specialty. Other organizing bodies may use the term to refer to members that have achieved educational or experiential benchmarks specific to their organization.

T. *Fellowship*—In regard to specialty veterinary medicine, a fellowship is a period of advanced study in a narrow focus of a veterinary specialty, consisting of research and/or clinical training beyond that which is required for certification in the specialty as a whole.

U. *Founder*—A member of the organizing committee of an emerging specialty that assume the role previously implemented by charter diplomates (see section II, part D1 of the Policies of the ABVS. Founders will be involved in the successful submission of the emerging VSO’s petition for recognition by the ABVS. Upon successful recognition by the ABVS, founders must pursue board certification in the RVSO through examination. Examples of sufficient experience demonstrating competency and thus credentialing in the specialty by a founding member include:

- i. at least 10 years of experience in the specialty, with no less than 75% of his/her professional time in each of the last five years being devoted to the specialty, and

- by teaching, research, or practice have contributed substantially to the development of the specialty, or
- ii. full professorship of the specialty in a college or department of veterinary medicine, and have contributed substantially to the development of the specialty, or
 - iii. advanced training (PhD or equivalent) in the specialty; have demonstrated competency through teaching, research, or practice in the specialty to which the individual devotes most of his/her professional time; and be an author of important

publications resulting from research or practice in the specialty.

V. *Full recognition*—A classification assigned to a veterinary specialty organization that meets or exceeds all standards established by the ABVS for recognition by the AVMA.

W. *Graduate training program*—see training program.

X. *Honorary member*—RVSOs must not award a title of honorary diplomate but instead use honorary member. A veterinarian or non-veterinarian who is nominated by, meets criteria specified by, and is approved by the RVSO or an RVS. An honorary member shall be a nonvoting member and shall not hold office in the specialty organization and shall not claim certification status in the specialty.

Y. *Internship*—An internship shall be a one-year clinical training program that emphasizes mentorship, direct supervision, and didactic experiences including rounds, seminars, and formal presentations. It provides practical experience in applying knowledge gained during the professional curriculum and an opportunity to obtain additional training in the clinical sciences. An internship should prepare a veterinarian for high-quality service in practice or for advanced specialty training. It is primarily an educational program for the intern rather than a service benefit to the hospital. A *Specialty internship* refers to an internship experientially designed to focus on an RVSO or RVS specialty.

Z. *Job/task analysis*—A systematic procedure for defining the tasks required by a job and the knowledge, skills, abilities, and other personal characteristics required of individuals performing that job. The results of a job/task analysis form the basis for determining the examination contents necessary to test mastery of that field.

AA. *Letter of intent*—A letter from an organizing group which plans to submit a petition for recognition as either an RVSO, or an RVS. This letter will indicate that the group has read and understands the standards of the ABVS which are applicable to their group, that they have read and understand the procedures for obtaining AVMA-recognition, and that they have the agreement of the RVSO under which they will apply if they are applying as an RVS. It will also briefly (1 paragraph) describe the scope of the intended veterinary specialty and justify how it is distinct from currently recognized RVSOs and RVSS. Lastly, it will provide a list of the members of the organizing committee and their credentials. It will specify if there is going to be an affiliated, independent certifying board and, if so, the proposed relationship between the RVSO, or RVS, and the certifying agency.

BB. *Maintenance of certification*—Board-certification demonstrates a veterinarian's expertise in a particular specialty of veterinary medicine at the time awarded. Maintenance of certification requires Diplomates to focus on continuous development to assure that the level of their knowledge and skillset meets contemporaneous expectations for certification in that specialty. Maintenance of certification should not be contingent upon maintaining membership and payment of membership dues in the specialty college but may require payment of a certification program fee that is reflective of the costs related to certification of individuals but does not include membership benefits.

CC. *Membership Fee* – see Dues

DD. *Organizing committee*—A group of individuals that must consist of no fewer than 25 members for a veterinary specialty organization or ten members for a veterinary specialty, that conduct the business of an emerging veterinary specialty seeking recognition by the AVMA.

EE. *Petition*—an organization seeking recognition as an RVSO or RVS must submit for consideration by the ABVS a petition describing the proposed specialty.

- a. An *initial* petition seeking provisional recognition must be submitted by the RVSO or RVS within four years of ABVS receipt of the letter of intent, with final changes submitted within five years of the letter of intent. A full description of the petition and an accompanying checklist can be found in Appendices 2 and 3.
- b. A *full* petition seeking full recognition must be submitted by the RVSO or RVS not before four but not after 10 years of ABVS receipt of the letter of intent, unless an

extension is granted by ABVS. A full description of the petition and an accompanying checklist can be found in Appendices 2 and 3.

FF. *Probationary recognition*—A classification assigned to a previously fully recognized veterinary specialty organization (RVSO) that meets most, but not all, of the established criteria for continued full recognition.

GG. *Provisional recognition*—A classification assigned to a new veterinary specialty organization, or veterinary specialty, that has not applied for full recognition or has not met all the criteria pertaining to complete formalization of its structure and objectives.

HH. *Qualifying pathways*—A qualifying pathway for training is established by the RVSO or RVS, through education, training, or experience to qualify candidates for examination in a timely manner. Qualifying pathways can occur either within or outside a standard residency or degree program. Any experience requirements must be clearly defined, relevant to the objectives of the specialty, and amenable to evaluation and approval by the RVSO.

II. *AVMA-Recognized veterinary specialty organization (RVSO)*—An organization that has been recognized by the AVMA as establishing standards for a specialty, certifying veterinarians who meet those standards, and serving as the organizational and administrative unit for any recognized veterinary specialties of the RVSO. Veterinarians undergoing a formal program of credentialing and certification will be members of the RVSO and designated as a diplomate (a recognized specialist in one or more of the recognized veterinary specialties under the organizational umbrella).

JJ. *AVMA-Recognized veterinary specialty (RVS)*—A clearly defined field of veterinary medicine comprising a species, discipline, or system within veterinary medicine and whose members acquire knowledge and skills through formal training, experimentation, and a standard approach to veterinary medicine. These focused areas of practice are under the umbrella of a parent AVMA-recognized veterinary specialty organization. Examples include, but are not restricted to, the recognized veterinary specialties of neurology, cardiology, oncology, and internal medicine within the ACVIM and the practice categories of avian, feline, equine, dairy, swine health management and food animal within the ABVP.

II. *Reports*—During its business, the ABVS reviews the following reports:

a. Existing RVSO/RVS

- i. Annual report: submitted by each RVSO or RVS each year, with the sole purpose of tracking specialty demographic data reflecting the growth of the respective recognized organization. The data included in the annual report should be reflected in the triennial report. The report should be submitted to ABVS by the deadline shown in Appendix 6. The form for the annual report can be found in Appendix 9.
- ii. Triennial report: submitted by each RVSO/RVS on a 3-year cycle, this in-depth report should be sufficiently detailed to allow ABVS review of the growth of the specialty and any major changes, challenges or circumstances that have occurred during the previous three-year period. ABVS review will assure that the respective specialty continues to meet the standards delineated for the respective specialty. During review at its annual meeting, ABVS may recommend that recognition of the specialty be continued, or it may identify issues or concerns. These concerns might simply be resolved with a written response by the specialty, or they may lead to recommendation of a probationary status or withdrawal of recognition. The form and an accompanying checklist for the triennial report can be found in Appendix 10.

- iii. Follow-up report: must be submitted by an RVSO or RVS in response to concerns promulgated by the ABVS during review of the triennial report, or in response to issues that arise in the interim. The follow-up report may simply address specific concerns or may be intended to resolve assignment of a probationary status or withdrawal of specialty recognition. Follow-up to questions generated during review of the triennial report might be submitted to ABVS prior to the annual ABVS meeting. However, response to probationary or withdrawal of recognition status should be submitted in advance of the annual ABVS meeting.
- b. Petitioning organizations
 - i. After submission of a letter of intent but prior to submitting an initial petition, the prospective RVSO/RVS should annually provide an informal letter of update to the VSOC liaison who will then report to the ABVS at its annual meeting.
 - ii. Interim report: During provisional recognition, the RVSO or RVS should submit an annual interim report that delineates the progress of the petitioning specialty toward full recognition. The form and an accompanying checklist for the annual petitioning specialty report can be found in Appendix 11.

JJ. *Residency*—Advanced training in a specialty in veterinary medicine that is intended to lead to specialty certification in an AVMA-recognized veterinary specialty organization. A residency program is conducted under the supervision of a board-certified specialist. A residency is usually narrowly confined to a specific discipline. A residency may in some instances be related to an advanced degree program.

