General Information and Instructions for 2016 Application
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.

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.

Your application will be submitted electronically via email. Some pages, such as your current license or Diploma, the Skills Form, and your letters of recommendation, must scanned and submitted by email. When your application is complete, please sign the waiver form (done last). If you are having difficulty with the application at any time, please contact us at: info@avecct.org.

If you use webmail email, such as yahoo, Hotmail, live, etc., you will need to save and attach the application manually to your email. The application should be emailed to applications@avecct.org. We will send you a confirmation within 2 business days detailing when the application was received. Requesting a read return receipt would be highly recommended. **Keep a copy of your “sent mail” with the date/time stamp in case of problems with email delivery. This must be provided as proof of attempt to email.**
Please note, it is the applicant’s responsibility to confirm that all documents are submitted. We will check that all documents received are in a valid, readable format, but we do not check that every required document is received! Please ensure you check and double check that the correct documents are attached to your email (only finalized documents!), and that the application is complete. Please keep your sent mail files, and read receipts.

Digital Application to be emailed (all forms filled in on your computer)

1. Applicant Information
2. Employment History
3. Continuing Education Form
4. Case Log
5. Four Case Reports
6. Waiver, Release and Indemnity Agreement
Non-Digital section of application that must be scanned and sent by email:

1. Scanned copy of valid, current veterinary technician license/registration OR Diploma
2. Proof of CE attendance
3. Skills Form
4. Two Letters of Recommendation

Fill in the form fields (blue highlights), then print the entire form to prepare your package for scanning.

Please use/copy ONLY the forms provided in the downloadable application from the AVECCT website (AVECCT.org). Do not modify any form. With the exception of the Skills Form and signatures, hand written forms will not be accepted. Also, include only the information requested. Extraneous documents will not be accepted and may result in your application being rejected. This is a professional application and all efforts should be made by the applicant to ensure it is an example of their highest quality of work.

The application fee is $40.00 USD. Money must be sent electronically through PayPal by following these instructions:

Go to http://avecct.org/content/application_process. There is a link midway down the page entitled Application fee for 2016 Examination: this payment must accompany your completed application, by the Dec 31, 2015 deadline. Click the “Pay Now” button to send your $40 fee. Do not send to the “Examination fee” button! Please be sure to send from the same email address that the application was sent from, or send an email letting us know if a different account was used, so that we may link it to your application.

For all PayPal payments, please ensure you keep the email transaction record as proof of payment.

COMPLETE applications and payment must be received on or before December 31, 2015 at 11:59pm EST. 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 based on recommendation of 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 in March, 2016.
AVECCT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Please read the instructions carefully. Incomplete or faulty applications will result in application rejection. Please be sure you are using the current application form obtained from the website www.AVECCT.org. This form is filled in using the free computer program Adobe Acrobat Reader. If you do not already have Acrobat Reader on your computer, you can download it here: http://get.adobe.com/reader/. This program will work on any computer, Mac or PC. It is not recommended that you attempt to fill in the application on a tablet such as an iPad.

Below are the instructions for each page. Please read this carefully, as there are tips on how to fill in each page. Note that there are two categories: Those forms that are submitted digitally, and those that must be scanned and emailed.

Part A: Digital Application:

1. Applicant information page (Form 1). Please note that you only need to fill in your name one time on the application, it will automatically fill in all the other pages requiring your name.

   NAVTA membership is a requirement for all AVECCT Candidates. Please provide your membership number. International candidates can still become NAVTA members.

2. Completed ‘Employment History’ (Form 2) 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. Please only give us the AVERAGE number of hours worked per week, not a range of hours.

3. Continuing Education Forms (Forms 3a and 3b)

   Official proof of attendance documents must be provided for each CE event. These documents must be provided with the non-digital section of the application. 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.

   Note that two form types have been provided, a few copies of each. The first form (Form 3a) is for a conference or event in which you may have attended several hours of lectures by different speakers. The second form (Form 3b) is used for events in which there may only have been one speaker, or for single hour lectures. You can also use this form for recording online CE.

   If you need additional copies of form 3a, they can be downloaded separately from the AVECCT.org website. Simply attach additional forms to your email, save them as additional form 3a with your name.

   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 the application deadline.

4. Case Logs (Form 4)

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 competence in advanced nursing skills. The log should include the following: date, patient identification (name or number), species, 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 entries appear in chronological order.

HINT** We highly recommend that you do a rough draft of your case logs and only fill in the computer form closer to the end of the year. You will be unable to move cases around to keep them in chronological order, and if you delete a case log, you will have a blank spot in your logs.

List individual nursing skills you performed; do not use unspecific phrases such as “critical care nursing”, “intense monitoring” or “pain management”. Provide a key if abbreviations are used. A page has been provided for your key.

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 (up to a total of 75) be submitted. There are enough case log forms to allow you to submit up to 75 cases. The case log will be used to confirm your advanced competency in veterinary emergency and critical care through clinical experience.

On the very first case log form, you will see yellow “callouts”, which signify comments in Acrobat. Click each of these callouts for instructions on how to fill in the field that they are pointing to.

5. 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. Acrobat Reader allows you to highlight the cases using the text highlight tool: Select the case log you wish to highlight by clicking and dragging to select all text. Then, click the highlight tool on the toolbar (yellow T with a small highlighter icon). All information from the case log should be included in the case report and
document the case log number as a reference.

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.

Case reports must be saved as PDF files. If using Microsoft Word 2007, 2010, or 2013 (PC) please choose File, then Save As and choose the .pdf format. If using Word 2008 or 2011 on a Mac computer, once your document is finalized, select File, then Print. Under Print, choose PDF (lower left hand corner), then Save As PDF.

Please save each case report individually with the following format for title:

Applicant Name, Case Report #___ (1-4).

**HINT** when saving your final files use caution to save them in a separate location from any working documents. For example, make a folder called “FINAL APPLICATION FILES”, and save only final copies of each file in this area. Last year, several candidates sent incomplete files, or files with “track changes” markup on the document. This could result in your application being rejected. Please ensure that all documents saved in your final application folder, are indeed the copies you wish to send!!

If you are using the “track changes” feature in Microsoft Word if you have someone review your documents, please ensure that you “accept all changes” in the document before you save as a PDF. Review your document following reformat to PDF, to ensure all of the formatting elements remained. Please do not submit a pdf that has the track changes visible.

See case report examples.

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

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, and specifically 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. “I” statements are allowed
but not required.
  o Explain why an observation was important or why you asked a certain question while taking the history.
  o Describe the procedures you assisted with or performed. Explain why the procedure was indicated, possible contraindications, and nursing care requirements.
  o Describe how you assisted the veterinarian in treating the patient.
  o Explain how you helped determine whether the patient’s treatment was being effective.
  o Explain how your observations and monitoring helped the veterinarian modify the patient’s treatment.
  o Explain your role in planning the patient’s care.
  o Show your understanding of the problem being treated. Brief explanations of pathophysiology help to demonstrate your knowledge base.

6. Application Checklist: be sure to go through the complete checklist for both the digital and non-digital sections of the application.

7. Signed copy of ‘Waiver, Release and Indemnity Agreement’ (Form 2). Digitally sign this form last, just prior to sending. We have provided a checklist at the end of the application to help remind you to do this. Having trouble?? Don’t fret, we’ve included another form that can be sent with the non-digital portion of your application! Below are the instructions to make your own digital signature.

Instructions for creating a Digital Signature in Acrobat Reader

1. Open Adobe Reader. Select "Document>Security Settings..." or on a Mac select "Adobe Reader>Security Settings..."
2. Click on the "Add ID" button.
3. Select "Create a self-signed digital ID for use with Acrobat."
4. Enter the identity. In the "Add Digital ID" box, enter a name, organization information and email address in the corresponding text boxes.
5. Save the digital signature. Select "Browse" to locate a storage place on the computer. Then, enter a password if desired.
6. Open a PDF document that you want to sign.
7. Click on the signature box. To place a signature in Adobe Reader, the creator of the PDF must have created a signature box and enabled the security settings that allows users of Reader to add signatures.
8. Select the signature from the "Digital ID" drop-down menu in the "Sign Document" box. Adobe places the information that was entered in step 4 in the signature box to verify the user of the form.

Tips for ensuring a Happy Application Experience

1. Download the newest version of Acrobat Reader, the current version is 11 (or XI). Click here: http://get.adobe.com/reader/
2. Save frequently!! Get in the habit of saving your form after every page or while doing case logs, after every case log. It will be well worth the effort and save a lot of frustration.
3. Don’t leave the application to the last minute. Keep a hard copy of case logs and start filling them into the application later, but remember, this is a time consuming process. Either way, make sure you are working on your application for as long as possible for the best results.
4. Spell check all of your documents. Spell checking is enabled in every field so if
you notice a red-line appear under a word, please double-check it. Don’t worry if you are from a different country, we are well aware that furosemide is also spelled frusemide, esophagus is also spelled oesophagus, etc. We understand these differences. Please be sure that you are using proper grammar in all of your documents as well.

