



May 12, 2020

James T. Penrod, CAE, FASLA,
Secretary & Executive Director
AAVSB
380 W. 22nd Street
Suite 101
Kansas City, MO 64108

Re: Licensure eligibility of new graduates during COVID-19

Dear Mr. Penrod,

COVID-19 has ushered in an era of unprecedented times for everyone and has us all adjusting and adapting to a new “normal”. We are very grateful to the veterinary state licensing boards and state veterinary medical associations for doing their very best to assist veterinarians in their respective states as we all work through this global pandemic’s rippling effects on access to continuing education opportunities, use of telemedicine, licensure and many other facets of the veterinary profession.

Amid all this uncertainty, the newest members of our veterinary profession are being uniquely impacted. The Class of 2020’s final months of clinical education was drastically altered, and graduation ceremonies have been canceled or conducted virtually. They face uncertainty in the current veterinary job market and a number face uncertainty in receiving their veterinary licenses.

The consequences are especially challenging for those Class of 2020 graduates that were scheduled to take the NAVLE in April 2020. With testing centers closed nationwide through April and Prometric’s plan to gradually re-open testing centers with limited capacity in May, over 600 Class of 2020 graduates are uncertain of their ability to obtain their state veterinary license to begin employment and start paying back their student loans. The Student American Veterinary Medical Association (SAVMA) Executive Board surveyed 2020 graduates. Of the 428 respondents who indicated they are waiting to take the NAVLE, 313 will be ineligible to apply for a license before their job is scheduled to begin or have experienced a delay in their licensure processing.

We want to thank you for all the work that has already been done to share information gathered from the state licensing boards concerning licensure of new graduates who find themselves unable to obtain a license due to the impact of COVID-19. However, we have new graduates aspiring to practice in some states where they do not have a clear path or answers. To overcome these barriers, we ask that each state licensing board have a plan in place to accommodate, to the extent possible, our new veterinary colleagues that are unable to obtain a license due to the impact of COVID-19 restrictions.

We are happy to answer any questions you might have and please feel free to contact Dr. Derrick Hall, Associate Director for Student Initiatives (dhall@avma.org, 847-285-6681). We look forward to working with AAVSB in these unprecedented times.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John A. Howe". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

Dr. Howe, AVMA President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marie Bucko". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "M".

Marie Bucko, SAVMA President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. Bransford, DVM". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "D".

Dr. Bransford, AVMA Vice President