KK. *Society*—An organization of veterinarians and others having a common interest in a discipline of veterinary medicine. A society usually has as its objective the encouragement of scholarship, through educational programs, among those interested in the discipline. A society is not a recognized specialty certifying organization.

LL. *Specialty*—See AVMA-recognized veterinary specialty.

MM. *Specialty internship*—See internship.

NN. *Training Program*—A period of advanced, post-veterinary degree training or education intended to provide additional expertise and an opportunity to applying knowledge gained during the professional curriculum. A training program does not necessarily lead to specialty certification (e.g., internships). The term “residency” may be used interchangeably with “training program” when the training program is intended to lead to specialty certification; however, in all cases, a training program emphasizes mentorship, direct supervision, and didactic experiences such as rounds, seminars, formal presentations, and graduate courses.

- a. *Clinical training program*: a post-veterinary degree program involving the primary management of clinical cases. A clinical training program or fellowship generally provides opportunity to obtain additional training in the clinical sciences. An internship generally is a clinical training program. A residency or fellowship may or may not include a clinical training program component.
- b. *Graduate training*: a post-degree program involving an accredited educational institute with the intended end point being graduate degree (e.g., Master of Science, Doctor of Philosophy). Graduate training may or may not be a requirement for credentialing in some specialties. For specialty certification, the graduate training must be in addition to a veterinary degree.
- c. *Alternate pathway training program*: for programs intended to lead to specialty certification, its implementation may be accomplished on a time-line that differs from the standard pathway training program. For example, an alternate pathway

training program may provide flexibility for a resident in private practice to meet

the credentialing requirements in a manner that is financially possible. An alternate pathway training program may allow a resident to meet credential requirements through distant mentorship if the institution does not employ a diplomate of the specialty in which the trainee is pursuing training. In all cases, the requirements for credentialing as stipulated by the specialty must be met.

- d. *Standard pathway training program*: the credentialing process is accomplished by the trainee as delineated in the procedural guidelines of the respective specialty. This is in contrast to an alternate pathway training program which is intended to provide flexibility in the time line for the credentialing process.

OO. *Waiting period*—A waiting period is defined as a period of time between completion of a qualifying route and candidate eligibility to sit for the certifying examination that cannot be justified as necessary and relevant to the objectives of the RVSO. A waiting period is not permitted by the ABVS.

Appendix 9

ABVS Annual Report Form

FOR EXAMPLE ONLY

Deadline for submission to ABVS: February XX, 20XX

This form to be used by both RVSOs and their RVSs, if any. A separate RVS form for each RVS should be submitted to the respective RVSO and reviewed then included with their report.

All information reported may be made available to other RVSOs.

Name of RVSO or RVS:	
Dates for 'reporting year':	
Exam date:	

The 'reporting year' for the annual report shall include all activity within the calendar year prior to year of submission, i.e., activity within 2021 for a report submitted in early 2022.

II. Demographics and Information Tables

1. Number of Diplomates

Number of Diplomates:	Previous year	Last year	This year
1. New diplomates added:			
2. Diplomates lost from active status due to:			
a. Death			
b. Change in status to:			
i. Emeritus			
ii. Inactive			
iii. Other (explain below)			
3. Total diplomates lost from active status (sum of rows 2a-2b[iii])			

4. Diplomates in following categories:				
a. Active				
b. Emeritus				
c. Honorary Members				
d. Inactive				
e. Other (explain below)				
5. Total diplomates in all categories (sum of rows 4a-4e)				
6. Number of diplomates participating in MOC				
Explanation of 'other' in table above:				

2. Training Programs

_____	Number of 'resident' (i.e. most-time-efficient) training programs
_____	Number of residents currently in training programs
_____	Number of non-traditional training programs
_____	Number of non-traditional trainees currently in programs

3. Credentialing Information

Report credentialing data for full, consecutive 12-month cycles.

	Applicant Class		
	Previous year	Last Year	Current year
A. Total number of applicants			
B. Number of applicants whose credentials were accepted			
C. Credentialing percentage (B/A x 100)			
<p>For the current year, how many of the applicants above (row A) are repeat applicants (re-credentialing)?</p> <p>a. Number due to credentials denied?</p> <p>b. Number due to credentials expired?</p>			

4. **Examination Results**

Report examination results for full, consecutive 12-month cycles.

Examination Results	Previous year	Last Year	Current year
Total number of candidates taking exam			
Number successfully completing exam (i.e. became diplomates)			
% successful			
% successful on first try			
% successful on second try			
% successful on third or subsequent try			

5. **Contact Information**

Include names and email addresses for:
Executive Secretary/Director:
VSOC Representative:
Alternate VSOC Representative:

By submitting this report, the [*insert name of the specialty organization*] hereby agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold the AVMA harmless from and against all claims, damages, and expenses (including reasonable attorney's fees) arising from any claim that the AVMA's use of the name or acronym of [*insert name of the specialty organization*] or any of its specialties or subspecialties infringes the intellectual property rights of any third party.

Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Appendix 10
AVMA-RECOGNIZED VETERINARY SPECIALTY ORGANIZATION
TRIENNIAL IN-DEPTH REPORT

The in-depth review captures changes since the last in-depth review. By submitting this report, the [*insert name of the specialty organization*] hereby agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold the AVMA harmless from and against all claims, damages, and expenses (including reasonable attorney's fees) arising from any claim that the AVMA's use of the name or acronym of [*insert name of the specialty organization*] or any of its specialties or subspecialties infringes upon the intellectual property rights of any third party.

If any response reflects a change in RVSO/RVS Constitution, By-Laws, Policy and Procedures, or other governing documents, indicate where that change can be reviewed in the respective document [highlight or clearly mark affected sections]. Additionally, a "clean-copy" of any document that has been changed should be submitted for ABVS records. Please include a copy of the most recent job task analysis (JTA).

1. Year of submission of the previous triennial report:
2. Describe substantive events or changes that have impacted the RVSO/RVS since the last report:
 - No substantive changes have occurred.
 - Changes include the following (indicate where in the document these changes may be found either by paragraph, line number, page number or any other appropriate identifier to delineate changes in the Constitution, By-Laws, etc.):
3. If the RVSO has one or more RVSS, describe the makeup of the Constitution, By-Laws and Policies and Procedures for each RVS. Indicate which documents are shared by each RVS and the RVSO. Provide a copy of the most current version of each document for the parent RVSO and each RVS (attach copy as separate document).

4.Regarding membership and growth of the RVSO/RVS, provide the following data delineating current diplomate numbers:

Status	Total	Gained Since Last In-Depth Report	Lost Since Last In-Depth Report
Active diplomates*			
Emeriti diplomates			
Diplomates not in good standing			

*Active diplomates are those individuals who meet all requirements to be currently considered as board-certified by the RVSO, including being current on maintenance of certification requirements and any fees associated specifically with maintaining the certification program. Payment of organizational membership dues should not be a requirement for issuance or maintenance of certification.

5. What activities does the RVSO/RVS conduct to advance the science supporting its discipline of veterinary medicine?

6. Have changes been made in the requirements for certification of diplomates by the RVSO/RVS?

- No
- Yes (describe):

7. Have there been complaints against the RVSO/RVS?

- No
- Yes (describe):

8. Have there been complaints against diplomates that have resulted in disciplinary action by the RVSO/RVS?

- No
- Yes (describe):

9. Please attach a copy of the latest Job Task Analysis (JTA) for your RVSO and/or each RVS within your RVSO. Address the role of the JTA in the certification process:

- a. What was the date of the most recent job task analysis?
- b. Describe the process that was used to conduct the JTA.
- c. Is the JTA validated by a psychometrician?
 - Yes
 - No (explain)
- d. If the JTA occurred since the previous in-depth report:
 - i. Summarize relevant findings and delineate substantive differences between the previous and most recent JTA
 - ii. Describe changes made to test specifications as a result of the most recent JTA.
 - iii. Indicate how those differences have impacted candidate:
 - 1. Training
 - 2. Credentialing
 - 3. Examination
 - iv. When is the next job task analysis planned?

