**CONSTITUTION AND BY- LAWS OF THE   
SOCIETY FOR VETERINARY MEDICAL ETHICS**

**CONSTITUTION**

**ARTICLE I**

**NAME AND ORGANIZATION**

Section 1 The name of the organization shall be the Society for Veterinary Medical Ethics   
 (Hereinafter, the “Society”)

Section 2 This organization is organized exclusively for charitable purposes within the   
 meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Section 3 Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the Society shall not carry   
 on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by an organization   
 exempt from Federal income tax under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal   
 Revenue Code of 2011 (or the corresponding provision of any future United   
 States Internal Revenue law) or (b) by an organization, contributions to which are   
 deductible under Section 170 (c) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 2011 (or   
 corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue law).

**ARTICLE II**

**OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSE**

Section 1 The Society is a non-profit organization formed for the purpose of promoting   
 education, research and service in the field of veterinary medical ethics.

Section 2 The major objectives of the Society are:

1. To encourage ethical practices and professional behavior of veterinarians and others in all aspects of the veterinary medical profession.
2. To increase the understanding of the philosophical, social, moral and ethical issues encountered by the veterinary medical profession.
3. To arrange presentations on ethical issues at local, state, regional and national meetings of veterinarians and other interested individuals.
4. To promote the teaching of ethical issues at colleges of veterinary medicine and to identify speakers on these subjects.
5. To encourage persons from other professions and disciplines, such as biomedical research, medicine, law, political science, philosophy and theology to engage in cross-disciplinary discussions and studies of these issues.
6. To exchange and disseminate information about veterinary ethical issues via various methods of communication including electronic means.

Section 3 No substantial part of the activities of the Society shall consist of carrying on   
 propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation; and the Society   
 shall not participate or intervene in any political campaign (including the   
 publishing or distribution of statements) on behalf of any candidate for public   
 office.

**BYLAWS**

**ARTICLE III**

**MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1 The classes or types of membership shall be:

1. Active Member
2. Honorary Member
3. Life Member
4. Student Member

Section 2 The qualifications for membership are:

1. An Active Member may be any person who has an interest in veterinary medical ethics and who has paid their annual dues for membership. Only Active Members shall be eligible to vote at meetings and to hold offices in the Society.
2. An Honorary Member is any person elected to membership by a simple majority of the Board of Directors.
   1. An Honorary Member must have made an outstanding contribution to the field of veterinary medical ethics based on the purposes stated in Article II.
   2. An Honorary Member is exempted from paying annual dues.
3. A Life Member is a person who has served the Society for a long period of time. Such persons will be nominated for Life Member status by the Board of Directors. Acceptance of Life Member Status is at the discretion of the person to whom such membership is offered. A Life Member is exempted from paying annual dues.
4. A Student Member is any person currently enrolled in the professional veterinary curriculum at an approved college of veterinary medicine; a graduate program pertinent to veterinary ethics; or a program leading to certification or a degree related to veterinary practice. Student Members may attend all meetings of the Society and participate in discussions, but may not hold office or vote on any matter.

Section 3 The annual dues of the Society shall be established by the Board of Directors.   
 The annual dues for Student Members shall be reduced from those paid by   
 Active Members.

Section 4 Any member of the Society may be automatically removed from membership by failure to pay dues after six months following notification. Two-thirds vote of the membership at a regular or special meeting is required to remove a member from the roll for cause. Notification of the member being considered for removal shall be given to that member at least thirty days before the meeting at which the   
 question is voted on to provide that individual an opportunity to be heard.

Section 5 The members and officers of the Society shall not be personally liable for debts

and obligations of the organization.

Section 6 All members shall be understood to embrace the objectives and purpose of the

Society.

**ARTICLE IV**

**OFFICERS**

Section 1 The officers of the Society shall be the President, Past President,   
 President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer and Parliamentarian. These officers shall   
 constitute the Executive Committee.

Section 2 The Board of Directors shall consist of the previously mentioned officers plus any members elected as described in Section 3. Except as provided by law, the Board of Directors shall exercise the powers of corporation, conduct business affairs, and make appropriate delegations of authority.

Section 3 All members of the Board of Directors shall be active members of the Society,   
 each elected by a majority vote of the Society from a slate of candidates   
 presented at an annual general or special meeting or via an email vote in special   
 circumstances determined by the Executive Committee.

Section 4 The Board of Directors shall keep a record of the meeting proceedings.

Section 5 The officers of the Society shall have specific responsibilities and duties:

1. President
   1. The President is the chief executive officer of the Society and shall exercise all duties and responsibilities pertaining to that office.
   2. The President shall preside over all meetings of the Society including those of the Board of Directors. Upon completion of the term of office, the former President becomes the immediate Past-President, and continues to serve on the Board of Directors for one year.
   3. The President shall coordinate the work of the Board of Directors.
   4. The President shall appoint committee Chairs for standing committees described in Article VI, and appoint other committees and their chairs as deemed necessary to fulfill the functions of the society. The Committee Chair selects the committee members.
   5. The President is an ex-officio member of all committees.
2. President-Elect
   1. The President-Elect shall assume all duties of the President when the President is absent or unable to perform these duties.
   2. The President-Elect shall perform all duties as may be assigned by the President
   3. Upon completion of the term of the President, the President-Elect has the option to assume the office of the President for the next term of office. In the absence of the President, or in the event of disability, inability, or refusal to act, the President-Elect shall assume the office of President with full powers of that office.
   4. If the office of President-Elect becomes vacant, a special election of the membership shall be called to elect a replacement.
3. Secretary
   1. The Secretary of the Society shall provide for the keeping of the minutes of all general meetings, Executive Committee meetings, Board of Directors meetings and special committee meetings.
   2. The Secretary shall act as custodian of all Society records and reports. The Secretary shall oversee the Society seal or logo, assuring that it is affixed, when required by law, to documents executed on behalf of the Society.
   3. The Secretary shall perform all duties incident to the office, and such other duties as may be assigned from time to time by the President.
   4. The Secretary shall be responsible for all publications of the Society.
   5. The Secretary shall be elected by the Board of Directors, with the term of office being two years. In case of vacancy of this office, the President shall appoint a replacement.
4. Treasurer
   1. The Treasurer shall collect dues and fees and be custodian of all funds of the Society. The Treasurer shall present an annual report to the membership on the financial status of the Society.
   2. The Treasurer shall cause to be kept correct and accurate, accounts of the properties and financial transactions of the Society and in general, perform all duties incident to the office.
   3. The Treasurer shall be elected by the Board of Directors, with the term of office being two years. In case of a vacancy of this office, the President shall appoint a replacement.
5. Past-President
   1. Upon completion of the term of President, that individual becomes the immediate Past-President and will serve in the office for one term.
   2. The Past-President is a full member of the Board of Directors with all the rights and responsibilities described herein.
6. Parliamentarian
   1. The Parliamentarian shall be elected by the Board of Directors, with the term of office being two years. In case of a vacancy in this office, the President shall appoint a replacement.
   2. The Parliamentarian is a member of the Board of Directors with all the rights and responsibilities described herein.
   3. The Parliamentarian shall be responsible for questions relating to Robert’s Rules of order during the conduct of meetings.

Section 6 A member may be suspended or removed with cause by vote of a   
 majority of the officers then in office. An officer may be removed with   
 cause only after given reasonable notice and opportunity to be heard.

Section 7 An officer may resign after delivering written resignation to another officer   
 of the Society. Such resignation shall be effective upon receipt, and   
 acceptance thereof shall not be necessary to make it effective unless it so   
 states.

**ARTICLE V**

**VOTING**

Section 1 Each Director and Active Member is entitled to one (1) vote and may vote   
 by proxy. The election of officers will be by the Board of Directors,   
 conducted at the annual meeting.

Section 2 Special elections or issues may require mail, telephonic, or electronic   
 ballots. If this is necessary, the membership shall be notified in advance   
 of the procedure.

**ARTICLE VI**

**STANDING COMMITTEES**

Section 1 The Standing Committees of the Society shall be the Executive   
 Committee, Constitution and Bylaws Committee, Program Committee,   
 Awards Committee, Membership Committee, Nominating Committee,   
 Education and Archives Committee, and Editorial Review Board.

Section 2 The specific duties and responsibilities of each of the committees is as   
 follows:

1. Executive Committee
   1. The Executive Committee is chaired by the President and shall include the President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, Parliamentarian and the Past-President.
   2. The Executive Committee is to review the Constitution and Bylaws and recommend changes to the Board of Directors and the membership.
   3. The purpose of the Executive Committee is to transact any business of the Society in between the annual and general meetings.
2. Constitution and Bylaws Committee
   1. The Constitution and Bylaws Committee and its Chair shall be appointed by the President and shall include at least a total of three members.
   2. The purpose of this committee is to review the Constitution and Bylaws and recommend changes to the Board of Directors and the membership.
3. Program Committee
   1. The Program Committee and its Chair shall be appointed by the President and shall include at least a total of three members.
   2. The purpose of this committee is to plan and implement scientific and educational programs.
   3. Programs shall include a yearly forum for the discussion of ethical issues consistent with the objectives and purposes of the Society as stated in Article II.
4. Awards Committee
   1. The Awards Committee and its Chair shall be appointed by the President and shall include at least a total of three members.
   2. The purpose of this committee is to identify individuals who are worthy of consideration for recognition by the Society for their contribution to the discipline of veterinary ethics. In addition, this committee may identify those individuals who might wish to become Honorary Members.
5. Membership Committee
   1. The Membership Committee and its Chair shall be appointed by the President and shall include at least a total of three members.
   2. The purpose of this committee is to promote membership in the society and to attempt to identify those individuals who may desire membership. The SVME website shall maintain a list of members in good standing.
6. Nominating Committee
   1. The Nominating Committee consists of the Executive Committee and other members of the Society as determined by a majority vote of the Executive Committee. The Chair shall be appointed by the President.
   2. The purpose of this committee is to identify a slate of officers for the Society for the up-coming terms of office.
7. Education Committee
   1. The Education Committee is chaired by a Board Member appointed by the President and shall include at least a total of at least three members.
   2. The purpose of this committee is to promote the teaching and learning of ethical issues at colleges of veterinary medicine and other allied educational institutions. In addition, the committee and chair will maintain a record of their activities including resources useful for future Education Committees.
8. Editorial Review Committee
   1. The Editorial Committee and its Chair shall be appointed by the President and shall consist of a total of at least three members.
   2. The purpose of this committee is to assist the editor in reviewing articles submitted for consideration for publication in the Society’s newsletter and enhancing the quality and quantity of article submissions. In addition, this committee will oversee any list serve or internet posting and forums hosted by the Society.

Section 3 Special Committees or ad hoc committees of a limited term of existence   
 may be appointed by the President. These committees will have a specific   
 charge or mission and will cease to function when the assigned task is   
 completed and a report (oral or written) is submitted to the Board of   
 Directors or the general membership. The President shall appoint the   
 chairs of the Special Committees.

Section 4 Meetings of the standing committees, special committees or ad hoc   
 committees may be held at such place or venue or via telephone or   
 internet and at such time that the officers may determine

Section 5 Any action required or permitted to be taken at any meeting of the officers   
 may be taken without a meeting if all officers and/or committee members   
 consent to the action in writing (including electronically) and the written   
 consents are filed with the records of the meetings. Such consents shall   
 be treated for all purposes as a vote at the meeting.

**ARTICLE VII**

**RULES OF OPERATION**

Section 1 The Headquarters or office for the transaction of business shall be   
 designated by the Board of Directors with the approval of the   
 membership.

Section 2 An annual meeting shall be held for the purpose of electing officers,   
 reporting on the affairs of the Society, conducting educational programs,   
 and transacting other business as may properly come before the meeting.   
 Notice of the time and place of the meeting shall be distributed to the total   
 membership by the Secretary no fewer than 30 days prior to the date of   
 the meeting.

Section 3 The order of business for the annual meeting shall be as follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Announcements
3. Presentation of Minutes
4. Officer Reports
5. Committee Reports
6. Old Business
7. New Business
8. Election of Officers
9. Adjournment

Section 4 Special meetings or conferences of the society may be called by the   
 President or by a majority of the Board of Directors. Notice of the time and   
 place of the meeting shall be given to the total membership at least 30   
 days in advance by the Secretary.

Section 5 Committee meetings or conferences of standing and special ad hoc   
 committees of the Society may be held as often as the chair of the   
 committee deems necessary in order to accomplish the objectives of the   
 committee. Committee meetings shall consist of a quorum of members   
 communicating in person or by any other physical or electronic means,   
 including but not limited to the US Mail, private delivery service,   
 telephone, facsimile, e-mail, chat room or other internet connection.

Section 6 A Quorum shall consist of those active members present at any   
 meeting of the society. A quorum of the Executive Committee shall   
 consist of the President and three additional members of that   
 committee.

Section 7 Robert’s Rules of Order shall govern this organization in all cases

where they are applicable and are not inconsistent with the constitution   
 and bylaws. Questions regarding parliamentary procedure will be   
 referred to the Parliamentarian.

Section 8 The Fiscal Year of the society shall be January 1 to December 31.

Section 9 Frank disclosure of interests which might be interpreted as conflicts   
 must be presented to the Board of Directors for authorization, approval   
 or ratification by any officer or committee member. Such disclosures   
 shall include relevant information and material facts known to such a   
 person, about the contact or transaction, which might be construed to   
 be adverse to the interest of the society.

Section 10 When a quorum is present at any meeting, a majority of the officers or   
 committee members present and voting shall decide any question   
 including election of officers, unless otherwise provided by law or these   
 Bylaws.

**ARTICLE VIII**

**DISSOLUTION**

Section 1 Upon the dissolution of this organization, assets shall be distributed for   
 one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501 (c) (3) of   
 the Internal Revenue Code (or corresponding section of any future tax   
 code), or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or   
 local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not so disposed   
 of shall be disposed by the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which   
 the principal office of this organization is then located, exclusively for such   
 purposes or to such organizations, as said court shall determine, which   
 are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

Section 2 Within the constraints denoted in Section 1 of this Article, if the Society   
 should cease to exist, the assets after payment of all debts will be   
 distributed to another non-profit tax-exempt organization as designated by   
 the Board of Directors.

**ARTICLE IX**

**AMENDMENTS**

Section 1 This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the active   
 membership. If the amendment change is approved, the amendment   
 change will be effective at the conclusion of the meeting. The Bylaws may   
 be amended by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

Section 2 If upon consultation with, and approval by a simple majority of the Board   
 of Directors, the President may declare an urgent need to amend the   
 Constitution, whereupon the President shall immediately convene a   
 meeting of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee of the Society to draft   
 such amendment(s) to the Constitution as deemed necessary. The   
 President shall e-mail the proposed amendment(s) to the Constitution and   
 Bylaws to all voting members of the Society soliciting their vote of   
 approval or disapproval within 45 days of the date that the amendments   
 were e-mailed. The amendment(s) will be adopted if a two-thirds majority   
 of respondents vote to approve the amendment(s). The amendments will   
 become effective immediately upon meeting the criteria for approval.