ACADEMY OF VETERINARY ZOOLOGICAL MEDICINE TECHNICIANS CONSTITUTION

Updated 31 Aug 2022

ARTICLE I NAME

This organization shall be known as the Academy of Veterinary Zoological Medicine Technicians hereinafter referred to as the "The Academy".

ARTICLE II INCORPORATION

- Section 1. The Academy shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Rhode Island as a not-for-profit organization organized exclusively for educational purposes, within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (or corresponding section of any future Federal Tax Code).
 - a. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the Academy shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation/organization exempt from Federal Income Tax under section 50l(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (or corresponding section of any future Federal Tax Code) or (b) by a corporation /organization, contributions to which are deductible under, Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code (or corresponding section at any future Federal Tax Code).
 - b. No substantial part of the activities of the Academy shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the Academy shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.
- Section 2. No part of the net earnings of the Academy shall insure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, officers, or other private persons, except that the Academy shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of Section 50l(c) (3) purposes.
- Section 3. The term for which the Academy is organized shall be perpetual. However, if dissolution of the Academy should occur its property shall be distributed evenly between the Organizing Committee and the Association of Zoo Veterinary Technicians (AZVT).

However, if the named recipient(s) is not then in existence, no longer a qualified distributee, or is unwilling or unable to accept the distribution, then the assets of the Academy shall be distributed to a Veterinary Technician and / or animal welfare fund, foundation, or corporation organized and operated

exclusively for the purposes specified in section 50l(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (or corresponding section of any future Federal Tax Code).

ARTICLE III STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Section 1. MISSION STATEMENT

The Academy of Veterinary Zoological Medicine Technicians exists to promote excellence in the discipline of zoo medicine. The Academy will provide a process by which veterinary technicians may become certified as a Veterinary Technician Specialist (VTS) in the field of zoo medicine. The veterinary technician who becomes certified as a VTS will demonstrate superior knowledge in scientifically – and humanely – based techniques of zoological medicine.

Section 2. OBJECTIVES

- a. Promote advancement and high standards of practice for those accredited veterinary technicians involved in zoo medicine.
- b. Establish education and experience prerequisites leading to certification in the veterinary technician specialty of zoological medicine.
- c. Examine and certify veterinary technicians as specialized team members in zoo medicine.
- d. Encourage research and other contributions to knowledge relating to zoo medicine.
- e. Promote continuing education and dissemination of knowledge relating to zoo medicine.

ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP

- Section 1. The members of the Academy shall be known as "Veterinary Technician Specialist" VTS (Zoo).
- Section 2. VTS (Zoo) shall be further classified as one of the following:
 - a. Charter VTS (Zoo): Veterinary Technicians having achieved distinction in the field of zoological medicine and having qualifications far exceeding those proposed as necessary for candidates desiring to take the certifying exam.
 - b. VTS (Zoo): A veterinary technician of high ethical and moral character who has fulfilled the requirements for certification as set forth in the Bylaws of the Academy.
 - c. Hereinafter Charter VTS (Zoo) and VTS (Zoo) will be referred to as VTS (Zoo).
 - d. Emeritus VTS (Zoo): A veterinary technician who has been a member in good standing for 10 years who is no longer actively engaged in practicing

veterinary medicine. Emeritus members will become non-dues paying members and are not required to maintain certification. Emeritus members may not hold office, but may serve on committees, and will retain voting rights of active member. The credentials of "VTS (Zoo) Emeritus" must be used.

ARTICLE V ORGANIZATION / ADMINISTRATION

- Section 1. The Executive Board (hereafter referred to as the Board) shall be the executive body of the Academy and shall consider first all business and policies pertaining to the affairs of the Academy.
- Section 2. The Board will consist of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Member at Large and shall be appointed by the organizing committee of the Academy.
- Section 3. Following provisional recognition, the Board will be elected by the Charter VTS.
- Section 4. The Executive Committee shall be composed of the current Executive Board, Charter VTS (Zoo), and past Board able to attend the annual business meeting.

