

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Academy of Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care Technicians (AVECCT) would like to thank you for your interest in becoming a Veterinary Technician Specialist in Emergency and Critical Care – VTS (ECC). AVECCT's goal in certifying veterinary technician specialists is to assure the veterinary profession and the public that AVECCT certified technicians possess the knowledge and experience needed to work effectively in a well-equipped and staffed emergency or critical care facility. The requirements for eligibility for the examination are defined in the AVECCT constitution and bylaws (available at: AVECCT.org). Although AVECCT requirements are rigorous, they are not designed to be obstacles to prevent candidates from becoming certified. The requirements are intended to assure the public and the profession that technicians certified by AVECCT are truly qualified.

Each applicant, before he or she is declared eligible for examination must be a graduate of an AVMA-approved Veterinary Technician School and/or legally credentialed to practice as a Veterinary Technician (or foreign equivalent), in some state or province of the United States, Canada or other country. The credential requirements are set by each individual state, province or country where credentials were obtained.

ALL of the requirements must be met AFTER graduating from an AVMA-approved Veterinary Technician School or becoming legally credentialed for an applicant to be considered eligible for the examination.

For the purpose of eligibility requirements the definition of emergency and critical care as established by the Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care Society will be used and reads as follows:

- **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.
- **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.

The AVECCT Credentials Committee will use these definitions to determine:

1. if your work experience was in the field of emergency and critical care.
2. if the cases in the case log and case reports are emergency and critical care cases.
3. if your continuing education is related to emergency and critical care medicine.

You must submit three copies of your application. Each copy should be secured in a separate 3-ring binder, and assembled in the following order:

1. **Applicant information page** (a single copy of this form tops three application copies)
2. **Waiver, Release and Indemnity Agreement**
3. **Employment History**
4. **Photocopy of valid, current veterinary technician license/registration**
5. **Skills Form**
6. **Two Letters of Recommendation**
7. **Continuing Education Form**
8. **Case Log**
9. **Four Case Reports**

Please use/copy **ONLY** the forms provided in the downloadable application from the AVECCT website (AVECCT.org). **Do not modify any form.**

The three copies of your application, along with a check for \$40.00 made out to: 'AVECCT', should be mailed to:

VECCS, Attn. AVECCT Applications, 6335 Camp Bullis Road #12, San Antonio, TX 78257

Applications must be received at the address above on or before **January 6, 2011**. Applications received after this date will not be accepted.

The application fee will not be refunded if applicant is not approved to take the examination. Eligibility rulings are made by the Council of Regents on recommendation by the Credentials Approval Committee. Applicants will be notified of eligibility results no less than 6 months preceding the scheduled examination date.

Notification letters will be mailed by March 11, 2011. If you do not receive your letter by March 21, 2011, please contact AVECCT at: info@AVECCT.org by March 26, 2011.

AVECCT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Please read the instructions carefully. Incomplete or faulty applications will result in application rejection. Please be sure you are using the 2009 application form obtained from the website www.AVECCT.org. The application should be assembled in the following order:

1. Applicant information page (Form 1)

Before mailing your final application package, include one copy of the Applicant Information Form placed on top of the three application copies

2. Signed copy of ‘Waiver, Release and Indemnity Agreement’ (Form 2)

3. Completed ‘Employment History’ (Form 3)

A minimum of 3 years full-time work experience or its equivalent (5,760 hours), in the field of veterinary emergency and critical care medicine is required (see definitions of emergency and critical care on page 2). All experience must be completed within five calendar years prior to the application submission date. All work experience must be performed after becoming legally credentialed.

4. Photocopy of valid veterinary technician license/registration/diploma

Applicants must provide proof of current license/registration or graduation from an AVMA-approved veterinary technology program. They may provide both, if applicable. Photocopies of the actual license/registration/diploma are the only proof that will be accepted. Cancelled checks or other documents will not be accepted. Information about requirements for technician credentialing on a state by state basis can be found on the AAVSB website: <http://www.aavsb.org/DLR/DLR.aspx>

It is strongly encouraged that the candidate be a member of a local, state, provincial, or the National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America, and a member of the Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care Society. Membership in any of these organizations is optional and will not be considered when your application is scored.

5. Completed ‘Skills Form’ (Form 4). Be sure to include **both** pages of this form.

The skills form documents those nursing skills that have been mastered by the candidate and are necessary to practice veterinary emergency and 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 and critical care nursing.

Each skill must be marked 'Yes' or 'No' to attest that the skill has been mastered by the applicant. AVECCT requires that a Veterinary Technician Specialist (ECC) or a veterinarian who has mastered the skill attest, by signature, to the applicant's mastery of the skill. Mastery is defined as being able to perform the skill safely, with a high degree of success, without being coached or prompted. Furthermore, mastery requires having performed the skill in a wide variety of patients and situations. AVECCT is aware that some states or provinces may not allow a skill to be performed by a licensed veterinary technician. Twenty-four of the thirty-three skills must be mastered for eligibility. Each skill must be clearly marked as 'Yes' or 'No' and include a signature; do not use quotation marks or arrows to indicate duplication.

