

**American Board of Forensic Anthropology, Inc.  
ABFA Manual**

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**American Board of Forensic Anthropology, Inc.**  
**Diplomate Manual**  
**Section I**

**Background, Function, and Purposes of the American Board of Forensic Anthropology**

The American Board of Forensic Anthropology (ABFA) was incorporated in 1977 to encourage the study and practice of, establish and enhance standards for, and generally advance the science of forensic anthropology. This Diplomate Manual was created in 2007 to memorialize past practices and procedures and to make policies known to Diplomates of the ABFA, those who have applied to become certified, those who wish to apply for certification, and to the general public.

The mission of the American Board of Forensic Anthropology is:

- (a) To encourage the study of, improve the practice of, establish and enhance standards for, and advance the science of forensic anthropology.
- (b) To encourage and promote adherence to high standards of ethics, conduct, and professional practice in forensic anthropology.
- (c) To grant and issue certificates, and/or other recognition, in cognizance of special qualifications in forensic anthropology to voluntary applicants who conform to the standards established by the Board and who have established their fitness and competence therefore.
- (d) To inform the appropriate branches of federal and state governments and private agencies and organizations of the existence and nature of the American Board of Forensic Anthropology and the professional quality of its Diplomates for the practice of forensic anthropology.
- (e) To maintain and furnish lists of individuals who have been granted certificates by the Board (hereinafter referred to as Diplomates).
- (f) To engage in any activities, not prohibited by law or the Board's Articles of Incorporation, which may contribute to the above purposes or which are in furtherance of the objects and purposes enumerated in the Articles of Incorporation.

**American Board of Forensic Anthropology, Inc.**  
**Diplomate Manual**  
**Section II**

**BYLAWS**

Approved by the Board on 20 February, 1990

Approved by legal counsel 16 May, 1990

Revised 17 March 2007

Approved by the Board on 17 March 2007

Revised 22 January, 2008

Approved by the Board on 23 January 2008

AMERICAN BOARD OF FORENSIC ANTHROPOLOGY, INC.  
BYLAWS

ARTICLE I

Definitions

Section 1. All definitions of terms and words herein, unless applicable law otherwise requires, shall be as defined by the Articles of Incorporation, the Bylaws, or the Board of Directors, in that order of precedence.

Section 2. Forensic anthropology shall be defined as the application of the science of physical anthropology to the legal process.

Section 3. Unless otherwise specified a quorum shall consist of a majority of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE II

Name and Purposes

Section 1. Name. The name of this organization shall be the AMERICAN BOARD OF FORENSIC ANTHROPOLOGY, INC.; hereinafter referred to as the “ABFA”, the “Board” or the “Corporation”.

Section 2. Purposes. The purposes of the Board, in the public interest, shall be:

- (a) To encourage the study of, improve the practice of, establish and enhance standards for, and advance the science of forensic anthropology.
- (b) To encourage and promote adherence to high standards of ethics, conduct, and professional practice in forensic anthropology.
- (c) To grant and issue certificates, and/or other recognition, in cognizance of special qualifications in forensic anthropology to voluntary applicants who conform to the standards established by the Board and who have established their fitness and competence therefore.
- (d) To inform the appropriate branches of federal and state governments and private agencies and organizations of the existence and nature of the American Board of Forensic Anthropology and the professional quality of its Diplomates for the practice of forensic anthropology.
- (e) To maintain and furnish lists of individuals who have been granted certificates by the Board (hereinafter referred to as Diplomates).

- (f) To engage in any activities, not prohibited by law or the Board's Articles of Incorporation, which may contribute to the above purposes or which are in furtherance of the objects and purposes enumerated in the Articles of Incorporation.

### ARTICLE III Sponsors

Section 1. Initial Sponsors. The Board was initially sponsored by the American Academy of Forensic Sciences and The Forensic Sciences Foundation, Inc. The Board is currently an independent, self sufficient organization with no sponsors.

Section 2. Other Sponsors. The Board of Directors may, by affirmative vote of the Directors, invite organizations having a legitimate interest in forensic anthropology to become sponsors of the Board.

Section 3. Termination of Sponsorship. A sponsoring organization may, in its discretion, terminate its sponsorship of the Board upon due notice to the Board. Such sponsorship may also be terminated by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the Directors.

Section 4. Responsibility of Sponsors. A sponsoring organization shall not have any obligations for financial support of the Board and shall not, by virtue of its sponsorship of the Board, have authority over or responsibility for any of the Board's operations or activities. The principal role of a sponsoring organization or organizations is to endorse and support the objectives of the Board and to give recognition to the Board's activities and programs.

### ARTICLE IV Offices

Section 1. Office of Record. The office of record of this Board shall be in the city of Washington, District of Columbia, at 910 17<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W., Suite 717, Washington, D.C. 20006.

Section 2. Other Offices. The Board may have such other offices at such locations, within or without the District of Columbia, as the Board of Directors may, from time to time, designate.

### ARTICLE V Officers

Section 1. Officers of the Corporation. The Officers of the Corporation shall be a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. They shall be elected by the Board of Directors from its membership.

Section 2. Officers of the Board of Directors. The Officers of the Corporation shall serve, in the same respective capacities, as Officers of the Board of Directors of the Corporation.

Section 3. Functions and Duties. The functions and duties of the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer shall be such as usually and customarily pertain to their respective offices, and also such other functions and duties as may, from time to time, be delegated or designated by the Board of Directors or as are herein prescribed.

ARTICLE VI  
Board of Directors

Section 1.     Authority. The governing body of the Corporation shall be a Board of Directors, which shall be empowered to have, hold, control, manage and administer all of the property, funds, business, affairs and operations of the Board pursuant to its Articles of Incorporation; with authority to do everything necessary and desirable in the conduct of the affairs and business of the Board and in accordance with these Bylaws.

Section 2.     Composition. The Board of Directors shall consist of at least five (5) and not more than fifteen (15) persons, nominated by the Diplomates-at-Large and by the Directors and elected by the Directors from among Diplomates of the American Board of Forensic Anthropology.

Section 3.     Qualifications of Directors.

- (a) Directors shall be chosen with due regard for their general attainments and their professional qualifications and experience in forensic anthropology and/or closely related fields.
- (b) Every person elected as a Director shall be a Diplomat of this Board; provided, however, that one (1) position on the Board of Directors may be held by a duly qualified attorney at law who shall not be required to be a Diplomat of this Board.
- (c) Any Diplomat of the Board may be elected as a member at-large of the Board of Directors whenever an eligible vacancy exists.

Section 4.     Duties and Functions. The duties and functions of the Board of Directors shall be as follows:

- (a) The Board of Directors shall exercise overall control over the affairs and operations of the Board.
- (b) The Board of Directors shall be charged with establishing standards for the profession of forensic anthropology, in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation and these Bylaws. These standards shall apply to all persons applying for certification on an equal basis.
- (c) The Board of Directors shall hold at least one (1) meeting annually and may hold additional meetings on reasonable notice upon the call of the President of the Board or upon the written request of a majority of the Directors.
- (d) The Board of Directors may, from time to time, designate qualified persons (who need not be Directors) or organizations to act on behalf of the Board in performing such duties and functions as the Board may direct. Such persons and organizations may be compensated for their services and reimbursed for the actual and necessary expenses incurred in the discharge of such duties and functions, and shall serve at the pleasure of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VII  
Executive Committee

Section 1.     Composition. An Executive Committee of the Board of Directors may be elected by the Board of Directors and shall consist of the President, who shall serve as its chairperson, the Vice President, the Secretary, and the Treasurer. A quorum of the Executive Committee shall consist of a

majority of its members, and its formal actions shall require a majority vote unless otherwise provided herein.

Section 2. Authority. The Executive Committee shall have full authority and power to act for and on behalf of the Board of Directors between meetings of said Board, except as herein otherwise provided. Actions taken by the Executive Committee on behalf of the Board of Directors shall be reported to the Board of Directors as soon as practicable.

## ARTICLE VIII Committees

Section 1. General. The Board of Directors may, by resolution adopted by a majority of the Directors in office, designate and establish, and determine the scope of authority, functions and duties of, such standing and special committees as, from time to time, it deems necessary.

Section 2. Composition. Each standing or special committee shall consist of two (2) or more persons, as designated by the Board of Directors. The chairperson of each committee shall be a member of the Board of Directors; other members of a committee may be members of the Board of Directors or other qualified person. The President shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.

