

ACADEMY OF VETERINARY EMERGENCY AND CRITICAL CARE TECHNICIANS AND NURSES

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

The Academy of Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care Technicians was created to foster and validate superior knowledge, skill, and experience in the nursing care and management of the emergent and/or critically ill veterinary patient. Certification as a Veterinary Technician Specialist in Emergency & Critical Care (VTS (ECC)) is a mechanism to ensure and maintain clinical competency, thereby promoting consumer protection, professionalism, and excellence in veterinary emergency and critical care nursing.

ARTICLE I

NAME

This organization shall be known as the Academy of Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care Technicians and Nurses hereinafter referred to as the “the Academy”.

ARTICLE II

INTERNAL REVENUE CODE RESTRICTIONS

Section 1. The Academy has been incorporated under the laws of the State of New York as a not-for-profit educational organization organized exclusively for educational purposes, and it has been recognized as exempt from Federal Income Tax as an organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Section 2. The Academy shall not possess or exercise any power of authority either expressly, by interpretation, or by operation of law that will prevent it at any time from qualifying, and continuing to qualify, as an organization described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or in corresponding provisions of subsequently enacted federal income tax laws (all of which are hereafter referred to as the “Code”); nor shall it engage, directly or indirectly, in any activity which would cause the loss of such qualification.

Section 3. No part of the net assets nor any part of the net earnings of the Academy shall be used for purposes other than educational purposes, and the Academy shall not be organized or operated for any purpose that is not educational.

Section 4. No part of the net earnings of the Academy shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to any member, officer, board member or individual, or substantial contributor to the Academy, or other private persons, except as reasonable compensation for services rendered, as a reasonable allowance for authorized expenditures incurred on behalf of the Academy; and no part of the assets or net earnings, current or accumulated, of the Academy shall ever be distributed to or divided among any such person or inure, be used for, accrued to or benefit any such person or private individual.

Section 5. No substantial part of the activities of the Academy shall consist of carrying on propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation; nor shall the Academy participate or intervene in any

manner, or to any extent, directly or indirectly, in any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office, whether by publishing or distributing statements, or otherwise.

Section 6. No solicitation of contributions to the Academy shall be made and no gift, bequest or devise to the Academy shall be accepted, upon any condition or limitation which, in the opinion of the Academy, may cause the Academy to lose its exemption from federal income tax.

Section 7. If the Academy shall ever be a private foundation as defined in Section 509(a) of the Code, the Academy shall make distributions at such time and in such manner as not to subject it to tax under Section 4942 of the Code, and the Academy shall not:

- (a) engage in any act of self-dealing which would subject it to tax under Section 4941 of the Code;
- (b) retain any excess business holdings which would subject it to tax under Section 4943 of the Code;
- (c) make any investments which would subject it to tax under Section 4944 of the Code; or
- (d) make any taxable expenditures which would subject it to tax under Section 4945 of the Code.

Section 8. The term for which the Academy is organized shall be perpetual however, in the event of its dissolution, its net assets, if any, remaining after payment (or provision for payment) of all liabilities, shall be distributed exclusively for educational purposes, and in even shares, to the following organizations that are described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Code at the time of such distribution: equally, the Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care Society (VECCS) and the National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America (NAVTA).

However, if none of the above-named distributees is in existence, described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Code, and is willing and able to accept the distribution, then the net assets of the Academy shall be distributed exclusively for tax-exempt purposes to, and only to one or more organizations described in section 501(c)(3) of the Code that operate in the areas of veterinary nursing and/or animal welfare.

ARTICLE III

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Section 1. MISSION STATEMENT

To advance emergency and critical care veterinary nursing through certification and standards of excellence.

Section 2. OBJECTIVES

- a. Promote advancement and high standards of practice for those individuals involved in veterinary emergency and critical care nursing.
- b. Establish education and experience prerequisites leading to certification in the specialty of veterinary emergency and critical care nursing.

- c. Examine and certify veterinary technicians and nurses as specialists in veterinary emergency and critical care nursing.
- d. Encourage research and other contributions to knowledge relating to veterinary emergency or critical care nursing.
- e. Promote continuing education and dissemination of knowledge relating to veterinary emergency and critical care nursing.

ARTICLE IV

MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. A member of the Academy shall be known as a “Veterinary Technician Specialist (Emergency & Critical Care)” or “VTS (ECC)”.

Section 2. VTS (ECC) shall be further classified as one of the following (with membership details outlined in the Bylaws):

- a. Charter VTS (ECC)
- b. VTS (ECC)
- c. Hereinafter in this document, both Charter VTS (ECC) and VTS (ECC) will be referred to as VTS (ECC).
- d. VTS (ECC)-Honorary
- e. VTS (ECC)-Retired
- f. VTS (ECC)-Life

ARTICLE V

ORGANIZATION/ADMINISTRATION

Section 1. The Board of Directors (hereafter referred to as the Directors, formerly known as the Council of Regents prior to 2016) shall be the executive body of the Academy and shall consider all business and policies pertaining to the affairs of the Academy. The Board of Directors will consist of the elected Officers, and three (3) Members-at-Large elected by the Academy membership.