6. Letters of Recommendation

Two letters of recommendation are required from a VTS (Emergency and Critical Care) member, a Veterinary Emergency Critical Care Society Veterinarian, or a Diplomat of the American College of Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care.

At this time letters of recommendation will also be accepted from non-VECCS emergency clinic veterinarians and board certified specialists in anesthesia, internal medicine, and surgery.

Letters must be typed.

7. Continuing Education Form (Form 5)

Include official proof of attendance documents for each CE event. Topic titles, attendance date, location, and length of lecture must be listed. A photocopy of a document provided by the organization or speaker must be provided as proof of the attendance. Cancelled checks or other documents will not be accepted as proof of attendance.

A minimum of twenty-five hours of continuing education related to veterinary emergency and critical care are required. The continuing education must be received from a nationally-recognized conference; local, state, regional veterinary medical or technician associations; accredited veterinary school or technician school sponsored CE programs; American Association of Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB); Registry of Approved Continuing Education (RACE) approved CE; or publically advertised local meetings delivered by instructors who are considered experts on the subject they are discussing.

The AVECCT definition of emergency and critical care will be used to determine whether or not your continuing education meets the requirement regarding content. If the title of the CE does not provide enough information to show that CE was related to emergency and critical care you may submit photocopies of the course description provided by the organization presenting the CE as proof that the continuing education was related to emergency and critical care.

The continuing education must be completed within the five calendar years prior to submitting the application.

8. Case Log (Form 6)

A case record log is to be maintained from January 1 – December 31 in the year immediately preceding the submission of the application. Only cases seen during this period qualify. The cases shall reflect the management of the emergent or critically ill patient and mastery of advanced nursing skills. The log should include the following: date, patient identification (name or number), species/breed, age, sex, weight, diagnosis, length of care, final outcome, and summary of nursing care techniques and procedures performed by the applicant on the patient. If the animal's weight, age, or sex is unknown enter 'not known' in the case log. Be sure that the case log is neat and that all entries are legible and **appear in chronological order**. List individual nursing skills you performed; do not use unspecific phrases such as "critical care nursing" or "intense monitoring. Provide a key if abbreviations are used.

Candidates must submit 50 cases that meet the AVECCT definition of emergency or critical care. However, if only 50 cases are submitted, a single unacceptable case could result in your application being rejected. Therefore it is **strongly suggested** that additional cases be submitted. The case log will be used to confirm your experience in emergency and critical care medicine and your mastery of a variety of advanced nursing skills, including those found within the AVECCT Skills List. Therefore, those skills should be clearly demonstrated within the case log.

Use the enclosed 'Case Log' master form (Form 6) to make copies for completing your log. For your convenience, a computer version of the case log form that can be filled in using Adobe Acrobat has been

included on the AVECCT website: www.avecct.org. If you wish to fill in your Case Logs on computer, use this form. Please carefully read the instructions included with the form. **Do not alter form.**

Please **highlight** the four cases used for your case reports.

9. Four case reports

See examples included in this package. The case reports must be selected from the case log and those cases should be highlighted in the case log.

The reports **must** be typed and **double spaced**. Case reports **must not exceed five pages each**. Case reports not meeting these requirements will be rejected. The following manuscript form should be used: Times New Roman font; margins justified and 0.5" top, bottom, and sides; top right of each page: **CASE REPORT # ___**, **APPLICANT NAME, PAGE #**, font size 10, all caps, bold; **Headings** capitalized, font size 10, bold; body font size 10.

See case report examples.

Case reports must demonstrate expertise in the nursing management of a variety of veterinary patients requiring emergency and critical care. Case reports must be the original work of the applicant.

Select cases that will demonstrate your expertise in emergency and critical care nursing. Be sure that information such as the patient's name, identification number, and date the case was seen is included in the report. The case report should describe, in detail, how the patient was diagnosed and treated. The case report must also be used to demonstrate how you used your knowledge and experience to assist the veterinarian in diagnosing and treating the patient. It is important that the information in your case report can be clearly understood. Present each case in a logical manner, check spelling, use generic drug names, and define any abbreviations that are not commonly used, e.g. positive end-expiratory pressure (PEEP). It is important to show that *you* participated in the diagnosis, treatment, and nursing of the patient and were not just an observer. It is also important to demonstrate *your* depth and comprehension of knowledge about the case that you have chosen. Consider some of the following ways of demonstrating your knowledge and experience:

- Show how *your* observations, physical examination, and history-taking assisted the veterinarian with the diagnosis. The easiest way to do this is to write in the first person, using "I" statements. "I placed a 20g intravenous catheter in.....", "I was concerned about the patients vomiting and suggested.....", "The lab results showed.....and I"
- Explain why an observation was important or why *you* asked a certain question while taking the history.
- Describe the procedures *you* assisted with or performed. Explain why the procedure was indicated, possible contraindications, and nursing care requirements.
- Describe how *you* assisted the veterinarian in treating the patient.
- Explain how *you* helped determine whether the patient's treatment was being effective.
- Explain how *your* observations and monitoring helped the veterinarian modify the patient's treatment.
- Explain *your* role in planning the patient's care.
- Show *your* understanding of the problem being treated. Brief explanations of pathophysiology help to demonstrate your knowledge base.