



The American Board of Animal Acupuncture Candidate Handbook and Application

Our profession is well into its fifth decade since the establishment of the first clinics and the first schools in the United States. Since those earlier days, our profession has come a long way and attained legal status in all but a few states. And currently, Animal Acupuncture is legal in at least six states, with many acupuncturists allowed to practice under the guidance of licensed veterinarians in most states.

The ABAA's commitment to excellence stems from the core of our mission - we care for animals, the quality of medical care they receive, and we are acutely aware of the benefits of animal acupuncture when properly applied.

We are also very aware that in the profession of acupuncture there has been no certification for animal acupuncture for licensed acupuncturists, except in only a few states. Our vision is that all licensed acupuncturists who are treating animals are certified by the ABAA, thus helping to safeguard the future of this specialty of Acupuncture and Chinese medicine and for the benefit of animals that are treated.

The Practice of Animal Acupuncture by Licensed Acupuncturists

The statutes of each state, and the regulatory board rules of states that govern the practice of acupuncture often change, so in each state it is incumbent upon a practitioner to check with their own licensing board as well as the veterinary board to determine their status for practicing animal acupuncture. In most states, acupuncturists need to work in association with a veterinarian. Being certified by the ABAA in animal acupuncture does not grant the practitioner the right to perform acupuncture on animals. This is determined by the statutes and regulations of the state in which they practice. It is solely up to the acupuncturist to understand and abide by the laws of the state in which they practice. It is not the responsibility of the ABAA.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The ABAA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, gender, sexual orientation, political or religious beliefs, handicap, marital status, or national origin.

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook serves as the principal source of information for those applying for certification in Animal Acupuncture. Applicants also need to periodically check our website for any changes to ABAA's policies, requirements, or forms. If you are unsure about a policy or procedure, contact ABAA by email at info@AnimalAcupunctureBoard.org or visit our website at www.AnimalAcupunctureBoard.org

ABOUT THE ABAA

Founded in 2013, the American Board of Animal Acupuncture (ABAA) has been established to standardize the field of certification in Animal Acupuncture for licensed acupuncturists. The Board is composed of specialists in the field of Animal Acupuncture and western veterinary medicine. The mission of the ABAA is to establish, assess, and promote recognized standards of education, competency and safety in use of Acupuncture for the treatment and benefit of animals. Board Certification from the ABAA authenticates an acupuncturist's knowledge and skill to practice the specialty of animal acupuncture. The ABAA also recognizes that Animal Acupuncture is and has been the domain of practitioners of Acupuncture long before western veterinary medicine was ever developed.

The ABAA is a non-profit 501(c) 6 corporation devoted to teaching, research, the practice and the certification of practitioners of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine as it relates to the treatment of animals. The ABAA respects the training and lineage of all practitioners who work with treating animals. In the interest of the health of animals, and the advancement of the AOM profession, the ABAA asserts the right of any practitioner to gain advanced knowledge in any area they choose to study.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR ABAA CERTIFICATION EDUCATION

EDUCATION

Graduation must have been obtained from a formal Educational Program that has met the standards of the Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine (ACAHM) [formerly ACAOM] or equivalent training, or students who are in their 3rd year, or beyond, of an accredited school (ACAHM).

CERTIFICATION ROUTES

The ABAA has established three routes of eligibility for certification in Animal Acupuncture: Individuals may qualify to take the ABAA examinations by meeting all of the requirements specified under one of the following routes: **If you are applying to sit for the examination, you must:**

1. A. Be certified or licensed by a state acupuncture licensure board, completing training in acupuncture, or be a student in the final year, at an accredited college of acupuncture that has met the standards equivalent to the Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine (ACAHM).

B. Have graduated from a program of instruction in Animal Acupuncture that meets the minimum competencies as listed below and is comprised of a minimum 140 hours of instruction with clinical training.

Or

A. Be certified or licensed in by a state acupuncture licensure board, and have completed training equivalent to the standards of the Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine (ACAHM), and

B. Have had tutorial instruction equivalent in nature to the minimum competencies for animal acupuncture, and over 6 years of actual practice of animal acupuncture.

In order to complete the process for certification in Animal Acupuncture, the following documentation is required:

1. Proof of Acupuncture License – a current copy must be submitted with the application. License must be verifiable, and applicant must be in good standing with their state licensing board or agency.
2. A. Proof of graduation from a certification program in Animal Acupuncture that meets the ABAA's minimum requirements; or verification for the college that you are completing the final year of study and in good standing.