10. Provide the following data for the certifying process.

	Candidate numbers		
	Most recent reporting year	Previous year	Two years prior
Credentials			
1. Total number of individuals completing training programs during this reporting year			

2. Total number of applicants submitting credentials packages this reporting year			
3. Number of applicants whose credentials were accepted			
4. Credentialing percentage: $(\#3/\#2) \times 100$			
5. Number of credentialed candidates (i.e., #3) presenting for examination in the same reporting year			
Examination (repeat this portion if multiple exams given, e.g. qualifying exam vs. certifying exam)			
6. Total number of candidates presenting for the examination, regardless of previous attempts			
7. Number of candidates presenting for examination (i.e., #6) who passed the certifying examination and became diplomates			
8. Of candidates who passed the examination (i.e., #7), list number who were:			
a. Successful on first attempt (taking exam for the first time this reporting year)			
b. Successful on second attempt			
c. Successful on ≥ 3 attempts			
Note: the sum of a, b and c should equal the number in #7			
9. Diplomat percentage of credentialed candidates per class (i.e., exam pass rate for candidates whose credentials were accepted in the same year= $[\#8a/\#5] \times 100$)			

10. Diplomate percentage of those presenting for examination (i.e., cumulative pass rate of candidates presenting for examination = [#7/#6] X 100			
---	--	--	--

11. Credentials acceptance

- No concerns
- Concerns:

12. Examination pass rate

- No concerns
- Concerns:

Address any disconcerting trends in the success of candidates in achieving certification (describe concern and how it is being addressed by the specialty):

13. Delineate any changes that have occurred regarding the following aspects of training programs (for any “yes”, indicate the document page number that delineates changes in either the Constitution, By-Laws, Policies and Procedures, or other governing documents):

a. Routes through which training can be accomplished (i.e., education, residency programs, clinical practice)

- No changes have occurred since the last report
- Yes, the following changes have been implemented:

b. Credentials process

- No changes have occurred since the last report
- Yes, the following changes have been implemented:

c. Examination process

- No changes have occurred since the last report
- Yes, the following changes have been implemented:

d. Have all changes in the processes been communicated to the trainees?

- No: explain why not?
- Yes: explain how?

14. Does the RVSO/RVS require candidates to complete any training outside a residency or other formal training program that is sponsored or produced by the RVSO/RVS?

- No
- Yes , describe:

15. Does the RVSO/RVS make any statements that any sponsored training course is uniquely designed to help candidates pass the board exam?
- No
 - Yes, describe:
16. Regarding the credentialing process, confirm the following (explain any "No" response):
- a. Candidates/trainees are notified promptly of deficiencies in their credentials:
 - No, explain:
 - Yes: explain how?
 - b. Notification of a candidate's credentials decision occurs at least 120 days prior to the examination.
 - No, explain:
 - Yes
 - c. Candidates appealing a credentials decision are notified of the appeal decision at least 45 days prior to the examination.
 - No, explain:
 - Yes
17. Regarding the examination process, confirm the following (explain any "No" response):
- a. Exam construction and administration procedures included methods to assure the absence of conflict of interest.
 - No, explain:
 - Yes
 - b. Reasonable examinee accommodations requests are met in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
 - No, explain:
 - Yes
 - c. Examinees are provided a blueprint and exam format prior to the examination.
 - No, explain:
 - Yes
 - d. Examinees are notified prior to the exam of the pass point and the method of setting the pass point.
 - No, explain:
 - Yes
18. Describe the method by which the pass point is determined including (if relevant) the number of diplomates that participated in validation:

19. Regarding notification of examinees of exam results:

a. Notification occurs within 45 days after the exam.

- No
- Yes

b. Notification of exam results to examinees occurs prior to sharing results with the general college.

- No
- Yes

c. Unsuccessful examinees are provided, upon request, a description of their deficiencies that prevented exam passage.

- No
- Yes

d. A method of appeal is published prior to the exam.

- No
- Yes

e. Unsuccessful examinees are informed of their remaining eligibility and reapplication procedures.

- No
- Yes

20. Regarding procedures for formal appeals in cases of adverse decisions (explain any "No" response):

a. They are published in appropriate documents (Constitution, By-Laws, Policies and Procedures)

- No, explain:
- Yes

b. Unsuccessful candidates are notified of the process and deadline for submission of appeals.

- No, explain:
- Yes

c. The committee making the final decision regarding the appeals is independent (autonomous) from the entity that made the adverse decision and from the executive board/board of regents.

- No, explain:
- Yes

d. Has the executive board/board of regents overturned an appeals committee decision since the last triennial report?

- No
- Yes, describe:

e. Have changes been made in the formal appeals procedures since the last in-depth report?

- No, explain:
- Yes, describe:

21. Regarding appeals of adverse decisions,
a. provide the following data:

	Current reporting year	Previous year	Two years prior
Credentials	Number of appeals: Number of successful appeals:	Number of appeals: Number of successful appeals:	Number of appeals: Number of successful appeals:
RVSO/RVS Examination	Number of appeals: Number of successful appeals:	Number of appeals: Number of successful appeals:	Number of appeals: Number of successful appeals:

b. Describe reasons for successful appeals:

22. Regarding the certification process, confirm the following (explain any “No” response):

- a. Is the certification process independent from the governance aspects provided by the specialty college?
- b. Are separate diplomas issued by the RVSO and the RVS if an RVSO has one or more RVSs?
 - No, explain:
 - Yes

c. Are diplomas time-dated?

- No, explain:
- Yes

d. Is maintenance of certification mandatory?

- No, explain:
- Yes

e. Is maintenance of certification required of diplomates certified prior to implementation of the maintenance of certification program?

- No, explain:
- Yes

f. Provide a brief description of the system/method for maintenance of certification (i.e., reexamination, point system, etc.). Include whether or not diplomates are audited and what percentage of diplomates are audited yearly.

23. Is the RVSO/RVS legally incorporated as a not-for-profit organization (section 501(C)(3) or 501 (C) (6) w) within a state or district of the United States?

- No
- Yes

24. Does the RVSO have Directors and Officers liability insurance and/or Errors and Omissions liability insurance?

- No
- Yes

25. Describe any major issues/challenges that may impact the viability of the RVSO/RVS including: lawsuits, financial concerns, declining membership, etc.

26. Does the RVSO offer fellowship(s)?

- No
- Yes, describe:

By submitting this report, the [*insert name of the specialty organization*] hereby agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold the AVMA harmless from and against all claims, damages, and expenses (including reasonable attorney's fees) arising from any claim that the AVMA's use of the name or acronym of [*insert name of the specialty organization*] or any of its specialties or subspecialties infringes upon the intellectual property rights of any third party.

Name:

Title:

Signature: _____

Appendix 11

AVMA PROVISIONALLY RECOGNIZED VETERINARY SPECIALTY ORGANIZATION

Interim Report Form

An officer of the recognized veterinary specialty organization (RVSO) indicated below is responsible for completion of this form and its return to the AVMA Education and Research Division **by November 1, 20XX**.

RVSO _____

1. Number of charter diplomates: _____

2. Number of years since provisional recognition. _____

3. Number of active diplomates January 1, **20XX** _____

4. Has your RVSO accepted applications for membership? If not, when do you plan to do so?

5. Change in number of active diplomates:

 Added _____

 Lost _____ Net change _____

7. Number of active diplomates December 31, **20XX**: _____

8. Number of diplomates having a status other than active:

Honorary _____

Emeritus _____

Other (please indicate status and number)

9. Total of all living diplomates December 31, **20XX** _____

10. Complete the attached form on Credentialing and Examination Outcomes. Use the most current information for each class of candidates.

11. Number of active diplomates primarily associated with:

a) Academia _____

b) Industry _____

c) Government _____

d) Practice _____

e) Other (please specify) _____

12. Provide a current copy of your constitution and/or bylaws. If there have been changes in your constitution or bylaws this year, please provide a second copy with deletions ~~struck through~~ and additions underlined.

13. Describe how you ensure that examination questions reflect the professional activities expected of diplomates.

14. Do you provide candidates with a content outline and the format of the exam prior to the exam? If so, provide a copy.

15. Describe how unsuccessful candidates are advised of deficiencies on examination.

16. Provide the time limit (in days) for reporting scores to candidates after the examination is administered. Are examination results sent to all candidates on the same day?

17. Are all unsuccessful candidates informed of their remaining eligibility and reapplication procedures? How?

18. a. Number of residency/training programs (approved qualifying routes) existing at time of provisional recognition: _____

b. Number of residency/training programs (approved qualifying routes) initiated this year: _____

c. Number of residency/training programs (approved qualifying routes) December 31, **20XX**: _____

d. Number of **individuals** in residency/training programs (approved qualifying routes) January 1, **20XX** (if available): _____

e. Number of **individuals** in residency/training programs (approved qualifying routes) December 31, **20XX** (if available): _____

Job (task) analysis, test validation, and criteria referencing (for establishing cut scores) improve the fairness, accuracy, and legal defensiveness of the credentialing examination, and certification of specialists. The following questions (19-23) address these functions.

19. Has your RVSO conducted a job analysis to help substantiate entry-level requirements and examination? If not, is such an analysis planned?

20. How does your RVSO develop examination items? Is a professional examination consultant

used? If so, to what extent?

