



**Academy
of
Veterinary Surgical Technicians**

Bylaws

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ACADEMY of VETERINARY SURGICAL TECHNICIANS BYLAWS

Article I Name and Purpose

SECTION 1 NAME

The name of this corporation is Academy of Veterinary Surgical Technicians, a non-profit, non-stock membership-based organization, organized under the laws of the State of Michigan in August 2009.

SECTION 2 PURPOSE

This Corporation is organized and is to be operated exclusively to continue the training and competency of those engaged in the profession and/or education of persons in the field of veterinary technology and veterinary surgery and to promote research in such area within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended. No part of the net earnings of the Corporation shall inure to the benefit of any private individual; no substantial part of the activities of the Corporation shall consist of the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. The Corporation shall not participate in or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office within these limitations:

- A. The Corporation shall engage in and conduct the business of providing services without discrimination against any individual on the basis of race, sex, color, religious affiliation, sexual preference, gender identity, or national or ethnic origin.
- B. The Corporation shall aim to provide individual and group instruction by teachers or other qualified professionals that focus on educating, training and qualifying of veterinary surgical technicians.
- C. The Corporation shall establish requirements for recognition as a Veterinary Technician Specialist (Surgery).
- D. The Corporation may lease and by gift, device or purchase, own and operate real estate for the accomplishment of such purpose.
- E. The Corporation may exercise any and all power that a non-profit, non-stock Corporation organized under the laws of the State of Michigan for these purposes is authorized to exercise.
- F. Corporation funding shall be through membership dues, fees and contributions.
- G. The Corporation shall not, as a substantial part of its activities, engage in any activities that are not in themselves in furtherance of one or more of its purposes.
- H. The Corporation will not confer or bestow any credit, degree or diploma.

Article II Membership

SECTION 1 DEFINITION

A member of the Academy of Veterinary Surgical Technicians (aka "AVST" or "the Academy") shall be a person who has fulfilled all the requirements as stated in the Constitution and Bylaws and who has been accepted for membership by the Executive Board (aka "the Board"). The Membership of the Academy shall consist of Active, Inactive, Emeritus and Honorary Members. Voting members shall be those in the Active and Emeritus category. Dues paying members shall be those in the Active, and Inactive categories.

SECTION 2 QUALIFICATIONS

All members, except Emeritus and Honorary, must have the following general qualifications:

- A. Be legally credentialed to practice as a veterinary technician in a state or territory of the United States or province of another country. In most states, this includes graduation from an AVMA approved Veterinary Medical Technology program.
- B. Maintain current dues as set forth in the Bylaws.
- C. Maintain certification every five years unless otherwise directed by the Board.

SECTION 3 CHARTER MEMBERS

Members of the Organizing Committee qualify as Charter members by meeting all of the following requirements as stated by the National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America (NAVTA) for their Committee on Veterinary Technician Specialties (CVTS). Charter members shall:

- A. Meet the above stated general requirements.
- B. Have been practicing as a veterinary technician with a surgical specialty for at least seven years.
- C. Devote at least seventy-five percent of his/her time to veterinary surgery.
- D. Be a member in good standing of NAVTA.
- E. Have qualifications exceeding those necessary for candidates taking the initial qualifying exam
- F. Have Veterinary Technician Specialist (Surgery) status granted to Organizing Committee (OC) members by a vote of the OC after this Academy's first examination has been administered.
- G. Be granted all rights and responsibilities of an Active membership.

SECTION 4 ACTIVE MEMBERS

Active Members shall:

- A. Have fulfilled the training requirements as approved by the Board of the AVST.
- B. Passed an examination administered by the AVST.
- C. Have the right to vote at meetings, and elect officers.
- D. Be permitted to use the VTS (Surgery) designation.
- E. Be entitled to run for office and serve as a member of the Board.
- F. Be entitled to serve on committees.

SECTION 5 INACTIVE MEMBERS

Only Active members in good standing may become Inactive Members. Inactive membership is intended for those members that need a medical leave of absence or other extenuating circumstance until which time an Active membership can be resumed. Active Members, who are current in their dues, may apply for Inactive status. They shall:

- A. Make written application to the Board and be approved to obtain Inactive status.
- B. Pay fifty percent of Active membership dues.
- C. Have no voting privileges.
- D. Not hold office nor serve on any committees, nor delegate themselves VTS (Surgery).
- E. Make written application to the Board and be approved for return to Active status.
- F. Upon Board approval and paying one year's active membership dues; be returned to Active membership status and have all the rights and privileges of an Active member.