ARTICLE VI OFFICERS

- Section 1. The elected officers of the Academy shall be the Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Member at Large. The President is a non-elected officer. These officers shall be voting members of the Board.
- Section 2. The Vice President shall automatically become President at the completion of their predecessor's term of office.
- Section 3. Election of Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Member at Large shall take place biennially (every two years) by mail or secure electronic ballot prior to the business meeting of the Academy. The officers shall begin their term of office immediately following completion of the business meeting in the year elections are held.

ARTICLE VII COMMITTEES

Section 1. This organization shall have the following standing committees: Credentials Approval, Examination, and Re-certification/Continuing Education.

Additional committees may be appointed by the President.

Section 2. The committee chairperson, with the approval of the Board, shall appoint committee members from the Academy as necessary for the completion of the duties assigned that committee.

ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENTS

- Section 1. Proposed amendments to the Constitution shall be submitted to the Board for review ninety (90) days before a scheduled meeting of the Academy, or distribution of a secure electronic ballot to the membership. Proposed amendments shall be distributed to the entire membership with a recommendation by the Board at least thirty (30) days prior to a voice vote, or distribution of a secure electronic ballot.
- Section 2. An affirmative vote shall require that at least one-third (1/3) of the members in good standing vote, and at least three quarters (3/4) of the members voting approve the proposal.

ACADEMY OF VETERINARY ZOOLOGICAL MEDICINE TECHNICIANS BYLAWS

ARTICLE I MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. The Academy of Veterinary Zoological Medicine Technicians shall be composed of Charter Members and Veterinary Technicians who have achieved distinction in the field of zoo medicine, have demonstrated high ethical and moral character, and have fulfilled the requirements for and successfully passed the certification examination as set forth in the Bylaws of the Academy.

ARTICLE II OFFICERS

- Section 1. The officers of the Academy shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Member at Large.
- Section 2. The term of office is two years.
- Section 3. The election of officers shall take place biennially (every two years) by secure electronic ballot prior to the business meeting of the Academy.

ARTICLE III

DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. The **President** shall:

- a. Preside over all meetings of the Academy and the Board.
- b. Administer the affairs of the organization according to the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws and the policies enunciated by the Board.
- c. Coordinate the activities of all the Academy's Committees.
- d. Serve as chairperson of the Examination Committee.
- e. Attend and present a report of the activities of the office at the biannual (twice yearly) meeting of the Board and at such other times as determined by the Board.
- f. Attend the annual (once yearly) general meeting and present a report of the activities of the office for the Academy.

Section 2. The **Vice President** shall:

- a. Automatically become President at the conclusion of the predecessor's term of office.
- b. Assume the responsibilities of the President if the President is unable to perform the duties of the office.
- c. Serve as chairperson of the Credentials Approval Committee.
- d. Coordinate correspondence and proposals regarding training programs and process applications for Zoological Medicine Certification Examination.
- e. Attend and present a report of the activities of the office at the biannual (twice yearly) meeting of the Board and at such other times as determined by the Board.
- f. Attend the annual (once yearly) general meeting and present a report of the activities of the office for the Academy.

Section 3. The **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 Board and all meetings of the Credentials Approval Committee unless specified otherwise by the President.
- c. Record and keep all original notes, minutes, and records of all official meetings and sessions until the Board approve their disposal.
- d. Maintain archival copies of all publications, documents, and other records of the Academy.
- e. Facilitate/secure electronic ballots when required.
- f. Serve as chairperson of the Re-certification/Continuing Education Committee.
- g. Handle all correspondence on behalf of the Academy.
- h. Attend and present a report of the activities of the office at the biannual (twice yearly) meeting of the Board and at such other times as determined by the Board.
- i. Attend the annual (once yearly) general meeting and present a report of the activities of the office for the Academy.