Or

B. Proof of tutorial instruction and 6 years of practice of animal acupuncture.

C. In addition to taking the written exam, an applicant who wishes certification after completing a tutorial program and has 6 years of practice with animals, may also be required to demonstrate that they meet acceptable standards of competence, knowledge and skill.

Grandfather Exception: Licensed acupuncturists in good standing, who have before 2016, successfully passed the Animal Acupuncture course given by Tai Sophia or by the Maryland University of Integrative Health, and who are also certified in Animal Acupuncture by the Maryland Acupuncture Board, are eligible for ABAA certification. Applicants who meet these requirements are 'Grandfathered' and will not be subject to examination.

1. Proof of Acupuncture License – a current copy must be submitted with the application. License must be verifiable, and applicant must be in good standing with their state licensing board or agency.
2. Proof of graduation from the Tai Sophia or the Maryland University of Integrative Health in Animal Acupuncture before 2016.
3. The application fee is \$300.

CERTIFICATION

The ABAA issues three different certifications:

1. Certification in Animal Acupuncture
2. Certification in Canine Acupuncture
3. Certification in Equine Acupuncture

The Certification Exam is comprised of two parts – the Written Exam & the Practical Exam

Written Exam: The written certification in Animal Acupuncture is comprised of two separate sections, one for the equine and one for the canine. Both the canine and equine exams contain questions on acupuncture, traditional Chinese medicine and western medicine. Should you only pass one section, you would only be certified in that discipline. If you are applying for certification in only one discipline (e.g., canine), you will only be tested on that one discipline.

Practical Exam: Applicants must have passed the demonstration of a practical application of knowledge, competence and skills in the necessary Domains of:

1. Patient Care
2. Clinical Judgement
3. Examination
4. Point Identification
5. Treatment

The details of these domains are listed below under Necessary Domains of Competence, Knowledge & Skills

BENEFITS OF ABAA CERTIFICATION

Earning certification from the American Board of Animal Acupuncture (ABAA) represents a significant professional achievement. ABAA certification makes an important statement about professional competency that is recognized by regulatory bodies, the profession, and the public.

To retain your lifetime certification, you must submit and document professional development activity in the amount of 15 ABAA-approved CEUs in the subject of Animal Acupuncture or animal medicine every 4 years. Western studies in animal medicine and anatomy may also qualify to meet the ABAA recertification requirements. Instructors in animal acupuncture can also acquire CEUs.

ABAA certification provides important benefits and privileges. ABAA certification allows you to:

- Describe yourself as “Certified in Animal Acupuncture” and, according to the credential earned, use the title: **FABAA (Fellow of the ABAA).**
- Be listed in **ABAA’s Directory of Certified Practitioners**, which is published on our website (www.animalacupunctureboard.org), and which is recognized as a valuable resource to find Board Certified Animal Acupuncture practitioners;
- Be considered as an advisory member to the ABAA board.
- Be considered to serve on ABAA standing committees.

APPLICATION PROCESS AND DEADLINES

Your completed application form, application fee(s), and all supporting documents must be postmarked by the application deadline. Submission of an application by the application deadline does not automatically guarantee your eligibility to take an examination. You must meet all eligibility criteria to sit for an examination.

These guidelines are only approximations; actual processing time may vary with individual cases.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The ABAA respects the privacy of all applicants. All materials submitted or received in connection with applications and all test scores are held in confidence, except upon permission for disclosure from the applicant, or except as required by law. Information about an applicant’s certification status is also provided in accordance with the ABAA.

The signature of an applicant on the application for ABAA certification authorizes ABAA to obtain additional information, if necessary, from third parties, to establish eligibility for certification.

CHECKING APPLICATION STATUS

The *Acknowledgement Form* that you attached to a self-addressed, stamped envelope and submitted with your application will be returned to you approximately two weeks after your application arrives in ABAA’s office. This card will contain your ABAA identification number. Use that number to check your application status with ABAA.

All documents must be reviewed, so allow reasonable time for documents to be processed and reviewed. Candidates must rely on the official notification (via United States mail) as to whether she or he has passed the examination.

AUTHENTICITY AND ADEQUACY OF DOCUMENTATION

The ABAA will verify the authenticity of all documents, including non-United States or translated educational documents before determining your eligibility to test. This verification process adds time to the application review period. You are encouraged to apply well in advance of the application deadline for the examination if you are using documentation from outside the United States or documentation that is translated from another language.