21. How is your examination validated?
22. How do you set the pass point?
23. Have your testing methods been previously established and reported to the ABVS? If not, please describe them as a part of this report (e.g., 300 multiple-choice questions). Are candidates notified of the passing point or the method of setting the pass point before the examination?
24. Describe any changes in your examination process occurring this year (e.g., type, validation, committee size).
25. Describe any advances in training programs, continuing education, or scientific programs made during the year.
26. Describe any other notable events occurring during the year, emphasizing those that demonstrate progress toward becoming "fully functional" and thus qualified for full recognition.
27. Provide names, addresses, phone and facsimile numbers, and e-mail addresses for current officers.
28. List any perceived or anticipated problems that might interfere with progress toward full recognition within the required time frame.
29. When do you intend to petition for full recognition? _____
30. If a determination has been made of the federal tax status of the organization was it:

Tax exempt under 501(c)(3) _____

Tax exempt under 501(c)(6) _____

Other _____

31. Is there special assistance that your veterinary specialty organization desires from the ABVS?

Name of person completing this form (please print) _____

Signature _____

Date _____

THANK YOU.

PLEASE RETURN TO THE AVMA BY NOVEMBER 1.

Name of Recognized Veterinary Specialty Organization, Specialty, or Subspecialty

Date _____

10. CREDENTIALING/EXAMINATION OUTCOMES

For this report, the RVSO **MUST** group candidates by the year in which they initially applied for certification. Candidates should remain in their candidate class regardless of whether their credentials are initially rejected or whether they reapply at a later time. Each year, the RVSO **MUST** update information for each candidate class as additional candidates complete the credentialing or examination process. This will provide the ABVS with up-to-date information for the current and five preceding candidate classes. If information is not available at the time the Annual Report is submitted, the RVSO should indicate “NA” and provide a brief explanation.

A duplicate of this form **must** be completed and submitted for each recognized veterinary specialty or subspecialty within your organization.

	Candidate					
	20XX	20XX	20XX	20XX	20XX	20XX
1. Total number of applicants						
2. Number of candidates for whom credentials were accepted,						
3. Credentialing percentage: (#2/#1) x 100						
4. Number of credentialed candidates (ie, #2) presenting for examination, regardless of previous examination attempts						
5. Number of candidates presenting for examination (i.e., #4) who passed the certifying examination and became diplomates						

6. Of candidates who passed the examination (i.e., #5), list number who were:						
a. successful on first attempt						
b. successful on second attempt						
c. successful on ≥3 attempts						
7. Diplomate percentage of candidate class (i.e., cumulative exam pass rate for each candidate class = $([#5/#1] \times 100)$)						
8. Diplomate percentage of credentialed candidates per class (i.e., cumulative exam pass rate for candidates with accepted credentials = $[#5/#2] \times 100$)						
8. Diplomate percentage of those presenting for examination (i.e., cumulative pass rate of candidates presenting for examination = $[#5/#4] \times 100$)						

Appendix 12

FOR EXAMPLE ONLY

AVMA PROVISIONALLY RECOGNIZED VETERINARY SPECIALTY

Interim Report Form

An officer of the recognized veterinary specialty (RVS) indicated below is responsible for completion of this form and its return to the AVMA Education and Research Division **by November 1, 20XX**.

RVS _____

RVSO the RVS is organized within _____

1. Number of organizing committee members that became diplomates

2. Number of years since provisional recognition. _____

3. Number of active diplomates January 1, **20XX** _____

4. Has your RVS accepted applications for membership? If not, when do you plan to do so?

5. Change in number of active diplomates:

 Added _____

 Lost _____ Net change _____

7. Number of active diplomates December 31, **20XX**: _____

8. Number of diplomates having a status other than active:

Honorary _____

Emeritus _____

Deceased _____

Other (please indicate status and number)

9. Total of all living diplomates December 31, **20XX** _____

11. Complete the attached form on Credentialing and Examination Outcomes. Use the most current information for each class of candidates.

11. Number of active diplomates primarily associated with:

a) Academia _____

b) Industry _____

c) Government _____

d) Practice _____

e) Other (please specify) _____

12. Provide a current copy of your constitution and/or bylaws. If there have been changes in your constitution or bylaws this year, please provide a second copy with deletions ~~struck through~~ and additions underlined.

13. Describe how you ensure that examination questions reflect the professional activities expected of diplomates.

14. Do you provide candidates with a content outline and the format of the exam prior to the exam? If so, provide a copy.

15. Describe how unsuccessful candidates are advised of deficiencies on examination.
16. Provide the time limit (in days) for reporting scores to candidates after the examination is administered. Are examination results sent to all candidates on the same day?
17. Are all unsuccessful candidates informed of their remaining eligibility and reapplication procedures? How?
18. a. Number of residency/training programs (approved qualifying routes) existing at time of provisional recognition: _____
- b. Number of residency/training programs (approved qualifying routes) initiated this year: _____
- c. Number of residency/training programs (approved qualifying routes) December 31, **20XX**: _____
- d. Number of **individuals** in residency/training programs (approved qualifying routes) January 1, **20XX** (if available): _____
- e. Number of **individuals** in residency/training programs (approved qualifying routes) December 31, **20XX** (if available): _____

Job (task) analysis, test validation, and criteria referencing (for establishing cut scores) improve the fairness, accuracy, and legal defensiveness of the credentialing examination, and certification of specialists. The following questions (19-23) address these functions.

19. Has your RVS conducted a job analysis to help substantiate entry-level requirements and examination? If not, is such an analysis planned?
20. How does your RVS develop examination items? Is a professional examination consultant used? If so, to what extent?
21. How is your examination validated?
22. How do you set the pass point?
23. Have your testing methods been previously established and reported to the ABVS? If not, please describe them as a part of this report (e.g., 300 multiple-choice questions). Are candidates notified of the passing point or the method of setting the pass point before the examination?
24. Describe any changes in your examination process occurring this year (e.g., type, validation, committee size).
25. Describe any advances in training programs, continuing education, or scientific programs made during the year.
26. Describe any other notable events occurring during the year, emphasizing those that demonstrate progress toward becoming "fully functional" and thus qualified for full recognition.
27. Provide names, addresses, phone and e-mail addresses for current officers.
28. List any perceived or anticipated problems that might interfere with progress toward full recognition within the required time frame.
29. When do you intend to petition for full recognition? _____

30. Is there special assistance that your RVS desires from the ABVS?

By submitting this report, the [*insert name of the specialty organization*] hereby agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold the AVMA harmless from and against all claims, damages, and expenses (including reasonable attorney's fees) arising from any claim that the AVMA's use of the name or acronym of [*insert name of the specialty organization*] or any of its specialties or subspecialties infringes the intellectual property rights of any third party.

Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Name of person completing this form (please print) _____

Email:

Signature _____

Date _____

THANK YOU.

PLEASE RETURN TO THE AVMA ELECTRONICALLY BY NOVEMBER 1.

Name of Recognized Veterinary Specialty _____

Date _____

10. CREDENTIALING/EXAMINATION OUTCOMES

For this report, the RVS **MUST** group candidates by the year in which they initially applied for certification. Candidates should remain in their candidate class regardless of whether their credentials are initially rejected or whether they reapply at a later time. Each year, the RVS **MUST** update information for each candidate class as additional candidates complete the credentialing or examination process. This will provide the ABVS with up-to-date information for the current and five preceding candidate classes. If information is not available at the time the Annual Report is submitted, the RVS should indicate "NA" and provide a brief explanation.

	Candidate					
	20XX	20XX	20XX	20XX	20XX	20XX
1. Total number of applicants						
2. Number of candidates for whom credentials were accepted,						
3. Credentialing percentage: (#2/#1) x 100						
4. Number of credentialed candidates (i.e., #2) presenting for examination, regardless of previous examination attempts						
5. Number of candidates presenting for examination (i.e., #4) who passed the certifying examination and became diplomates						
6. Of candidates who passed the examination (i.e., #5), list number who were:						
a. Successful on first attempt						
b. Successful on second attempt						

c. Successful on ≥ 3 attempts						
7. Diplomate percentage of candidate class (i.e., cumulative exam pass rate for each candidate class = $(\#5/\#1) \times 100$)						
8. Diplomate percentage of credentialed candidates per class (i.e., cumulative exam pass rate for candidates with accepted credentials = $\#5/\#2 \times 100$)						
8. Diplomate percentage of those presenting for examination (i.e., cumulative pass rate of candidates presenting for examination = $\#5/\#4 \times 100$)						

Appendix 13

MODEL LANGUAGE FOR REQUEST FOR SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS FOR THE CERTIFYING EXAMINATION

Note: This model is not intended as legal advice, and any RVSO incorporating this model into its examination procedures should consult with legal counsel to ensure their testing accommodations policies and practices comply with the ADA and any other applicable laws.

The NAME OF RVSO complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (as amended). To ensure equal opportunities for all qualified persons, the RVSO will make reasonable and appropriate accommodations for candidates with documented physical or mental impairments that substantially limit one or more of the major life activities. If you require special accommodations related to a disability in order to take the examination, you must complete this form and return it with your examination application. If you need assistance in completing this form due to a disability, please contact the RVSO at _____.

Accommodations are provided on an individual basis and depend on the nature of the disability and documentation provided. The RVSO will make reasonable efforts to provide the requested accommodations to candidates provided the functional impairment has been demonstrated through documentation and that the accommodations do not fundamentally alter the measurement of the skills or knowledge the examination is intended to test, do not jeopardize examination integrity and security, and do not result in an undue burden to the RVSO.

Documentation submitted in support of the request is used solely for the purpose of evaluating the request. Failure to provide the RVSO with the appropriate supporting documentation in a timely manner will cause a delay in the review process and your ability to schedule and take the examination.

Please type or print all information.

Last Name _____ First Name _____ Middle _____ Initial _____

Telephone number: () _____ Email address _____

Anticipated Examination Date: _____

Have you previously taken the RVSO Certifying Examination? [] Yes [] No

If yes, on what date? _____

Were you provided special testing accommodations? If yes, please describe _____

Please identify the disability or disabilities that substantially limit one or more of your sensory, manual, or speaking skills:

Will your disability require a special accommodation in order for you to take the **RVSO** Certifying Examination? Yes No

If yes, please list the special testing accommodation(s) requested. Use a separate sheet if more space is needed.

Note: You must provide the **RVSO** with written documentation supporting each accommodation you are requesting from an appropriate health care professional with the credentials, training, and expertise to diagnose the reported disability who has examined or treated you. The documentation must be sent directly from the health care professional to the **RVSO**. This documentation must be on letterhead, dated, and signed, and must include the name, title, professional credentials, and contact information of the qualified health care professional. It must include a diagnosis of your health condition, the date(s) of the assessment on which the report is based, a description of the specific impact on your daily life activities and day-to-day functional limitations to major life activities, and a specific recommendation and justification for each special testing accommodation that you require. The **RVSO** will not pay any costs that you may incur in obtaining the required diagnosis and recommendation. However, the **RVSO** will pay for any reasonable accommodations that are provided for you.

The **RVSO** reserves the right to request further verification, if necessary, of the evaluating professional's credentials and expertise relevant to the diagnosis. If the candidate has received prior examination accommodations in an educational setting or for other examinations, documentation of these should also be submitted to the **RVSO**.

Signature of Candidate

Date

Appendix 14

EXAMPLE OF A PROCEDURE FOR APPEAL OF ADVERSE DECISIONS

“The attached sample appeals policy was provided by outside legal counsel representing the AVMA. Neither the AVMA nor AVMA’s outside counsel are authorized to provide legal advice to the organizations represented on the VSOC. Therefore, you are strongly encouraged to review the attached sample policy with your own legal counsel to determine the extent to which this policy is appropriate for your organization, or any revisions that may be necessary.”

POLICY ON REVIEW OF ADVERSE DECISIONS OF THE COLLEGE

The American College of _____ is committed to making decisions in accordance with applicable substantive criteria and fair procedure. Accordingly, any veterinarian or residency program that is the subject of an adverse decision listed below will be given a written explanation of the reasons for the decision. The veterinarian or program may then seek review of that decision by following the procedures set forth in this Policy. The Policy begins by indicating the decisions that are appealable. It then describes the procedures governing requests for reconsideration, appeals, and ultimately review by the Board of the College.

1. APPEALABLE DECISIONS

- a) Any veterinarian whose credentials for eligibility to sit for an examination have not been approved;
- b) Any veterinarian who has been denied certification or continuing certification for a reason other than receipt of a failing grade on the examination, or
- c) Any veterinarian whose certification has been revoked or whose application for reinstatement has been denied;
- d) Any residency program whose application for recognition has been denied; and
- e) Any residency program that has been the subject of any other adverse action

Receipt of a failing grade on a written examination is not appealable. However, candidates have the right to be assured that the score they received was accurate. To assure an accurate result, all certification examinations with a failing score will automatically be re-scored. If still not satisfied, the candidate may request a hand re-scoring.

Decisions by a veterinarian's Residency Program, Program Director, or sponsoring institution regarding credit for training or any other matter shall not be appealable. Any disagreement by a veterinarian with such decisions should be communicated to the Residency Program, Program Director, or sponsoring institution.

2. REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Within ten (10) days after the date of written notice of an adverse decision, the subject of the decision may request reconsideration by the entity that made that decision. Any request for reconsideration shall be in writing, shall be accompanied by payment of any fee imposed by the College, and shall include a concise statement of why that decision is believed to be incorrect. The request for reconsideration will be promptly reviewed, and the requestor will be advised of the decision and the reasons therefor.

A request for reconsideration is optional. A decision not to seek reconsideration does not prevent the subject of an adverse decision from filing an appeal.

3. APPEAL

Within ten (10) days after the date of the written notice of an adverse decision or after the date of the written notice of a denial of a request for reconsideration (whichever is later), the subject of the adverse decision may appeal that decision. The appeal shall be in writing, shall be accompanied by payment of any fee imposed by the College, and shall state whether the appellant would like an oral hearing on the appeal. Within fourteen (14) days after filing an appeal, the appellant shall provide a statement of the basis for the appeal and any supporting documentation. No facts or materials will be considered on appeal that were not presented to the initial decision-maker at the time of the initial decision or on a request for reconsideration. Each properly filed appeal will be reviewed by an Appeals Committee consisting of three individuals appointed by the President of the College. No member of the Appeals Committee shall have participated in the initial decision under review. After reviewing the materials submitted by the appellant, the Appeals Committee shall determine whether an oral hearing would be useful. The Committee may also determine whether to seek a response from the entity that made the initial decision. The decision whether to hold an oral hearing is within the sole discretion of the Appeals Committee. Unless otherwise determined by the Appeals Committee or the Board of the College, the pendency of an appeal shall not stay the effective date of the initial decision.

If the Appeals Committee determines that a hearing might be useful, it shall schedule a hearing within ____ days after receipt of the statement of the basis for the appeal and the supporting documentation. The Committee shall determine whether the hearing will be in person, by telephone, or by other electronic medium. The Committee shall determine whether to invite a representative of the entity that made the initial decision to participate in the hearing. Not less than thirty (30) days prior to the scheduled hearing, the Appeals Committee shall notify the appellant (and any representative of the entity that made the initial decision) of the time and date of the hearing – and whether the hearing will be in person, by phone, or by other medium. The Appeals Committee, in its sole discretion, shall determine whether legal counsel for the appellant may be present at any hearing and the extent to which such counsel may participate.

Not later than fourteen (14) days before any hearing, the appellant shall notify the Appeals Committee of its intent to participate and who will be presenting on behalf of the appellant. Unless otherwise permitted by the Appeals Committee, only one individual may speak for the appellant. That individual shall be given the opportunity to make a statement in support of appellant's position and shall answer any questions posed by the Committee. The Appeals Committee shall not be bound by technical rules of evidence or procedure. A record of the proceedings shall be kept. A copy of the record shall be made available to the appellant upon payment of the cost of reproduction. All expenses of the appellant in connection with the appeal and any hearing shall be borne by the appellant.

Following the hearing or after review of written submissions if there is no hearing, the Appeals Committee shall affirm, modify, or reverse the initial adverse decision. The appellant and the entity that made the initial decision shall be notified in writing of the decision of the Appeals Committee and the reasons for that decision. The Board of the College shall also be notified. The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be final except that it is subject to review by the Board of the College at the sole discretion of the Board.

4. REVIEW BY THE BOARD OF THE COLLEGE

The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be reviewable by the Board of the College. The Board shall ratify the decision of the Appeals Committee unless it finds that decision to have been not in accordance with fair procedure, contrary to applicable requirements, or otherwise arbitrary. Any decision by the Board with respect to the action by the Appeals Committee shall constitute the final action of the College with respect to the matter at issue.

