



Guidance for the Individual Training Program Pathway

Dear Colleague:

Thank you for your interest in pursuing board certification in the American College of Animal Welfare. In this document you will find an overview of the process, detailed milestones for your journey toward board certification, and several recommendations or cautions from lessons learned. Let us start with several specific notes:

- ✓ The American College of Animal Welfare (ACAW) offers two options for board certification:
 - Formal Residency (covered under a separate document), and
 - The Individual Training Program (ITP).
- ✓ The ITP is designed for persons seeking board-certification who do not have the ability to participate in a formal residency program.
- ✓ While this document describes the process, the most current forms, formats, and submission instructions are available on the ACAW website.
- ✓ Registration, application, and examination deadlines and fees are noted, as applicable.
- ✓ Be mindful of the deadlines.
- ✓ Unless otherwise noted, payments, application materials, and other submissions should be submitted via the ACAW website. You may also submit your documents to the ACAW Secretary (ACAW.Secretary@gmail.com) as a secondary means to confirm submission of your documents to the ACAW.

We are excited that you have expressed interest in becoming board certified in animal welfare. Your journey will be challenging, require dedication, and focus; but if you persist with your training and engage ACAW Diplomates as partners, you will optimize your opportunity to become a respected Diplomat of the American College of Animal Welfare.

Questions regarding the process or formwork may be directed to:

Dr. Ron Banks
ACAW Secretary
Email: ACAW.Secretary@gmail.com
Phone: 405.465.9514

The ACAW Individual Training Program (ITP) Pathway

The purpose of the ACAW Individual Training Program (ITP) is to provide a pathway for veterinarians seeking board certification in animal welfare who may not have the ability participate in a formal residency program in animal welfare. The ITP is expected to be as robust and as high-quality as a formal residency in animal welfare. The primary difference between the ITP and a formal residency is the training methodology.

- The ITP utilizes ‘independent study’ in association with an ACAW Diplomate mentor to achieve the objectives of an ACAW-approved ITP. The ITP is expected to meet the specific proficiency requirements of the ACAW – the same as in a formal residency process. The ITP is crafted by the applicant, supported, and endorsed by the mentor, and reviewed / approved by the ACAW Training Committee.
- Formal residencies are structured along classic academic educational processes having an institutionally prescribed course of study which has been approved by the ACAW Training Committee.

Applicants submitting their ITP are expected to follow the Job Task Analysis (JTA) procedures described within this ‘Guidance’ document.

ITP Milestones: The milestones of the ITP are:

1. Meet the basic requirements for Board Certification with ACAW.
2. Identify an ACAW Diplomate willing to serve as your mentor.
3. Register with ACAW (on the website) by paying the \$200.00 Registration Fee and providing the requested information.
4. Work with your mentor and create a proposed ITP.
5. Submit your proposed ITP for review / approval to the ACAW Training Committee within 18 months of registration with ACAW.
6. Complete your ACAW-approved ITP within five (5) years of the Training Committee approval date of your ITP.
7. Publish one (1) peer-reviewed manuscript on an animal welfare topic.
8. Submit your ITP documentation to the ACAW Credentials Committee to verify completion of your ITP and meet the board eligibility requirements.
9. Pay the \$300.00 Credentialing Fee (at submission of your credentialing packet).
10. Receive approval from the Credentials Committee to sit for the certifying examination.
11. Pay the \$300.00 Examination Fee prior to the first examination (no additional fee is required for the subsequent two exam attempts if required).
12. Sit for the certifying examination.

Milestone Details for the ITP pathway:

1. **Meet the basic requirements for Board Certification with ACAW.**
 - ✓ Able to speak and write in English, and
 - ✓ Be a graduate of a college or school of veterinary medicine accredited or approved by the AVMA, or
 - ✓ Possess a certificate from the Educational Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates (ECFVG), or
 - ✓ Be qualified to practice veterinary medicine in some state, province, territory, or possession of the United States, Canada, or other country. *NOTE: Current practice licensure IS NOT REQUIRED to become board certified. One must only 'be qualified to practice.' Veterinarians involved in non-clinical medicine such as pathology, epidemiology, etc. are eligible for becoming board certified in animal welfare with ACAW.*
2. **Identify an ACAW Diplomate willing to serve as your mentor.** The ITP candidate must engage an ACAW Diplomate to serve as a mentor for their ITP. Candidates are encouraged to talk to multiple ACAW Diplomates and select a Diplomate that is in the best position to support the candidate's ITP. ACAW Diplomates willing to provide mentorship are listed on ACAW's website. As an alternate suggestion, contact the ACAW Secretary for assistance finding a mentor.