Section 2. Following provisional recognition, the first cohort of Officers and Directors were elected by the Charter VTS (ECC). Subsequent Officers and Directors will be elected by the Academy membership.

Section 3. Advisors. The Directors may appoint Advisors to support the work of the Academy by providing expertise where appropriate skill, experience, or knowledge is sought to complement existing skills on the Board and to enhance the ability of the Directors to discharge their duties and advance the purposes of the Academy.

ARTICLE VI

OFFICERS

Section 1. The elected Officers of the Academy shall be the President, President-Elect, Immediate Past President, and Treasurer. These Officers shall be voting members on the Board of Directors.

Section 2. The President-Elect shall automatically become President at the termination of his/her predecessor's term of office.

Section 3. Election of President-Elect shall take place biennially by secure ballot prior to the Business Meeting of the Academy. Election of Treasurer shall take place every four years by secure ballot prior to the Business Meeting of the Academy. Except as provided in Section 2 of this Article, the Officers shall begin their term of office immediately following completion of the Business Meeting in the year elections are held.

Section 4. An Executive Secretary will be appointed by the Directors. The term of the appointment will be determined by the Directors and reviewed biennially. The appointed Executive Secretary is not a voting member of the Directors, except during the first two years following provisional recognition, after which time the Past-President replaced the Executive Secretary as a voting member.

ARTICLE VII

COMMITTEES

Section 1. This organization shall have the following standing committees: Nominations, Credentials Approval, Appeals, Examination, Recertification, Continuing Education, Financial Affairs, and Governance Committees. Additional committees may be appointed and dissolved as needed by the President with the approval of the Directors.

Section 2. The President, with the approval of the Directors, shall appoint the Chairperson and approve members of all committees within a timeframe that expedites the business of the Academy.

Section 3. All Committees will follow established operational policies and procedures as set forth by committee chairpersons and approved by the Directors.

ARTICLE VIII

AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Proposed amendments to the Constitution shall be submitted to the Directors for review 90 days before a scheduled meeting of the Academy or the distribution of a secure ballot to the membership. Proposed amendments shall be distributed to the entire membership with a recommendation by the Directors at least 30 days prior to an amendment vote.

Section 2. An affirmative vote shall require that at least thirty-three percent of the members in good standing vote, and at least seventy five percent of the members voting approve the proposal.

ACADEMY OF VETERINARY EMERGENCY AND CRITICAL CARE TECHNICIANS AND NURSES

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I

MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. A member of the Academy shall be known as a “Veterinary Technician Specialist (Emergency & Critical Care)” or “VTS (ECC)”.

Section 2. VTS (ECC) shall be further classified as one of the following:

a. Charter VTS (ECC): veterinary technicians having achieved distinction in the field of veterinary emergency and critical care nursing and having qualifications far exceeding those proposed as necessary for candidates desiring to take the certifying exam. Charters were selected by a sub-committee of the Organizing Committee.

b. VTS (ECC): A veterinary technician or nurse of high ethical and moral character who has fulfilled the requirements for certification as set forth in the Bylaws of the Academy.

c. Hereinafter in this document, both Charter VTS (ECC) and VTS (ECC) will be referred to as VTS (ECC).

d. VTS (ECC)-Honorary

1. Honorary Member status may be conferred upon any individual who has made substantial contributions to the development and progress of emergency and critical care nursing.
2. Nominations for Honorary Member status must be made in writing by at least two VTS (ECC) members to the Board of Directors. Election to Honorary Membership shall require approval by at least two thirds (2/3) of the members casting their vote, with the minimum of a quorum.
3. Honorary Members shall have all rights and privileges of members except the right to vote and hold office, and shall be known as ‘VTS (ECC)-Honorary’.

e. VTS (ECC)-Retired:

1. Any VTS (ECC) who has retired from active practice may apply for retirement status.
2. Eligibility requirements for VTS (ECC)-Retired designation:
 - a. Certification as a VTS (ECC) for a minimum of 5 years
 - b. Retirement from active practice as a VTS (ECC)
 - c. Submission of a completed Retirement Status Application and subsequent approval by the Directors
3. Upon achieving VTS (ECC)-Retired status, the VTS (ECC)-Retired designation should be utilized whenever listing credentials.
4. Benefits of VTS (ECC)-Retired status:
 - a. The VTS (ECC)-Retired continues as a voting member of the Academy, may hold office, and continues to receive all membership benefits and privileges.
 - b. Annual Academy dues shall be reduced for VTS (ECC)-Retired members.