SECTION 6 EMERITUS MEMBERS

Emeritus members shall:

- A. Make a written application to the Board and be approved to obtain Emeritus status.
- B. VTS title will change to VTS (Surgery-Em)
- C. Qualifications for Emeritus/Emerita status are as follows:
 1. Be a member of good standing having reached the age of 55 AND completed a minimum of a total of 15yrs active membership
 2. Individuals may or may not still be primarily engaged in performing surgical duties (e.g., academia, administrative, marketing, etc.)
 3. Granted lifetime access to all academy business that occurs on the listserv, website, and social media.

4. Recredentialing will be waived.
5. Annual dues will be waived.
6. Have all voting rights afforded an Active member.
7. Not eligible to run for a position on the Board but may serve on committees.

SECTION 7 HONORARY MEMBERS

Honorary members shall:

- A. Be an individual having made major contributions to the advancement of veterinary technicians in the field of veterinary surgery.
- B. Be nominated, in writing, to the Board by two AVST members in good standing.
- C. By a two-thirds vote of the voting membership and Board be elected to Honorary membership status.
- D. Pay no dues. May not hold office and have no voting privileges.
- E. VTS-H (Surgery) credential will be awarded, but honorary members may not hold the VTS (Surgery) designation.
- F. Granted lifetime access to all academy business that occurs on the listserv, website, and social media.
- G. Recredentialing will be waived.

SECTION 8 CERTIFICATION

- A. Candidates must pass the certifying examination.
- B. Final approval for VTS (Surgery) status must be granted by the Board.
- C. VTS (Surgery) certification is granted for a period of five (5) years. The certification period begins on the date the examination is passed and ends on 12/31 five (5) years later (i.e. 10/22/24-12/31/29), except in unusual circumstances.
- D. A certificate, suitable for framing, shall be issued once to all Active and Honorary members.

SECTION 9 MAINTENANCE OF CERTIFICATION

- A. Maintenance of certification may be obtained through one of two (2) ways.
 1. Meeting the continuing education requirements set forth by the Recertification Committee.
 2. Retaking of the VTS (Surgery) certifying examination.
 - a. Members must notify the Recertification Chair via email the desire to retake the examination no later than May 1st of recredentialing year.
 - b. Examination must be taken the same year as the recredentialing year.
 - c. Members will be required to pay the examination fee.
 - d. Members may not have served on the Exam Committee for a period of three (3) years prior to retaking the exam.
- B. Failure to submit required documentation by the deadline will result in loss of certification (recorded as voluntary) as a VTS (Surgery), and as such, the member certificate will be recorded as void by the Academy Secretary. [See Article VII, Section 1]
- C. Discipline
 1. A member will have their membership suspended if they fail to pay dues within thirty (30) days of March 31st.
 2. The following consequences will result during suspension:
 - a. Prohibited to legally use VTS title
 - b. Declined access to members only area on AVST website
 - c. Taken off the AVST listserv
 - d. Unable to vote, hold office or serve as a committee member
 3. Repossession of Certificates: Certificates remain the property of the Academy and shall be repossessed when the issuance of such a certificate or its receipt violates the provisions of the Academy's Constitution and By-Laws

- D. Membership to AVST will be revoked and member will lose their VTS title when:
1. The member violates the provisions of the Academy's Constitution or By-Laws
 2. The VTS (Surgery) fails to maintain acceptable standards of competence in veterinary surgery as determined through investigation by the Board.
 3. The VTS (Surgery) fails to complete the recertification process by the deadline.
 4. Failure to pay dues.
 5. Legal Ramifications: Under direction of the NAVTA and CVTS, legal action may be taken if a member continues to use the VTS (Surgery) title for any personal or professional affiliation during suspension or failing to recertify in given year.
 6. A member accused of unethical conduct, incompetence, fraud or other charges that discredit the Academy will be investigated. Such charges must be made in writing to the Board. If action is warranted, the accused member will be notified in writing and given full opportunity to respond in writing and through a hearing before the Board. Disciplinary action may be recommended by the Board. This action will be executed following an affirmative vote by two-thirds of the Board.
- E. It is considered illegal to use the VTS title without successfully passing both the application and examination process set forth by AVST. A person caught illegitimately utilizing the VTS (Surgery) title will be investigated by the AVST. If action is warranted, the accused person will be notified in writing and given full opportunity to explain their situation and agree to stop using the VTS (Surgery) title. Failure to stop utilizing the VTS title (if found guilty) will be reported to the Committee of Veterinary Technician Specialties – a subsection of National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America, where legal action will be considered. Failure to adhere to these instructions will result in expulsion from the Academy.
- F. Reinstatement of membership status will be granted upon receiving all back dues and completion of all requirements of the Academy.