NOTE: Applicants may email the ACAW Secretary for assistance with identifying a mentor.

NOTE: Mentors may require compensation for their services and such specifics should be determined prior to initiating your training program. ACAW is not involved in these discussions.

3. **Register with ACAW by visiting www.ACAW.org, download instructional documents, complete the online registration form, and pay the \$200 registration fee.** You may register at any time, but the recommendation is to identify a mentor prior to registering and paying your fee. When the registration fee is paid, you have only 18 months to submit your proposed ITP for review. Failure to submit the proposed ITP within 18 months requires a new registration & fee with ACAW.

NOTE: *For individuals participating in the Formal Residency option, registration with ACAW is also required. The Formal Resident should submit ACAW registration and pay the fees online. The Program Director should send an email to the ACAW Secretary advising the ACAW of the resident's engagement in the residency program with anticipated residency start and end dates.*

Submit your ACAW Registration Form using this [link](#) or follow this path.

- Visit www.acaw.org
- Click on the “Becoming a Diplomate” tab
- Go to Step 1 and click on the download link for the Applicant’s Packet and Alternate Route Forms. Review all documents.
- Go to Step 2 and click on the Online Registration and Fee Payment link
- Complete online registration and pay fee using a credit card.

NOTE: All fees may be paid via the ACAW website using a credit card or PayPal.

CAUTION: *Registration initiates an ‘18-month clock’ within which a candidate must submit their proposed ITP to the ACAW Training Committee, or re-register with ACAW and pay an additional registration fee. You may wish to delay registration with ACAW until you and your mentor are working on a proposed ITP.*

By registering with ACAW, you will also be automatically included in:

- The ACAW Trainee Listserv, and
- Have access to the recordings of the ACAW-supported monthly webinar ‘The Gaggles.’ This is a welfare-oriented informal web-training session which may be used as training documentation on your Credentials Activities Log.

4. **Work with your mentor and create your proposed ITP.** An acceptable ITP begins with documenting past activities buttressed by anticipated new training to build a broad and complete welfare training program. The overarching questions to keep in mind when designing your ITP are:
- ✓ What knowledge do you already possess that addresses the JTA?
 - ✓ How will you gain (and document) new knowledge required in the JTA?
 - ✓ What one (1) publication will you provide which demonstrates animal welfare knowledge and insight?
 - ✓ How will you complete the eight (8) required welfare assessments?
 - ✓ How will you complete the eight (8) required welfare case studies?

What should be included in your proposed ITP? There are two types of information that should be included in your proposed ITP:

- ✓ Include in your proposed ITP all welfare training, formal course work, continuing education, and welfare-related clinical experiences accomplished from the date of obtaining your veterinary degree up to the present; and
- ✓ Proposed work you anticipate completing during your ITP (e.g., reading, coursework, lectures, experiences), which you have developed with your mentor.

Animal welfare is a broad and dynamic field of study. Your ITP is also anticipated to be as robust and detailed as a more formal university-based residency program. As such, you should anticipate selecting multiple sources of materials and a variety of experiences for each Task Area on the Credentials Activities Log (CAL) spreadsheet.

CAUTION: Do not use a single activity for large numbers of Task/Knowledge Areas. While the breadth of a specific animal welfare reference, article, or activity may allow listing under several Task or Knowledge Areas, the intent of a well-designed ITP is to provide a diverse and well-rounded experience. Therefore, it is wise limit a single K/T citation to one or at most a very few K/T areas. There is no prohibition against listing a single reference to multiple K/Ts, however this approach is counter to the intent of a training program with maximal breadth and scope.

Suggestions for Listing Proposed or Actual Individual Training Activities in your Credentials Activity Log: The Credentials Activity Log (CAL) is a core programmatic document for recording your accomplishments and educational activities. The reviewers (Training Committee and Credentials Committee) will use the CAL as the PRIMARY document to review your proposed training program and at the completion of your training program, to validate completion of your Training Committee approved ITP. As such, the level of detail you place in the CAL should be as much as a reviewer might need to clearly understand the association between your proposed activity, book, chapter, or section, and the specific JTA Knowledge Area and Task (K/T). Suggestions for citation include:

- ✓ **Book:** Cite the book name, year of publication, and author of the chapter you are proposing for a specific Task area.
 - A book having 10 chapters may be cited for each of 10 chapters in 10 different Task areas.
 - Generally, but not always, one chapter should be used for the citation in a single Task Area and not re-used for several different Task Areas.
 - Using the same chapter in 3 or more K/Ts will be denied.
- ✓ **Websites:** For certain Task Areas (e.g., Regulations as listed in Task Areas 131-140), it may be preferable to review websites where regulations regarding welfare issues are detailed.
 - When citing a website, include the Common website name (e.g., AVMA website), and the specific page(s) reviewed to address this Task Area.
 - Specific URLs are not necessary, but the reference citations should allow reviewers to visit the same site for the information you will use.
- ✓ **On-line Course Work: There are several potential ‘online courses’ that one might** use to fulfill Task Area requirements.
 - When selecting an ‘online course,’ the citation should specify the course name, the hosting institution, and the specific course chapter applicable to the Task Area.
 - Since online courses often cover several topics, it is possible that the online course might apply to multiple Task Areas. When this occurs, specify how each listing from the course is applicable to the specific Task Area it is associated with.
- ✓ **Journal Club Reviews:** Cite in your CAL the article(s) title(s) discussed, author(s), and note the general group who participated in the review (e.g., ACAW mentor & residents, Behavioral Group review, etc.).

- ✓ **Study Group Reviews:** Cite the journal or book chapter (including author) that was discussed by the group, as in a journal club. Include a brief note as to the general group who participated in the review (e.g., ACAW mentor & residents, Behavioral Group review, etc.).
- ✓ **Gaggles:** Cite the title of the gaggle presentation and the presenter of the gaggle.

Suggestions for Calculating Experience or activity time: For activities spanning several months / years, provide your best professional estimate of the time spent for each training activity. For example:

- ✓ **Reading a book:** You read each evening for about 30 minutes over 5 nights. Therefore, $30 * 5 = 150$ minutes. Converted to hours / minutes, you record 2.5 hours for this K/T.
 - **Credentials Activity Log Reporting:** You may either report 2.5 hours under a single heading, or you may report in half hour increments under individual topical areas, summing to 2.5 hours.
- ✓ **Complete an online course:** You spent 10 weeks @ 2 day per week & 2 hours per day for online and off-line work = $10 * 2 * 2 = 40$ hours.
 - **Credentials Activity Log Reporting:** You may either report 40 hours under a single heading, or you may report in sub-unit increments under individual topical area, summing to 40 hours.
- ✓ **Practice Experience:** You worked for 1 year in a veterinary practice, averaging 25% time where you engaged in welfare-specific treatments, hoarding cases, or teaching animal welfare principles to clients: Therefore, 50 weeks/per year (two weeks' vacation) @ 25% of 40 hours per week = $50 \text{ weeks} * 10 \text{ hours per week} = 500$ hours.
 - **Credentials Activity Log Reporting:** You may either report 500 hours under a single heading, or you may report in sub-unit increments (NLT half hourly) under individual topical areas, summing to 500 hours.

Other Specific Activities to include in your proposed ITP include:

- ✓ **Areas of research interest** (including previous and proposed publications) and whether a research project will be undertaken as part of the ITP.
- ✓ **Previous experience in the field of animal welfare** obtained after the completion of your veterinary degree.
- ✓ **Knowledge obtained while achieving Diplomate status in another veterinary specialty** (e.g., ACLAM, ACVPM, etc.) in a dual residency program or in a relevant doctoral (e.g., Ph.D., D.Sc.) program.

- ✓ **“Animal Welfare Assessments (AWA)”** (described below) in the 12 areas for performance assessments as listed in the Task 9B section of the JTA. Candidates must complete eight (8) AWAs consisting of:
- One AWA in all six (6) sections of K/T sections ‘a’ through ‘f’, and
 - Two (2) additional welfare assessments from K/T sections ‘g’ through ‘l’
 - Species specific K/T Areas:
 - a) Companion animals
 - b) Poultry production
 - c) Hooved stock production
 - d) Equids
 - e) Laboratory animals
 - f) Zoo animals
 - g) Aquatic animals
 - h) Aquaculture/fisheries
 - i) Wildlife/exotic animals
 - j) Animals in exhibitions/entertainment
 - k) Animals in education
 - l) Working/assistant animals

NOTE: Direct observations are highly encouraged and preferred. Examples include:

- Hands-on welfare assessments
- Facility visits with or without an attending veterinarian
- Facility visits with or without the mentor

NOTE: Alternative assessment modalities (to direct observations) may include:

- Participating in animal welfare judging
- Reviewing welfare scenarios (e.g., Michigan State University)
- Mentor-created scenarios

Encouragements regarding Animal Welfare Assessments:

- **The goal of AWA’s is skill development** in identifying factors affecting welfare, consideration of the factor’s interaction upon welfare, and professional decision-making regarding options and choices supportive of good welfare outcomes.
- The use of standardized AWA tools is preferred for the assessments.
- Mentors have access to several tools which may be used by the resident..
- *Alternative assessment modalities should not be the sole source of an applicant’s proposed AWA.*
- AWAs are documented in the candidate’s completed ITP Credentials Activities Log submitted to the Credentials Committee as demonstrable evidence of focused interaction with the Diplomat mentor (or Subject Matter Expert) and attentiveness to welfare principles and applications. This is one-half of the required welfare activity; the other half are the Case Studies.

✓ **Case Studies (CS):**

- **The goal of Case Studies is to prepare the resident for the examination.**
Case Study assessment and commentary is one-half of the examination grade.
- Candidates must complete eight (8) CSs, preferably selected by their mentor so that conditions of the examination can be approximated to assist the resident with 'practicing' to be successful in the examination.

Case studies include:

- Identification and description of a situation of sub-optimal animal welfare.
- Assessment of welfare in the provided scenario.
- A written (generally) report of the CS which includes: the conditions leading to suboptimal welfare, recommendations for steps that could be instituted to improve conditions supportive of good welfare, which may include specific consideration of public / client education.

Encouragements regarding Case Studies:

- One goal of the case studies further development of your skills of identifying factors affecting welfare, consideration of the factor's interaction upon welfare, and professional decision-making regarding options and choices supportive of good welfare outcomes. Approach CS as a real life situation where you as a newly minted Diplomate are charged with a challenging situation, and the continuing welfare of the described animals is in your hands. In short, practice your CS as you will answer the examination questions and practice your new certification as a Diplomate.
- Case studies/case reports are documented in the candidate's completed ITP Credentials Activities Log submitted to the Credentials Committee as demonstrable evidence of focused interaction with the Diplomate mentor (or Subject Matter Expert) and attentiveness to welfare principles and applications.
- Since the board certifying examination uses CS, it could be wise to perform the CSs under conditions like the board examination, such as:
 - Give yourself one hour within which to read, consider, and report out a case study assigned by your mentor. Time management is an important skill in the certifying examination.
 - Have your mentor define a specific situation (e.g., dairy operation, animal shelter, elephant enclosure) where the candidate could compare or contrast the issues or circumstances inherent to the situation that might affect animal welfare. The case study portion of the exam often asks to 'compare and contrast welfare states,' so the ability to effectively discuss welfare differences may be a useful tool in the exam.
 - Have your mentor define a specific situation (e.g., a specific animal in a societal situation) where you could rank order the issues or circumstances inherent to the situation that might affect animal welfare. Sometimes your task will be to do a 'deep dive' on a specific situation where rank ordering the issue might be helpful.

- Consider a case study where the mentor requests a paradigm using a modified and potentially enhanced management plan to lead an animal from poor welfare to good welfare. You will need to express your skills with nuances of welfare situations and proposed improvement plans for the animal's benefit.
- ✓ **Preparing your proposed ITP for review by the Training Committee:** The **Animal Welfare Credentials Activities Log (CAL)** is the primary means to record a candidate's past efforts, anticipated training, selected welfare assessments, and other TP information. The CAL must use the ACAW formatted JTA CAL listing of Ts & Ks. It must be complete and include proposed animal welfare-related activities. Each row item should have three (or more) reference citations for that item. Reference citations may be re-used in multiple rows, but generally not more than for three (3) lines.

NOTE: Only ITPs submitted using the ACAW Credentials Activity Log format will be reviewed by the Training Committee. You may use the ACAW template, or you may create your own (if it looks the same), but the submitted proposed ITP must be complete and accurate.

Suggestions on completing the CAL for review by the Training Committee:

- Use one color (e.g., brown), to identify those activities completed through prior experience or training and, in a contrasting color (e.g., green), list those activities that will be accomplished during this Training Program.
 - Ensure that activity descriptions include sufficient detail to describe how each activity will meet the K/T expectations listed in the JTA.
 - Candidates should show that they have planned for a comprehensive training experience.
- ✓ **Mentor Letter:** Include a letter from your mentor stating that they have been actively involved in the development of the proposed ITP. While there is no set length for the letter, it must include the following statement (or similar):

I have been actively involved in the development of this Individual Training Program. I believe this proposal meets or exceeds the requirements of the JTA and should adequately prepare this candidate for credentialing.

- ✓ **Other animal welfare activities which may be included in your proposed ITP, either previously completed or as proposed activities, which demonstrate active engagement in the field of animal welfare include:**
 - Serving as a site visitor for an accreditation group that accredits animal facilities/programs.
 - Being a primary participant in animal welfare policy development.
 - Enforcement of animal welfare regulations or guidelines at your place of employment.

- Participation in veterinary association animal welfare committees or activities (or similar committees and groups).
- Providing training, either formal or informal, to the public regarding animal welfare.
- Serving as an instructor to students (any level) on animal welfare topics.
- Participation in legislative advocacy activities focused on animal welfare.
- Attending animal welfare-focused continuing education or college courses
- Volunteering in community animal welfare groups.
- Serving in a leadership role in an animal welfare group.

NOTE: This list is not exhaustive but is meant to encourage applicants to think broadly about how they have gained experience in the field of animal welfare and how they can create their individual training programs to encompass a variety of animal welfare activities.

✓ **Other veterinary activities which should not be included in your proposed ITP, either previously completed or as proposed activities:** Any activity where animal welfare was peripheral to the primary goal of the activity, such as:

- Clinical veterinary experience aside from the portion of clinical work involved in animal welfare, such as components of animal welfare assessments.
- Teaching clinical procedures to veterinarians and veterinary nurses.
- Providing clinically focused veterinary continuing education.
- Authorship of clinically focused manuscripts to include case reports, retrospective medical records reviews, prospective studies that gather and report only on clinical data, etc.

NOTE: This list is not exhaustive but is meant to encourage applicants to think broadly about the welfare applicability of potential proposed activities.

NOTE: While not acceptable for the purposes of welfare documentation in your ITP, providing this information as an appendix on a separate page is encouraged as this information provides documentation of work experiences, but it is not considered sufficient for an animal welfare focused board certification process.

5. Submit your proposed ITP to the ACAW Training Committee. Once you and your mentor agree on your ITP, submit the documents to the ACAW via the website.

NOTE: You should submit all materials via the ACAW website, but if problems occur, you may submit your documents to the ACAW Secretary at: acaw.secretary@gmail.com

CAUTION: Your registration with ACAW starts the '**ACAW CLOCK**', meaning you have 18 months from the registration month to submit your ITP to the ACAW Training Committee!

The Training Committee will review your proposed ITP and will either:

- Approve your ITP, or
- Request clarification of certain point(s) in your proposal, or
- Require more detailed information for approval of your ITP.

CAUTION: While the Training Committee will review and approve as quickly as they can verify your ITP meets ACAW requirements, it may still take several weeks to months to completely review and approve your ITP. While awaiting approval, you may choose to complete some of your proposed activities. Be advised that if the Training Committee does not approve certain specific proposed training activities. Unapproved training activity(s) cannot be used as effort toward ACAW certification.

NOTE: You should expect that an ITP is expected to a couple of years to complete. Submission of a proposed ITP and a credentials packet in the same year is viewed with suspicion, as the ITP is designed as a 'training program plan' and generally requires a period of time to complete the full program. Historically, most ITPs require 2-3 years to complete. According to the ACAW By-Laws, you have five years to complete your training program and submit your credentials packet to the ACAW Credentials Committee. The ACAW Clock for the training program starts the month the Training Committee approves your ITP.

NOTE: The option for credentialing based on past efforts was sunset in 2017 because of AVMA requirements. The College no longer has an option for credentialing based solely on past performance. An ITP of approximately 2-3 years duration will be expected of all residents.