APPLICATION VALID FOR DURATION ONE YEAR

Your application is valid for one year from the date it was received by ABAA. After one year, if you still have not obtained certification, you must submit a new application and be subject to all certification and fee requirements in place at that time.

WITHDRAWING AN APPLICATION

You may withdraw your application at any point by submitting a written request to the ABAA. **However, examination fees are not refundable.**

FEES & REFUNDS

Due when application is submitted. All application/examination fees are non-refundable and must be payable in United States (\$) dollars.

FEES

ABAA Handbook and Application Fee ABAA – \$50

Examination Fee - \$300

Recertification Fee - \$200

Duplicate Certificate Fee - \$50

Retaking the Written Exam - \$200

Retaking the Practical Exam – [to be determined based on location and instructor expenses]

Note: The above information reflects fees in effect at the time this handbook was printed.

Refunds will not be issued under the following circumstances:

- Absence from an examination administration for which you were registered.
- Involvement in cheating or fraud at any point in the application/certification process.

EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION & POLICIES

The ABAA examinations are currently administered one time each year in the United States.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

Measuring devices, computers, calculators, cameras, dictionaries (electronic or paper), and notes, should not be taken to the testing center.

HOW EXAMINATION COMPLAINTS ARE RESOLVED

The ABAA will evaluate all complaints and a written response will be issued within 45 days.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND EXAMINATION SECURITY

Prior to starting the exam, you will be asked to read and accept the terms of a non-disclosure agreement.

REPORTING EXAMINATION RESULTS

The ABAA exams, both the written exam and clinical exams, are designed to test competence, not to measure excellence. For this reason, examination results are reported as PASS (with no score) or FAIL (with no score) to indicate whether or not a candidate has demonstrated that they meet acceptable standards of competence, knowledge and skill. Each candidate must rely on the official notification(s) (via United States mail) as to whether she or he has passed the examination.

APPEALING EXAMINATION DECISIONS

Candidates may appeal the Pass/Fail decision by sending a letter describing the justification for the appeal. The ABAA must receive the appeal within 30 days of the candidate's receipt of ABAA's initial decision. The ABAA Board of Directors will review the appeal request at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The candidate will be notified of the Board's decision within 30 days after the Board meeting at which the appeal was considered.

RETAKING THE EXAMINATION

Applicants who need to retake an examination will receive an *Authorization Letter* that gives them permission to retest one time.

Written Exam: Applicants only need to retake portions of the exam that they did not pass. For example – If the applicant passed the TCM portions of the exam, but did not pass the western medicine portion of the canine, they would only need to retake the western medicine portion again. The written exam can only be retaken one time.

Practical Exam: Applicants who have not passed the demonstration of the practical application of knowledge, competence and skills in the necessary Domains may retake the Practical Exam only one time.

1. Patient Care
2. Clinical Judgement

3. Examination
4. Point Identification
5. Treatment

The details of these domains are listed below under Necessary Domains of Competence, Knowledge & Skills

ACHIEVING CERTIFICATION

When certification is awarded, you will receive a letter that will contain your official certification date and certification number. You are officially certified as of the date shown in the letter and may rely on that information for any appropriate purpose. You can expect to receive your ABAA certificate within 3 weeks from the date you are certified. Please note: it is critical that ABAA has your current and accurate address. If ABAA sends your certificate to an old address because you did not update the information, you may be charged \$50 for a replacement certificate.

ABAA CERTIFICATION

The ABAA is a non-profit organization. It awards certification in Animal Acupuncture. It does not award licenses to practice acupuncture or other forms of medicine. In the United States, licensure laws vary among the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and United States territories and possessions. It is very important to use the correct terminology when referring to your ABAA certification-Fellow American Board of Animal Acupuncture [FABAA] or any license to practice issued to you by a United States jurisdiction.

Licensure is the process whereby a governmental unit (state or local) grants an individual permission to pursue an occupation or carry out a business subject to regulation under the government's "police powers." Penalties for violating licensure laws vary from state to state. Animal Acupuncture done by a licensed acupuncturist or a practitioner certified in acupuncture by a specific jurisdiction is not necessarily legal. In some states it is illegal for a non-veterinarian to treat animals with acupuncture. It is important to understand and follow the laws of your own state or jurisdiction.