Article III Applicant Requirements

SECTION 1 APPLICATION

Application requirements include documentation of work experience, continuing education, and clinical competency as outlined in the following sections.

SECTION 2 EXPERIENCE

- A. The Applicant must complete a minimum of 10,000 work experience hours (equivalent to 5 years of full-time employment) after becoming a Credentialed Veterinary Technician or Veterinary Nurse.
- B. Within the immediate five (5) years prior to the beginning of the application period (January 1), the applicant's work experience must include at least 3 years (minimum of 6,000 hours) in a clinical role focused on the field of veterinary surgery.
- C. At least 4,500 hours of the submitted work experience completed while in the clinical role focused on the field of veterinary surgery must be strictly related to veterinary surgical duties as defined below.
- D. Definitions of surgery
 1. Veterinary surgery includes the advanced knowledge of surgical procedures and instrumentation (including instrument identification and care), proper sterilization techniques, principles of infection control, aseptic techniques, perioperative patient care, physical rehabilitation and a thorough knowledge of the anatomy and pathophysiology of animals.

2. Surgery is defined as the branch of medicine that deals with the diagnosis and treatment of injury, deformity, and disease by manual and instrumental means. A procedure is considered surgical when it involves cutting of tissues or closure of a previously sustained wound. A surgical procedure may include elective, emergency, reconstructive, transplantation, replantation, cosmetic or minimally invasive procedures such as arthroscopy, laparoscopy, and laser surgery.
 3. Surgical duties do not include anesthetic induction, monitoring, or recovery.
- E. All work experience must be completed as a credentialed veterinary technician (or nurse) as defined by the applicant's state, provincial, or national credentialing body.
 - F. If the applicant works in a state or province that does not offer credentialing, the applicant must pass the Veterinary Technician National Exam (VTNE) prior to accruing the minimum of five (5) years/10,000 hours needed to apply.
 - G. Applicants outside the United States and Canada must hold equivalent credentials to practice in their respective countries. The Credentials Committee with Board approval will assess applicants where credentialing is not yet established on a case-by-case basis.
 - H. Curriculum Vitae (CV) or resume to reflect 75% of work experience in veterinary surgery.

SECTION 3 CONTINUING EDUCATION

- A. A minimum of 40 hours of continuing education (CE) related to the Academy of Veterinary Surgical Technician Advanced Surgical Skills form must be completed within the immediate five (5) years prior to submission.
- B. CE must be obtained after becoming credentialed or passing the Veterinary Technician National Exam (VTNE).
- C. Proof of attendance is required.
- D. All CE must be presented by a member of a veterinary technician specialty academy, an AVMA recognized veterinary specialty, European equivalent, or otherwise qualified as listed in the current application instructions.
- E. The Credentials Committee will review the guidelines for in-house or online combined CE hours, and may update these requirements as deemed necessary.

SECTION 4 CLINICAL COMPETENCE

- A. An applicant must provide documentary evidence of advanced competence in surgery through clinical experience as outlined below.
- B. Completion of the current AVST Advanced Surgical Skills Form. The skills form documents those surgery related skills that have been mastered by the candidate and are necessary to participate in veterinary surgery at an advanced level.
- C. A case log must be maintained between January 1 and December 31 of the year immediately prior to the application submission deadline. A minimum of fifty cases must be recorded with relevant details documented for each case. Case entries reflect advanced knowledge of the management of surgical patients and procedures and show mastery of advanced surgical nursing skills.
- D. Four in-depth case reports selected from the case log demonstrating expertise in the nursing management of a variety of veterinary surgical patients and procedures and highlighting an array of advanced surgery related skills.
- E. Two letters of recommendation are required. Letter writers must be qualified as listed in the current application instructions.

SECTION 5 OUTSIDE ASSOCIATIONS

It is strongly recommended that the candidate be a member of the National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America or other provincial association.

SECTION 6 APPLICATION SUBMISSION

- A. The application for credentialing must be submitted as per the current year's application instructions and deadlines. Detailed instructions outlining the requirements for the application process and all associated forms will be posted for distribution on the AVST website, or at individual request from the Credentials Chair.
- B. The applicant is required to sign a 'Waiver, Release, and Indemnity Agreement' at the time of application.
- C. Applicants must submit all required documents with the prescribed application fee.
- D. Applicants may not submit additional data to augment the original application unless requested by the AVST Credentials Committee.