6. **Upon approval by the Training Committee, complete your approved ITP.** Since this is an independent training process and not a formalized residency, successful completion of your ITP will depend upon you and your mentor. ACAW expects an on-going communicative relationship between you and your mentor. As such, most candidates choose to meet by teleconference, about once a month for the duration of their ITP. Mentors may require more or less contact time, but the amount of contact time should be governed by the needs of the candidate's progress (e.g., animal welfare assessments & case studies require more contact time than on online course or book reading activities).
7. **Changes to your ITP:** The ACAW Training Committee approves an ITP consisting of the 'minimum requirements' to meet the expectations of the College regarding Credentialing to sit for the Board Certifying Examination. The Training Committee relies upon the leadership and decision-making of the ACAW Diplomate serving as the mentor when changes to an approved ITP occurs. If the change, either addition of additional activities, or replacement of one activity for another activity, does not deviate from the intents / expectations of the originally approved ITP (K/T), your ACAE Mentor can approve the modification to your approved ITP for a specific set of activities. There is no re-review of an ITP change required by the Training Committee. When submitting your credentials dossier, you must identify the changes and provide a brief explanation of why the change was necessary and how the changed item met the intents and expectations of that affected Knowledge Area and Task Item (K/T). Your mentor should also confirm the change.

8. **Addition of new activities to your ITP:** You may discover activities or resources you were unaware of when designing your ITP. Simply add those new discovered activities to the Credentials Activities Log (CAL) and continue with your program. While the Training Committee approves your proposed ITP, their approval indicates that you met the 'minimum standards' for an ITP. You are encouraged to supplement your learning with the addition of novel resources as suggested by your mentor or discovered during your training journey. You do not need to have these 'new' activities approved by the Training Committee.
- ✓ **Replacement of a new activity for an ITP approved activity:** Occasionally, proposed ITP activities may not be available when you are ready to perform that activity. You may find an alternative activity as a replacement; however, your mentor must agree that the proposed replacement activity is of the same intensity, focus, and purpose as the one being replaced for the affected K/T.
- i. **NOTE:** It would be wise for the mentor to note in the CAL that this replacement activity was determined as substantively the same as the activity being replaced. Both activities should be included on the CAL with a means of tying each activity to the other (to assist the Credentials Committee review).
 - ii. **Note:** Either the Resident or the mentor may request a formal Training Committee review if the proposed alternative activity doesn't seem to perfectly fit the replacement item.

CAUTION: You must complete your approved ITP within five (5) years from the Training Committee approval date or re-submit a new proposed ITP to the Training Committee.

9. **Publish one (1) peer-reviewed manuscript on an animal welfare topic.** Publication requirements for ACAW credentialing to sit for the certifying examination, are characterized as:

- ✓ The applicant must be the first author on one (1) welfare-focused publication.
- ✓ The manuscript(s) must have been accepted for publication **BEFORE** the candidate submits their credentials dossier for review.
- ✓ Publication may be in either hard copy or online journals, assuming:
 - The online publications are 'peer-reviewed' (same process as hardcopy journals), and
 - Are searchable in one of the more common scientific databases.

- ✓ On-line options may include (as example):
 1. Animals <https://www.mdpi.com/journal/animals>
 2. Veterinary Sciences <https://www.mdpi.com/journal/vetsci>
 3. Frontiers in Veterinary Science
<https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/veterinary-science>
 4. PLOS One <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/>

NOTES Regarding Publication:

- Online journals may have turn-around times much shorter than hard-copy journals which could hasten the manuscript approval / publication processes for candidates. Additionally, publication in open access journals enhances access for prospective readers. However, the criteria noted above must be met for any journal.
- ACAW does not keep a list of ‘acceptable journals,’ as any publication option meeting the conditions outlined in this message is acceptable for ACAW publication purposes.
- Your manuscript(s) must have been peer reviewed. Please note that some journals only publish manuscripts that are peer-reviewed while other journals publish a mix of peer-reviewed and non-peer-reviewed manuscripts.
- The publication does not need to be data driven. Thoughtful and well-referenced commentaries, review articles, and non-data driven thought provoking or purpose-driven articles, are potentially acceptable.
- Publications need not say ‘welfare’ in the title.
- The manuscript MUST be clearly linked to improving animal welfare beyond the clinical practice of veterinary medicine.
- An acceptable publication(s) **MUST**:
 - Have a ‘substantial focus’ on animal welfare and/or discuss how the research performed directly affects a component of animal welfare as outlined in the JTA.
 - Contribute to the body of knowledge regarding animal welfare.
 - Describe detailed and well-defined direct links between the concepts, work, research, or results and animal welfare. Manuscripts that describe concepts, work, research, or results that “may” impact animal welfare may not be accepted. Manuscripts that only state that something ‘...may impact animal welfare...’ are not considered to be substantially focused on animal welfare and will not be accepted.
 - Have a critical thinking component that indicates a link to animal welfare.
- ✓ Examples of unacceptable manuscript(s):
 - A pharmacokinetic study of an analgesic that does not have a clearly discussed direct link to animal welfare.
 - A disease diagnostics study which only tangentially improves animal welfare through advancing clinical veterinary practice.