RECERTIFICATION – ABAA Diplomat status is required to be recertified every 4 years. The Recertification Application and information is available on our website.

CODE OF ETHICS

All practitioners certified by the American Board of Animal Acupuncture must be committed to responsible and ethical practice, to the growth of the profession's role in the broad spectrum of health care, and to their own professional growth. All Certified members agree to be bound by the ABAA Code of Ethics.

COMMITMENT TO THE PUBLIC

1. Provide accurate information regarding education, experience, and certification status.
2. Refrain from any representation that ABAA certification implies licensure or a right to practice unless so designated by the laws in the jurisdiction in which you practice.
3. Use only the appropriate professional designations for credentials (FABAA).
4. Advertise only accurate, truthful, non-misleading information and refrain from making public statements on the efficacy of Animal Acupuncture that are not supported by the generally accepted experience of the profession.
5. Respect the integrity of other forms of health care and other medical traditions and seek to develop collaborative relationships to achieve the highest quality of care for individual patients.

NECESSARY DOMAINS OF COMPETENCY, KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS

Patient Care

- Ability to respect the rights and dignity of each patient.
- Ability to safely approach and comfortably position the animal for treatment.

- Ability to relate to and be comfortable with large and small animals.
- Ability to understand the animal's emotional energy state and reactions.
- Ability to properly relate to and be supportive of the animal's guardian.
- Ability to communicate to pet parents and guardians the length and consistency of treatment required for healing, and the reasons for treating with acupuncture.
- Ability to communicate to the pet parents and guardians nutritional and dietary information that can affect the animal's health and wellbeing.
- Ability to provide a safe working environment.
- Ability to assess the animal's tolerance for treatment and the limits of treatment.

Clinical Judgement

- Ability to exercise clinical judgment.
- Ability to recognize conditions that are outside of the practitioner's expertise or the need for urgent care, and to refer these patients to a veterinarian or appropriate medical professional.
- Ability to assess and evaluate the animal's medical records as it pertains to their care.
- Ability to assess and evaluate the appropriateness of TCM care for each presenting animal.
- Ability to assess issues of safety for the practitioner, others present and the animal.

Examination

- Ability to execute the Passive & Active exams for the horse.
- Ability to execute and interpret reactions to point palpation and running the points.
- Ability to make an accurate TCM diagnosis and prepare and explain a practical treatment plan.

Point Identification

- Ability to accurately locate points.
- Ability to accurately identify landmarks for points.
- Ability to accurately describe point indications.

Treatment

- Ability to explain the essential points for treatment.
- Ability to properly execute a treatment using needles – including technique, depth & angle.
- Ability to properly execute a treatment using a Class 3B laser.
- Ability to keep accurate and legible records of each patient's history and treatment.

ABAA REFERENCE TEXTS: the following texts are essential for understanding the location of points on the horse and the dog, and for understanding conditions and treatment protocols. The information in these texts form the foundation of what is tested in the exam.

Acupuncture Points on the Horse, by Gene Bruno, OMD

Equine Conditions & Treatment Protocols, by Gene Bruno, OMD

Acupuncture Points on the Dog, by Gene Bruno, OMD

Canine Conditions & Treatment Protocols, by Gene Bruno, OMD

Textbook of Veterinary Anatomy by Dyce, Sack, & Wensing

Merck Veterinary Manual

APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION IN ANIMAL ACUPUNCTURE

1. PERSONAL INFORMATION

NAME:

LAST (Family name or surname), FIRST, MIDDLE

NAME WITH TITLES AS YOU WISH TO APPEAR ON CERTIFICATE:

DATE OF BIRTH (MM/DD/YYYY): _____

2. OFFICIAL MAILING ADDRESS/CONTACT INFORMATION

(All correspondence will be sent to this address)

STREET APT. / SUITE

#: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE: _____

Country: _____

Cell Phone: _____ /Home Phone _____

Email: _____

3. BUSINESS CONTACT INFORMATION

(Complete only if different from official address)

BUSINESS NAME: _____

STREET/SUITE #: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP/POSTAL CODE, COUNTRY:

BUSINESS TELEPHONE/ WEBSITE:

_____ / _____

5. TEST YOU ARE APPLYING FOR:

- _____ Certification in Animal Acupuncture
- _____ Certification in Canine Acupuncture
- _____ Certification in Equine Acupuncture