SECTION 7 EXAMINATION

- A. Candidates must pass the VTS (Surgery) credentialing examination given by the Academy. Examinations will be administered annually. The Board reserves the right to postpone or cancel the examination if the safety of examinees and AVST members is jeopardized or questionable.
- B. An applicant is allotted a maximum of three (3) times in three (3) consecutive years to successfully pass the examination without resubmission of the application.
- C. Successful candidates will be issued a certificate indicating the right to the VTS (Surgery) designation upon direction of the Board. VTS (Surgery) credentials are conferred for a period of five (5) years.
- D. Candidates who have failed the examination:
 - 1. Will receive, via email, a rejection overview that provides examples of the deficient areas of the examination. The rejection overview may or may not contain examples of ALL deficiencies.
 - 2. Candidates may retake the examination two (2) additional times in the next two (2) consecutive years for a total of three (3) times without reapplying to the Academy. The candidate must pay the applicable examination fee each year by the prescribed time.

SECTION 8 APPROVAL

The Exam Committee will grade the exam and determine which candidates will be recommended for VTS (Surgery) status and Active membership in the Academy. These results will be reported to the President, and Active membership will be approved by a majority of the Board.

SECTION 9 APPEALS

- A. Candidates denied eligibility to sit for the VTS (Surgery) Certifying Examination may appeal this decision within thirty (30) calendar days of notification of denial of eligibility. The appeal must be made by written petition sent via email to the 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 Secretary shall notify the Chair of the Credentials Committee and the President.
 - 2. The President will activate the Appeals Committee within fifteen (15) calendar days of receiving notification of the appeal.
 - 3. The Chair of the Credentials 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.

4. 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.
 5. The Appeals Committee shall review the appeal(s) and render a recommendation report to either grant or deny the appeal(s) to the Board within thirty (30) calendar days from the date the Chair of the Appeals Committee received the petitioner's file from the Secretary or the Credentials Committee Chair.
 6. The Board will render a decision on the appeal(s) upon the recommendation of the Appeals Committee and the Secretary or Appeals Committee Chair will notify the petitioner of the decision within fifteen (15) calendar days after receipt of the report of the Appeals Committee.
 7. The decision of the Board shall be final.
- B. Failure of the examination cannot be appealed.
1. The Exam Committee will determine what documentation will be required for re-examination.
 2. The applicant is allowed to sit for the exam a total of three (3) consecutive times with their initial application submissions packet.
 3. The full certifying examination fee must be paid for each repeated examination.
 4. If the applicant has not passed the examination after three (3) attempts, the applicant must submit a new application packet.
- C. Appeals of other adverse decisions made by the Academy, including VTS (Surgery) membership revocation may be made by written petition emailed to the Secretary.
1. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Secretary will notify the President.
 2. The President will activate the Appeals Committee within fifteen (15) calendar days of receiving notification of the appeal.
 3. All documentation pertaining to the adverse decision shall be submitted to the Appeals Committee by the appropriate committee chair or individual.
 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 Board within thirty (30) calendar days from the date the Chair of the Appeals Committee receives the appeal from the Secretary.
 6. The Board will render a decision on the appeal(s) upon the recommendation of the Appeals Committee and the Secretary or Appeals Committee Chair 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 Board shall be final.
- D. The President, Secretary, and Appeals Committee Chair shall work closely together to uphold the Appeals process and timeline.
- E. Appeal processes are included with the application instructions. Applicants are notified of the appeals process along with their results.

Article IV Executive Board

SECTION 1 MEMBERS AND RESPONSIBILITY

The Executive Board includes the Past President, President, President-elect, Secretary, Treasurer and four (4) Members-at-Large. Members shall:

- A. Attend the meetings of the Academy as defined by the Constitution and Bylaws.
- B. Vote in all decisions of the Board and Academy unless otherwise prohibited.
- C. Turn over all funds, properties and records of their office to the incoming officer at the end of their term.
- D. Serve without compensation, but may be reimbursed for direct expenses, as agreed upon by a vote of a quorum of the Board.
- E. Serve a term of office shall equal to the membership year.

