



# **PATH International Credentialing Council Charter**

## **1. Introduction**

PATH Intl. provides certifications for individuals in the equine-assisted activities and therapies (EAAT) field and accreditation for EAAT centers. Certification ensures core knowledge, skills and abilities of the individuals providing services to the public. Center accreditation demonstrates compliance with PATH Intl. standards, which promote safety of the participant, the staff, the volunteers and the equines, as well as best practices in an EAAT session. Both certificants and accredited centers follow the PATH Intl. Code of Ethics and PATH Intl. Standards for Certification and Accreditation.

Article IX of the PATH Intl. Bylaws provides the authority for the PATH Intl. Credentialing Council over essential certification and center accreditation decisions.

## **2. Purpose**

The PATH Intl. Credentialing Council (PICC) is an autonomous body of the association responsible for the development, maintenance and administration of the professional certification and center accreditation programs of PATH Intl.

The PICC has sole decision-making authority for all certification program policies regarding certification eligibility requirements; recertification requirements; examination development, administration and scoring; grievance and disciplinary policies for certificants; and the appointment and oversight of subject matter expert committees.

The PICC also has sole decision-making authority for all center accreditation program policies regarding center eligibility requirements; reaccreditation requirements, administration and scoring; and grievance and disciplinary policies.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

The PICC has independent and sole decision-making authority in the following areas with regards to the professional certification programs:

- A. Define certification eligibility requirements.
- B. Define recertification requirements.
- C. Develop and maintain examination in keeping with generally accepted psychometric practices and national accreditation standards.
- D. Administer secure and standardized examination in keeping with generally accepted psychometric practices and national accreditation standards.
- E. Score examination in keeping with generally accepted psychometric practices and national accreditation standards.
- F. Establish grievance and disciplinary policies including a process for suspending or withdrawing certification as well as the oversight of all disciplinary investigations and actions related to certificants.
- G. Appoint and oversee subject matter expert committees.
- H. Oversee implementation of certification program policies.

The PICC has independent and sole decision-making authority in the following areas with regards to the center accreditation program:

- A. Define accreditation schedule for site visits (currently every five years).
- B. Define minimum level for pass/fail.
- C. Publish pass/fail rates.
- D. Train site visitors.
- E. Develop and implement a site visitor evaluation and review process.
- F. Review pass/fail rates for individual standards to determine if additional clarification/training/communication is needed (quality assurance).
- G. Establish a quality assurance program for accreditation. Work with the PATH Intl. Quality Assurance Task Force as needed.
- H. Work with standards development committees/task forces as needed to ensure public, equine, participant and staff safety.
- I. Manage a grievance and disciplinary program.
- J. Establish and follow a fair appeal process.

### **4. Composition**

The PICC will consist of representatives of each certification and accreditation program and at least one member of the public. The public member(s) will represent the population served by the certified individuals and the accredited members. A liaison from the PATH Intl. Board of Trustees may be appointed as a non-voting member of the PICC. Liaisons from special interest

groups related to potential certification or accreditation specialties may be appointed from time to time as non-voting members of the PICC.

The PICC will elect officers from the representatives. Officer positions will include chair and vice-chair.

There will be 12 voting representatives:

- PATH Intl. Therapeutic Riding Instructor – Registered level
- PATH Intl. Therapeutic Riding Instructor – Advanced level
- PATH Intl. Therapeutic Riding Instructor – Master level
- PATH Intl. Registered Therapist /American Hippotherapy Association (AHA) - Level 2
- PATH Intl. Certified Driving Instructor – Level 1 or Level 2
- PATH Intl. Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning
- PATH Intl. Interactive Vaulting Instructor
- PATH Intl. Lead Site Visitor
- PATH Intl. Premier Accredited Center Representative – Smaller Center (under \$300,000 in EAAT revenue)
- PATH Intl. Premier Accredited Center Representative – Larger Center (over \$300,000 in EAAT revenue)
- Representative at large – must be either a representative from a Premier Accredited Center or hold a PATH Intl. Certification
- Public member – must represent the population served by certification and accreditation and meet National Council for Certifying Agencies standards for a public member representative. The public member cannot be PATH Intl. certified, work for any EAAT center or be a member of PATH Intl.

PATH Intl. staff will be assigned by the PATH Intl. CEO to perform PICC duties including a PICC Director who will be an ex-officio and non-voting member of the PICC as well as the staff liaison.