Section 3. Appointment and Authority. The chairperson and other members of each standing or special committee, unless otherwise provided herein, shall be appointed by the President of the Board with the advice and consent of the Board of Directors. The President of the Board may appoint interim ad hoc committees pending approval of the Board of Directors. Every committee may, unless otherwise provided herein, exercise the authority of the Board of Directors in the manner and to the extent provided for in the resolution establishing the committee. Recommendations made by appointed committees shall not be binding upon the Board of Directors.

Section 4. Term of Office. Unless otherwise provided herein or in the resolution of the Board of Directors establishing a standing or special committee, the chairperson and other members of every standing or special committee shall serve one (1) year terms and be eligible for reappointment.

## ARTICLE IX Elections and Terms of Office

Section 1. Election of Officers. The Board of Directors shall annually elect from its membership a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. The election shall be by ballot, and a majority of votes cast shall be required to elect an Officer.

Section 2. Officer's Terms of Office. The Officers shall take office on July 1 following their election, and each shall hold office for one (1) year, or until his or her successor has been duly elected and qualified.

Section 3. Vacancies Among Officers. The Vice President shall fill a vacancy in the office of President occurring during his or her term of office as Vice President. Other vacancies among Officers shall be filled by election of the Board of Directors from its membership. Such election may be conducted by mail or email ballot.

Section 4. Election of Directors. Any Diplomate of this Board may be elected by the Board of Directors as a member of the Board of Directors at the annual meeting, at any special meeting, or by

mail or email ballot, whenever an eligible vacancy exists. Such election shall require a majority affirmative vote.

Section 5. Term of Office of Directors. The terms of all Directors shall be three (3) years, unless otherwise specified herein. A nominated Director may serve not more than two (2) consecutive full terms without an intervening period of one (1) year, unless otherwise specified herein. Each Director's term of office shall commence on July 1 following election and shall end on June 30 of his or her final year in that office, or when his or her successor has been duly elected and qualified.

## ARTICLE X Indemnification and Surety

Section 1. Indemnification. The Corporation shall indemnify any person made a party to any action, suit or proceeding, by reason of the fact that he/she, his/her testator or interstate, is or was a Director, Officer or employee of the Corporation, or of any corporation which he/she served as such at the request of the Corporation, against the reasonable expenses, including attorneys' fees actually and necessarily incurred by him or her in connection with the defense of such action, suit or proceeding, or in connection with any appeal therein, except in relation to matters as to which it shall be adjudged in such action, suit or proceeding that such Officer, Director or employee is liable for negligence or misconduct in the performance of his or her duties. The Corporation may also reimburse to any such Director, Officer, or employee the reasonable costs of settlement of any such action, suit or proceeding, if it shall be found by a majority of a committee composed of the Directors not involved in the matter in controversy (whether or not a quorum) that it was in the interests of the Corporation that such settlement be made and that such Director, Officer, or employee was not guilty of negligence or misconduct. Such rights of indemnification and reimbursement shall not be deemed exclusive of any other rights to which such Director, Officer or employee may be entitled apart from the provisions of this section.

Section 2. Surety. The Board of Directors shall, in their discretion, procure or cause to be procured, at the Board's expense, appropriate liability insurance coverage for the Board's Officers, Directors, agents and employees.

Section 3. Fidelity Bonds. The Board of Directors may require the Treasurer of the Board to furnish, at the expense of the Board, an appropriate fidelity bond approved by the Board of Directors. At the end of the term of the Treasurer of the Board an independent audit prepared by a CPA shall be provided to the Board, at the expense of the Board.

## ARTICLE XI Meetings and Operations

Section 1. Annual Meeting. The annual meeting of the Board shall be held at the call of the President, at a location designated by the President within or without the District of Columbia. Notice of the annual meeting shall be provided to each Director at least thirty (30) days before the meeting date. An annual meeting may be conducted by mail or email or by conference upon the written consent of two-thirds (2/3) of the Directors in office.

Section 2. Special Meetings. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the President, or upon the written request of a majority of the Directors in office, on a date and at a time and location to be designated by the President, within or without the District of Columbia. Notice of a special meeting

shall be give to each Director at least fifteen (15) days before the meeting date, with information regarding the subject(s) to be considered.

Section 3. Quorum. A quorum for all purposes herein, unless otherwise provided, shall consist of a majority of the Directors. In the event less than this number is present at a meeting, the President may adjourn the meeting not longer than thirty (30) days under the same call for a meeting. No Director shall be entitled to vote through use of a written proxy.

Section 4. Conduct of Board Business.

- (a) Business of the Board including that of an annual meeting may be conducted by mail, or email, by conference, or by a committee of the Board comprised of not less than two (2) persons when authorized by a majority of the Directors in office.
- (b) When such business conducted by mail or email calls for a vote of the Board of Directors, a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote shall be required to carry a motion.
- (c) Business of the Board carried on by conference or by standing or special committees of the Board shall be conducted in such manner as the Board of Directors may direct.

Section 5. Territory. The operations of the Board are to be conducted in the United States of America and its territories and possessions, and in such other place(s) as the Board of Directors may, from time to time, authorize and direct.

## ARTICLE XII Finances

Section 1. Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the Board shall be from July 1 through June 30, inclusive.

Section 2. Income. The income of the Board shall be derived from application fees and other fees and charges, from gifts, grants and contributions, and from such other sources and activities as may be approved by the Board of Directors. All monies accruing to the Board shall be collected by such person(s) as the Board of Directors may designate.

Section 3. Compensation and Reimbursements. No member of the Board of Directors shall be paid any salary or fee for his or her services as a Director or an Officer. Subject to the availability of funds, a Director or an Officer may be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses incurred by him or her in attending meetings of the Board or in performing other duties or functions on behalf of the Board. The Board of Directors shall determine the compensation and reimbursements to be paid to parties, other than Officers and Directors of the Board, for services performed or for activities carried out on behalf of the Board.

## ARTICLE XIII Certification

Section 1. Standards. The Board of Directors shall establish, maintain, and revise as necessary, standards and qualifications for the granting, issuing, and renewing of certificates and/or other forms of recognition in cognizance of special qualifications in forensic anthropology.

Section 2. Professional. Applicants generally should possess at least three years professional experience which involves the practice of forensic anthropology. This experience must be subsequent to the receipt of the doctoral degree, and must be acceptable to the Board. Specific guidelines on the kinds

of professional experience acceptable to the Board are contained within the qualifications and requirements section of the current ABFA web site.

Section 3. Evaluation of Applicants. The Board of Directors shall evaluate the fitness, competence, and qualifications of persons seeking certification by the Board. This function may be carried out, in part, by a Credentials Committee whose membership shall include at least two (2) Directors, and, in part, by a Committee on Examinations whose membership shall include at least two (2) Directors. Further details on the examination process are contained within the current ABFA guidelines for certification procedure.

Section 4. Certificates. The Board of Directors shall have authority to issue or cause to be issued Certificates of Qualification in Forensic Anthropology to persons who have met the standards of the Board and have fully complied with all applicable requirements. Certificates of Qualification shall be in such form as prescribed or approved by the Board of Directors. A person holding a valid, un-revoked Certificate of Qualification issued by this Board shall be entitled to use the designation “Diplomate of the American Board of Forensic Anthropology”, and shall be known as “certified” by the Board.

Section 5. Fees. The Board of Directors shall annually establish the fees and other charges incident to application for and granting, issuing, and renewal of Certificates of Qualification and/or other forms of recognition.

Section 6. Denial and Revocation of Certificates. The right to deny certification and to suspend or revoke Certificates of Qualification shall reside with the Board of Directors. Certificates issued by the Board are subject to revocation only for one or more of the following reasons:

- (a) A misstatement or misrepresentation, or concealment or omission, of a material fact or facts in an application or any other communication to the Board or its representative(s).
- (b) Conviction of an applicant for certification or holder of a certificate of this Board by a court of competent jurisdiction of a felony or of any crime involving, in the opinion of the Board of Directors, moral turpitude.
- (c) Issuance of a certificate contrary to or in violation of any of the laws, standards, rules, or regulations governing the Board and its certification programs at the time of its issuance; or determination that the person certified was not in fact eligible to receive such certificate at the time of its issuance.
- (d) Non-payment of annual renewal fees after the second notice by the Treasurer. Reinstatement may be granted in that fiscal year upon payment of the outstanding fees plus a \$50.00 reinstatement charge.
- (e) Failure to complete an annual update as required.
- (f) Upon the recommendation of any two Diplomates of the American Board of Forensic Anthropology, the qualifications of any Diplomate may be reviewed by the Board to determine whether the Certificate of Qualification issued by the Board should be revoked. The candidate shall have the right to present his or her case to the Board, but the final decision rests with the Board.
- (g) Upon recommendation of the Ethics Committee and approval by 2/3 of the Board, action to suspend or revoke certification may only be taken after at least thirty (30) days advance notice of the nature of the charges or reasons for such action has been given to the individual concerned and a reasonable opportunity for such person to be heard has been provided by the Board.