**Instructions for submitting Part A Application with Acrobat Reader**

1. Ensure you save the file in the following format, “**Your name here 20xx AVECCT Application Part A**”. Save it in a convenient location on your harddrive, such as to your desktop.
2. Open your email application either an email client such as Thunderbird, Outlook etc., or your internet email application such as Yahoo or Hotmail.
3. Create a new email message, addressed to: **applications@avecct.org**
4. **Subject heading “AVECCT Application”**
5. If your program allows you to do a read receipt, choose that option
6. Attach your file for the form that was just saved
7. Attach your case reports in separate files, also labeled in the required way:
8. Click Send

**You should receive a confirmation email within 48 hours. If you have not, please email applications@avecct.org to ensure it has been received.** Remember to keep your sent mail!

**Part B: Non-Digital Applications files to be sent by Email**

The following forms must be **scanned and emailed** with the other forms in your application as a complete package. If you do not own a scanner, this can be done at a local Kinkos, UPS Store, Staples or any printing offices, such as Kwik-Kopy. These facilities will be able to assist you with packaging your documents appropriately for emailing, and/or emailing the files for you. When saving the files, please ensure that each file is titled appropriately, beginning with the Applicant Name, then form title (such as waiver, diploma, skills form or recommendation). All files should be sent to **applications@avecct.org** by the deadline on **December 31 at 11:59pm EST.**

**HINT** We highly recommend that you scan your documents in groups such as Diploma/License, CE Proof, Skills Form, and Letters of Recommendation. Please save them in the format “Jane Doe Diploma.pdf”, “Jane Doe CE Proof.pdf” etc.

Also, please do not scan at more than 180-200 dpi! Any larger than this will result in files that are very difficult to email due to size!! You can also scan in greyscale rather than color, which will also keep the file sizes small.

Before emailing, please double check that all required documentation scanned appropriately, is legible, and that it is all included. We cannot notify you if a document is missing.

All forms must arrive by the deadline on **December 31 at 11:59pm EST.** Keep in mind, if you hit send at 11:59pm EST, it does not mean that it will be received at 11:59pm EST. We go by the timestamp, which is when the document is received. We would recommend you send no later than 11:30pm EST to avoid a potentially late application.

1. Copy 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. Each applicant, before he or she is declared eligible for examination must be a **graduate** of an AVMA approved Veterinary Technician School and/or meet the requirements as a Veterinary Technician in some state or province of the United
States, Canada or other country. The requirements are set by each individual state, province or
country where credentials were obtained. The original date of credentialing and graduation date
(if applicable) must be documented on the history form.

**ALL of the requirements must be met AFTER** graduating from an AVMA (or its
equivalent) approved Veterinary Technician School or **becoming legally credentialed for
an applicant to be considered eligible for the examination.** 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](http://www.aavsb.org/DLR/DLR.aspx)
Membership in NAVTA (National Association of Veterinary Technicians of America) is a
requirement for AVECCT Certification.

It is strongly encouraged that the candidate be a member of a local, state, provincial,
technicians association, 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. Please do not include membership documentation in the application
package.

2. **Proof of attendance at all CE events.** You will need copies of certificates or other proof
of attendance for each CE event attended.

3. **Completed ‘Skills Form’ (Form 6).** Be sure to include **ALL** 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. Please print this document and have it signed by the qualified
professional as outlined below.

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. Each skill must include a signature;
do not use quotation marks or arrows to indicate duplication.

**Keep the original for your records.**

4. **Letters of Recommendation**

**Two letters of recommendation** are required from a VTS (Emergency and Critical Care,
Anesthesia, Internal Medicine) member, a Veterinary Emergency Critical Care Society
Veterinarian, a Diplomat of the American College of Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care or
board certified veterinarian specialist in Anesthesia, Internal Medicine or Surgery. Letters must
be typed, and should include details on training, ethical behavior, and quality of skills.

These letters may emailed separately to applications@avecct.org by the person writing the letter,
or included in your package. Please ask that the subject line include the applicant’s name. A
confirmation email will be sent, if it is not received, please email applications@avecct.org to
ensure receipt of the letter.

Letters must include: The full name of the applicant and the full name and qualifications (as
written above) of the VTS or DVM writing the letter, as well as contact information. For VECCS
member DVM's please include your membership number.