## **5. Qualifications**

PICC representatives must hold the certification they are representing and be a PATH Intl. Certified Professional in good standing (compliant, membership current, and have a clean record with the PATH Intl. Grievance Review Panel). The public member may not be a member of PATH Intl., hold a PATH Intl. certification or be employed by a PATH Intl. Member Center and must meet the NCCA standards for public members. The two representatives from PATH Intl. Premier Accredited Centers must work for a center with the revenue stated in the representatives' list in Section 4. The Premier Accredited Center's membership must be current and in good standing. The representative at large must hold either a PATH Intl. certification and be in good

standing or work for a PATH Intl. Premier Accredited Center whose membership is current and in good standing. A PICC representative may hold more than one certification, or may be affiliated with a PATH Intl. Premier Accredited Center, but may only hold one PICC representative position at any time.

## **6. Selection**

Elections will be held annually and may be either mail ballot or electronic ballot.

Refer to Appendix A for procedures.

## **7. Resignations and Removals**

The resignation of an officer or PICC member shall be made in writing to the chair of the PICC. The chair of the PICC may resign in writing to the PICC. Such resignations shall be effective upon acceptance by the chair of the PICC or full PICC as applicable. The PICC may at any meeting remove any officer, member or public member for cause (“for cause” will be defined in writing as policy by the PICC) subject to a two-thirds vote of the PICC members then in office. The unexcused absence of any PICC member from two PICC meetings in a fiscal year shall be grounds for the removal of that PICC member.

If an elected representative resigns or cannot complete his or her term, the chair may appoint with the approval of a majority of the PICC members an interim representative who meets all the necessary representative requirements. The interim representative will serve until the next scheduled election for that position.

## **8. Terms**

All elected representatives will serve a three-year term and may serve two consecutive terms. Upon initial composition of the PICC, all elected representatives will draw lots for either a one-year, two-year or three-year term to stagger the terms and minimize turnover on the PICC.

Terms will start on the first of the calendar year.

The public member will serve a three-year term and may serve two consecutive terms.

Officers may serve an additional three-year term for a total of three terms or nine years.

## **9. Committees**

The PICC may form committees, task forces and workgroups as needed to complete its tasks.

## **10. Meetings**

The PICC shall meet no less than two times per year.

A quorum for the transaction of business at all PICC meetings shall consist of a majority of the existing PICC members.

## **11. Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality**

PICC representatives shall not approve, endorse or recommend any education or training programs and products designed or intended to prepare candidates for certification. PICC representatives shall have no involvement in the development or delivery of such programs or products.

During their term(s) of service, and for one year afterward, PICC representatives shall not participate in the development or delivery of any educational or training program and product designed or intended to prepare individuals to take certification examinations.

PICC representatives shall be able to develop education programs and products for continuing education of current certificants.

PICC representatives may not mentor certification candidates during their terms of service and for two years after their service as PICC representatives.

PICC representatives shall not take any certification exam during their terms of service on the PICC and for two years afterward.

## **12. Amendments**

Amendments to this charter may be recommended by the PICC and approved by the PATH Intl. Board of Trustees.

# **APPENDIX A**

## **I. Selection Procedures**

The PICC will appoint a nomination review task force to recruit members for vacant positions. The nomination review task force will prepare the slate of candidates. The nomination review task force shall recommend policies and procedures for the nomination and selection process to be approved by the PICC.

- One center representative from all PATH Intl. Premier Accredited Centers in good standing is eligible to vote for the accreditation representative (one vote per PAC).
- All PATH Intl. Premier Accredited Center member representatives of record are eligible to serve as the accreditation representative.
- All certified professionals and premier accredited center member representatives will vote by ballot (either written or electronic).
- All certificants in good standing are eligible to vote for all open certification representative positions.
- The candidate who receives the most votes for each open representative position will be the elected representative. Public members will be elected by the majority vote of the PICC.
- All voting representatives of the PICC shall be instated by the nomination review task force.

## **II. Meetings**

In-person, teleconference or video conference shall all be considered acceptable formats for PICC meetings.

## **III. Terminology**

Certification – the process of testing and verifying knowledge, skills and abilities within the EAAT profession, ensuring continuing professional development and learning in order to maintain the certifications awarded. Examples include Certified Therapeutic Riding Instructor and Certified Therapeutic Driving Instructor.

PATH Intl. Accreditation – the process of objectively and fairly inspecting PATH Intl. Member Centers in order to ensure PATH Intl. standards are being met and awarding an accreditation status such as PATH Intl. Premier Accredited Center.

NCCA Accreditation – the process of applying and maintaining NCCA standards for PATH Intl. Certifications. NCCA current standards can be found at [www.credentialingexcellence.org](http://www.credentialingexcellence.org).

Public Member – may not be a member of PATH Intl., hold a PATH Intl. certification or be employed by a PATH Intl. Member Center and must meet the NCCA standards for public members.