F. Perform other duties, not defined, as determined by the Board.

SECTION 2 DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

A. President shall:

1. Assume the office of President following his/her term as President-elect.
2. Only vote during Board and Academy decisions in the case of a tie.
3. Provide mentorship for the office of President-elect.
4. Provide leadership to the Academy and represent the Academy at all functions where a presence is indicated.
5. Preside over all meetings of the Academy and Board.
6. Appoint, on approval of the Board, all Chairs of Standing and Ad-Hoc committees and temporary officers to fill vacancies.
7. Oversee the activities of all Standing and Ad-Hoc committees.
8. Act as Chairman of the Board.
9. Have the authorization to sign checks in the absence of the Treasurer.

B. President-elect shall:

1. Assume the office of President following his/her term as President-elect.
2. In the absence of the President, preside over meetings of the Academy.
3. Actively prepare for the leadership responsibilities that will be assumed at the end of his/her term.

C. Secretary shall:

1. Record and maintain all minutes of the Academy and Board.
2. Maintain all minutes of the AVST committees.
3. Maintain current membership lists.
4. Assist the Chair of the Nominations and Election Committee as needed.
5. Provide correspondence on behalf of the Academy, in conjunction with the President, via email or through the website.
6. Prepare and submit all required documents to the NAVTA CVTS.
7. Record and keep all original notes, minutes, publications, documents and records of all official Academy meetings and sessions for five years, or until the Board approves their disposal.
8. In conjunction with the Public Relations Committee, provide oversight of the AVST website and other social media type platform

D. Treasurer shall:

1. Oversee the financial matters of the Academy including the collection of dues.
2. Set up a bank account in a federally insured bank. Maintain checking, savings and corporate credit card accounts.
3. Assure that all filings to state and federal authorities are made in a timely manner
4. Have the authorization to sign checks.
5. With the assistance of the Finance & Development Committee, prepare a mid-year and year-end financial report for the Board and the membership.
6. Prepare a budget for the upcoming fiscal year.
7. Facilitate annual accounting review and/or audit of the financial records of the Academy.
8. Present a Treasurer report at quarterly meetings of the Board and act at such other times as determined by the Board.
9. At the 4th quarter annual meeting, make a recommendation to the Board on the amount of all dues and fees for the following year.
10. Maintain a file of all vouchers and invoices accompanying them for a period of not less than five years.

11. Turn over all funds, properties, and records to the Treasurer-Elect.

E. Past President shall:

1. Assume the office of Past President following his/her term as President.
2. Assist and advise the President as requested.
3. Represent the Academy at functions, where an AVST presence is needed in the absence of the President.
4. Assume the duties of the office of President in case of the President's resignation or removal from office.

F. Members-at-Large shall:

1. Execute the directives of the officers of the Board.
2. Assist in the formation of and be advisors to committees within the Academy.
3. Be ambassadors of the Academy and help promote the Academy at the annual meeting and to the general public.
4. Help to maintain good relations with other organizations within the field of veterinary medicine.
5. Serve as an audit committee for the office of the Treasurer unless also serving on the Finance and Development committee thus creating a conflict of interest.
6. Serve on any committee as appointed by the President.

SECTION 3 ELECTION AND TERMS OF OFFICERS

- A. The term for the President series is three (3) consecutive years.
- B. The term of the Treasurer is three (3) years.
- C. The term of the Secretary is three (3) years.
- D. The terms for the Members-at-Large shall be three (3) years.
- E. Officers of the Academy will be elected by a simple majority of the members voting in the general election. New officers will assume office during the first quarterly meeting of the year following the election. (January 1-December 31st)

SECTION 4 TERM LIMITS

There are no limits as to how many terms an officer can serve in any position on the Board.

SECTION 5 VACANCY OF OFFICE

- A. If a vacancy occurs within the Board, the President, with the approval of the Board, shall appoint an Active member to serve as interim officer until the position can be filled via the next general election.
- B. If the President cannot fulfill his/her duties, the Past President shall assume the responsibilities of the office.

SECTION 6 RESIGNATION PROCESS

- A. Any member of the Board who wishes to resign their position must notify the President electronically at least thirty (30) days prior to the resignation.
- B. The President must notify the Board of his/her recommended appointee to fill the vacant position thirty (30) days prior to the next Board meeting. The President's appointee shall be approved or disapproved by a simple majority vote of the Board members present.
- C. Resignation of the President must be made to the Past President. It is the Past President's duty to notify the rest of the Board. The Past President position will then remain vacant until the position is filled (based on a special election), or until the next general election.