Section 4. The **Treasurer** shall:

- a. Maintain the financial records of the organization and prepare them for audit annually or when requested.
- b. Prepare an annual budget and submit it to the Board for review and approval.
- c. Advise the Board on dues, fees, expenditures, speaker honorariums, continuing education costs, and other fiscal matters of the Academy.
- d. Be the custodian of all assets of the Academy.
- e. Pay all expenses of the Academy as directed by the Board.
- f. Maintain a file of all vouchers and invoices accompanying them for a period of not less than five years.
- g. Deposit all monies in the name of the Academy in a federally insured bank approved by the Board.
- h. Serve as a member of the Re-certification/Continuing Education Committee.
- i. Turn over all funds, properties, and records to their successor.
- j. Attend and present a report of the financial status of the Academy at each biannual (twice yearly) meeting of the Board and at such other times as determined by the Board.
- k. Attend and present a report of the financial status of the Academy at the annual (once yearly) general meeting.

Section 5. The **Member at Large** shall:

- a. Attend and present a report of the activities of the office for the Academy at each biannual (twice yearly) meeting of the Board and at such other times as determined by the Board.
- b. Attend the annual (once yearly) general meeting and present a report of the activities of the office for the Academy.

Section 6. The terms of office:

a. Of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Member at Large shall be two years. The term of office begins at the close of the Academy general meeting in the year that elections are held.

ARTICLE IV COMMITTEES

Section 1. Executive Board

- a. The management and control of the business and professional affairs of the Academy shall be vested in the Board.
 - i. The Board or its designated committees shall receive and consider for approval all applications, 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 Board.
 - ii. It shall consider and act upon: charges against members for alleged offenses against the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, charges of unprofessional conduct, and expulsion of members.

- iii. The Board shall select the time and place of all meetings, determine the amount of the initiation, ancillary fees and dues, and generally govern the membership of the Academy.
- iv. It shall direct the management of funds held by the Academy.
- b. The Board shall consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and one Member at Large elected by the Academy.
- c. Vacancies between elections occurring on the Board shall be filled by appointment by the Board, unless otherwise stated in the constitution. Any member appointed to fill a vacancy shall hold the office until the expiration of the term in which the vacancy occurred.
- d. One (1) of the biannual (twice yearly) meetings of the Board 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 written request of not less than three (3) members of the Board.
- e. Not less than five (5) days notice of the time and place of any special meeting (including teleconferences) and not less than thirty (30) days notice of the time and place of the regular meeting shall be given by, e-mail.
- f. Four (4) voting members of the Board present in person or on a teleconference call shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business that may come before the meeting.

Section 2. Committees

- a. This organization shall have the following committees: Credential Approval, Examination, and Re-certification/Continuing Education. Additional committees may be specified by the President and approved by the Board, as deemed necessary.
- b. Standing and *ad hoc* committee members shall be appointed by each chairperson and approved by the Board. Committees shall be composed of a chairperson and a minimum of two members of the Academy, with the exception of the Recertification/Continuing Education Committee.
- c. If a committee member is unable to fulfill his or her term, a replacement shall be appointed by the chairperson.

Section 3. Credentials Approval Committee

The Vice President shall serve as chairperson of this committee.

- a. The duties of this committee shall:
 - i. Provide through the Secretary of the Academy information and application forms to prospective applicants.
 - ii. Evaluate and certify eligibility of applicants requesting examination by the Academy.
 - iii. Notify the Board of approved applicants, and of applicants who are not deemed eligible for examination and delineate the areas of deficiency.

Section 4. Examination Committee

The President shall serve as chairperson of this committee.

a. The duties of this committee shall be:

- i. Preparation, administration, and grading of the examination. The passing score will be established by the Examination Committee with approval by the Board. The method of establishing the passing scores will also be approved by the Board.
- ii. Inform prospective examinees about the content of the upcoming examination.
- iii. Report to the Board results of such examinations and make recommendations based on the proposed passing point.
- iv. At least one (1) member of this committee will monitor and proctor the written/electronic examinations as designated by the chairperson.
- v. Administer an oral examination if required. The oral examination will be conducted by at least three (3) members of the committee as designated by the chairperson.
- vi. Provide written summary of deficiencies in a letter of clarification through the Board to individuals requesting that information following failure to pass examination.
- Section 5. Re-certification/Continuing Education Committee
 The Secretary, as chairperson, and Treasurer shall serve on this committee.
 - a. The Re-certification duties:
 - i. Evaluate applications and CE units for re-certification.
 - ii. Review submitted published article, lecture, workshop presentation, wet lab presentation, or completed research project for appropriateness and approval for re-certification.
 - iii. Successful completion of the 60 CE units and the additional produced requirement will result in re-certification for another five year period. Final approval for re-certification status must be granted by the Board.
 - b. The Continuing Education duties:
 - i. Coordinate all continuing education, publication, and research endeavors of the Academy.
 - ii. Plan, organize, select speakers and conduct continuing education meetings of the Academy.
 - iii. Oversee and ensure the timely publication of all proceedings generated from Academy educational programs.

ARTICLE V DUES, FEES, FISCAL MATTERS

Section 1. Dues

- a. The dues for members of the Academy shall be established by the Board and reviewed as needed.
 - i. Dues become payable on January 1st of each calendar year. Dues are delinquent January 31st and if not paid by March 1st active membership in the Academy will be terminated, but only after notification of members in question by certified mail, return receipt requested.

b. Reactivation of membership may be completed by petition through the Secretary with payment of all delinquent dues plus an additional fifty percent (50%) of total dues owed. Delinquent memberships of more than two years will be considered null and void. Re-application to the Academy wil.l be required.

Section 2. Exam Application Fee

- a. The zoological medicine certifying examination fee will be set by the Board annually for all eligible candidates qualifying for the examination each year.
- b. Fees will not be refunded.

Section 3. Annual Operating Budget

a. The Board shall approve the annual operating budget for the Academy upon recommendations by the Treasurer.

Section 4. Fiscal Year

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

ARTICLE VI CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Section 1. Annual Meeting

- a. The Academy shall meet annually at a site selected by the Board for the purpose of conducting and reviewing the business of the Academy. Additional meetings of the Academy shall be held if requested by the Board. Written notice to all AVZMT members shall precede the meeting date by at least thirty (30) days. The conduct of all meetings shall follow the procedures set forth in the current edition of Roberts Rules of Order when applicable as long as they are consistent with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Academy.
- b. AVZMT members who are current in good standing are eligible to attend business meetings of the Academy and vote.
- c. A quorum for meetings of the Academy shall consist of one third (1/3) of the AVZMT members eligible to vote.

Section 2. Election of Officers

- a. Election of officers shall take place biennially (every 2 years) by secure electronic ballot at least thirty (30) days prior to the business meeting of the Academy.
- b. Nominations shall be presented to the Board at least ninety (90) days prior to the annual business meeting.
- c. Election shall be made by anonymous ballot. A simple majority of votes shall be necessary to elect. If on any ballot of more than two (2) candidates, simple majority of the votes is not attained the candidate receiving the smallest number of votes shall be eliminated and the voting shall proceed. A tie vote with two (2) candidates shall be decided by the President casting the tie breaking vote.

Section 3. Reports

a. Annual reports shall be submitted to CVTS by the required deadline.

ARTICLE VI

AMENDMENTS

- Section 1. Proposed Amendments to the Bylaws
 - a. Proposed amendments shall be submitted to the Board for study ninety (90) days before a scheduled meeting of the Academy or the distribution of a secure electronic ballot to the membership.
 - b. Proposed amendments shall be distributed to the entire membership with a recommendation by the Board at least thirty (30) days prior to counting of electronic ballots or a voice vote of the AVZMT membership.
 - c. An affirmative vote shall require that at least one third (1/3) of the members in good standing vote and at least three quarters (3/4) of the members voting approve the proposal.
 - d. All changes in the Constitution and Bylaws shall be included in the CVTS annual report.

ARTICLE VII EXAMINATION, CERTIFICATION AND RECERTIFICATION

Section 1. Credential Requirements

- a. Credential Requirements dictate that each applicant, before he or she is declared eligible for examination, must:
 - i. Be a graduate of an AVMA approved Veterinary Technician program and/or credentialed to practice as a Veterinary Technician in some State or Province of the United States or Canada. Applicants falling outside of these parameters will be given consideration on a case by case basis.
 - ii. It is strongly encouraged that the candidate be a member of the NAVTA and AZVT.
- After graduating from a recognized school of Veterinary Technology and/or becoming credentialed to practice as a Veterinary Technician (or its equivalent), candidates must meet education and experience requirements, as specified:
 - i. Five years (a minimum of 10,000 hours) work experience or its equivalent in the field of zoo medicine at a zoological institution. All experience must be completed within seven years prior to the application. Verification of experience can in the form of pay stubs or other proof showing employment and hours worked for the required period of time and hours.
 - ii. A minimum of forty (40) continuing education (CE) hours in zoological medicine or appropriate related topic.
 - 1. The continuing education must be completed within the last five years immediately prior to submitting the application.
 - 2. Proof of attendance, speaker names, topics and length of talks are required for organized conferences or seminars.

- iii. Provide the documentary evidence of advanced competence in zoo medicine through clinical experience.
 - 1. Completion of the Veterinary Zoological Medicine Skills Form. The Skills Form documents those skills that have been mastered by the candidate and are necessary to practice as zoo veterinary technicians at an advanced level. The completed form must be signed by a VTS (Zoo) coworker or supervising veterinarian. The form will be provided by the Credentials Approval Committee. It is subject to change based upon the current state of the art in zoo medicine.
 - 2. A case record log is maintained within the three (3) years immediately preceding the submission of the application.
 - a. A minimum of forty (40) medical cases must be recorded. The cases shall reflect the management of the patient and mastery of advanced zoo veterinary technician skills. The log should include at minimum: Date, animal signalment, veterinary diagnosis, and summary of the case, including treatments and procedures performed by the applicant.
 - 3. Five (5) detailed case reports. At least one (1) in each of the following taxa: mammal, avian, herptile. Case reports must demonstrate expertise in the management and treatment of a variety of challenging medical cases. The case reports should be selected from the case record log. Case reports must be the original work of the applicant.
 - 4. Curriculum Vitae, 75% time devoted to zoo medicine.
 - 5. Two (2) letters of recommendations from the following three (3) categories: an AVZMT member, a supervising Veterinarian, or a Diplomate of the American College of Zoological Medicine (ACZM).
- Section 2. Applicant procedures for admission to examination for VTS (Zoo) status are as follows:
 - a. Application for examination must be made by the applicant to the Credentials Approval Committee Chair on a form provided by the Academy, and submitted along with the prescribed application fee and required documents on or prior to the calendar date eight (8) months preceding the scheduled examination. The application fee will not be refunded if applicant is not eligible to take the examination.
 - b. Eligibility rulings are approved by the Board based on recommendation by the Credentials Approval Committee, and applicants will be notified of results no less than six (6) months preceding the scheduled examination date.
 - c. The applicant is required to sign a waiver, release, and indemnity.

Section 3. Examinations

a. Candidates approved by the Credentials Approval Committee and the Board, upon receipt of the prescribed examination fee by the stated due date, will be

- advised of the exam format no less than three (3) months prior to examination.
- b. Examinations will be prepared and administered by the Examination Committee.
- c. Passing scores will be proposed by the Examination Committee and approved by the Board.
- d. Examinations will be given at least once every other year.
- e. The examination committee may include written, oral, and practical items; computer simulations or audiovisual aids may be used as part of the testing process.
 - i. Topics to be covered on the examination are those that are crucial to zoo medicine.
 - ii. Exam items will be referenced using current scientific sources.
- f. A minimum passing score as established by the Examination Committee and approved by the Board must be achieved to obtain VTS (Zoo) status.
 - i. All candidates sitting for an examination will be notified of the results in writing within sixty (60) days of the date of the examination.

Section 4. Certification

- a. Candidates must successfully pass the certifying examination.
- b. Final approval for VTS (Zoo) status must be granted by the Board.
- c. A certificate will be issued to the VTS (Zoo) by the Secretary upon direction of the Board.
- d. VTS (Zoo) certification is conferred for a period of five (5) years. The certification period will begin on the first day of the month that the examination is passed and end on December 31st five (5) years later.

Section 5. Appeals

- a. Candidates denied eligibility to sit for the VTS (Zoo) Certification Examination may appeal this decision within thirty (30) calendar days from their receipt of the letter of notification. The appeal must be made by written petition to the Secretary and shall include a statement of the grounds for reconsideration. The appeals committee may request additional information as needed.
 - i. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Secretary shall notify the President and the Chair of the Credentials Approval Committee. The President will appoint a committee of three (3) VTS (Zoo)s to serve as an *ad hoc* Appeal Committee within fifteen (15) calendar days of receiving notification of the appeal.
 - ii. The Chair of the Credentials Approval Committee shall submit to the Appeal Committee a written statement indicating the reasons for rejecting the candidate. The complete application file of the candidate will be provided for the Appeal Committee to review.
 - iii. The Appeal Committee shall review the appeal(s) and render the recommendation(s) to the Board within thirty (30) calendar days from the date the committee was appointed. The Board will render a decision on the appeal upon the recommendation of the Appeal Committee and notify the petitioner of the decision within fifteen (15)

calendar days after receipt of the report of the Appeal Committee. The decision of the Board shall be final.

- b. Failure of the examination.
 - i. Failure of the examination is not appealable.
 - ii. The Credentials Approval Committee will determine what documentation will be required for reexamination. The examination may be taken up to two times before a complete application packet is required. The full certification examination fee must be paid for each repeated examination.
- c. Appeals of other adverse decisions by the Academy, including VTS (Zoo) suspensions, may be made by written petition through the Secretary to the Board. An *ad hoc* Appeal Committee will be established and the petitioner notified of the appeal process and timetable.
- d. The procedure for the Appeals Process will be included with all application forms.

Section 6. Re-certification

- a. Re-certification may be obtained through one (1) of two (2) options.
 - i. Retaking the VTS (Zoo) examination. Members who have served on the exam committee at any point or who have had access to the exam in any other manner, including submitting exam questions are not eligible for this option.
 - ii. Completion of sixty (60) continuing education (CE) units per five (5) year period, which may be obtained through attendance at seminars pertaining to zoo medicine and related disciplines, and one [1] of the subsequent three [3] options:
 - 1. Contribution to a relevant professional publication, presentation of a lecture, workshop, or wet lab, or completion of a research project.
 - 2. Submission of 50 test questions, a minimum of sixteen [16] of the questions must be accepted for inclusion on the exam. Topics will be assigned by the exam committee.
 - 3. Completion a full two [2] year term on the Executive Board (2 years). This option can be invalidated by the Recertification Committee if it is determined that not all duties and obligations were met during the applicant's tenure on the Board.

ARTICLE VIII DISCIPLINE

Section 1. Repossession of Certificates

- a. Certificates shall remain the property of the Academy and shall be repossessed when:
 - i. The issuance of such a certificate or its receipt violates provisions of the Academy's Constitution or Bylaws.

- ii. The VTS (Zoo) member fails to maintain acceptable standards of competence in zoological medicine as determined through investigation by the Board.
- iii. The VTS (Zoo) fails to pay dues by May 1st of the calendar year.
- iv. The VTS (Zoo) fails to complete the re-certification process by the deadline.
- b. Notification of repossession will be made by registered mail, return receipt requested. Reinstatement is contingent on approval by the Board, payment of all past dues, and current dues in full plus late fees.

Section 2. Unethical Conduct

- a. Members accused of unethical conduct, incompetence, negligence, fraud, or other charges that discredit the Academy will be investigated.
- b. Such charges must be made in writing to the Board. If investigation reveals evidence warranting action, the accused will be notified in writing and given full opportunity to respond in writing to the Board.
- c. Disciplinary action may be recommended by the Board and can be executed following an affirmative vote by two-thirds [2/3] of the Academy members.