6. SPECIAL REQUESTS AND ACCOMMODATIONS

_____ I WISH TO BE LISTED IN THE CERTIFIED PRACTITIONER DIRECTORY

_____ I DO NOT WISH TO BE LISTED IN THE CERTIFIED PRACTITIONER DIRECTORY

7. IDENTIFICATION You must bring a form of identification (ID) to the test site. It must be a current government- issued photo ID (e.g., driver's license, passport, military ID card, or state-issued personal ID card). **You will not be admitted to the examination without proper identification.**

8. ROUTE OF ELIGIBILITY *(Check applicable route)*

_____ State License Holder and completed formal Animal Acupuncture training program.

_____ State License Holder, completed tutorial instruction and 6 years of experience in Animal Acupuncture.

9. FORMAL ANIMAL ACUPUNCTURE EDUCATION

SCHOOL NAME & LOCATION: _____

DATE OF GRADUATION: _____

Or

TUTORIAL STUDY PROGRAM:

Instructor: _____ Phone Number: _____

DATE OF COMPLETION: _____

[Tutorial study program applicants will be required to verify hours of clinical and didactic instructions and certain documents may need to be notarized.]

10. PROFESSIONAL ETHICS AND FITNESS TO PRACTICE

I. LEGAL STATUS: *You must furnish additional information with this application if you answer “yes” to any of the following questions. This documentation must include your explanation of the charges or claims made against you, all legal documents related to the charges or claims and an account of how the charges or claims were resolved. If a case is still pending, please indicate that fact in your response. All information provided will be reviewed in accordance with ABAA policies.*

- 1. Has a judgment ever been entered against you or have you been a party to a settlement in any legal proceeding relevant to the practice of a health-related profession? YES NO
- 2. Have you ever been convicted of a felony? YES NO
- 4. Have you ever been convicted of any other crime relevant to the practice of a health-related profession or to your fitness to practice? YES NO
- 5. Have you ever had any disciplinary or administrative action or order taken against you by any licensing board or health-related professional association or school? YES NO
- 6. Have you ever been denied or voluntarily surrendered a license to practice in any health-related profession? YES NO

II. HEALTH STATUS: *If you answer “yes” to any of the following questions, you must furnish with your application information about any impairment from a healthcare professional who has treated you if you. This documentation must include a personal statement of the history and current status of any physical or psychological impairment or impairment due to substance abuse and an attestation that you are no longer impaired (or that you are currently under treatment for the impairment) and that the impairment, or treatment does not interfere with your ability to practice.*

- 7. Has your physical or psychological health status interfered with your ability to practice a health-related profession or otherwise interrupted your professional or academic activities for more than three months? YES NO
- 8. Have you ever been, or are you currently, impaired because of any substance abuse, including alcohol? YES NO

12. LICENSES: **List you’re Acupuncture current license(s). Please list all other occupational licenses (nursing, veterinary, chiropractic, etc). Include State of issue and license #.**

ACUPUNCTURE LICENSE(S) -

OTHER LICENSES:

Attach a copy of your current acupuncture license.

13. FEES

ABAA Handbook and Application Fee ABAA – \$100

Examination Fee - \$300

Recertification Fee - \$200

Duplicate or Replacement Certificate Fee - \$50

Retaking the Written Exam - \$200

Retaking the Practical Exam – [[to be determined based on location and instructor expenses]

Note: The above information reflects fees in effect at the time this handbook was printed.

14. STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

I hereby certify that the information I provided on this application and in any supporting documents is accurate, and true, to the best of my knowledge. I acknowledge and agree to abide by the policies, procedures, and Code of Ethics promulgated by ABAA. I agree to inform and release to ABAA and its designated agents all pertinent information about my qualifications or about other matters that may arise in connection with my application and /or my subsequent certification or recertification by ABAA. I agree that I am prohibited from transmitting information about ABAA examination questions or content in any form to any person or entity and that my failure to comply with this prohibition, may result in my scores being cancelled or my certification being revoked. I acknowledge that application fees are non-refundable.

Applicant’s Signature: _____ Date: _____

Be sure to attach a self-addressed, stamped envelope with your Application.

Send this application, supporting documents, applicable fees, and the Acknowledgement Form to:

American Board of Animal Acupuncture

c/o Gene Bruno

9051 S. Aldercreek Ln.

Canby, OR. 97013

Make check out to: American Board of Animal Acupuncture

INCLUDE A RECENT PASSPORT-SIZED PHOTO: