



## Student American Veterinary Medical Association

### Policies Manual

#### Purpose

The Student American Veterinary Medical Association (SAVMA) Policies Manual is to provide guidance and instruction regarding the draft, maintenance, review, and distribution of policies adopted by the SAVMA House of Delegates (HOD) and Executive Board (EB).

#### Definition of a Policy

Merriam-Webster defines “policy” as “a definite course or method of action selected from among alternatives and in light of given conditions to guide and determine present and future decisions; a high-level overall plan embracing the general goals and acceptable procedures especially of a governmental body.” Within the confines of SAVMA, a “policy” can be further defined as any standard procedure or practice, official position or stance, with regards to issues and events within SAVMA’s operating purview. Policies are not bylaws amendments but still guide standard operating procedures within SAVMA. Endorsed policies are policies of other organizations, such as the AVMA and AAVMC, which SAVMA has recognized as relevant. However, endorsed policies do not guide SAVMA’s own standard operating procedures.

#### Creation and Adoption of a Policy

The SAVMA Executive Board, Standing Committees, Ad-Hoc Committees, or Task Forces, as well as any individual member of the SAVMA HOD or Committee, can suggest creation of a policy and bring a draft forward for consideration. Policies will be adopted by a simple majority vote of the SAVMA HOD. If a Policy is suggested by a SAVMA Ad-Hoc Committee, or SAVMA Task Force, wording should be included in the motion as to which standing committee shall maintain responsibility of the policy. If no such wording is included, then the SAVMA President shall assign the policy to the most appropriate committee. Policies and the Policy Manual shall be maintained by the SAVMA Secretary with assistance from the SAVMA President. The SAVMA ITO shall be responsible for maintaining the SAVMA Policies and Policy Manual online, in an appropriate location.

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### **Communication of a Policy**

A policy shall be communicated to the SAVMA HOD and SAVMA membership via online methods including, but not limited to, the SAVMA Governance Portal and the SAVMA Website. The ITO shall be involved in determining the appropriate location for posting of these policies. The Executive Board and Vet Gazette Editor shall be involved in determining if a release on the Vet Gazette blog is appropriate for the policy on a case by case basis. The policy shall also be communicated as described in the original motion that enacts the SAVMA policy.

### **Assignment of Committees to a Policy**

In the event that a Standing Committee for the review of the policy is not outlined in the original motion, the SAVMA President will be responsible for assigning the policy to an appropriate Standing Committee for review. The SAVMA Secretary will maintain the list of policies for each Standing Committee, and assist in the policy review process as outlined below.

### **Maintenance and Review of a Policy**

SAVMA is a highly dynamic organization that is steadily increasing in relevance within the veterinary medical community. Given the nature of SAVMA, there is an inherent steady, predictable turnover rate. This benefits the organization by maintaining a continuous influx of new ideas, but also presents a unique challenge in keeping the policies supported and followed by SAVMA relevant to the current concerns within veterinary medicine and veterinary medical education.

SAVMA Policies should be reviewed a minimum of once every three years, beginning on the year that the policy was enacted. In order to prevent the SAVMA HOD from being overwhelmed by policy review, a schedule for regular review of SAVMA Policies and Procedures is as follows:

1. The SAVMA Secretary shall notify the SAVMA President of all upcoming policies up for review at least 30 days prior to the SAVMA Symposium HOD meeting.
2. The SAVMA President shall assign all policies for review to their respective Standing Committees at the SAVMA Symposium.
3. The Standing Committee shall then decide upon an appropriate recommendation to make with regards to the policy as stated above. This recommendation shall be submitted in the form of a motion to the SAVMA HOD for consideration at the SAVMA HOD meeting during the AVMA Annual Convention.

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For each policy reviewed, one of the following recommendations should be forwarded to the HOD:

1. **Rescind** – if outdated, superseded, overcome by events or implemented
2. **Revise** – with the proposed revision clearly state in the recommendation
3. **Reaffirm** – the policy will remain unchanged. The Standing Committee’s recommendation will be brought forward to the HOD to be voted upon based on the schedule outlined in this document.

SAVMA recognizes that due to the dynamic nature of the organization, occasions may arise where policies should be revised more frequently than once every three years. Policies may be changed more frequently than scheduled provided that the following procedure is followed:

1. Suggested changes must be submitted to the SAVMA Executive Board at least 30 days prior to the SAVMA HOD meeting.
2. The SAVMA President must notify the respective standing committee that was assigned responsibility at least 25 days prior to the SAVMA HOD meeting.
3. The standing committee must assign a recommendation as above with regards to the suggested change.
4. Prior to considering the SAVMA Policy in question, the SAVMA HOD must make at least a 2/3 vote in order to consider the changes to the SAVMA policy.

## References

1. AVMA Policy on Policies
2. Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary