

DRAFT

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 that 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 (PICC) over essential certification and center accreditation decisions.

2. Purpose

The PATH Intl. Credentialing Council (PICC) is an autonomous body of the organization 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 for accredited centers.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

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

- A. Certification eligibility requirements
- B. Recertification requirements
- C. Examination development and maintenance in keeping with generally accepted psychometric practices and national accreditation standards
- D. Secure and standardized examination administration in keeping with generally accepted psychometric practices and national accreditation standards
- E. Examination scoring in keeping with generally accepted psychometric practices and national accreditation standards
- F. Grievance and disciplinary policies including establishing a process for suspending or withdrawing certification as well as the oversight of all disciplinary investigations and actions related to certificants.

- G. Appointment and oversight of subject matter expert committees
- H. Overseeing implementation of certification program policies

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

- A. Define accreditation schedule for site visits (currently every 5 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 for accredited centers.
- 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 11 voting representatives:

- Therapeutic Riding Instructor – Registered level
- Therapeutic Riding Instructor – Advanced level
- Therapeutic Riding Instructor – Master level
- Therapeutic Driving Instructor – Level 1
- Therapeutic Driving Instructor – Level 2
- Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning
- Interactive Vaulting Instructor
- Premier Accredited Center – Smaller Center (under \$300,000 in EAAT revenue)
- Premier Accredited Center – Larger Center (over \$300,000 in EAAT revenue)

- Representative at Large (must be either a Premier Accredited Center or hold a PATH Intl. Certification)
- Public Member – must represent the population served by certification and accreditation and meet NCCA standards for a Public Member representative. The public member cannot be certified, work for an 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 staff position 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 in good standing (compliant, paid in full, and have a clean record with the grievance review panel)

The public member may not be a member of PATH Intl. or hold a PATH Intl. certification or be employed by a PATH Intl. member center and must meet the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) standards for public members. The two Premier Accredited Center representatives must work for a center with the revenue stated in the representatives' list in Section 4. The premiere accredited center must be paid in full and in good standing. The Representative at Large must hold either a PATH Intl. certification and in good standing, or work for a premier accredited center that is fully paid and in good standing. A PICC representative may hold more than one certification, or may be affiliated with an accredited center, but may only hold one Council Representative position at any time.

6. Selection

PICC will appoint a Nominations Committee to recruit members for vacant positions. The Nominations Committee will prepare the slate of candidates. The Nominations Committee shall recommend policies and procedures for the nomination and selection process to be approved by the Council. All holders of a PATH Intl. certification, and who are in good standing with PATH Intl. are eligible to serve on the Credentialing Council as a representative of their certification.

All certificants in good standing are eligible to vote for all open certification representative positions. All Premier Accredited Center (PAC) Members representatives of record are eligible to serve as the Accreditation Representative. All Premier Accredited Center members in good standing are eligible to vote for the Accreditation Representative (One vote per PAC). All certified professionals and premier accredited center members will vote by ballot (either written or electronic). The candidate that 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 Credentialing Council.

All voting representatives of the PICC shall be nominated by the PICC Nominations Committee.

Elections will be held annually and may either be mail ballot or electronic ballot. Terms will start on the first of the calendar year.

7. Resignations and Removals

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

If an elected representative resigns or cannot complete their term, the Chair may appoint with approval of a majority of the Council members an interim representative that 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 Council, 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 Council. 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 work groups as needed to complete its tasks.

10. Meetings

The PICC will meet once a quarter, for four meetings per year. Meetings will be via teleconference or video conference. The PICC may also choose to hold one quarterly meeting face to face. Hybrid meetings, where some members are face to face and some members are participating via tele/video conference, are allowed.

11. Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality

PICC, either collectively or individually, shall not approve, endorse, or recommend any education or training programs and products designed or intended to prepare candidates for certification. The PICC 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 serve as site visitors for center accreditation for their term and two years after their service as PICC representatives.

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 term(s) of service on the PICC and for two years afterward.

12. 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 Premiere Accredited Center.

NCCA Accreditation – The process of applying and maintaining NCCA standards for PATH Intl. certifications.

Public Member – may not be a member of PATH Intl. or hold a PATH Intl. certification or be employed by a PATH Intl. member center and must meet the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) standards for public members.

13. Amendments

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