



CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

Standard Operating Procedures

DIRECTIVE: This committee, chaired by the Secretary, handles applications for certification between the time all information has been received from the applicant and the time the applicant is approved or disapproved for testing. The Committee Chair completes the certification process if testing is successful.

1. Credentials Application Procedures

- 1.1. Upon receipt of all transcripts, references, and training materials, the Administrative Office will forward the application documents to the Credentials Committee Chair. The Credentials Chair will complete a conflict check by ensuring the members of the Credentials Committee assigned to evaluate the application were not involved in the applicant's training. If the Credentials Chair is the principal trainer or specialized trainer of the applicant, the Credentials Chair must recuse him/herself, and a member of the Credentials Committee will take the role of the Credentials Chair for this applicant. The Chairman will send the *ABFDE Testing Committee Guidelines for Credentials Evaluators*, the *SWGDOC Standard for Minimum Training Requirements for Forensic Document Examiners*, and the above documents to each committee member no later than ten (10) working days after receipt of all application documents. Note: the header on the former should include the current Applicant #. The Credentials Committee will review the application for the sole purpose of determining whether the applicant meets the general requirements for certification.
- 1.2. The Credentials Committee will submit its recommendation through the completed *ABFDE Testing Committee Guidelines for Credentials Evaluators* to the Chairman no later than fifteen (15) working days after receipt of the application. Votes may be cast or information transmitted or requested by telephone, fax, mail, or e-mail at this or any step in the evaluation of the application.
- 1.3. The Credentials Committee Chairman will send a letter to the candidate concerning the decision of the Committee no later than ten (10) working days of receipt of all ballots.

Copies of this letter will be sent to the President, Administrative Office, and, in the event of an affirmative vote, the Testing Committee Chairman.

- 1.4. An applicant who is unsuccessful may appeal the decision per Section IV, G, 5. Appeals Process, of the Rules and Procedures Guide.
- 1.5. The Testing Committee Chair will notify the Credentials Chair when a candidate has completed the testing process.
 - 1.5.1. If the candidate successfully completes all testing phases, the Credentials Chair will:
 - 1.5.1.1. Submit the candidate's name to the Directors for a vote.
 - 1.5.1.2. Contact the Administrative Office, if a majority affirmative vote is received, to obtain a certificate number and for a Diplomat card to be prepared and mailed to the Diplomat.
 - 1.5.1.3. Arrange for a Certificate of Qualification to be prepared. The certificate should contain the Diplomat's name (preference is listed on their application), certificate number, date of issue, the 5-year period of validity beginning with the date of issue (the date majority vote by the Directors is received). The certificate signatures, calligraphy of the Diplomat's name, date of issue, and certificate number are original pen ink on paper. This original ink creates a deterrent to duplication should the certificate ever be stolen and duplicated.
 - 1.5.1.4. Email a letter of congratulations to the new Diplomat, with a courtesy copy sent to the Administrative Office so the letter can be placed in the permanent file.
 - 1.5.1.5. Forward the new Diplomat's file including the application and letter of congratulations to the Recertification Committee Chair and the appropriate Recertification Committee Member. It is not necessary to retain any other documentation or file.
 - 1.5.2. If the candidate fails or withdraws from the testing process, the Credentials Chair will:
 - 1.5.2.1. Save a copy of the letter of notification from the Testing Committee Chair in the candidate's files.
 - 1.5.2.2. Retain the file until the two-year deadline.

2. Credentials Committee Annual Report

2.1. The Chair prepares the annual report for the Board of Directors meeting.

2.1.1. This report should include:

- 2.1.1.1. The number of applicants who passed the Credentials processes and were forwarded to testing.
- 2.1.1.2. The number of applicants who did not pass the Credentials process.
- 2.1.1.3. The number of applicants who are still in the Credentials process.
- 2.1.1.4. A report that a review of records has been conducted to ensure that confidential documents have been filed appropriately or destroyed and the candidate files are complete.