- c. VTS (ECC)-Retired status does not require completion of recertification to maintain the VTS (ECC)-Retired title.
 - d. VTS (ECC)-Retired members will appear in the public Academy membership list as: ‘Retired, not actively practicing’.
5. If a VTS (ECC)-Retired returns to active ECC practice, they may return to full VTS (ECC) status by:
- a. paying any back dues equivalent to full member dues, and
 - b. meeting any Academy recertification or re-exam requirements due if still within the recertification period in place at the time of achieving VTS (ECC)-Retired status, and
 - c. submitting a completed Return to Full Status Application with subsequent approval by the Directors;
- or
- d. completing the entire VTS (ECC) application process again if more than 5 years have passed since their last VTS (ECC) certification/recertification.

f. VTS (ECC)-Life:

- 1. VTS (ECC)-Life Member status may be conferred upon a VTS (ECC) in good standing with 20 years continuous Academy membership (no lapses in membership) and demonstrated meritorious service and contribution to the Academy and the profession.
- 2. Nominations for VTS (ECC)-Life membership status shall be submitted to the Directors, through the Executive Secretary, by members of the Academy in good standing, according to Board policy and procedure.
- 3. The Directors will review and vote on all nominations according to Board policy and procedure, giving primary consideration to the contributions of the individual toward furthering the mission of the Academy.
- 4. VTS (ECC)–Life members will be exempt from the payment of dues, have all the rights and privileges afforded a VTS (ECC), and shall be known as VTS (ECC)-Life members. Recertification is not required if no longer working in the field.

ARTICLE II

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. The management and control of the business and professional affairs of the Academy shall be vested in the Board of Directors. The Directors or its designated committees shall receive and consider for approval all applications for membership, provide for the conduct of an examination, and issue appropriate certificates to those who successfully pass the examination and are approved for membership by the Directors. Utilizing disciplinary guidelines outlined in Bylaws Article IX, the Directors shall consider and act upon: charges against members for alleged offenses against the Constitution and Bylaws, charges of unprofessional conduct, and expulsion of members. The Directors shall select the time and place of all meetings, determine the amount of the initiation and ancillary fees and dues, and generally govern the membership of the Academy. It shall direct the management of funds held by the Academy.

The Directors shall have fiduciary responsibility, oversight, and accountability for the Academy. The Directors shall comply with the confidentiality policy set forth herein. Directors shall disclose any actual

or potential conflicts of interest (COI) to the board in writing per Board COI policy. Service on the Board of Directors carries the expectation and responsibility for participation in meetings and engagement in Board activity. Failure to meet these obligations may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the Board as outlined in Board policies and procedures. Each Director shall ensure a smooth and timely transition for his or her successor.

Section 2. The Board of Directors shall consist of the President, President-Elect, Past-President, Treasurer, and three additional Members-at-Large elected by the Academy members. One of the initial three Members-at-Large will be elected for a term of two years; the other two and all subsequent Members-at-Large will be elected for terms of four years.

Section 3. Advisors. The Directors at their discretion and after considering the diversity, skills, and knowledge available via the Directors may appoint Advisors as outlined under Article V, Section 3 of the Constitution.

a. Potential Advisors possess appropriate skill, experience, diversity, or knowledge to complement the existing skills on the Board and enhance the ability of the Directors to discharge their duties and advance the purposes of the Academy.

b. Advisors shall have no voting privileges, nor obligations for attendance at regular meetings of the Directors. Advisors may attend said meetings at the invitation of a Director.

c. Advisors shall comply with the confidentiality policy set forth herein and shall sign a confidentiality agreement consistent therewith upon accepting appointment as an Advisor.

Section 4. Vacancies occurring on the Board of Directors between elections shall be filled by appointment by the Directors. Any member appointed to fill a vacancy shall hold the office until the expiration of the term in which the vacancy occurred. Ideally, members appointed to fill a vacancy should have prior Board experience.

Section 5. Confidentiality. Directors shall not discuss or disclose information about the Academy or its activities to any person or entity unless such information is required by law, already a matter of public knowledge, such person or entity has a need to know, or the disclosure of such information is in furtherance of the Academy's purposes, or can reasonably be expected to benefit the Academy. Directors shall use discretion and good business judgment in discussing the affairs of the Academy with third parties. Without limiting the foregoing, Directors may discuss the purposes and functions of the Academy, including but not limited to accounts on deposit in financial institutions. Each Director shall execute a confidentiality agreement consistent herewith upon being voted onto and accepting appointment to the Board of Directors.

Section 6. Meetings

a. The Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors shall be held immediately preceding to the time and at the location designated for the Annual Business Meeting of the Academy. Special meetings may be called at any time by the President or at the documented request of not less than a majority of the members of the Board of Directors.

b. Not less than five (5) days' notice of the time and place of any special meeting and not less than thirty (30) days' notice of the time and place of the regular meeting shall be provided to each Director at their contact location specified in the official records of the Academy.

c. Five voting members of the Directors present in person or via electronic conference shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business, which may come before the Directors.

d. Meetings conducted other than in person (electronic) shall require that all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other or see each other's written contributions to the meeting, and that the names of all participants in the meeting are disclosed to all participants.

e. Parliamentary Procedure. Any question concerning parliamentary procedure at meetings shall be reconciled by the President with reference to Robert's Rules of Order.

ARTICLE III

DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. The President shall:

a. Preside over all meetings of the Academy and the Board of Directors.

b. Administer the affairs of the organization according to the Constitution and Bylaws, and the policies enunciated by the Board of Directors.

c. Coordinate activities of all Academy Committees.

d. Coordinate, complete, and submit required reports to the NAVTA Committee on Veterinary Technician Specialties (CVTS). This responsibility may be delegated at the President's discretion.

Section 2. The President-Elect shall:

a. Automatically become President at the termination of his or her predecessor's term of office.

b. Assume the responsibilities of the President if the President is unable to perform the duties of his or her office.

c. Serve as a member of the Continuing Education Committee.

d. Serve as a member of the Financial Affairs Committee.

Section 3. The Immediate Past-President, hereafter known as Past-President, is the outgoing President.

a. If the President and President-Elect simultaneously are unable to perform the duties of President, the Past-President shall serve as acting President until the next regularly scheduled election or until either the President or President-Elect are able to resume the duties of President.

b. The Past-President shall serve as an ex officio, non-voting member of the Exam Committee.

Section 4. The Treasurer shall oversee and coordinate all financial matters of the Academy including:

a. Maintain the financial records of the organization ensuring accounting records are kept current.

b. With integrity and high standards for safeguarding Academy funds, be the custodian of all assets of the Academy and ensure that the Academy's financial policies are followed.

c. Manage all incoming and outgoing funds including payable and receivable accounts, and deposit all monies in the name of the Academy in a Director-approved, federally-insured bank, or as directed by the Directors.

d. Present a report of the financial status of the Academy at each Annual Business Meeting and act at such other times as determined by the Directors.

e. With the assistance of the Financial Affairs Committee: report on the financial status of the Academy and its programs, prepare an annual budget, and facilitate annual tax filings and accounting review and/or audit.

f. Facilitate and encourage the Directors' strategic thinking about the short- and long-term financial viability of the Academy, including investment management, in relation to its advancement of the Academy's mission.

g. Serve as Chairperson of the Financial Affairs committee.

h. Carry out other duties as determined by the Directors.

Section 5. The Term of Office:

a. of the President, President-elect, and Past President shall be 2 years each. Treasurer shall be four years. Term of office begins at the close of the Academy Business Meeting in the year that elections are held, except for the President, whose term commences immediately upon the expiration of his or her predecessor's term. In the event the Treasurer is unable to perform his or her duties, the vacancy of Treasurer will be filled by the Directors' appointee until the next regular election.

Section 6. The Executive Secretary shall:

a. Maintain the general records of the organization and file all required reports pertaining thereto.

b. Attend all meetings of the Academy and the Directors.

c. Record and keep all original notes and minutes and records of all official meetings and sessions until the Directors approve their disposal.

d. Maintain archival copies of all publications, documents, contracts, and other records of the Academy.

e. Conduct secure balloting when required.

f. Handle all correspondence on behalf of the Academy, including coordinating and processing correspondence related to all applications and appeals for VTS (ECC) Certification.

g. Coordinate industry alliances and educational partner communications in cooperation with the Directors.

h. In consultation with the Directors and in collaboration with appropriate committees as assigned, coordinate media representation for Academy public relations including screening of information submitted to any media or social media venues, and information posted on the Academy website.

i.. Present a report of the activities of the office of the Executive Secretary at the Annual Meeting of the Directors and at such other times as determined by the Directors.

j. In the event that the Executive Secretary is unable to perform his/her duties, the vacancy will be filled by the Directors until the Executive Secretary is able to resume their duties or the position is reappointed.

ARTICLE IV

COMMITTEES

Section 1. This organization shall have the following standing committees: Nominations, Credentials Approval, Appeals, Examination, Recertification, Continuing Education, Financial Affairs, and Governance Committees. Additional committees, advisors, or assistance to the committees may be appointed by the President with the approval of the Directors as deemed necessary to support and expedite Academy business.

Section 2. Standing and ad hoc Committee members and Chairpersons shall be appointed by the President and approved by the Directors. The Chairperson(s), in conjunction with the President and approval by the Directors, will select their respective Committee members within a timeframe that expedites the business of the Academy. Terms of committee members shall overlap, i.e., initial appointments shall be for scaled terms and subsequent appointments shall be for fixed terms. The following shall apply to all committees unless otherwise explicitly stated:

a. If a committee member is unable to fulfill his or her term, a replacement shall be appointed/approved by the President (with approval of the Directors) to fulfill the unexpired term.

b. A committee member may be appointed to a committee for not more than two consecutive terms.

Section 3. Nominations Committee

a. The Nominations Committee shall be composed of a Chairperson and two members of the Academy. The Chairperson shall be a prior year member of the Committee.

b. The Committee shall be appointed not less than six months prior to an election date.

c. The term of office is one year (except for the Chairperson).

d. The duties of this Committee shall be:

1. Present a slate of proposed Officers and Members-at-Large candidates to the Directors for approval prior to election as specified in Article VI, Section 4 of the Bylaws. Candidates must be VTS (ECC) members of the Academy in good standing. At least one qualified member for each position shall be presented by the Committee.

Section 4. Credentials Approval Committee

a. The Credentials Approval Committee shall be composed of a Chairperson plus sufficient members of the Academy to address the volume of applications received. A senior member on the Committee will be the Chairperson unless otherwise designated by the President. A senior member is a person with the greatest number of years of experience on the Committee.

b. Committee members shall be initially appointed for one year (one member), two years (two members), and three years (two members) respectively thereafter, terms will be for a three-year period.

c. One Member-At-Large will be assigned as liaison between the Directors and the Committee.

d. The duties of this Committee shall be:

1. Provide through the Executive Secretary of the Academy, information and application forms to prospective applicants.
2. Evaluate and certify eligibility of applicants requesting examination by the Academy.
3. Forward a list of eligible applicants to the President and Executive Secretary for subsequent approval by the Directors.
4. Notify the President and Executive Secretary of applicants who are not deemed eligible for examination and delineate the areas of deficiency.