ARTICLE XIV  
Parliamentary Authority

Section 1. Parliamentary Authority. Unless otherwise provided in its Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws, the conduct of meetings of the Board shall be governed by rules promulgated by the Board of Directors or, in the absence of such rules, by the rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, latest edition available. Any question as to priority of business shall be decided by the chairperson.

Section 2. Suspension of Rules. The rules promulgated by the Board of Directors governing the conduct of meetings may be suspended at any meeting by a majority vote of the Directors present.

ARTICLE XV  
Seal and Insignia

Section 1. The Board shall have a corporate seal and may have other devices and insignia, of such design as the Board of Directors adopt.

ARTICLE XVI  
Amendments

Section 1. These Bylaws may be amended, altered, or repealed, in whole or in part, in the following ways:

- (a) Upon two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the Directors present at a meeting of the Board of Directors at which a quorum is present, provided that a copy of the proposed change(s) has been submitted to all Directors at least thirty (30) days prior to such meeting;
- (b) Upon two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote by mail or email ballot of the Directors within sixty (60) days after a copy of the proposed change(s) has been submitted to all Directors, provided that a consent in writing to use of a mail or email ballot has been signed by all of the Directors in office;
- (c) By the unanimous written consent of all members of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE XVII  
Effective Date of Bylaws

Section 1. These Bylaws shall become effective upon adoption by all of the Directors of the Board.

**American Board of Forensic Anthropology, Inc.**  
**CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT**

Proposed February 16, 1999  
Approved by the Board February 20, 2001  
Changes proposed January 16, 2008  
Approved by the Board January 23, 2008

**SECTION I - THE CODE:** As a means to promote the highest quality of professional and personal conduct of its members, the following constitutes the Code of Ethics and Conduct which is endorsed and adhered to by all Diplomates of the American Board of Forensic Anthropology (ABFA).

Diplomates of the American Board of Forensic Anthropology shall:

- a) Refrain from exercising professional or personal conduct adverse to the best interests and purposes of the ABFA.
- b) Refrain from providing any material misrepresentation of education, training, experience, or area of expertise. Misrepresentation of one or more criteria for certification shall constitute a violation of this section of the code.
- c) Refrain from providing any material misrepresentation of data upon which an expert opinion or conclusion is based. Diplomates shall render opinions and conclusions strictly in accordance with the evidence in the case (hypothetical or real) and only to the extent justified by the evidence.
- d) Not make statements in his/her written reports, public addresses, or testimony that are not technically correct and scientifically based.
- e) Act at all times in a completely impartial manner by employing scientific methodology to reach logical, unbiased conclusions and by reporting all findings in a clear, concise manner.
- f) Set a reasonable fee for services if it is appropriate to do so; however, no services shall be rendered on a contingency fee basis.
- g) Treat all information from an agency or client with the confidentiality required.
- h) Refrain from issuing public statements which appear to represent the position of the ABFA without specific authority first obtained from the Board of Directors.

**SECTION II - GROUNDS FOR DISCIPLINE:** Any Diplomate whose professional conduct becomes adverse to the best interests and purposes of the ABFA shall be liable to censure, suspension, or expulsion with revocation and recall of certification granted in Article XIII, Section 4 of the Bylaws. The Diplomate shall be censured, suspended, or expelled by action of the ABFA Board of Directors acting on the findings and recommendations of the Ethics Committee, following the appeal period or any other actions required. Investigative action may be initiated due to alleged violations of any of the following provisions:

- a) An intentional misstatement or misrepresentation or concealment or omission of a material fact or facts in an application or any other communication to the Board or its representative(s).
- b) Conviction of an applicant for certification or holder of a certificate by this Board by a court of competent jurisdiction of a felony or of any crime involving moral turpitude.
- c) Issuance of a certificate contrary to or in violation of any of the laws, standard rules, or regulations governing the Board and its certification programs at the time of its issuance; or determination that the person certified was not in fact eligible to receive such certificate at the time of its issuance.

- d) Violations of the Rules of Professional Conduct of the ABFA by an applicant or holder of a certificate of this Board.
- e) Non-payment of annual renewal fees after the delinquent notice by the Treasurer. Reinstatement may be granted in that fiscal year upon payment of the outstanding fees plus a \$50.00 reinstatement charge.
- f) Failure to complete recertification documentation as required.
- g) Upon the recommendation of any two Diplomates of the American Board of Forensic Anthropology, the qualifications of any Diplomat may be reviewed by the Board to determine whether the Certificate of Qualification issued by the Board should be revoked. The candidate shall have the right to present his or her case to the Board, but the final decision rests with the Board.
- h) Upon recommendation of the Ethics Committee and approval by two-thirds (2/3) of the Board, action to suspend or revoke certification may only be taken after at least thirty (30) days advance notice of the nature of the charges or reasons for such action has been given to the individual concerned and a reasonable opportunity for such person to be heard has been provided by the Board.

**SECTION III - INVESTIGATIVE BODY:** There shall be constituted a standing Ethics Committee, the primary composition and function of which will be:

- a) The standing Ethics Committee shall serve as the investigative body to which the chairperson of the Ethics Committee shall refer all cases for consideration.
- b) The members of the Ethics Committee shall be appointed by the President of the Board with the advice and consent of the Board of Directors. Each member, with the exception of the non-voting attorney member, if present, will serve a one-year term. The Ethics Committee shall elect a chairperson from its membership annually.
- c) The President of the ABFA may chair the Ethics Committee in the absence of the Ethics Committee chairperson, if the chairperson is under investigation, has a conflict of interest in that particular case, or for other valid reasons, is unable to participate.
- d) The Ethics Committee can order investigations and serve as a hearing agency concerning past or present conduct of individual members of the ABFA which may constitute a violation of the provisions of the Code of Ethics and Conduct.

**SECTION IV - INVESTIGATION INITIATING ACTION:** The following are the principal forms by which the Ethics Committee may initiate investigative proceedings:

- a) Any two Diplomates of the ABFA may submit formal written allegations of violations concerning a Diplomat to the Secretary of the ABFA (see Judiciary Process below) or to the chairperson of the Ethics Committee.
- b) The Ethics Committee may institute an inquiry based on any evidence brought to its attention which indicates the need for further query or positive action under the provisions of the Bylaws. Appropriate to this form of action, ABFA officers, upon receipt of a complaint concerning the professional or personal conduct of a Diplomat, may refer said complaint to the Ethics Committee in writing, accompanied by a recommendation, if any, concerning need for further investigation. Such recommendations, however, shall not be binding on the Ethics Committee.

## **SECTION V - JUDICIARY PROCESS**

- a) Written allegations against a Diplomat, if delivered to the ABFA Secretary, shall immediately be transmitted to the chairperson of the Ethics Committee.
- b) The Ethics Committee shall immediately give notice of the filing of a complaint to the accused, and in accordance with the Rules and Regulations formulated by the Ethics Committee and approved by the Board of Directors, assemble such written data from both the accused and the accuser(s) which will permit the Ethics Committee to arrive at a preliminary determination as to whether the complaint is well founded and requires further investigation. The accused will be advised of the nature of the complaint and of the identity of the complainant(s).
- c) The Ethics Committee may contact any individual or entity (whether an ABFA Diplomat or not) in its investigations.
- d) If the Ethics Committee, in its preliminary determination, finds that the complaint is not well founded, it shall dismiss the complaint. It shall issue a report of such determination to the Board of Directors, setting forth the basic facts, but omitting the names of the parties if possible and stating the reasons for its decision to dismiss.
- e) If the Ethics Committee determines the complaint is well founded, the Ethics Committee will investigate the allegations. The Ethics Committee shall then formally hear the charges and shall give both the accused and the accuser(s) a reasonable opportunity to be heard and confront each other.
  - 1) Notice shall be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, to both the accused and the accuser(s) for the purpose of setting up a formal hearing.
  - 2) The accused shall receive a copy of the written complaint. He/she is entitled to see the document in its entire form.
  - 3) After receipt of the return notice (by certified mail, return receipt requested) a formal hearing date will be mutually agreed to by both parties and the Ethics Committee. This date will be at least ninety (90) days from said receipt of official notice in order to give both parties adequate time to prepare for the hearing. If agreeable to both parties, the hearing shall be held at or about the time of the annual meeting of the ABFA in order to keep costs to a minimum. If one or both parties request a hearing date at a time other than the annual meeting, the costs of said hearing shall be the responsibility of the party/parties requesting the hearing and not the ABFA.
  - 4) At this hearing no legal counsel for either party may be present. The non-voting attorney member of the ABFA, as a non-voting member of the Ethics Committee, will be present for the purpose of assuring that propriety, protocol, and adherence to proper procedures is maintained during the hearing. The attorney Board member shall act in an advisory position to the committee only and shall not be involved in the presentation of the case for either party.
  - 5) The Ethics Committee shall make a report, which will include a recommendation to the ABFA Board of Directors at the conclusion of the hearing(s).
- f) Upon a vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the members of the Board of Directors present and voting, the party accused of unethical or wrongful conduct may be censured, suspended, or expelled. No Board of Director member or member of the Ethics Committee who is the subject of a pending accusation under the provisions of the ABFA Code of Ethics and Conduct shall sit in deliberation on any manner concerning ethics.
- g) The accused has the right to appeal the action of the Board of Directors to the Diplomates of the ABFA. In effecting an appeal, the appellant must file a brief typewritten notice of the appeal,

together with any typewritten statement he/she may wish to submit in his/her behalf, with the ABFA Secretary not more than thirty (30) days after receiving notice of the action of the Board. Punitive actions of the Board against the accused shall not commence until after thirty (30) days from the date of notification of the accused to allow time for the appeal. The Secretary shall immediately advise each member of the Board of Directors of the appeal and shall forward to each a copy of the supporting papers submitted by the appellant. If no appeal is received by the Secretary within thirty (30) days, the actions of the Board shall be implemented, and may no longer be appealed.

- h) If an appeal is received within thirty (30) days, the Executive Committee shall prepare a written statement of the reasons for the Board of Directors' actions and file the same with the ABFA Secretary not more than thirty (30) days from receipt of the appeal.
- i) Within ten (10) days of receipt of the statement from the Executive Committee, the Board of Directors shall choose seven (7) Diplomates-at-Large (not on the Board of Directors), and the appellant shall choose eight (8) Diplomates-at-Large (not on the Board of Directors) to hear the appeal.
- j) The Secretary of the Board shall send the statements from the appellant and the Executive Committee to each of the fifteen (15) members of this Appeal Committee within ten (10) days after the Board is convened.
- k) The fifteen (15) members of this Appeal Committee shall arrange a closed meeting either in person or by conference call(s). The meeting(s) shall be strictly confidential. Neither the appellant, the accuser(s), nor any member of the Board of Directors shall be part of the meeting. The non-voting attorney member shall be part of the meeting(s) to assure propriety, protocol, and adherence to procedures. The attorney shall not represent either party involved in the hearing.
- l) Decisions of the Diplomates in the closed hearing will be based upon the written information provided by the appellant and the Board of Directors. A written vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the Appeal Committee present and voting at the closed meeting shall be required to overrule the action of the Board of Directors in regard to censure, suspension, or expulsion of a Diplomat.

## **SECTION VI - CONFIDENTIALITY, RULES, AND AAFS ETHICS**

- a) Any member of the Ethics Committee, Board of Directors, or Appeals Committee divulging information on matters previously considered or being considered could be in violation of the Code of Ethics and Conduct and is subject to charges of same being filed. This does not apply to written statements made and worded by the Board of Directors concerning ethical matters or about the case(s) being considered which may be distributed to the Appeals Committee by said person after Executive Committee approval.
- b) The Ethics Committee shall formulate internal Rules and Procedures, and from time to time propose changes to such Rules and Procedures, designed to facilitate the expeditious, fair, discreet, and impartial handling of all complaints or matters brought before the Ethics Committee. The Rules and Procedures, and any subsequent deletions, additions, or amendments thereto, shall be subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.
- c) In order to prevent a conflict of interest between the ABFA and the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS), a written report of the action of the Board of Directors of the ABFA concerning censure, suspension, or expulsion of the Diplomat will be forwarded to the chairperson of the Ethics Committee of the AAFS. The AAFS Ethics Committee will be notified if a notice of appeal is filed and ultimately the results of said appeal. It is assumed that if an ethical problem occurs with the Ethics Committee of the AAFS with an ABFA Diplomat who is

a member of the AAFS, a report would be given to the President or Secretary or chairperson of the Ethics Committee of the ABFA for any consideration or action.

**American Board of Forensic Anthropology  
Diplomate Manual  
Section III  
Policies, Procedures, Guidelines, Standards**

**ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

**Elected Officers:**

Officers shall take office on July 1 following their election and each shall hold office for one (1) year or until his or her successor has been duly elected and qualified. Vacancies among officers (with the exception of the office of President who shall be succeeded by the sitting Vice President) shall be filled through election, specifically by majority vote, from among the membership of the Board of Directors. Such election may be conducted by mail or email ballot.

**The President** (1 year term) is nominated and elected by majority vote of the Board of Directors from its members.

The President shall:

- 1) Preside over meetings of the Executive Committee, Board of Directors, and Diplomates.
- 2) Develop meeting agendas in consultation with the other members of the Executive Committee.
- 3) Prepare an annual report for the Board of Directors Meeting.
- 4) Direct all committee chairpersons and oversee their progress.
- 5) Assist Executive Committee members in making decisions when/if issues arise throughout the year.
- 6) Appoint officers and chairpersons of standing and special committees as directed by the Bylaws.
- 7) Notify chairpersons of their committee membership and charges within one week after the annual meeting.
- 8) Report to the Board of Directors at the annual meeting.
- 9) Maintain all copies of critical documents and/or correspondence in a secure location.
- 10) Package and ship all ABFA Presidential material and equipment to the incoming President within thirty (30) days of the new President assuming office.
- 11) Schedule rooms for the annual Board meeting, examination, and annual Diplomate meeting.
- 12) Review and approve minutes from the annual meeting.
- 13) Communicate a synopsis of Board decisions from the annual meeting to Diplomates within twenty (20) days of receipt of draft minutes from the Secretary.
- 14) Advise new policies and procedures to the Diplomates.
- 15) Have the pleasure of welcoming new Diplomates at the Diplomate meeting.
- 16) Oversee the preparation and distribution of Certificates of Qualification in cooperation with the Executive Committee.
- 17) Oversee the maintenance of the ABFA website.

- 18) Maintain contact information for the ABFA attorney.
- 19) Maintain contact information for the ABFA insurance company.
- 20) Maintain liaison with the Forensic Specialties Accreditation Board.
- 21) Serve as a member of the Scientific Working Group for Anthropology (SWGANTH).
- 22) Represent the ABFA Diplomates and Board of Directors to outside agencies as required and appropriate.

The **Vice President** (1 year term) is nominated and elected by majority vote of the Board of Directors from its members. The Vice President shall fill any vacancy in the office of President if such occurs during his/her term in office.

The Vice President shall:

- 1) Attend all meetings of the Executive Committee, Board of Directors, and Diplomates-at-Large.
- 2) Prepare an annual report for the Board of Directors Meeting.
- 3) Be familiar with the duties of President and be willing to assume the President's position if necessary.
- 4) Preside over the Examination Committee and be responsible for the planning, execution, and grading of the Certification Examination.
- 5) Notify examinees of examination fee due.
- 6) Notify examinees of the precise time and location of the examination at least two weeks prior to the examination.
- 7) Notify all examinees of the results of the examination by March 30 following the examination.
- 8) Destruction of completed examinations consistent with the examination policies.
- 9) Maintain all copies of critical documents and/or correspondence in a secure location.
- 10) Package and ship all ABFA Vice Presidential material and equipment to the incoming Vice President within thirty (30) days of the new Vice President assuming office.
- 11) Read and approve minutes from the annual meeting.

The **Secretary** (1 year term) is nominated and elected by majority vote of the Board of Directors from its members.

The Secretary shall:

- 1) Attend all meetings of the Executive Committee, Board of Directors, and Diplomates-at-Large.
- 2) Produce the minutes of the annual meeting of the Board of Directors within sixty (60) days and send to the Executive Committee members for approval.
- 3) Produce the minutes of the annual meeting of the Diplomates-at-Large.
- 4) Prepare an annual report for the Board of Directors Meetings.
- 5) Maintain an up-to-date list of all committee memberships.
- 6) Keep a calendar of when applicants take the examinations.
- 7) Notify the AAFS staff of changes in the ABFA officers within 30 days after the annual business meeting.
- 8) Send all necessary application materials to prospective applicants upon request and answer questions regarding the application process.
- 9) Receive and review application materials from applicants.

- 10) Notify applicants approximately one week prior to December 1 as to the status of the application (including the status of letters of recommendation received), provided the Secretary is aware of the forthcoming application.
- 11) Send pending applications to all members of the Board of Directors at least thirty (30) days before the annual meeting in February.
- 12) Send application fees to the Treasurer of the ABFA.
- 13) Inform each applicant in writing of the Board's decisions concerning his/her application within thirty (30) days after the annual meeting and provide written feedback supporting the decision.
- 14) Except for the original notarized application form, destroy all inactive application materials three years after their review, including original applications transferred from the previous Secretary.
- 15) Maintain the corporate seal/embosser.
- 16) Maintain all copies of critical documents and/or correspondence in a secure location.
- 17) Package and ship all ABFA Secretary material and equipment to the incoming Secretary within thirty (30) days of the new Secretary assuming office.
- 18) Maintain permanent archives of original application forms.
- 19) Oversee destruction of application documents after each annual meeting.
- 20) Receive recertification documents from Diplomates.
- 21) Maintain a list of past officers.
- 22) Notify the Webmaster of necessary changes to the ABFA web site.
- 23) Notify the Chairperson of the Ethics Committee of the AAFS of censure, suspension, or expulsion of a Diplomat by the ABFA due to ethics violations (in accordance with Section 6, Paragraph c of the ABFA Code of Ethics and Conduct).

The **Treasurer** (1 year term) is nominated and elected by majority vote of the Board of Directors from its members.

The Treasurer shall:

- 1) Attend all meetings of the Executive Committee, Board of Directors, and Diplomates-at-Large.
- 2) Prepare a report for the prior fiscal year, a mid-year report for the current fiscal year, and a report of current financial status for the annual Board of Directors meeting.
- 3) Prepare for the Executive Committee an end of fiscal year report no later than August 1 of the new fiscal year.
- 4) Review and approve minutes of the annual meeting.
- 5) Maintain the financial records of the ABFA using accepted accounting practices.
- 6) Oversee ABFA budgets and notify the President when expenditures will exceed assets.
- 7) Estimate proposed budget changes as needed.
- 8) Send the first notice of the January 1 dues deadline by December 1 of the year prior to the deadline.
  - a) If needed, send a second notice of the January 1 deadline by February 1.
  - b) If the January deadline is not met, send a **delinquent** dues notice by March 1 through certified mail (return receipt requested). This third notice shall state that action to revoke certification has been initiated and will automatically occur if dues are not received by April 1. This third statement shall also include the following sentence: "The Treasurer must receive written notification through certified mail by March 15 of circumstances beyond your control that prevent your payment of outstanding dues by the extended deadline of April 1."

The Board of Directors will review these circumstances and, at their discretion, may extend the deadline.”

- 9) Collect application and examination fees.
- 10) Receive insurance premium statement and, in consultation with the President, be responsible for annual payment of insurance premiums.
- 11) Notify the Examination Committee of the status of the examination and re-examination payments.
- 12) Notify the Certification Committee of the dues status of Diplomates.
- 13) Reimburse expenses for members of the Board of Directors in accordance with ABFA policies.
- 14) Pay appropriate expenses incurred for ABFA business.
- 15) Notify insurance company of Treasurer’s contact information when new officer takes office.
- 16) Notify CT Corporation of Treasurer’s contact information when new officer takes office.
- 17) On even numbered years make biennial report fee payment to the District of Columbia.
- 18) Maintain all copies of critical documents and/or correspondence in a secure location.
- 19) Retain financial documents using an accepted accounting retention schedule.
- 20) Package and ship all ABFA Treasurer materials, equipment, and bank assets to the incoming Treasurer within thirty (30) days of the new Treasurer assuming office.
- 21) Make arrangements for a complete outside audit of the ABFA financial records every three years or at the time a new Treasurer is elected.

**Members of the Board of Directors** (3 year term, maximum of two consecutive terms) are nominated by the Diplomates-at-Large and by the Board of Directors and are elected by majority vote of the members of the Board of Directors. Nominations may be made to any member of the Board of Directors and are accepted from the time of the AAFS annual meeting through April 1. The Board will hold elections by majority vote by May 1.

*Any Director shall be subject to removal from office or from the Board of Directors for failure to complete his/her duties in a timely manner by majority vote of the members of the Board of Directors.*

**Directors-at-Large shall:**

- 1) Be familiar with the Bylaws, Articles of Incorporation, Code of Ethics and Conduct, and this manual.
- 2) Read and respond to correspondence from the Board of Directors.

**Committees:** Each committee shall consist of two (2) or more persons. The chairperson of each committee shall be a member of the Board of Directors while other members of a committee may be members of the Board of Directors, Diplomates-at-Large, or other qualified persons. The President is an ex-officio member of all committees. Unless otherwise provided herein, the President of the Board, with the advice of the Board of Directors, shall appoint the chairperson and other members of each Standing or Special Committee.

The chairperson and other members of every Standing or Special Committee shall serve one (1) year terms and, unless otherwise provided within the Bylaws or resolved by the Board of Directors, are eligible for reappointment.

**Standing Committees:**

- 1) **Executive Committee:** This committee shall consist of the sitting President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The President is the Chairperson of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall have full authority and power to act for and on behalf of the Board of Directors between meetings of said Board, except as provided in the Bylaws. Actions taken by the Executive Committee on behalf of the Board of Directors shall be reported to the Board of Directors as soon as practicable.
- 2) **Ethics Committee:** This committee shall consist of at least two (2) members of the Board of Directors and at least one (1) member from the Diplomates-at-Large. The Ethics Committee will investigate allegations against Diplomates for violations of Rules of Ethics and Conduct and will recommend action to the Board of Directors consistent with the procedures, standards, rules, and regulations established by the Board.
- 3) **Examination Committee:** The Vice President shall chair the Examination Committee and be responsible for the development, execution, and grading of the Certification Examination. The Vice President may recommend to the President at least three (3) members of the Board of Directors for appointment to assist him/her in the completion of Examination Committee duties.
- 4) **Certification Committee:** This committee shall consist of at least two (2) individuals in addition to the Treasurer, appointed from the Board of Directors. The Certification Committee shall oversee recertification of Diplomates consistent with procedures, standards, rules, and regulations established by the Board of Directors. It is the responsibility of the Chairperson of the Certification Committee to provide timely reports to the Executive Committee during the course of the year. The Chairperson of the Certification Committee will also present an annual report of committee activities and actions to the Board of Directors each February at the annual meeting of the American Board of Forensic Anthropology. See specific information concerning recertification under “Recertification Procedure” below.

**Diplomates-at-Large shall:**

- 1) Be familiar with the Bylaws, the Code of Ethics and Conduct, and this Manual.
- 2) Notify the Secretary of changes in contact information.
- 3) Submit annual dues by January 1.
- 4) Comply with recertification procedures.
- 5) Nominate Diplomates to the Board of Directors when vacancies arise.
- 6) Read and respond to correspondence from the Board of Directors.
- 7) Bring concerns about the ABFA to the Board of Directors.

**ABFA Fees (2007-2008):**

- Application Fee: \$100.00 non-refundable fee to be submitted with the application.
- Reapplication Fee: \$100.00 non-refundable fee to be submitted with each reapplication.
- Examination Fee: \$200.00 by December 1 prior to the examination in February. This is non-refundable and covers the initial examination and one re-take if necessary.
- Re-examination Fee: \$200.00 by December 1 prior to the examination in February. This is non-refundable and covers the re-examination and one final re-take if necessary.
- Annual Dues: \$150.00 per year due January 1 of each year.

- **Penalty Fee:** A penalty of fifty dollars (\$50.00) reinstatement fee will be levied if the Board of Directors grants reinstatement after violation of non-payment of annual renewal fees has been rectified.

## **APPLICATION, EXAMINATION, AND CERTIFICATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Applications are reviewed and approved or rejected (with comments) by the Board of Directors. Examinations are executed and graded as pass or fail (with comments) by the Examination Committee.