SECTION 7 REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

- A. Any Board member missing three (3) consecutive board meetings will be removed from his/her office unless extenuating circumstances have been approved by consensus of the remaining members of the Board.
- B. Failure to disclose a conflict of interest, failure to exercise the duties of office, or any breach of confidentiality may be grounds for removal from office.
- C. Removal of an officer of the Board will be by a 2/3 majority of the remaining Board members.
- D. Notification will be made by certified mail and email.

SECTION 8 VOTING

- A. All members of the Board shall have one vote, save the President. The President shall have the tie-breaking vote if needed.
- B. Meetings are governed by the latest edition of *Roberts Rules of Order, Revised*.

SECTION 9 NOMINATIONS

- A. All active members are encouraged to submit names for consideration.
- B. A job description will be provided to each intended nominee.
- C. All potential candidates will submit their biography with a letter of intent to the Nominations Chair for inclusion on the electronic ballot. At least one qualified member for each position will be advanced to the membership.
- D. If no opponents are present within a nominated slate of officers, the nominated slate of officers may become the elected slate of officers by acclamation.
- E. If more than one candidate for an office is placed on the ballot, then elections will be held during November of each year. In the case of a tie, the Chair will cast the deciding vote.
- F. Electronic ballots must be sent to all eligible, voting members of the Academy.
- G. Newly elected officers will be announced in December of each year

Article V Committees

SECTION 1 STANDING COMMITTEES

The Academy shall have the following standing committees: Nominations/Elections, Credentials, Examination, Appeals, Recertification, Program, Finance and Development, Public Relations Committee, and Mentorship Committee. Chairs shall be appointed by the President and committee members shall be volunteers active or emeritus members of the Academy. If there are insufficient numbers of Academy member volunteers to fill any open Committee Chair positions, an officer may be appointed to serve in the role until the position can be filled. There are no limits as to how many terms an officer can serve in any Chair position. The Chair of each standing committee will be responsible for providing annual reports to the President.

SECTION 2 AD HOC COMMITTEES

The Academy shall create ad hoc committees on an as needed basis.

- A. The following shall apply to all committees unless otherwise explicitly stated: If a committee member or committee chair is unable to fulfill their term, a replacement shall be appointed by the President, with the approval of the Board, to fulfill the duration of the term.

SECTION 3 NOMINATIONS/ELECTIONS

- A. Nominations will be solicited in September of each year by the Nominations Committee Chair. This will be an active process. All members are encouraged to submit names for consideration.
- B. The committee will conduct the election via a secure internet balloting process.
- C. Electronic ballots must be sent to all eligible, voting members of the Academy.
- D. The Chair will determine the size of the committee.

SECTION 4 CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

A. The makeup of the committee will be the Chair and at least three (3) members. The Chair and members are appointed for three (3) year terms. The Chair will determine the size of the committee. The total number of committee members will depend on the number of applications submitted each year.

B. Duties of the committee:

1. Determine the content of the application packet.
2. Annually review and update all forms, procedures and contents of the application packet. (Application packet files will be saved for a total of five (5) years.)
3. Ensure that a mechanism is in place to provide packets to any interested parties.
4. Set deadlines for application submission.
5. Evaluate and certify the eligibility of applicants.
6. Notify all eligible applicants and forward a list of candidates to the Board and Examination Committee Chair.
7. Notify all ineligible applicants and the Board with a detailed explanation of why the applicant is ineligible.
8. Work with the Program Committee on educational and training standards.
9. Set fees for credentialing review with Board approval.
10. Perform other duties as assigned by the Board.

SECTION 5 EXAMINATION COMMITTEE

A. The makeup of the committee will be the Chair and at least four (4) members. Members are appointed for four (4) year terms. The number of committee members may be increased as deemed necessary by the Examination Committee Chair.

B. Duties of the committee:

1. With the guidance of testing professionals, establish the blueprint for the examination and review this blueprint at recommended intervals, but at least every five (5) years.
2. Maintain a bank of exam questions, and actively solicit items on an annual basis.
3. Prepare an examination for administration using sound psychometric methods.
4. Offer an exam on an annual basis.
5. Ensure that general information is provided to all eligible candidates on content, type, time and location of examination.
6. Provide medically eligible candidates with reasonable accommodations according to the Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines prior to the examination.
7. Administer the examination and provide proctors and monitors.
8. Grade the examination, determine the passing score, and validate the exam using sound psychometric methods.
9. Report results of examination and proposed passing point to the Board.
10. Notify all examinees of their examination results.
11. Provide unsuccessful examinees with a written summary of area(s) of deficiency.
12. Set fees for examination with Board approval.
13. Other duties as assigned by the Board.