Appendix 15

Glossary of Abbreviations

AAVC	American Association of Veterinary Clinicians
AAVMC	Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges
AAVSB	American Association of Veterinary State Boards
ABVP	American Board of Veterinary Practitioners
ABVS	American Board of Veterinary Specialties
ABVT	American Board of Veterinary Toxicology
ACAW	American College of Animal Welfare
ACLAM	American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine
ACPV	American College of Poultry Veterinarians
ACT	American College of Theriogenologists
ACVAA	American College of Veterinary Anesthesia and Analgesia
ACVB	American College of Veterinary Behaviorists

ACVCP	American College of Veterinary Clinical Pharmacology
ACVD	American College of Veterinary Dermatology
ACVECC	American College of Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care
ACVIM	American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine
ACVM	American College of Veterinary Microbiologists
ACVN	American College of Veterinary Nutrition
ACVNU	American College of Veterinary Nephrology and Urology
ACVO	American College of Veterinary Ophthalmologists
ACVP	American College of Veterinary Pathologists
ACVPM	American College of Veterinary Preventive Medicine
ACVR	American College of Veterinary Radiology
ACVS	American College of Veterinary Surgeons
ACVSMR	American College of Veterinary Sports Medicine and Rehabilitation
ACZM	American College of Zoological Medicine

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ARRC	ABVS Annual Report Review Committee
AVDC	American Veterinary Dental College
AVMA	American Veterinary Medical Association
BOD	AVMA Board of Directors
CDNS	ABVS Committee on Development of New Specialties
COE	AVMA Council on Education
EC	ABVS Executive Committee
ECFVG	AVMA Educational Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates
HOD	AVMA House of Delegates
MOC	maintenance of certification
NBVME	National Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners
P&P	ABVS Policies and Procedures Committee
PPEC	ABVS Postgraduate Program Evaluation Committee

RVSO Recognized Veterinary Specialty Organization

RVS Recognized Veterinary Specialty

Appendix 16

Guidelines for Fellowships in Specialized Veterinary Medicine

Why fellowships?

Fellowships have been helpful in both human and veterinary specialized medicine, where like-minded specialists create a formal means to advance the science of a focused area of study, providing learning opportunities beyond what residencies may provide. Knowledge and skills can be passed on from mentors to trainees in a narrowed and more in-depth aspect of the specialty. Fellowships may also provide a conduit for inter-specialty collaboration and learning that residencies may not provide. Though not a primary goal, fellowships may act as a stepping-stone for eventual development of an AVMA-recognized veterinary specialty.

Objectives of a fellowship

The objective of a fellowship program is to build upon knowledge and experience obtained during discipline specific training by an AVMA Recognized Veterinary Specialty Organization (RVSO). It is anticipated the fellowship will include a period of intensive applied training that should prepare its enrollees to successfully interact with other disciplines and to provide a leadership role in the area of study. It is expected that most graduates of fellowship training programs will devote a major portion of their professional effort to their fellowship discipline.

At what stage should fellowships be pursued/offered?

The focused nature of fellowships necessitates successful completion of a RVSO's certifying examination. However, certain requirements of the fellowship may be accrued after a candidate's credentials package has been accepted but prior to becoming a diplomate. The title of fellow would only be awarded upon satisfactory completion of all requirements and upon becoming a diplomate of a specialty that sponsors the fellowship.

Is cross-collaboration encouraged among multiple specialties?

Cross-RVSO collaboration is a potentially special aspect of fellowships, which provides the potential for educational opportunities that would otherwise not be available. If two RVSOs share a fellowship, there may be slight modifications of the requirements for each RVSO. Such collaboration requires identification of the organization(s) overseeing the fellowship and associate criteria for achieving fellow status.

Definitions

A. ***Fellowship***—In regard to specialty veterinary medicine, a fellowship is a period of advanced study in a focused area of an existing veterinary specialty, consisting of research and clinical training beyond that which is required for certification in the specialty.

B. ***Fellow***—In regard to specialty veterinary medicine, a fellow is considered to be a specialist who has successfully completed a fellowship training program and passed the fellowship committee's measure of competency. To earn the title "fellow" the individual must first achieve diplomate status.

C. ***Fellowship training program***: A mentored training program of specific application, duration, curriculum, and evaluation established by an RSVO. Fellowship training programs are separate and distinct from RVSO requirements for diplomate eligibility. The specialty sponsoring the fellowship may choose to allow the period of fellowship training to begin following completion of residency training.

D. ***Residency***—Advanced training in a specialty in veterinary medicine that is intended to lead to specialty certification in an AVMA-recognized veterinary specialty organization. A residency program is conducted per the requirements published by the RVSO. A residency is usually confined to a specific discipline.

E. ***Founder or Founding Fellow***—A diplomate of the RSVO and member of the organizing committee of an emerging fellowship who will be involved in the successful submission of the fellowship's petition for recognition by the ABVS, development of the fellowship program, and assessment of fellowship candidates. A founder has received fellow status as a result of credentials that were submitted, reviewed, and approved during an open call by the RVSO for founding fellows. Founding fellow requirements may be fulfilled through:

1. Application for founding fellow at the initial call for founding fellows. Applicants completing all minimum criteria as defined by a founding fellow selection committee at the time of the call for founding fellows. The founding fellow selection committee is a group of specialists that are uniformly identified as

experts in the area of fellowship study. This group will be responsible for setting minimum criteria and reviewing applications of specialists interested in becoming founding fellows.

2. Application for an extension of consideration (of scholarly credentials): This one-time option, available during implementation of a new fellowship may apply only to a handful of individuals, is separate from the original call for founding fellows and would be available in cases where diplomates either did not act on the original call or did not fulfill the scholarly requirements for immediate acceptance as a founding fellow. If the application for extension is accepted, the applicant would be allowed an extension to complete scholarly requirements.

F. Primary mentors and program directors: A diplomate in good standing, who is a fellow or founding fellow, may mentor a fellow candidate or be on record as a program director in the appropriate discipline. Primary mentors and program directors must maintain diplomate status. The same individual may serve as both institutional program director and primary mentor.

G. Supervising mentor: Supervising mentors are those who are directly supervising the fellow candidate on a given day. Any founding fellow or fellow can be a supervising mentor.

H. Supporting faculty: Supporting faculty are all faculty, other than supervising mentors, involved in training of the fellow candidate. This includes: ABVS-recognized board-certified specialists of other disciplines as defined by the fellowship objectives, other diplomates who are not founding fellows or fellows, European diplomates, and research experts within the field of study.

I. Fellow Candidate: A person currently enrolled in a fellowship training program who has not yet completed that program. The fellow candidate may use this title in correspondence or other means of communication.

J. Terminology for a person who successfully completed a fellowship training program, but is not board-certified: A person who has completed a fellowship training program and has not passed the specialty certifying examination may indicate only that they have completed a fellowship training program in the discipline. No connection to the RVSO or RVS may be implied. Terms such as, for example, "ACVS Fellow eligible" should not be used. An individual who identifies their professional credentials using these terms may be eliminated from the approval process. An example of acceptable terminology is "residency and fellowship trained in X discipline". A candidate who has passed the specialty examination and fulfilled requirements of the fellowship but has not yet passed examinations (if any) associated with conveyance of the fellowship, may use

acceptable terminology such as “fellowship trained in X discipline”.

K. Terminology for a person who successfully completed a fellowship training program and is board-certified: RVSOs may instruct successful candidates to use the credentials “Fellow, INSERT RVSO ABBREVIATION HERE- INSERT FELLOWSHIP ABBREVIATION HERE” (examples: Fellow, AVDC-OMFS or AVDC Fellow-OMFS).

Proposed Fellowship Guidelines

Program Development:

Each fellowship program develops its own guidelines as to what is required for a candidate and should establish specific components to the training program, ensuring candidates meet minimum standards as determined by the specialty/specialties involved in creation of the program.

The following are the core components of a fellowship program:

1. Fellowship programs should be structured with robust instruction in a focused field of study.
2. The duration of fellowship programs may be variable based on the area of focus. One year of study may be reasonable for full-time fellowship candidates. Part-time fellowship candidates may spend two or more years obtaining direct supervision requirements. Deviations from the traditional timeline should be documented and justified with the RVSOs overseeing the fellowship program
3. Fellowship programs may utilize specialists in other fields, including AVMA-recognized specialty organizations, international specialty organizations such as the European colleges and counterparts in human medicine, for training of Fellows.
4. Fellowship programs must set objective standards that must be met for award of the Fellow designation. Measurable outcomes for the successful completion of these programs and mastery of the field of study may include:
 - a. Publication requirements
 - b. Research project completion
 - c. Presentation requirements

- d. Successful completion of a defined number of surgical and related non-surgical rotations
- e. Attendance at specified seminars, conferences, lectures, etc.
- f. Competency assessment by supervisor evaluation, module completion and/or examination
- g. Maintenance of activity and case logs to document required clinical and non-clinical experience.

Guidelines for Establishing a Fellowship Training Program:

Requests for approval of a fellowship program should include:

1. Justification for development of the fellowship program, including: i) evidence of a critical mass of diplomates within the field who desire to establish the program. ii) A description of the specific knowledge base or practice area that exists to merit a fellowship program.
2. Description of the proposed training program for the fellowship. This should include case type and number, activities, seminars, rounds, scholarly activities and any pertinent training timelines.
3. List and description of requirements (facilities, instructors) for programs providing training within the fellowship.
4. Proposed procedure for recognition of fellows completing the program, including a description of the proposed method for determination of mastery within the field.
5. Plan for organization and administration of the fellowship, such as the selection and duties of committee members.
6. Mechanism for demonstrating continuing professional development in the field.
7. Demonstration that there is currently no existing fellowship that provides a similar function for the interested group of veterinary specialists. Inter-specialty fellowships are encouraged where applicable. VSOC can provide guidance to ABVS and proposed fellowships in determining possible overlap.

Becoming a Fellow:

Founding Fellows

Existing diplomates may qualify as founding fellows. Diplomates initiating the program may recruit other qualified diplomates within a limited time to an “open call” to the specialty membership to apply for “Founding Fellow” status and to aid in establishment of a Fellowship Program.

Minimum requirements might include:

- a. Have an established reputation of excellence in the field as documented by three letters of reference from diplomates familiar with the individual's expertise both within and outside of the individual's institution.
- b. Have an established record of publication and presentation, as defined by the RVSO, in the fellowship's area of study.
- c. Have sufficient experience to have established an area of expertise (e.g., greater than 5 years experience)
- d. Can meet these requirements within a finite period (e.g., three years from announcement of the intent to form a Fellowship Program).

Diplomates who meet the minimum requirements would be granted the title of “Founding Fellow” in the specific field.

New Fellow Candidates

Founding fellows will act as mentors for new fellow candidates.

1. Candidates enrolling in a fellowship program must have successfully completed all requirements of an AVMA-recognized residency program and have been approved to sit for their specialty examination.
2. Candidates must successfully complete the fellowship program.
3. Since the fellowship builds upon residency training, the title of fellow is not conferred and may not be used until diplomate status has been achieved.

4. Fellowship programs are not subspecialties and the title of “fellow” shall not be referred to as a “subspecialist”.

Example of Possible Fellowship Training Program Requirements:

A. Fellowship training must be conducted at a facility (hospital or institution) that offers the scope, volume, and variety of caseload affected with conditions for the specific discipline as well as the complimentary services necessary to diagnose and treat patients.

B. Fellow candidates should have a broad exposure to techniques and procedures within the discipline. Training institutions will need to carefully consider whether they can provide the depth and breadth of training required before agreeing to participate in the training of a fellow.

C. The training program should include regularly scheduled educational events consisting of lectures, debate series, and/or journal clubs.

D. A written agreement crafted by the institution and signed by the fellowship candidate, fellowship mentor, and department head or hospital director to participate in the training of the fellow candidate should be formally documented prior to institution of the fellowship program. This agreement (known as the fellowship training agreement) will serve to define the clinical and educational relationship between the fellow candidate and the training institution(s) as to their responsibility to provide mentorship to the fellow candidate for the entirety of their program. The training agreement must specify the agreed duration of the training program (for example, minimum of one year, maximum of three years), which should be determined before training begins. The agreement is retained by the institution.

E. The institution may craft a statement to be signed by the fellow candidate. This statement may indicate that the fellow candidate understands that they must undertake their clinical role with the utmost integrity, care, professionalism, and responsibility to the institution and the patients whom they serve. The statement (known as a statement of compliance) may also specify expectations of day-to-day work responsibilities and schedules. Meeting the licensing requirements to practice at an institution is the responsibility of the fellow candidate. The candidate is expected to remain in good standing throughout the fellowship training program with both the training institution(s) and all state and federal licensing agencies.

Example of Possible Expectations of Fellow Candidates:

A. The fellow candidate must have completed a residency prior to beginning a fellowship training program (or for some fellowships, at least having been approved to take the specialty exam prior to collecting cases toward fellowship requirements). It is not necessary to be board-certified before beginning the program, but becoming board-certified is required before the individual can use the title of “fellow”. No aspects of the residency credentials process can be applied toward the requirements of fellowship training.

B. The fellow candidate should register with the sponsoring specialty college of the fellowship training program. Confirmation of receipt of the fellowship registration is received before cases can be counted to meet the requirements of the fellowship program. The fellow candidate must work with the program director and primary mentor to complete the registration form for fellowship training.

E. The fellow candidate shall keep a case log listing the cases. This should include the medical record number, the animal and client’s name, a description of the case, primary or first assistant on the case, and whether the case was directly supervised by mentoring faculty or non-supervised. The case log will be submitted along with the activity week logs to be reviewed by the appropriate fellowship oversight committee at regular intervals.

F. A fellowship training program may have a peer-reviewed manuscript requirement. The expectation may be that peer-reviewed manuscripts will be accepted within three years of initiating fellowship training and include required publications in the credentials application. The types of manuscripts and particular requirements for each fellowship training program will be detailed in the documents specific to the fellowship discipline.

G. The fellow candidate will undergo an assessment of competence, which may be an examination or direct assessment and feedback from mentors.

Example of Possible Expectations of Program Director and Primary Mentor:

A. The program director/ primary mentor must be diplomates, in good standing, and either a fellow or founding fellow.

1. Primary mentors and program directors must maintain specialty certification according to RVSO criteria.
2. The same individual may serve as both institutional fellowship director and primary mentor in the specific discipline.

3. The sponsoring veterinary specialty may place limits on how many fellow candidates may be mentored by a single mentor at a time.

B. The fellowship training program is considered an intensively mentored experience. This may require varying levels of direct supervision at different phases of the fellow candidate's training. Fellow candidates are required to have completed a residency and therefore should begin their fellowship training program with certain core competencies. Nonetheless, good decision-making in or for complex cases requires experience.

1. The fellow candidate must receive mentored assistance or observation on a case-by-case basis until such a time that the fellow candidate is competent to proceed with similar cases unassisted and unobserved.
2. A supervising mentor must be available for consultation at all times during fellowship training. While the primary mentor may not be personally available at all times, he or she should ensure that there is mentorship available at all times.

C. The program director must assure each fellow candidate's progress is formally evaluated in writing and feedback provided to the fellow candidate at least semi-annually.

1. The program director or the primary mentor can perform this function.
2. The fellow candidate should be advised of any deficiencies at semi-annual reviews of the fellowship training program and an immediate performance improvement plan put in place if deficiencies are identified. If satisfactory improvement is not met in the specified time frame, the fellow candidate can be dismissed from the training program.

D. The fellowship program director must provide an opportunity for fellow candidates to evaluate the overall fellowship training program, as well as all educational events, rotations, conferences, and faculty.

E. The fellowship program may be required to provide all fellow candidates evaluations of their program for review by the RVSO's fellowship committee to determine whether the goals of the training program are being achieved and whether ancillary institutions/faculty are effective in their training mission.

Example 1: Specific Program Requirements from the American College of Veterinary Surgeons (ACVS)

- A. The ACVS Fellowship Oversight Committee will review for approval each fellowship training program request by a fellow candidate. Requests to initiate programs must be made at least 60 days prior to the start of the fellowship training period to allow time for the fellowship oversight committee to review the program plan. The approval of the program will remain in force for 3 years providing no substantive changes in the program structure or personnel occur.
- B. Review of the primary training institution's oversight of fellowship training programs will occur once every three years or when substantive changes occur to ensure the minimum standards are met. On behalf of each primary training institution, program directors shall submit documentation for each fellow candidate participating in the fellowship training program over the last three years to the fellowship oversight committee.
- C. A fellow candidate may complete a fellowship training program in a minimum of one year but all requirements must be completed over a maximum three-year period. The terminology used for training options include "full-time fellowship training", for fellowship programs of approximately one-year duration. A training program significantly longer than one year is defined as "part-time fellowship training".
- D. Part-time fellowship training can be organized as continuous; i.e., the fellow candidate is employed full-time at the mentor's institution, but assigned to fellowship training only part of the time. Part-time fellowship training can be intermittent; i.e., the fellow candidate is employed elsewhere, when not in active fellowship training
- E. The fellowship training program must include a minimum of 40 weeks on clinics. A fellow candidate's clinic "week" is defined as at least five full workdays along with appropriate after-hours case management (nights and weekends).
- F. Outside rotations in human hospitals can be part of ACVS fellowship training program. Specific requirements for each ACVS fellowship training discipline will be as the discretion of the fellowship oversight committee for that discipline.
- G. There is an expectation that fellowship training candidates will attend focus meetings in their discipline. Specific requirements for each fellowship training program will be defined by the fellowship oversight committee in that discipline.
- H. Up to 7 weeks of the 52 weeks of the Fellowship training program can be used for research and/or board preparation.
- I. Two additional weeks are to be scheduled for vacation.