**Function:** The certification process (including the application and examination portions of the process) is established to provide the following functions for the American Board of Forensic Anthropology, Inc. (ABFA):

- 1) Review the credentials and required documents of individuals who wish to sit for the examination for a Certificate of Qualification in Forensic Anthropology and approve those who meet the qualifications to be examined. All members of the Board of Directors of the ABFA perform this function.
- 2) Create, schedule, administer, and grade the examination, which must be successfully completed for the examinee to be granted the Certificate of Qualification in Forensic Anthropology awarded by the American Board of Forensic Anthropology, Inc. This function is performed by the Examination Committee and overseen by the Board of Directors of the ABFA.
- 3) Establish and maintain the application and recertification forms, together with instructions, so that they reflect current information and requirements of the ABFA. All members of the Board of Directors of the ABFA perform this function.
- 4) Establish a policy on continuing forensic anthropological education. All members of the Board of Directors of the ABFA perform this function with input from the Diplomates-at-Large.

### **General Provisions Concerning Certification:**

- 1) The Board reserves the right to deny certification.
- 2) Certificates granted and issued by the Board may be suspended or revoked for any of the following reasons:
  - a) A misstatement, misrepresentation, concealment or omission of a material fact or facts in an application or any other communication to the Board or its representative(s).
  - b) Conviction of a felony by a court of competent authority or of any crime involving, in the judgment of the Board of Directors, moral turpitude.
  - c) Determination that the person certified was ineligible to receive the certificate at the time of issuance.
  - d) Issuance of a certificate contrary to or in violation of any of the standards, rules or regulations governing the Board and/or its certification procedures at the time of its issuance.

- e) Unethical conduct or any other conduct that, in the judgment of the Board, brings the specialty of forensic anthropology into disrepute.
  - f) For non-payment of annual dues, failure to submit the annual signed ethics statement, or for failure to submit recertification documents.
- 3) Action to suspend or revoke a certificate may be taken only after thirty (30) days notice of the charges or reasons for such action has been given to the individual in question, and an opportunity has been provided for appeal as outlined in the standards, rules, or regulations of the Board.
  - 4) Applicants who are denied certification or who have their Certificate of Qualification revoked may appeal the decision to the Board of Directors, in writing, within thirty (30) days following the issue date of such notification.
  - 5) Persons holding a valid, un-revoked Certificate of Qualification issued by the Board are entitled to use the following designations: “Diplomate of the American Board of Forensic Anthropology,” “DABFA” or “Diplomate ABFA”.
  - 6) A Certificate of Qualification in forensic anthropology is valid for a period of three (3) consecutive years and may be renewed in accordance with the recertification program, procedures, standards, rules, and regulations established by the Board (see “Maintaining Diplomate Status” below).
  - 7) Certificates issued by the Board are not transferable and remain the property of the Board. Every person to whom a certificate has been properly issued shall be entitled to its continued possession unless and until such certificate is revoked.

### **Maintaining Diplomate Status:**

To maintain Diplomate status, Diplomates must:

- 1) Pay annual dues by January 1 each year.
- 2) Apply once each three (3) years for recertification by submitting documentation of forensic anthropology activities over the preceding thirty-six (36) months. The instructions accompanying the Application for Recertification must be followed to avoid delay in recertification.

### **Application to Sit for the Certification Examination in Forensic Anthropology**

#### **Requirements of the Applicant:**

The applicant must:

- 1) Be a person of good moral character, high integrity, good repute, and must possess high ethical and professional standards.
- 2) Be a permanent resident of the United States, Canada, or their territories.
- 3) Individuals who are not permanent residents of the United States, Canada, or their territories may petition the Board of Directors for a waiver to be considered to apply to sit for the board certification examination. The decision to consider this waiver is at the discretion of the Board of Directors. All correspondence and any associated documents must be in English.
- 4) Possess an earned doctoral degree in anthropology with an emphasis in physical anthropology.
- 5) Have three years of professional experience in forensic anthropology after being awarded a doctoral degree.

Note: In some circumstances, an earned doctoral degree in a closely related field will be considered sufficient to meet this requirement. This is at the discretion of the Board of Directors, but the decision may be appealed. Decisions regarding the appeal are at the discretion of the Board.

### **The Application Process:**

Individuals wishing to establish eligibility to sit for the examination for a Certificate of Qualification in Forensic Anthropology granted by the American Board of Forensic Anthropology should contact the current Secretary of the ABFA, whose contact information can be found at:

[www.theABFA.org](http://www.theABFA.org)

The Secretary will respond to inquiries by providing an application form, together with detailed requirements, to the applicant. The applicant must carefully follow instructions in the application and submit all required materials in order to avoid a delay in processing. If the submitted application is incomplete, the applicant may be asked for additional information, which may delay Board consideration, or the applicant may be summarily rejected for the current year (at the discretion of the Board of Directors).

The successful applicant must sit for four hours of written questions and four hours of practical examination within three (3) years after being approved (except as provided under “Examination Procedure” below), though a minimum of three examinees are required for the certification examination to be administered. This examination is administered on Monday at the location of the annual meeting of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (see specific information concerning this examination under “Examination Procedure” below).

### **The Application:**

- 1) An individual who wishes to be considered for the examination must submit (paper versions, not electronic versions) **one notarized original and ten (10) copies of the entire application and associated documents**, and the names of three (3) individuals selected by the applicant as recommenders. Each recommender must each send a letter of recommendation directly to the Secretary of the ABFA. The completed application includes:
  - (a) A copy of the applicant’s doctoral diploma.
  - (b) A copy of the applicant’s *curriculum vitae*.
  - (c) Five (5) forensic case reports and supporting documents, as necessary.
  - (d) The \$100.00 non-refundable fee.
- 2) The completed application must be received by December 1 in order to be considered at the next annual meeting of the Board of Directors.
- 3) If the applicant’s file is complete, the Secretary will forward a copy to each of the ten members of the Board of Directors for review at least 30 days before the annual meeting.

The entire Board will consider the application during the annual meeting of the American Board of Forensic Anthropology.

- 4) Decisions regarding the application are made by simple majority vote of all members of the Board of Directors present. The Secretary of the Board will advise each applicant of the Board's decision within thirty (30) days following the annual meeting of the Board of Directors and provide a written response supporting the decision.
- 5) The Board of Directors, at its discretion, may request additional information from the applicants or referees. At its discretion, the Board may offer a mid-year review of those applications with minor deficiencies or under special circumstances. If the applicant is then successful in petitioning the Board, he or she will be offered a chance to sit for the examination the following February.
- 6) The original set of all application materials will be retained for three (3) years. The original application form will be retained indefinitely. All associated materials, such as the *curriculum vitae*, copy of the doctoral diploma, case reports, and letters of recommendation will be destroyed after three (3) years. Copies of letter(s) of denial sent to unsuccessful applicants will be retained indefinitely, along with their original application(s).

### **Reapplication Procedure:**

- 1) Applicants may request that the Secretary reuse the copy of the doctoral diploma from their file, but must submit a new, notarized application form for each re-application.
- 2) In most circumstances, new letters of recommendation must be submitted. However, if the Secretary receives a written request from the reapplicant, existing letters of recommendation may be reused at the discretion of the Executive Committee (this request may be emailed).
- 3) In most circumstances new case reports will be required unless the only criticism from the Board involved the lack of supporting documentation, and provided minimum time has elapsed between the original and reapplication.
- 4) Reuse of any material(s) in a reapplication is allowed only through written permission by the Board, and only within the three-year period prior to the destruction of records.
- 5) The original set of all reapplication materials will be retained for three (3) years after which only the original reapplication form will be retained indefinitely. All associated materials, such as the *curriculum vitae*, copy of doctoral diploma, case reports, and letters of recommendation will be destroyed. Copies of letters of denial sent to unsuccessful applicants will be retained indefinitely.
- 6) Applicants may reapply once, and if denied, will be required to wait for two (2) years from the date the application was denied by the Board of Directors apply again. Applicants will be allowed to apply twice more (for a total of four applications). Applicants may appeal the decisions of the Board within ninety (90) days of the date of notification of a failed application or reapplication. If an applicant does not appeal the fourth denial decision within ninety (90) days, he/she must wait five years prior to requesting a fifth and final application attempt. The Board has full discretion in its decision to consider this request to review a fifth application, but if granted, the applicant must submit a new, complete application along with the \$100.00 application fee.
- 7) Applicants are encouraged to seek training and guidance from Diplomates of the ABFA in preparation for the application procedure.

- 8) The \$100.00 application fee is due with each reapplication.
- 9) Information in the application will remain strictly confidential. All Directors will destroy their copies of the application materials within two (2) weeks after the annual meeting.

### **Application Format:**

To facilitate review by the Board of Directors, the applicant is required to follow the instructions and format of the application provided. Failure to do so will result in the application being returned for additional information and/or required materials. This will delay processing and subsequent determination of eligibility. Official applications must be obtained from the Secretary of the Board. The 2009 - 2010 Secretary of the Board is:

Susan M. T. Myster, Ph.D.  
Department of Anthropology  
Hamline University  
P.O. Box 196  
St. Paul, MN 55104  
(651) 523-2554  
Fax: (651) 523-3170  
[smyster@gw.hamline.edu](mailto:smyster@gw.hamline.edu)

### **Detailed instructions within the application:**

- 1) Your packet must include five case reports that you have submitted to a medical examiner, coroner, or a law enforcement agency as part of your forensic work. These are to be the unaltered case reports as they were submitted to the authority/agency, but may include supporting information and documentation (see below). If necessary, names and other identifiers may be redacted to maintain confidentiality.
- 2) You should be the single author for the case reports submitted for evaluation. However, it is recognized that in some instances multiple anthropologists may contribute to a final report. In such cases a separate statement indicating that you (the applicant) were the primary author and, if required, would testify in that case. When submitting a multiple-authored report, your specific role must be clearly explained.
- 3) Case reports submitted to the Board for review are extremely important in judging the proficiency of the applicant; however it is recognized that agencies differ in their expectations regarding the structure and content of these reports. For this reason, it may be necessary for you to add supporting materials as addenda to your official case reports, particularly when your report is abbreviated or limited to specific elements of the case (e.g. trauma only).
- 4) Supporting materials must contain information that will allow the Board of Directors to ascertain whether appropriate methods were used that validate and justify the conclusions reached by the applicant. Supporting material may include (but is not limited to) photographs, drawings, notes, references, and other documents that you believe will aid the Board in evaluating your proficiency in forensic anthropology casework.

- 5) Assign a number to each of your five case reports and all related documents (i.e., Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5) prior to photocopying. This avoids complex case numbering systems and will facilitate discussion of each case report by the Board.
- 6) Include your current *curriculum vitae* along with a complete list of your scientific publications. Each entry should include names of all co-authors, complete title, journal name, inclusive page numbers, and year published.
- 7) Enclose a photocopy of your doctoral diploma.
- 8) A completed application packet must include one (1) original notarized application and its supporting documentation, plus ten (10) copies of the entire packet (copies need not be notarized), for a total of 11 complete applications. Any graphics included must be duplicated for the original application as well as for each of the 10 copies.
- 9) All application materials – including the three (3) letters of recommendation sent by your recommenders – must be received by December 1 in order for the application to be considered during the Board meeting in February. The completed application and all necessary copies must be mailed to the Secretary of the American Board of Forensic Anthropology whose name and address is listed on the current letterhead or on the ABFA website.
- 10) Enclose a non-refundable fee of \$100.00. Please make checks or money orders payable to the “American Board of Forensic Anthropology” and include the payment with the application. Note that all applications, including reapplications, must include this non-refundable fee.
- 11) If the application is approved, a \$200.00 examination fee will be assessed and will be due by December 1 prior to the examination.

**The five case reports submitted with the application should:**

- 1) Be authored by the applicant. Coauthored reports may be admitted (at the discretion of the Board of Directors) if a written statement accompanies the report which confirms that the Applicant is the primary author and would testify in court about the case if called upon to do so.
- 2) Be the true and unaltered case report submitted to the agency for which it is written (names of the decedent and case numbers may be redacted for confidentiality).
- 3) Contain such supporting information that will allow the Board of Directors to ascertain that the methods used and conclusions reached by the applicant are valid and justified. Supporting material may include photographs, drawings, notes, and other documents that the applicant believes will aid the Board in concluding that the applicant is proficient in forensic anthropology.
- 4) It is recognized that agencies differ in their requirements concerning a forensic anthropology case report. The case reports submitted to the Board for review are extremely important in judging the proficiency of the applicant, and for this reason it may be necessary for the applicant to add supporting materials to the application.

**Examination Procedure:**

The Examination Committee is responsible for the development, scheduling, administration, and grading of the examination given for the Certificate of Qualification in Forensic Anthropology awarded by the American Board of Forensic Anthropology, Inc. It is also responsible for the periodic analysis of the

instruments used for this examination relative to content, current theory and the performance of examinees.

- 1) Successful applicants (those who are invited to sit for the examination) are required to pay a \$200.00 examination fee to the Treasurer of the ABFA by December 1 prior to the examination. The examination fee is non-refundable and covers the examination and, if necessary, one retake of either or both sections.
- 2) Those who are invited to sit for the examination must notify the Vice President of his/her intention to sit for the examination by November 1 prior to the examination.
- 3) If the applicant is accepted for examination, he/she must sit for the examination within three years after acceptance (except in cases in which the examination is not offered every year), or will have to begin the application process anew.
- 4) The applicant may first sit for the examination the February following the successful application. The examination is given on the Monday of the week at the location of the annual meeting of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences. The precise time and location of the examination will be provided to the examinee at least two weeks prior to the scheduled examination.
- 5) At the discretion of the Board of Directors, the examination will not be offered if fewer than three (3) individuals are qualified and have notified the Vice President that they intend to sit for the examination in a given calendar year. When this occurs, the examination will be offered the following year, even if fewer than three candidates have been accepted to sit for the examination. The examination will be postponed beyond the second year only when there have been no examinees during the previous two consecutive years.
- 6) In exigent circumstances, the Board, at its discretion, may extend the time allowed for the examinee to sit for the examination or reexamination.
- 7) Examinees must engage in both the written and practical sections when they first sit for the examination.
- 8) The Examination Committee chairperson will provide a copy of the written portion of the most recent examination to the prospective examinee within ninety (90) days after the Board meeting at which the prospective examinee is accepted to sit for the examination.
- 9) Examinees are encouraged to ask for guidance, advice, and/or instruction from Board Certified Forensic Anthropologists.
- 10) Examinees may question the Examination Committee Chairperson (the Vice President of the Board) regarding any aspect of the examination prior to it being offered.

### **The Examination:**

- 1) The A.B.F.A. certification examination consists of a multiple-choice examination and a practical examination. The examination will begin at 8:00 a.m. and will end at 6:00 p.m.
- 2) Examinees must have a thorough working knowledge of the discipline and be able to provide appropriate literature citations.
- 3) Examinees are not permitted to bring reference materials to the examination. During the examination, examinees will have access to age determination standards and other suitable materials and equipment deemed appropriate by the Examination Committee.
- 4) The examination will be administered in an area that provides a secure and otherwise appropriate environment for the written and practical portions of the exam. The Vice President is responsible for proctoring the examination.
- 5) For further information refer to the Certification Examination Guidelines on the website.

**Retakes:**

- 1) In the event that an examinee fails both sections (i.e., written and practicum), both sections must be included in the retake.
- 2) The first retake of the exam or either section of the exam may be taken without an additional fee.
- 3) An examinee may, with written permission from the Vice President, skip one year to prepare for the first retake, but must sit for the failed section(s) during the second scheduled exam beyond the failure.
- 4) If exigent circumstances prevent the examinee from retaking the examination when scheduled, he/she may request (in writing) an additional postponement. This may be allowed at the discretion of the Board.
- 5) Failure of one or both sections of the first retake requires a \$200.00 examination fee for the second retake (i.e. third attempt). If additional preparation time is desired, the examinee may file a written request with the Board to postpone the second retake for one year. Extensions beyond one year will only be granted after documentation of extenuating circumstances and are at the discretion of the Board.
- 6) An examinee that fails one or both sections of the second retake may sit for a third retake (i.e. fourth attempt) without an additional fee.
- 7) In the event that an examinee fails either or both sections (i.e., written and practicum) of the third retake (i.e. the fourth attempt), a potential examinee must wait five (5) years after the fourth failure before requesting, in writing, that the Board permit a fifth attempt at the examination. If the Board grants this request, the examinee must sit for the entire examination (written and practicum) anew and pay the \$200.00 examination fee. If the examinee fails either or both sections of the examination at this fifth attempt, he/she is entitled to one retake of the failed section(s) with no additional fee. Examinees who do not pass both the written and practicum by the sixth attempt are no longer eligible for certification by the ABFA.

**Grading:**

Three or more members of the Board of Directors will serve as a team of graders under the guidance of the Examination Committee chairperson (Vice President of the Board). To foster impartiality in grading, the names of the examinees will not be associated with their answers. The Vice President will notify the examinees of examination results no later than March 30 of the year in which the examination is taken.