- ✓ Examples of acceptable manuscript(s):
 - A pharmacokinetic study of an analgesic which clearly describes how the findings improve animal welfare.
 - A disease diagnostics study which has a clearly discussed direct link to animal welfare, which may also advance clinical veterinary practice.

NOTE: See Document titled Examples of Acceptable Publications for ACAW Credentials for several additional examples of acceptable and unacceptable publications.

Suggestion: The ACAW Publications Committee will provide a review of proposed research, published manuscripts, or manuscripts in progress:

Unpublished work: The purpose of this review is to confirm 'welfare applicability' (potential ACAW acceptance) of the proposed work. This review does confirm if the proposed activity / manuscript would meet the requirements of the College, as no published document is available for review at this time.

Published manuscripts: The Publication Committee will approve or disapprove published manuscripts. You may submit your manuscript at any time during your residency to receive approval of your manuscript. This action, if completed early in your residency, can relieve substantial anxiety regarding whether or not your manuscript will be accepted by ACAW. By submitting early, if there is a problem with your manuscript you will have time to address the issue before completing your program and not being able to sit for the examination due to your absence of an acceptable manuscript.

Submit the document you wish to have pre-reviewed to the ACAW Secretary:
acaw.secretary@gmail.com

10. Upon completion of your ITP, submit your documentation, the CAL spreadsheet, to the ACAW Credentials Committee to verify completion of your training program.

Submit your credentialing materials via the ACAW website or ACAW Secretary **Not Later Than** midnight 31 October of the year prior to when you intend to sit for the examination. (Example: October 31, 2024 submission to sit for the June 1, 2025 certifying examination)

The Credentials Committee may require supplemental documentation or clarification during their review of the credentialing packet.

CAUTION: If you change your contact information after submitting your credentialing packet, please make sure you update that information with ACAW.

Mentor Letter: Include a letter from your mentor stating that in their opinion, you have completed the ITP as of or exceeding the approved program, and you are qualified to sit for the certifying examination. While their letter may be as long or short as they desire, it should include the following statement:

- ✓ Include a letter from your mentor stating that they have been actively involved in the development of the proposed ITP. While there is no set length for the letter, it must include the following statement (or similar):

I have been actively involved in this Individual Training Program. I believe this Resident has met (or exceeded) the requirements of the JTA and should adequately prepared to be credentialed as 'Board Eligible' and qualified to sit for the certifying examination.

Candidates will be notified of the Credentials Committee's decision not later than March 1 of either their full credentialed status 'Board Eligible'; or the Credentials Committee's decision to withhold board eligibility at this time. An explanation will be provided if this is the case.

11. **Pay the \$300.00 Credentialing Fee.** The Credentials Committee will accept and review the proposal but cannot release the results of their review without confirmation of payment of the Credentials Fee. You may submit the fee via the ACAW website.
12. **Receive approval from the Credentials Committee to sit for the certifying examination.** The ACAW Secretary will notify you as soon as the Committee has issued a judgement. At this point you may refer to yourself as 'ACAW Resident - Board Eligible' in your signature block or other documentation.

NOTE: On occasion unforeseen circumstances may get in the way and interfere with an individual's ability to sit for an examination. While the expectation is for a board-eligible individual to sit for the examination at the next scheduled event, the Board of Directors does consider deferrals when there exist extenuating circumstances. Individuals who desire a deferral for an examination should submit their purposed request to the ACAW Secretary for consideration by the Board of Directors.

13. **Pay the \$300.00 Examination Fee.** Prior to the first examination, pay the \$300 examination fee via the ACAW website. There is no additional fee required if the candidate is unsuccessful in their initial exam attempt (a total of three examination attempts are included in the one examination fee).
14. **Sit for the certifying examination.** Upon approval by the Credentials Committee, you will have three (3) opportunities over the ensuing five (5) years to successfully pass the board certifying examination.