J. Continuous part-time fellowship training programs longer than one consecutive year must include clinical rotation blocks of no less than one consecutive week. Intermittent part-time fellowship training programs longer than one consecutive year must include clinical rotation blocks of no less than two consecutive weeks to ensure an appropriately intensive clinical experience.

K. Regularly scheduled educational events consisting of attendance at case conferences/journal clubs covering surgical topics appropriate to the discipline, basic science, clinical research and rehabilitation should be organized. These should be outlined at the beginning of the fellow candidate's program and involve a broad cross section of the above topics. Specific numbers of educational events will be determined by the fellowship oversight committee in that discipline.

L. Presentation of comprehensive case discussions may be required as defined by the fellowship oversight committee in the discipline. An acceptable audience includes their fellowship mentors but may include other ACVS Diplomates and residents. The cases presented should represent complex multi-disciplinary approaches to the management of a surgical patient. The intention of the audience is to prepare the fellow candidate to successfully interact with the other related disciplines and to provide a leadership role in the link between the disciplines. Case presentations may be teleconferenced to enable participation of a number of ACVS Fellows or Founding Fellows.

M. Required learning objectives for ACVS fellowship training programs

1. Radiology – Each ACVS fellowship training discipline will set specific learning objectives pertaining to diagnostic imaging. Mastery of these learning objectives must be documented by the ACVR diplomate radiologist who was identified as participating faculty at the start of the fellowship training program. If the fellowship training program is designed such that focused clinical weeks (rotations in radiology) must occur in order to master the required training objectives, such clinical weeks (rotations) must occur in addition to the 40 clinical training weeks specified for surgical case experience.

2. Anesthesiology – Each ACVS fellowship training discipline will set specific learning objectives pertaining to anesthesia. Mastery of these learning objectives must be documented by the ACVAA diplomate anesthesiologist who was identified as participating faculty at the start of the fellowship training program. If the fellowship training program is designed such that focused clinical weeks (rotations in anesthesiology) must occur in order to master the required learning objectives, such clinical weeks (rotations) must occur in addition to the 40 clinical training weeks specified for surgical case experience.

3. Ancillary Specialty Learning Objectives – ACVS fellowship training discipline will set specific learning objectives pertaining to their specific training discipline.

N. Minimum case requirements: Minimum case requirements for ACVS fellowships performed under ACVS Fellow or Founding Fellow membership in the appropriate discipline will be set and determined by the individual ACVS fellowship training programs. The fellow candidate can either be the primary surgeon or first assistant on the case in order for the case to be counted toward case minimum. If multiple fellow candidates scrub on a case, only one person can count as primary and one as first assistant.

O. The type of surgical procedures for each ACVS fellowship training program must demonstrate sufficient depth and breadth of diversity and advanced skills. The distribution of cases will be determined by each of the individual ACVS fellowship training programs. The primary mentor must sign off on all surgical case logs at the end of the fellowship training.

P. The primary mentor, the program director, and supporting faculty will determine if the fellow candidate has successfully completed the fellowship training program at the end of the fellowship training program. The fellow candidate must submit the following within three years of initiating the fellowship training program to be considered for the designation of ACVS:

1. Letter of intent to become an ACVS Fellow in the discipline of training.
2. Supporting letters from the program director and primary mentor indicating successful completion of the program.
3. All supporting documentation (case logs, signed documentation of other required specialty training, case presentations, publications, etc.). Review by the fellowship oversight committee, ACVS Fellowship Committee and ACVS Board of Regents will occur within 6 months of submission of materials to the ACVS office.

Q. Activities of the fellow candidates in ACVS Fellowship Programs will be monitored by the fellowship oversight committee. The fellowship oversight committee will provide a report to the ACVS Fellowship Committee each fall specifying:

1. Number and location of fellowship programs
2. Names of fellow candidates pursuing fellowships
3. Results of requirement completion

4. Requests for program modification

R. After fellow candidates successfully complete all program requirements, the ACVS Board of Regents will grant fellow status based on the recommendation of the fellowship oversight committee and review of the ACVS Fellowship Committee.

Example 2: Specific Case Requirements from American Veterinary Dental College Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Fellowship (AVDC OMFS)

AVDC OMFS Fellowship Minimum Required Case Log Requirements

Category 1: Surgical treatment of oral and facial tumors requiring partial or complete mandibulectomy – **8 cases***

Category 2: Surgical treatment of oral and facial tumors requiring maxillectomy – **6 cases ****

Category 3: Surgical closure of congenital or acquired palate defects acquired after birth– **4 cases *****

Category 4: Treatment of maxillary or mandibular fractures by application of bone-borne devices such as plates, wires or cross pins/half-pins – **6 cases ******

Category 5: Treatment of maxillary or mandibular fractures by application of a wire-reinforced intraoral tooth-borne splint – **6 cases**

Category 6: Treatment of maxillofacial conditions requiring repositioning and internal fixation, and/or osteotomy/ostectomy, of osseous structures associated with the maxillary and/or orbital bones, zygomatic arch or mandibular coronoid process or condyle – **3 cases ******

Category 7: Surgical treatment of salivary gland disorders – **3 cases**

Category 8: Local, subdermal plexus or axial pattern pedicle flaps for closure of traumatic or surgical OMF soft tissue defects involving the dermis – **4 cases** *****

Category 9: Surgical management of miscellaneous challenging OMFS conditions. Qualifying procedures may include: extraction of impacted teeth, enucleation of odontogenic cysts or tumors (when indicated), root tip retrieval from nasal cavity or mandibular canal, surgical management of osteonecrosis, marsupialization procedures – **5 cases**

Category 10: Management of soft tissue neoplasms not requiring ostectomy – **3 cases**

Category 11: Management of traumatic soft tissue injuries (e.g., lip avulsion, lip laceration, tongue laceration and avulsion) – **3 cases**

Category 12: Medical management of temporomandibular conditions – **2 cases**

*Category 1 shall include at least 1 total mandibulectomy, 1 segmental mandibulectomy, 1 bilateral rostral mandibulectomy, and 1 dorsal marginal mandibulectomy (i.e., mandibular rim excision).

**Category 2 shall include at least 3 caudal maxillectomies. Procedures that do not penetrate the nasal cavity would not fulfill this category.

***Category 3 may include closure of oronasal fistula (ONF) caused by periodontal disease, though no more than 1 of the 4 cases can be dental-related ONF cases.

****Categories 4 and 6 shall include at least 4 cases involving placement of plates (standard, reconstruction or miniplates), and 4 cases in which a bone-grafting technique or application of rhBMP2 is used.

*****Category 8 shall include a minimum of 2 axial pattern flaps. One case may be performed on a dog or cat cadaver but must be documented with image material and supervised as a clinical case. One case may also be performed in a non-OMF region when performed with an ACVS/ECVS boarded surgeon. Note that intraoral mucosal flaps that do not include dermis do not satisfy the requirements of this category.

Note: a 'case' can be included as meeting the MRCL requirement under only one

category unless a technique in Category 8 is used for reconstruction following treatment using a technique in a different category, e.g. following maxillectomy. A total of 5 procedures may be performed on a cadaver.

Recommended Oncology Rotation Learning Objectives

1) 2-week rotation in medical and radiation oncology

2) Medical Oncology

- know the rationale and indications for chemotherapeutic agents for the treatment of OMF neoplasms
- know the indications for pre and/or postoperative adjunctive chemotherapy for OMF neoplasms
- observe and be familiar with complications associated with the administration of chemotherapy for the treatment of OMF neoplasms
- observe and be familiar with the treatment of complications associated with the administration of chemotherapy for the treatment of OMF neoplasms
- review the outcomes of chemotherapy for a minimum of 10 OMF cases with a board-certified medical oncologist

3) Radiation Oncology

- know the basic principles of radiation therapy for the treatment of OMF neoplasms
- know the rationale and indications for radiation therapy for the treatment of OMF neoplasms
- know the indications for pre- and/or postoperative adjunctive radiation therapy for OMF neoplasms
- observe and be familiar with mapping techniques and dosage regimens for administration of radiation therapy for the treatment of OMFS neoplasms
- observe and be familiar with complications associated with the administration of radiation therapy for the treatment of OMFS neoplasms
- observe and be familiar with the treatment of complications associated with the administration of radiation therapy for the treatment of OMFS neoplasms

- review the outcomes of radiation therapy for a minimum of 10 OMF cases with a board-certified radiation oncologist

4) Multimodal therapy

- know the rationale and indications for multimodal therapy for the treatment of OMF neoplasms