SECTION 6 APPEALS COMMITTEE

A. The Appeals Committee will be activated on an as-needed basis as determined by the President.

1. The Chair shall be the Past President.
2. The committee shall include at least two (2) Members-at-Large.
3. Additional members will be appointed to provide a sufficient number of committee members to address the volume of appeals received.
4. Members may not serve on the Appeals Committee and the Credentials Committee simultaneously.
5. Alternate members of the Academy will be appointed in the event of a conflict of interest.

B. The duties of this Committee shall be:

1. Following the procedures outlined in Article III, Section 7 of the Bylaws, review all written appeals made to the Academy regarding denial of eligibility to sit for the VTS (Surgery) Certifying Examination, revocation of VTS (Surgery) status, or other adverse decisions made by the Academy.
2. To render their recommendations to the Board within thirty (30) calendar days of the date the Chair of the Appeals Committee receives the petitioner's file from the Secretary, President, Credentials Committee Chair, Recertification Chair, or other applicable individual.

SECTION 7 RECERTIFICATION COMMITTEE

- A. The makeup of the committee will be comprised of a Chair and at least two (2) members.
- B. The term of office for the Chair shall be three (3) years. The term of the members shall be two (2) years.
- C. The duties of this committee are:
 1. With approval of the Board, determine the requirements for recertification.
 2. Establish communication with members due for recertification.
 3. Evaluate member applications submitted for recertification.
 4. Provide an annual report to the Board.
 5. Notify applicants of acceptance or denial of application.
 6. Determine the recertification fee with approval of the Board.
- D. All members, except Emeritus and Honorary, are subject to recertification.

SECTION 8 PROGRAM COMMITTEE

- A. The Chair will determine the size of the committee
- B. Members will serve a three (3) year term
- C. Serve as official liaison to the American College of Veterinary Surgeons (ACVS).
- D. Duties of the committee are:
 1. Coordinate continuing education, publication, and research endeavors of the Academy.
 2. Provide support to and coordinate efforts with the ACVS Symposium Committee.
 3. Liaison to allied industry partners for organizing joint continuing education opportunities.

SECTION 9 FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- A. The Treasurer will Chair the committee.
- B. The Chair will determine the makeup of the committee. Members are appointed for three (3) year terms.
- C. Duties of the committee are:
 1. Prepare an annual budget and submit it to the Board for review and approval.
 2. Advise the Board on dues, fees, expenditures, continuing education costs and other fiscal matters of the Academy.
 3. Mediate all requests for refunds of dues or fees.
 4. Solicit funds for the operating needs of the Academy.

SECTION 10 PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

- A. The Chair will determine the makeup of the committee. Members are appointed for three (3) year terms.
- B. Maintain and monitor the AVST website in conjunction with the Secretary.
- C. Work with the Board to respond to communications and disseminate information to the Academy and public.
- D. Maintain and monitor any social platforms by the Academy.
- E. Promote and maintain the Academy's public image.

SECTION 11 MENTORSHIP COMMITTEE

- A. This Committee shall be composed of a Chair plus members of the Academy. The number of academy members will be determined by the number of mentor requests.
- B. The committee chair shall be appointed for a three (3)-year term, in which during the final year provide oversight for the incoming committee chair.
- C. Duties for this committee chair will include but are not limited to:
 - 1. Assignment of AVST mentor volunteers to those applicants that submit a request.
 - 2. Provide clear guidance to the mentors/mentees as to the scope of permitted assistance.
 - 3. Provide any additional assistance required to maintain the relationship between assigned mentor and mentee.
 - 4. Maintain records of all mentor and mentee matches, and provide match information to the Credentials Committee Chair and Recertification Chair after mentee AVST Applications are submitted.
 - 5. Act as a liaison between the Credentials Chair and mentors/mentees as to any application changes or clarifications

Article VI Academy Meetings

SECTION 1 MEETING CONDUCT

All meetings of the Board, Academy and its committees shall conduct business consistent with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Academy and follow the procedures set forth in the current edition of *Roberts Rules of Order, Revised*.

SECTION 2 ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

- A. The Academy shall hold an annual business meeting during the ACVS Veterinary Symposium or at such time and place as to be announced by the President. The Secretary shall send electronic notification of the Annual Meeting to the members thirty (30) days in advance.
- B. Board members shall review the agenda prior to the meeting.
- C. Board members unable to attend must send prior electronic notification to the President.
- D. A quorum shall consist of the members present that are eligible to vote.
- E. All are welcome to attend, however only members of the Academy may hold the floor and vote.