Section 5. Appeals Committee

a. The Appeals Committee shall be composed of a Chairperson and at least two members of the Academy or a sufficient number to address the volume of appeals received. The Chairperson shall be a prior year member of the Committee (except for the first Chairperson). Members may not serve on the Appeals Committee and the Credentials Approval Committee simultaneously. No member of the Appeals Committee may be an Academy Officer or Director.

b. Committee members shall be initially appointed for one year (one member), two years (two members), and three years (two members) respectively; thereafter, terms will be for a three-year period.

c. The duties of this Committee shall be:

1. Following the procedures outlined in Article VIII, Section 5 of the Bylaws, review all written appeals made to the Academy regarding denial of eligibility to sit for the VTS (ECC) Certification Examination, revocation of VTS (ECC) status, or other adverse decisions of the Academy.
2. To render their recommendations to the Directors within thirty (30) calendar days of the date the Chair of the Appeals Committee receives the petitioner's file from the Executive Secretary, President, Credentials Approval Committee Chair, or other applicable committee or individual.

Section 6. Examination Committee

a. The Examination Committee shall be composed of two co-Chairpersons and at least four members of the Academy.

b. The Past-President serves as an ex officio, non-voting member of this Committee.

c. One Member-At-Large will be assigned as liaison between the Directors and the Committee.

d. The term of office for each co-Chairperson shall be two years and he or she must have at least one year of prior experience on the Committee. The co-Chairs should have staggered terms. The term of office for other members shall be three years. Members will be appointed for scaled terms.

e. The duties of this Committee shall be:

1. Prepare, administer and score the examination. The passing score will be established by the Examination Committee with approval by the Directors. The method of establishing the passing scores will also be approved by the Directors.
2. Inform prospective examinees about the content of the upcoming examination.
3. Report results of such examinations to the Directors and make recommendations for certification based on the proposed pass point.
4. Provide written summary of deficiencies to individuals requesting such information following failure to pass examination.

Section 7. Recertification Committee

- a. The Recertification Committee shall be composed of a Chairperson and sufficient members of the Academy to address the volume of recertification applications received.
- b. The term of office for the Chairperson shall be two years and he or she must have at least one year of prior experience on the Committee. The term of office for other members shall be three years.
- c. One Member-At-Large will be assigned as liaison between the Directors and the Committee.
- d. The duties of this Committee shall be:
 1. Determine the distribution of the sixty (60) CE units/points used to satisfy the re-certification process, with approval by the Directors.
 2. Evaluate applications and CE units/points submitted for recertification. Successful completion of 60 CE units/points will result in recertification for another five-year period.
 3. Conduct audits of the recertification process as outlined by Committee policy.
 4. Forward a list of applicants recommended for recertification to the President and Executive Secretary as outlined in the policies and procedures of the Committee. Final approval for recertification status must be granted by the Directors.

Section 8. Continuing Education Committee

- a. The Continuing Education (CE) Committee Chairperson shall be appointed by the Directors and be composed of a sufficient number of Academy members to achieve Academy CE objectives.
- b. Tenure for the Chairperson will be 3 years and the term of office for other CE Committee members will be determined by the Directors.
- c. The duties of this Committee shall be:
 1. Promote, facilitate and coordinate all continuing education, training, publication, and research endeavors of the Academy.
 2. Identify and communicate veterinary emergency and critical care continuing education opportunities to the membership.

Section 9. Financial Affairs Committee

a. The Financial Affairs Committee shall be composed of the Treasurer, who will serve as Chairperson, the President-Elect, and two members of the Academy.

b. The members will serve for two-year terms (except for the Treasurer whose term is 4 years) and be appointed so as to have one replacement each year.

c. The duties of this Committee shall be:

1. Provide financial oversight for the Academy, monitor overall financial health, create and update internal financial controls and accountability policies. Implement safeguards to ensure that Academy assets are appropriately protected.
2. Facilitate annual accounting review/financial audit, and recommend any changes in organizational or management practices as a result of the audit to the Directors.
3. Prepare and present financial statements at quarterly meetings and at any other times deemed necessary by the Directors.
4. Prepare an annual budget to be presented to the Directors for review and approval, and monitor budget performance. The Committee will also advise the Directors on dues, fees, expenditures, speaker honorariums, continuing education costs, investments, and other fiscal matters of the Academy.
5. Review and report on the financial impact of Academy programs to facilitate Directors' evaluation of expenditure alignment with Academy mission.