Examinees who wish to appeal the decision(s) of the Examination Committee must:

- 1) Appeal in writing and clearly delineate each area of contention.
- 2) Mail the appeal via certified mail return receipt requested to the Vice President within ninety (90) days of the notification of a failed examination.
- 3) The Board of Directors, in consultation with the Examination Committee and a Diplomate-at-Large requested by the appealing examinee, will review the decision of the Examination Committee and determine whether the examination will be reevaluated. If the examinations are to be reevaluated, this will occur within ninety (90) days of the date of appeal. The decisions of the Board of Directors regarding further appeal, reevaluation of the examination, and the results of the reevaluation are final.

- 4) If the decision of the Examination Committee is not appealed within ninety (90) days of the notification of a failed examination, no further action regarding the examination will be possible after that date.
- 5) The President of the Board has the pleasure of presenting the Certificate of Qualification in Forensic Anthropology to successful examinees at the next annual meeting of the Diplomates.
- 6) New Diplomate names and contact information will be added to the list of Diplomates located on the ABFA website.

### **Diplomate of the American Board of Forensic Anthropology:**

Successful completion of both portions of the examination will qualify the individual as a Diplomate of the American Board of Forensic Anthropology, and entitle him/her to use the initials DABFA after his/her name. Diplomates are issued a unique certificate number, issued in numerical order. Certificate numbers are never reused.

A list of Diplomates (current, deceased, retired, suspended) is on the ABFA website.

### **Recertification Program:**

It is the responsibility of the chairperson of the Certification Committee to provide timely reports to the Executive Committee during the course of the year. The chairperson of the Certification Committee will also present an annual report of committee activities and actions to the Board of Directors each February at the annual meeting of the American Board of Forensic Anthropology. See specific information concerning recertification under "Recertification Procedure" below.

Certificates of Qualification issued by the ABFA remain valid for a period of three (3) years. In order to maintain certification beyond three years, Diplomates must:

- 1) Pay annual dues by January 1 each year. **Payment of the annual dues signifies that the Diplomate has and will comply with the ABFA Code of Ethics and Conduct.**
- 2) Participate in the recertification process overseen by the ABFA as a means of demonstrating continued education and maintenance of skills in forensic anthropology and related forensic sciences. Documentation of forensic activities (as outlined below) for the preceding three years is required.
- 3) Return the Application for Recertification to the Chairperson of the Certification Committee of the ABFA by the appropriate deadline.

### **Recertification Procedures:**

- 1) To maintain certification the Diplomate must submit all recertification documents by July 1 in the year of the third anniversary of the current Certificate of Qualification (i.e., sequenced in three-year increments from the date the Certificate was granted). For example, a Diplomate granted a Certificate in 2000 would submit recertification documents by July 1 in 2003, 2006, etc.

- 2) Failure to submit the Application for Recertification as outlined in these guidelines will result in the automatic lapse of the Certificate. After the Certification Committee of the ABFA notifies the Diplomate of impending decertification, the Diplomate must furnish the Application for Recertification to that Committee within thirty (30) days. If notice of extenuating circumstances is received by the Board within fifteen (15) days of notice of impending decertification, the Certification Committee, at its discretion, may grant an extension.
- 3) The Certification Committee will determine recertification eligibility of registered Diplomates.
- 4) The committee's recommendations for recertification must be accepted or rejected by the Board of Directors. Eligibility for recertification will be based on the candidate's meaningful participation in forensic activities, timely payment of annual dues, and an annual reaffirmation of the ABFA Code of Ethics and Conduct. This policy for establishing eligibility places the primary responsibility on the candidate to adequately document his/her forensic activities.

### **Categories of Forensic Activity:**

The documentation of the various areas of involvement required for recertification reflects the diverse activities that comprise the practice of forensic activity and its interaction with related forensic sciences.

All candidates for recertification must indicate a minimum of thirty (30) hours of continuing forensic anthropology education during the three years of their current certificate. The ABFA Certification Committee must approve continuing education activities not specifically listed for credit in the Categories of Continuing Education below. In addition, the Diplomate will document current involvement in **one or more** of the following forensic categories:

- 1) Forensic anthropology casework
- 2) Court testimony, depositions
- 3) Consultative appointments
- 4) Research in forensic sciences and related fields including, but not limited to: forensic anthropology, osteology, location and recovery of remains, statistical analysis in forensic anthropology, etc.
- 5) Publications in forensic sciences and related fields including, but not limited to: forensic anthropology, osteology, location and recovery of remains, statistical analysis in forensic anthropology, etc.
- 6) Teaching, lectures, presentations
- 7) Forensic related appointments, activities, offices held, and meetings

### **Categories of Continuing Education (CE):**

- 1) CE hours should all relate closely to forensic anthropology.
- 2) CE hours for activities not listed in the table below must be approved by the Certification Committee prior to the submission of the recertification application.
- 3) The Diplomate wishing to apply CE credit hours in categories not listed in the table below must petition the Certification Committee for approval before those hours can be claimed. Failure to do so may result in those hours being removed from the total CE hours submitted.

- 4) CE hours will be self-tracked through the three year period and be reported to the Certification Committee by July 1 prior to the anniversary date of the Certificate of Qualification (as outlined above).

<b>AAFS Meeting</b>	
<b>Attendance</b>	Actual hours attending papers
<b>Workshop</b>	Actual hours or CE Credit
<b>National or International Professional Meeting Related to Forensic Anthropology</b>	
<b>Attendance</b>	2 hours/day attended
<b>Regional Meeting in Forensics Related to Forensic Anthropology</b>	
<b>Attendance</b>	2 hours/day attended
<b>Journal Study (Self-study)</b>	1 hour per month with no more than 25 total hours in 36 months
<b>ABFA Examination</b>	15 hours in year successful
<b>Independent Research Relevant to Forensics</b>	1 hour/day expended
<b>Forensic Lecture Attendance (Non-meeting)</b>	0.5 hours per lecture
<b>Other</b>	As approved

**Format for Recertification Documentation:**

- 1) The Application for Recertification must be used when documenting forensic activities.
- 2) Failure to use the above referenced format or comply with the instructions will result in a notification to the Diplomate that corrections are needed and may result in delay in recertification.
- 3) It is the responsibility of the Diplomate to submit the completed Application for Recertification to the Certification Committee for review.

**Failure to Comply and Decertification:**

- 1) If the Diplomate fails to submit the Application for Recertification by July 1 prior to the three-year anniversary date of his/her certification, the Certification Committee of the ABFA will notify the Diplomate of noncompliance in accordance with the procedures outlined above.
- 2) After notification, failure to submit the Application for Recertification within thirty (30) days will result in automatic lapse of the Certificate. Upon notice to the Recertification Committee within 15 days of extenuating circumstances by the Diplomate, the Certification Committee, at its discretion, may grant an extension.

- 3) Failure to submit annual dues and the signed Code of Ethics and Conduct statement by February 1 of each year will result in notification (from the Treasurer of the Board) of impending decertification. Failure to submit annual dues within thirty (30) days of notification will result in automatic lapse of the certificate.
- 4) Upon automatic lapse of the Certificate, a \$50.00 reinstatement fee will be charged if reinstatement is granted. All dues and required forms must be submitted with the reinstatement fee. Until the Certification Committee reinstates the Diplomat, the Certificate of Qualification will be deemed invalid.

**Retirement:**

- 1) Diplomates, who have held Certificates of Qualification from the ABFA for at least ten years and who are Diplomates in good standing, may request retirement status.
- 2) This written request must be sent to the Secretary of the Board of Directors and will be placed on the agenda of the next meeting of the Board. If, by majority vote, the Board grants retirement status, the Retiree may:
  - (a) Cease payment of dues.
  - (b) Cease recertification procedures.
  - (c) Use the designation “DABFA (retired).”
  - (d) Continue to attend Diplomat meetings.

The Retiree may not:

- (a) Sit on the Board of Directors.
- (b) Vote on any matter before the Board or Diplomat members.
- (c) State that he or she is currently Board Certified or that he or she currently holds a Certificate of Qualification from the ABFA.

Further:

- (a) Retirement status cannot be applied retroactively (i.e. granted for some previous date).
- (b) Retirement is irrevocable except by a subsequent finding by the Board of Directors that the Diplomat was not in good standing at the time of retirement.
- (c) If an action taken or not taken by the Diplomat prior to retirement is adjudicated after retirement and exposes ethical violations or other violations of Codes of Conduct, retirement status may be revoked and, at the discretion of the Board, the Diplomat may be decertified.