SECTION 3 EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETINGS

- A. The Board must meet, at minimum, quarterly during January, April, June and September or at such time as to be announced by the President. The Board may hold meetings on an internet chat room or other electronic media on a date approved by the Board.
- B. The Board members shall receive the agenda prior to the meeting.
- C. Board members unable to attend must send prior electronic notification to the President.
- D. A quorum of 51% of Board members shall be required to conduct business.
- E. Decisions are decided by a simple majority.
- F. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the officers or Committee Chairs at any time when situations warrant such a meeting. Electronic notification of a minimum of seven (7) days shall be given. If a quorum cannot be met, the special meeting will be cancelled.

SECTION 4: ELECTRONIC MEETINGS

Members may participate in a meeting through use of a conference telephone or by computer equipment by which all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other or see each other's written contributions to the meeting, provided that all participants in the meeting are advised of the use of such equipment and that the names of all participants in the conference are disclosed to all the participants.

Article VII Dues, Fees, Fiscal Matters

SECTION 1 DUES

- A. Upon recommendation of the Finance and Development Committee chaired by the Treasurer, and by vote of the Board, all dues of the Academy for the upcoming year will be established during a quarterly board meeting.
- B. All members, except Honorary and Emeritus members, must pay annual dues in a timely fashion to remain a member of the Academy.
- C. The dues year shall run from January 1st to December 31st.
- D. Members whose dues have not been paid within thirty (30) days of the due date shall be contacted by certified mail and be given thirty (30) days to pay.

SECTION 2 FEES

Upon recommendation of the Finance and Development Committee chaired by the Treasurer, and by vote of the Board, all fees of the Academy for the upcoming year will be established at the annual business meeting. Fees are payable at the time of services rendered.

SECTION 3 REFUNDS

All dues and fees of the Academy are non-refundable, except by recommendation of the Finance and Development Committee and approval of the Board.

Article VIII Indemnification of Officers

To the fullest extent permitted by applicable law, the Academy may indemnify any person who was or is a party, or who is threatened to be made a party, to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding by reason of the fact that the person is or was a Board member, officer or agent of the Academy.

Article IX Severability

SECTION 1 SEVERABILITY

Each of the provisions of these Bylaws shall be considered a separate and severable provision so that if any provision is deemed or declared to be invalid or unenforceable, such determination shall have no effect on the validity or enforceability of any of the other provisions.

SECTION 2 PREEMPTION OF LAWS

If a State or Federal law invalidates any provisions of these Bylaws, requires more notice than provided or creates rights and procedures not provided or inconsistent; the law shall be applied and preempt these Bylaws to that extent, all other provisions of the Bylaws shall continue in full force and effect.

Article X Authorization

SECTION 1 CONTRACTS

The Board may authorize any officer(s) or agent(s) to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the corporation. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

SECTION 2 LOANS TO THE ACADEMY

No loans shall be contracted on behalf of the Academy and no evidence of indebtedness shall be issued in its name unless authorized by a resolution of the Board. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

SECTION 3 LOANS TO OFFICERS

The Academy may not lend money to or guarantee the obligation of an officer unless approved by a majority of the votes represented by all members entitled to vote thereon, excluding the votes of the benefited officer. The Board may determine that the loan or guarantee benefits the corporation and either approves the specific loan or guarantee or a general plan authorizing loans and guarantees.

SECTION 4 CHECKS, DRAFTS, ETC.

All checks, drafts or other orders for the payment of money, notes or other evidence of indebtedness issued in the name of the Academy shall be signed by such officer(s) of the Academy and in such manner as is from time to time determined by resolution of the Board.

SECTION 5 DEPOSITS

All funds of the Academy, not otherwise employed, shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the Academy in such federally insured banks, trust companies or other depositories as the Board may select.

Article XI Amendments

Proposed amendments to the Bylaws can be made by any member, and shall be submitted to the Board for study thirty (30) days prior to a scheduled meeting of the Academy or the distribution of an electronic ballot to the membership. The Board shall distribute proposed amendments to the entire membership, with recommendations, at least thirty (30) days prior to counting electronic ballots or a voice vote of the eligible voting members. An affirmative vote shall require a simple majority vote of active members voting.

The foregoing Bylaws were adopted by the Executive Board of the Academy on December 28, 2008 and amended in June 2009, December 2010, on June 25, 2012, on October 2012, September 14, 2015, and add current date ____.