Section 10. Governance Committee

a. The Governance Committee shall be composed of a Chairperson and at least two members of the Academy. The Chairperson shall ideally have prior experience on the Academy Board of Directors.

b. Tenure for the Chairperson will be 3 years and the term of office for other Committee members will be determined by the Directors and be appointed so as to have one replacement each year.

c. The duties of this Committee shall be:

1. Review the Academy Constitution and Bylaws biennially and advise the Directors about operational strategies including relevant amendments to strengthen the Academy and empower the Board of Directors in meeting its obligations.
2. Evaluate the efficacy of Academy Board and Committee governance structure and identify the current and future needs of the Academy to ensure that the Board and Committees have the necessary diversity, perspectives, experience, skills, maturity, and judgment to effectively pursue their duties in planning and oversight.
3. Review, guide, and help devise Academy policies, procedures, and position descriptions that reflect best practices for overall good governance.
4. Develop and conduct an orientation process for newly appointed Directors and provide ongoing Board training and development.

ARTICLE V

DUES, FEES, FISCAL MATTERS

Section 1. Dues for members of the Academy shall be established by the Directors annually. Dues become payable on January 1st of each calendar year. Dues are delinquent March 1st and if not paid by

May 1st, active membership in the Academy will be revoked but only after notification of members in question by registered mail, return receipt requested. Revocation of active membership means that the member will be removed from all membership and newsletter lists, loses the right to call themselves a VTS (ECC) and all other rights and privileges pertaining to a VTS (ECC), including the right to vote in Academy matters. Membership may be reactivated within the same calendar year by petition through the Executive Secretary to the Board of Directors with payment of all delinquent and current dues, and a reinstatement fee.

Section 2. An application fee for submitting the application packet to qualify for the VTS (ECC) certifying examination will be set by the Directors annually. Application fees will not be refunded. All newly submitted or resubmitted application packets must include the application fee.

Section 3. Examination fee will be set by the Directors for all eligible candidates qualifying for examination each year. Examination fees will not be refunded. The examination fee must be paid for each examination attempt.

Section 4. The Directors shall approve the annual operating budget for the Academy upon recommendations by the Financial Affairs Committee.

Section 5. The fiscal year of the Academy shall be from January 1 to December 31.

ARTICLE VI

CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Section 1. The Academy shall meet annually at a site selected by the Directors for the purpose of conducting and reviewing the business of the Academy. Additional meetings of the Academy shall be held if requested by the Directors. Notification to all VTS (ECC) shall precede the meeting date by at least 30 days. The conduct of all meetings shall follow the procedures set forth in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

Section 2. VTS (ECC) who are current in their dues are eligible to attend business meetings of the Academy and vote.

Section 3. A quorum for business meetings of the Academy shall consist of the members present and eligible to vote.

Section 4. Election of Officers and Directors.

a. Election of officers shall take place biennially, or every four years in the case of the Treasurer, by secure ballot prior to the Annual Business Meeting of the Academy. A proposed slate of Officers shall be presented by the Nominations Committee to the Directors for approval at least 90 days prior to the Annual Business Meeting. Recommendations for additional nominations will be solicited from the membership by the Nominations Committee.

b. Election of Members-at-Large of the Board of Directors will be held biennially. Candidates for open positions will be presented by the Nominations Committee to the Directors at least 90 days prior to the Annual Meeting. Nominations will be solicited from the membership by the Nominations Committee.

c. Election shall be conducted by secure, secret ballot. A simple majority of votes shall be necessary to elect. If, on any ballot of more than two candidates, simple majority of the votes is not attained, the

candidate receiving the smallest number of votes shall be eliminated and the voting proceed until a majority is obtained. A tie vote with two candidates shall be decided by the President casting the tie breaking vote.

Section 5. Voting may be conducted by secure ballot. The item for vote or approval must be sent at least thirty (30) days prior to counting of the ballot to all VTS (ECC) eligible to vote. Any voting means utilized must include functionality designed to prevent duplicate and unauthorized balloting, and in the case of secret ballots, anonymity. The ballot closing date and the process by which to return the ballot will be made clear, with periodic reminders for those that have not yet voted sent to those members prior to the closing date.

Section 6. Contracts or instruments may be signed or executed by the President, or other designee of the Directors on behalf of the Academy. The Executive Secretary shall maintain archival copies of all executed contracts in perpetuity.

ARTICLE VII

AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Proposed amendments to the Bylaws shall be submitted to the Directors for study ninety (90) days before a scheduled meeting of the Academy or the distribution of a secure ballot to the membership. Proposed amendments shall be distributed to the entire membership with a recommendation by the Directors at least thirty (30) days prior to an amendment vote.

Section 2. An affirmative vote shall require that at least thirty-three percent of the members in good standing vote, and at least seventy five percent of the members voting approve the proposal.

ARTICLE VIII

EXAMINATION, CERTIFICATION AND RECERTIFICATION

Section 1. Credential requirements dictate that each applicant, before he or she is declared eligible for examination, must:

- a. Be currently credentialed to practice as a Veterinary Technician or Veterinary Nurse (or equivalent).
- b. It is strongly encouraged that the candidate be a member of a local, state, provincial, or national veterinary technician or nurse association, and a member of the Veterinary Emergency Critical Care Society.
- c. After becoming credentialed to practice as a Veterinary Technician or Veterinary Nurse (or equivalent), and incurring no lapses in said credentials, meet training requirements, as specified:
 1. Three years full time work experience (not less than 6,000 hours) in the field of veterinary emergency and critical care medicine.
 - a. All experience must be completed within the preceding five-year period ending the day prior to the start of the application year in which the candidate is applying.
 - b. All experience must be earned while maintaining credentials.

- c. For the purpose of this eligibility requirement the definition of emergency care and critical care as established by the Veterinary Emergency Critical Care Society will be used.
- (1) Emergency Care - action taken in response to an emergency. The term implies emergency action directed toward the assessment, treatment, and stabilization of a patient with an urgent medical problem.
- (2) Critical Care - The care taken or required in a response to a crisis. In medicine, the treatment of a patient with a life threatening or potentially life-threatening illness or injury whose condition is likely to change on a moment-to- moment or hour-to-hour basis. Such patients require intense and often constant monitoring, reassessment, and treatment.
2. Completion of a minimum of twenty-five hours of continuing education related to veterinary emergency and critical care.
 - a. The continuing education must be completed within the preceding five-year period ending the day prior to the start of the application year in which the candidate is applying.
 - b. The continuing education must be received from a nationally recognized conference; local, state, regional veterinary medical, technician, or nurse association; accredited veterinary school or accredited veterinary technician or nurse school-sponsored CE programs; American Association of Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB); Registry of Approved Continuing Education (RACE) approved CE; or publicly advertised local meetings delivered by instructors who are considered experts on the subject they are discussing. Proof of attendance is required.
 3. Documentary evidence of advanced competence in veterinary emergency and critical care nursing through clinical experience.
 - a. Completion of the Advanced Veterinary Emergency Critical Care Nursing Skills Form. The Skills Form documents those nursing skills that have been mastered by the candidate and are necessary to practice veterinary emergency critical care nursing at an advanced level. The Skills Form is subject to change based upon the current state of the art in veterinary emergency critical care nursing.
 - b. Case log: documentation of 50 acceptable cases that meet the Academy definition of emergency and critical care. These cases must have been seen during the period indicated in the application, in the year immediately preceding the submission of the application. The log should include the following: date, patient identification (name or number), species, breed, age, sex, weight, diagnosis, length of care, final outcome, and brief summary of nursing care techniques and procedures performed by the applicant on the patient. The Case Log Form will be provided in the application packet.
 - c. Four case reports of no more than five pages each, double spaced. Case reports must demonstrate expertise in the nursing management of a variety of veterinary patients requiring emergency and critical care. The case reports must be selected from the case log being submitted with the current application. These cases must have been seen during the period indicated in the application, in the year immediately preceding the submission of the application. Case reports must be the original work of the applicant.
 4. Two letters of recommendations from a VTS (ECC), (Anesthesia & Analgesia), or (Internal Medicine) member; a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care, European College of Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care, or international equivalent; a

Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care Society or European Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care Society veterinarian; or board-certified DVM specialist or international equivalent in anesthesia, internal medicine, or surgery.

Section 2. Applicant procedures for admission to examination for VTS (ECC) status are as follows:

- a. Application for examination must be made to the Executive Secretary on a form provided by the Academy and filed along with the prescribed application fee and required documents on or prior to the calendar date specified by the current application policy and procedure. The application fee will not be refunded if applicant is found to be ineligible to take the examination.
- b. Eligibility rulings are made by the Directors upon recommendation by the Credentials Approval Committee, and applicants will be notified of results no less than 6 months preceding the scheduled examination date.
- c. The applicant is required to sign a ‘Waiver, Release, and Indemnity Agreement’ at the time of application.

Section 3. Examinations

- a. Candidates approved by the Credentials Approval Committee and the Directors, upon receipt of the prescribed examination fee by the stated due date, will be advised of the exam format no less than three months prior to examination.
- b. Examinations will be given at least once every other year.
- c. Examinations will be prepared and administered by the Examination Committee. The examination will be securely monitored and proctored.
- d. Passing scores will be proposed by the Examination Committee and approved by the Directors.
- e. The Examination Committee may include multiple choice questions, computer simulations, or use audiovisual aids as part of the testing process.
 1. Topics to be covered on the examination are those that are crucial to emergency and critical care nursing, and are derived from VTS (ECC) job analysis study and role delineation survey results. The exam blueprint will be made available to applicants.
 2. Ancillary diagnostic techniques will be included in each topic as appropriate. Anatomy and physiology, data collection and identification of problems may also be covered. The VTS (ECC) needs to understand clinical techniques and how procedures are performed. Therefore, the examination will include indications, equipment needed, complications, and troubleshooting with regards to common clinical procedures.
- f. A minimum passing score as established by the Examination Committee and approved by the Directors must be achieved to obtain VTS (ECC) status.
 1. All candidates sitting for an examination will be notified of the results of the examination by mail, or email on the same date within sixty (60) days of the date of the examination.

2. Candidates who have failed the examination will, upon written request through the Executive Secretary to the Directors within thirty (30) days of notification, be given written clarification as to the areas of deficiencies. The letter of clarification of deficiencies will be provided within sixty (60) days of receipt of the candidate's request

Section 4. Certification

- a. Candidates must successfully pass the certifying examination. Candidates must pass the examination within three years of their original application acceptance date. Thereafter, a new application/credential package must be submitted and accepted for future examination.
- b. Final approval for VTS (ECC) status must be granted by the Directors.
- c. A certificate will be issued to the VTS (ECC) by the Executive Secretary upon direction of the Directors.
- d. VTS (ECC) certification is conferred for a period of five years. The certification period will begin on the first day of the month that the examination is passed, and recertification is required every five years.

Section 5. Appeals

- a. Candidates denied eligibility to sit for the VTS (ECC) Certification Examination may appeal this decision within thirty (30) calendar days of notification of denial of eligibility. The appeal must be made by written petition to the Executive Secretary and shall include a statement of the grounds for reconsideration including appropriate, related documentation. Appeals from anyone other than the candidate will not be accepted.
 1. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Executive Secretary shall notify the Chair of the Credentials Approval Committee, and the Chair of the Appeals Committee.
 2. The Chair of the Credentials Approval Committee shall submit to the Appeals Committee a written statement indicating the reasons for rejecting the candidate and the complete application file of the candidate for the Appeals Committee to review.
 3. The Appeals Committee may request additional validating information as needed, however, all appeal decisions will be based on the original submitted application. Candidates may not submit new data to augment the original application.
 4. The Appeals Committee shall review the appeal(s) according to Appeals Committee guidelines and render a recommendation report to either grant or deny the appeal(s) to the Directors within thirty (30) calendar days from the date the Chair of the Appeals Committee received the petitioner's file from the Executive Secretary or the Credentials Committee Chair.
 5. The Directors will render a decision on the appeal(s) upon the recommendation of the Appeals Committee and the Executive Secretary will notify the petitioner of the decision within fifteen (15) calendar days after receipt of the report of the Appeals Committee. The decision of the Directors shall be final.
- b. Failure of the examination.
 1. Failure of the examination is not appealable.

c. Appeals of other adverse decisions by the Academy, including VTS (ECC) membership revocation may be made by written petition through the Executive Secretary to the Directors.

1. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Executive Secretary will notify the President and the Chair of the Appeals Committee, and submit the appeal to the Chair of the Appeals Committee.
2. The petitioner will be notified of the appeal process and timetable by the Executive Secretary.
3. Any member of the Appeals Committee directly involved with an appeal must recuse themselves from the appeal process in question.
4. The Appeals Committee may request additional information as needed.
5. The Appeals Committee shall review and investigate the appeal(s) and render a recommendation to the Directors within thirty (30) calendar days from the date the Chair of the Appeals Committee receives the appeal from the Executive Secretary.
6. The Directors will render a decision on the appeal(s) upon the recommendation of the Appeals Committee and the Executive Secretary will notify the petitioner of the decision within fifteen (15) calendar days after receipt of the recommendation of the Appeals Committee. The decision of the Directors shall be final.

d. The President, Executive Secretary, and Appeals Committee Chair shall work closely together to uphold the Appeals process and timeline.

e. The procedure for the appeals process will be included with all application forms.

Section 6. Recertification

a. Recertification may be obtained through one of two options:

1. Completion of sixty (60) continuing education (CE) units/points per five-year period. The CE units may be obtained through attendance at seminars pertaining to emergency and critical care and general veterinary medicine; contribution to professional publications; presentation of emergency and critical care programs; self-study, in-service training, and through some Academy committee service at the discretion of the committee chair. The distribution of CE units/points will be determined by the Recertification Committee with final approval by the Directors.
2. Retaking and successfully passing, the VTS (ECC) examination in the year in which recertification is due. Members choosing this option must notify the Recertification Committee Chairperson by June 15 of their recertification year and sit for the examination in the same year. The examination fee will be waived for members choosing this option.

ARTICLE IX

DISCIPLINE

Section 1. Repossession of Certificates (and subsequent revocation of VTS (ECC) title)

Certificates shall remain the property of the Academy and shall be repossessed, and the individual shall lose the right to use the VTS (ECC) title when:

- a. The issuance of such a certificate or its receipt violated provisions of the Academy's Constitution or Bylaws.

- b. The VTS (ECC) fails to maintain acceptable standards of competence in the practice of veterinary emergency and critical care as determined through investigation by the Directors.
- c. The VTS (ECC) fails to pay dues by May 1st of the calendar year. Notification of repossession will be made by registered mail, return receipt requested. Membership may be reactivated within the same calendar year by petition through the Executive Secretary to the Board of Directors with payment of all delinquent and current dues.
- d. The VTS (ECC) fails to complete the re-certification process by the deadline.

Section 2. Members accused of unethical conduct, incompetence, negligence, fraud, or other charges that discredit the Academy will be investigated. Such charges must be made in writing to the Directors. If investigation reveals evidence-warranting action, the accused will be notified in writing and given full opportunity to respond in writing and through a hearing before the Directors. Disciplinary action, including censure, suspension, removal from membership, or pursuit of legal action may be recommended by the Directors and can be executed following an affirmative vote by majority of the Directors. If action is warranted, the accused person will be notified in writing and given full opportunity to explain their situation and agree to voluntarily cease use of the VTS (ECC) title. Failure to stop utilizing the VTS (ECC) title (if found guilty) will be reported to the National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America, Committee on Veterinary Technician Specialties where legal action will be considered.