

## **BYLAWS FOR VOLUNTARY CERTIFICATION OF MISSOURI ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICERS AND HUMANE INVESTIGATORS (ACO/HI)**

### **PART 1: DEFINITIONS**

The words and phrases defined below shall, when used in this document, have the following meaning, unless the context indicates otherwise.

- A. BOARD/APPOINTING AUTHORITY – shall mean the Missouri Animal Control Association Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is charged with program oversight.
- B. ACO/HI shall have the meaning for this document Animal Control Officer/Humane Investigator
- C. CERTIFICATION COMMITTEE – means the Certification Committee for ACO/HI as created herein.
- D. CERTIFIED ACO/HI – is a person who has met the qualification requirements as defined in this program and has successfully passed a written examination with a score of not less than eighty (80) percent and in receipt of a valid “Certificate of Certification”.
- E. CERTIFICATE OF CERTIFICATION – is a document issued as evidence of qualification and registration to practice as a certified ACO/HI under this program, bearing the designation “Certified ACO/HI”. The certificate shall state the name of the person being certified, date issued, expiration date, MACA seal, and the signature of the Certification Chairperson, hereby authorized to grant such certificates. (Amended 11/3/2004)
- F. EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS – means on-the-job training and experience as stated in these bylaws which all applicants must complete prior to being qualified to take the certification examination administered by the certification committee.
- G. CONTINUING EDUCATION UNIT – means the value assigned to each hour of approved training received.
- H. QUALIFICATIONS FOR CERTIFICATION AS CERTIFIED ACO/HI – shall mean a person who has attended the Missouri Animal Control Association Certification Training program. (Amended 2/10/2005)

### **PART 2: CREATION OF CERTIFICATION COMMITTEE**

The Appointing Authority/Board shall make initial appointments to the Certification Committee as provided in Part 3, no later than three (3) days following the effective date of this program, and such subsequent appointments as necessary.

### **PART 3: MISSION STATEMENT OF CERTIFICATION COMMITTEE**

There is hereby created a Certification Committee by the Missouri Animal Control Association to certify individuals as ACO/HI in the State of Missouri. Individuals whose duties require knowledge and skills in environment health sciences, care and nutrition of animals, regulations on safety, submitting rabies samples, knowledge of techniques of public relations and the laws relating to animal welfare in the State of Missouri, and to assure continuing education of members so certified.

### **PART 4: CERTIFICATION COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

The Certification Committee shall consist of five (5) members who shall reside in the State of Missouri and are current Missouri Animal Control Association members in good standing. The Appointing Authority/Board shall appoint one (1) member who shall serve as chairperson of the

certification committee. The four (4) remaining committee members shall be appointed by the chairperson upon approval by the Appointing Authority/Board.

A. Four (4) members, each of whom shall be a practicing Animal Control Officer, Humane Investigator, or other related position as approved by the Appointing Authority/Board with at least two (2) years of experience and be qualified for certification under the provisions of this program. (Amended 2/10/2005)

B. Optional – Provisions may be made to provide one (1) non-voting ex-officio member as desired.

#### PART 5: TERM OF OFFICE

A. Appointments shall be for a three-year (3) term. There shall be no term limit; the Appointing Authority/Board shall approve any re-appointments to a committee position. Vacancies occurring prior to the expiration of the term shall be filled by appointment of the Chairperson, upon approval of the Appointing Authority/Board.

B. The appointing authority/board, upon recommendation of the certification committee may remove a committee member for misconduct in office, incompetence, neglect of duty or other sufficient cause after written notice informing of pending action. The affected committee member may appeal such removal to the appointing authority/board in writing. The appointing authority/board shall hear such appeal with fifteen (15) days of receipt of written appeal. A final determination deciding dismissal of the removal action or support of the removal shall be submitted to the affected member within fifteen (15) day from the date of the hearing. All decisions by the appointing authority/board are binding and final.

#### PART 6: CERTIFICATION COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION, DUTIES OF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS, COMPENASATION, SEAL, AND MEETINGS

A. The members of the Certification Committee shall upon being appointed, organize and conduct a meeting to elect from their numbers a vice-chairperson whose responsibility is to conduct the business of the committee in the absence of the chairperson.

B. The members of the Certification Committee shall also upon being appointed select from their numbers a secretary. The secretary shall be responsible for maintaining minutes of all board meetings, collecting fees and depositing funds or providing such funds to treasurer of the Appointing Authority/Board for deposit. (Amended 6/1/2006, 10/23/2008)

C. The Certification Committee shall recommend such policies and bylaws as are necessary to carry out the provisions of the certification program to the appointing authority.

D. The Certification Committee shall hold at least one (1) meeting each year to review the programs progress, , conduct examination review and update as necessary, review and approve all expenditures, prepare and approve reports, and transact all other business as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this program. Other reviews may be accomplished by U.S. mail, electronic mail (email), or by telephone. (Amended 11/3/2004)

E. Applicants who have been determined qualified to become certified ACO/HI shall upon satisfactory completion of the certification examination be issued a certificate of certification in which the official seal of the Missouri Animal Control Association has been affixed. (Amended 11/3/2004)

F. The Certification Committee may hold hearings for the purpose of administrative items and policies of such matters as may properly come before it, make the necessary determinations in conjunction therewith, and issue such orders as may be consistent with their findings.

- G. A simple majority of the Certification Committee shall constitute a quorum, and a special meeting of the Certification Committee shall be called by the secretary at the direction of the certification chairperson upon written request by two (2) members of the Certification Committee, or upon written request by ten (10) certified ACO/HI's.
- H. All Certification Committee meetings should be open to the public with the exception of sessions to consider members revocation issues and/or content of the Certification Examine. (amended 11/9/2007)
- I. The secretary of the Certification Committee shall receive reimbursement for postage, travel and other expenses incurred in the discharge of their official duties. All members of the Certification Committee shall serve without compensation, but may receive reimbursement for expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. No funds shall be dispensed without the approval of the Certification Committee by simple majority of those voting.
- J. An annual report of the certification committee finances shall be made by the treasurer of the appointing authority/board and incorporated in the annual report of the Association.

#### PART 7: RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS, APPLICANTS, AND CURRENTLY CERTIFIED AC/HO'S

- A. The Certification Committee shall maintain for five (5) years a record of proceedings, a list of all current certified ACO/HI in the State of Missouri and a record of all applicants.
- B. The Certification Committee shall provide an application form for the use of all applicants which shall contain the following:
  - 1. The name of the applicant, place of residence, and date of the application.
  - 2. The name and address of employer or business affiliation.
  - 3. Information stating experience and qualifications.
  - 4. The date on which the Chairperson reviewed and acted upon the application.
  - 5. Action taken by the chairperson and/or committee.
  - 6. Pertinent information as may be deemed necessary by the Board (i.e. continuing education units).
  - 7. A current mailing address. (Amended 11/3/2004)

#### PART 8: QUALIFICATION FOR EXAMINATION FOR CERTIFICATION AS AN ACO/HI

Any person desiring to be certified as an ACO/HI may make application to the Certification Chairperson on a form provided by the Certification Committee. . The chairperson shall accept the application if accompanied by the required fees. (Amended 11/3/2004)

#### PART 9: APPLICATION/RENEWAL/DISPOSITION OF FEES

- 1. Applicants for certification as professional ACO/HI shall pay a non-refundable certification examination fee as determined by the Certification Committee, at the time of making application for certification. Any recommended increase of certification fees shall be first discussed with the membership at the annual conference, prior to a vote of the board. However, the board may elect to allow the membership to vote on any proposed increase of certification fees.
  - A. All certificates shall expire on the renewal date unless renewed prior to such date.
  - B. A professional ACO/HI certified under provisions of this program shall prior to renewal of the certificate, submit proof satisfactory to the certification committee that during the preceding two-year period he/she has attended or participated in courses relevant to public health and/or animal health since the issuance of their certification certificate. A total of twenty (20) CEU's is required for the two year period. 3. A ACO/HI certified under the provisions of this program may renew their certificate by paying a non-refundable fee as determined by the Board and by providing documentation of twenty (20) CEU's earned in the preceding

two-years, or by re-examination as for a new applicant. Said fee shall be due and payable on or before the date of expiration. Upon payment of fees a renewal certificate valid for two (2) years shall be issued.

2. Certification expired for failure to pay renewal fees or provided satisfactory proof of continuing education requirements may be reinstated within thirty (30) days upon receipt of appropriate fees and satisfactory proof of continuing education requirements.

- A. Funds collected under the provisions of this program shall be used to pay reimbursements and expenses of the Board and for such other purposes as approved by the Certification Committee for the furthering of the educational and professional standards of ACO/HI certified under the provisions of this program, and to otherwise administer the provisions of this program.
- B. All fees collected under the provision of this program shall be paid into the treasury of the appointing authority/board and credited to the certification fund to be used by the Certification Committee in carrying out the provisions of this program. No part of this fund shall revert to the general treasury of the Association. (Amended 11/3/2004)

#### PART 10: EXAMINATION FOR CERTIFICATION

- A. The test will be written in English. A member of the Certification Board or the certification chairperson shall administer the written examination. If requested seven (7) calendar days in advance an additional test administrator will be provided to read the test questions and answers, as written, to the person(s) taking the test to accommodate language barriers and/or disabilities. (Amended 10/24/2006)
- B. The written examination shall be administered in conjunction with the Missouri Animal Control Association's Certification Training program. An applicant who fails to pass the certification examination may re-test at the annual conference upon re-submitting an application and the examination fee.
- C. The certification examine shall only be administered to those individuals that qualify pursuant to Part 8 of these bylaws.
- D. The certification examine shall be of a quality equal to that as provided by the National Animal Control Association or its equivalent as determined by the certification committee. In any case, the certification committee shall determine the curriculum of the examination to be administered to applicants, and such examination shall be required for all candidates who wish to become certified under this program. For successful completion of the certification examination, the applicant must receive a score of at least eighty-percent (80%).
- E. The examination papers and records pertaining thereto shall be filed with the secretary of the Certification Committee and retained for a length of five (5) years.

#### PART 11: CONTINUING EDUCATION

- A. The Certification Committee shall, as a means to maintain professional competency, promulgate policies and guidelines, establish standards for continuing education requiring twenty (20) CEU's in a given two-year period of direct participation in a course or courses approved by the committee or its equivalent in the units of measure adopted by the committee. One hour of training equals one continuing education unit. These standards shall be established in a manner to assure that a variety of alternative forms of continuing education are available to certified ACO/HI's including, but not limited to, academy studies, in-service

education institutes, lectures, conferences, workshops, extension courses, and home study programs. The standards should recognize specialized areas of endeavor. (Amended 11/3/2004)

B. The Certification Committee shall make available a form for request for credit of continuing education units and it shall be their responsibility to approve or disapprove request.

#### Part 12: INVESTIGATION FOR DENIAL, SUSPENSION, OR REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION

A. The Certification Committee shall promulgate policies and guidelines for investigation of complaints regarding unprofessional and or illegal actions of certified ACO/HI's.

B. Notwithstanding and other provisions of this program, the Certification Committee may deny, refuse to renew, suspend or revoke a certification certificate issued under the provisions of this program after sufficient notice of hearing and upon findings that the ACO/HI has;

1. Knowingly made a false statement of fact required to be revealed in the application for certification or for renewal of certification; or,
2. Been convicted of a crime, if the crime is substantially related to the qualifications, function, and duties of the business or profession for which the certification was issued; or,
3. Committed an act of deceit, misrepresentation, violation of contract, fraud, negligence, professional incompetence or unethical practice; or,
4. Failed to pay required fees for renewal according to the provisions of this program; or,
5. Failed to meet continuing education requirements.

C. Upon suspension or revocation of an individual's certification, the Certification Committee shall notify the certificate holder, consistent with provisions on Part 6, Section E.

#### PART 13: USE OF TITLE

Only a person who has qualified as a Certified ACO/HI and who holds a valid certification certificate issued by the Certification Committee shall have the right and privilege of using the title "Certified ACO/HI" and to use the abbreviations "ACO/HI" after his/her name.

#### PART 14: RIGHT OF APPEAL OF CERTIFICATION COMMITTEE DECISIONS

Any action by the Certification Committee which adversely affects an applicant or holder of a certificate of certification may appeal. The appeal shall be made to the Certification Committee, which shall appoint an investigating committee to hear the appeal. The appointed committee shall submit their findings, which shall be final and binding to the Certification Committee.