

# *American Board of Forensic Entomology*

## *By-Laws*

### **PREAMBLE**

**Section 1.** This organization shall be known as the American Board of Forensic Entomology (ABFE).

**Section 2.** The objectives of this Board shall be to promote education for, research in, and the practice of medico-legal entomology (*sensu latu*) in forensic science.

**Section 3.** This Board shall be incorporated in the State of Nevada and offices at other such locations as determined by the Governing body of the ABFE.

### **ARTICLE I**

#### **MEMBERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP**

The American Board of Forensic Entomology hereafter referred to as the Board, will be composed of two membership status levels: Member and Diplomat.

### **ARTICLE II**

#### **LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE**

From this membership of Diplomates (D-ABFE), officers will be elected from a pool of nominations. The election will be via written ballots submitted to the Chairperson of the ABFE. Officers will be elected based on the staggered terms of the original charter officers, and their terms of office. The ABFE will have the offices of Secretary, Treasurer, Vice-Chairperson, and Chairperson. The officers will serve two year terms, and advance to the next highest position unless a majority vote is cast by the Diplomates to terminate the individual's office progression. In the absence of a termination vote, the Secretary will advance to treasurer, who advances to Vice-Chairperson, and the Vice-Chairperson moves to the vacant Chairperson position after the termination of the two year term. This progression of offices will remain in effect until a majority vote is cast by the Diplomates. Treasurer can remain in position without advancing depending upon re-appointment by the ABFE membership.

#### **Executive Committee Responsibilities**

The ABFE Executive Committee consists of the current elected officers of the ABFE: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Treasurer, and Secretary.

The ABFE Executive Committee is responsible for conducting elections, development and administration of certification programs and examinations, and supervision of proceedings regarding possible certification revocation.

### **ARTICLE III**

#### **CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

The ABFE is solely responsible for the administration of the board-certification examination. The successful completion of the ABFE Certification Examination with a score of at least 80 percent is the minimum standard required for qualification and recognition as a "board-certified Forensic Entomologist" and for inclusion as a "Member" of the ABFE. The completion of the ABFE Certification Examination does not also qualify an individual as a Diplomat. Separate

criteria are maintained for Diplomate status. The ABFE Certification Examination will be in accordance with any current or future requirements and stipulations imposed by the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS), or the Forensic Science Accreditation Board (FSAB). The FSAB will be the regulatory authority for all professional guidelines of the official governing body of the ABFE.

### **Section 1. General Requirements**

- A. Applicants must be persons of good moral character, high integrity, and good repute, and must possess high ethical and professional standards.
- B. Only permanent residents of the United States of America and its territories and possessions, or of Canada and its territories, are eligible for Certification.

### **Section 2. Education**

Applicants must possess an earned thesis-based Master's degree or Doctoral degree in Entomology, Biology, Ecology, or Zoology. This must include statistics as well as a substantial number of entomology courses including: systematic entomology, insect taxonomy, immature insects, medical/veterinary entomology, insect morphology, insect physiology and insect ecology. The earned degree must be from an accredited institution.

### **Section 3. Professional Experience**

Applicants must apply for admission as Member into the ABFE. Applicants are required to document a record of appropriate professional activities in medico-legal forensic entomology, in keeping with the concept that medico-legal forensic entomology is the application of the methods of entomology to criminal law.

#### **A. Criteria for Admission as Member:**

1. Those seeking Member status must have earned a thesis-based Master's degree in Entomology, Biology, Zoology, or Ecology and have one additional year of experience in forensic entomology after completing an earned thesis-based Master's degree prior to submitting their application to the ABFE. Individuals that have earned a B.S. and are currently pursuing a Ph.D. in a previously listed discipline must have been active within their Ph.D. program for a minimum of three years. For these individuals, failure to complete a Ph.D. or earn a thesis-based Master's degree will have their membership within the ABFE nullified.
2. Possess at least three years of professional experience that involves the practice of medico-legal forensic entomology casework. This experience must be casework containing associated agency contact information, and signed by the applicant.
3. Possess a minimum of one peer reviewed publication on a subject germane to the field of forensic entomology (senior authorship is not required).
4. Provide at least three professional presentations to convey research or general education on the subject of forensic entomology at independently-hosted meetings, workshops, or symposia.
5. At the time of application, the applicant must submit copies of three case reports prepared by the applicant for review by the Executive Committee of the ABFE. The three medico-legal casework examples acceptable as submission for initial certification for Member status must consist of collected entomological evidence from criminal investigations

associated with human death, abuse or neglect. All submitted casework must come from the previous five-year period.

**B. Criteria for Promotion to Diplomate:**

1. Must have completed all of the requirements for Member status.
2. Must have an earned Ph.D. degree in Entomology, Biology, Zoology, or Ecology.
3. Possess a minimum of two additional peer reviewed publications on a subject germane to the field of forensic entomology (senior authorship is required) after being certified as a Member.
4. After being certified as a Member, document at least three additional professional presentations to convey research or general education on the subject of forensic entomology at independently-hosted meetings, workshops, or symposia.
5. After being certified as a Member, submit copies of two additional case reports that consist of entomological evidence from human death investigations and prepared by the Member for review by the Executive Committee of the ABFE.
6. Qualified Members for Diplomate status will require a two-thirds majority vote of the D-ABFE membership for advancement to Diplomate status.
7. Individuals receiving Member status must wait a minimum of five years before applying for Diplomate status.

**Section 4. Examinations**

- A. Applicants who meet the requirements of Sections 1, 2, and 3 (above) will be allowed to pay a fee and sit for the comprehensive, written and practical examinations based upon broad principles of medico-legal forensic entomology. In order to be certified, individuals are required to achieve passing grades of at least 80 percent for each examination.
- B. Applicants taking the examination but scoring below 80 percent will remain eligible to undergo examination for a period of one year.
- C. Applicants will not be limited to only one exam session during that year, but they will be limited to only officially sanctioned examinations in conjunction with the annual meetings of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences or the North American Forensic Entomology Association.
- D. Applicants who fail in the examination(s) during that one year period will be charged an examination fee each time the examination is administered for them.

**Section 5. Renewal of Certification**

Certification and/or membership renewal applications will be reviewed by the ABFE upon submission of documentation by the D-ABFE of continued activities in the areas of professional activity detailed in the Procedures Manual, and submission of a minimum of five case reports. Medico-legal casework acceptable for “Recertification” can include any criminal/civil cases involving entomological evidence. All submitted casework must come from the previous five year period.

**Section 6. General Provisions**

- A. The ABFE reserves the right to deny certification, Member or Diplomate status.

- B. Certification in Medico-legal Forensic Entomology is valid for five years, and are renewable for five year periods according to standards and under conditions established by the Board as set forth in the Procedures Manual at an appropriate fee.
- C. Fees for certification and renewal of certification are to be established by the Executive Board of the ABFE.
- D. Persons holding a valid Certificate issued by the Board are entitled to use the designation Diplomate of the American Board of Forensic Entomology and the initials D-ABFE whenever professionally appropriate.
- E. Certificates issued by the Board are not transferable. They remain the property of the Board, but every person to whom a Certificate has been properly issued is entitled to its continued possession unless and until such Certificate is revoked.

**ARTICLE IV**  
**CERTIFICATION, CENSORSHIP, AND REVOCATION**

**Section 1. Censorship**

Unethical, immoral, illegal, or unprofessional violation of the General Requirements, Article III, Section 1, in the practice of forensic entomology will result in censorship.

**Section 2. Revocation**

Repeated unethical, immoral, illegal, or unprofessional violation of the General Requirements, Article III, Section 1, in the practice of forensic entomology will result in revocation of the Certificate.