



BOARD OF CANINE BEHAVIORISTS



CANDIDATE HANDBOOK

Senior Canine Behavior Consultant (SCBC) Certification

Advanced Certification — Board Certification Pathway

Version 1.0

www.caninebehaviorists.org

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Welcome

Congratulations on pursuing the Senior Canine Behavior Consultant (SCBC) credential.

The Senior Canine Behavior Consultant certification represents the third level within the Board of Canine Behaviorists' professional certification pathway. This advanced certification recognizes experienced canine behavior professionals capable of independently assessing, developing, implementing, and overseeing comprehensive behavior rehabilitation programs for complex companion dog behavior cases.

The SCBC credential is designed for professionals who have demonstrated advanced knowledge of canine behavior science, professional judgment, ethical decision-making, and the ability to manage behavior rehabilitation from initial assessment through successful case resolution.

This Candidate Handbook outlines eligibility requirements, examination procedures, candidate responsibilities, Board policies, renewal requirements, and the standards expected of Senior Canine Behavior Consultants.

The Candidate Handbook is not intended to serve as a textbook. Rather, it serves as the official guide governing the SCBC certification program. Candidates are responsible for reading and understanding this handbook before submitting an application or scheduling their examination.

On behalf of the Board, we congratulate you on reaching this stage of your professional journey.

Board of Canine Behaviorists

Scientia. Ethica. Compassio.

Section 1 About the Board of Canine Behaviorists

The Board of Canine Behaviorists was established to bring structure, consistency, and credibility to a profession that had long lacked a unified standard. As demand grew for qualified canine behavior professionals, so did the need for an independent body capable of setting benchmarks that the public, veterinary community, and profession itself could trust.

Our Mission

The Board's mission is to advance the canine behavior profession by establishing internationally recognized certifications that reflect scientific knowledge, ethical practice, and professional excellence.

Our Vision

The Board envisions a global profession in which every certified individual, regardless of geography or specialty, is held to the same rigorous, evidence-informed, and welfare-centered standard — and in which certification is a meaningful signal of competence to clients, employers, and veterinary partners alike.

An Independent Certification Body

The Board of Canine Behaviorists is an independent professional certification body. It is not affiliated with, nor does it endorse, any single training school, methodology, product line, or commercial organization. Certification decisions are made solely on the basis of published eligibility requirements and examination performance.

Science, Ethics, and Compassion

Every standard the Board sets is built on three pillars: scientific rigor, ethical accountability, and compassion for the animals and people that certified professionals serve. This commitment is reflected in the Board's motto, *Scientia. Ethica. Compassio.*, and is woven throughout the certification requirements, examination content, and Code of Ethics.

Evidence-Informed Practice

The Board's certification standards are grounded in contemporary behavioral science and are reviewed periodically to ensure they remain aligned with current research and professional best practice. Candidates are expected to demonstrate an understanding of evidence-informed principles rather than any single training philosophy.

Why Certification Matters

Professional certification provides a consistent, independently verified benchmark of knowledge and ethical commitment. For candidates, it offers a structured path toward professional growth. For the public, employers, and veterinary professionals, it provides confidence that a certified individual has met defined standards. For the profession as a whole, certification strengthens public trust and helps raise the standard of care provided to dogs and their families.

Methodological Neutrality

The Board does not endorse a single training methodology, tool, or equipment philosophy. Certification standards instead focus on the underlying science of how dogs learn, communicate, and respond to their environment, and on the humane, welfare-focused application of that knowledge in professional practice.

The Certification Pathway

The Board offers four progressive certification levels, allowing professionals to grow and formally recognize their expertise as their careers advance:

- Canine Behavior Assistant (CBA) — the foundation credential for those beginning their professional journey.
- Canine Behavior Consultant (CBC) — for professionals working independently and applying evidence-based practices.
- Senior Canine Behavior Consultant (SCBC) — recognizing experienced professionals with advanced knowledge and proven results.
- Board Certified Canine Behaviorist (B.C.C.B.) — the Board's highest credential, recognizing exceptional knowledge, ethics, leadership, and experience.

This handbook addresses the Senior Canine Behavior Consultant (SCBC) certification specifically.

Requirements for the CBA, CBC, and B.C.C.B. credentials are described in their respective candidate handbooks.

Section 2 About the Senior Canine Behavior Consultant (SCBC)

The Senior Canine Behavior Consultant (SCBC) certification is the third level within the Board's certification pathway, and the first of the Board's advanced credentials. It recognizes experienced professionals who have moved beyond independent case management into the assessment, planning, and oversight of comprehensive behavior rehabilitation for complex cases.

Purpose of the Certification

The SCBC exists to identify professionals capable of independently assessing, developing, implementing, and overseeing comprehensive behavior rehabilitation programs for complex companion dog behavior cases — not single interventions, but full rehabilitation programs carried from initial assessment through case resolution.

Who This Certification Is For

The SCBC is designed for professionals who already hold significant, documented experience managing behavior cases and are ready to formalize that experience at an advanced level, including:

- Senior dog trainers seeking formal recognition of advanced behavioral competency.
- Experienced behavior consultants managing behavioral rehabilitation cases on an independent basis.
- Industry leaders contributing to education, mentoring, research, or leadership within the profession.

- Veterinary behavior teams working alongside veterinarians to support behavioral assessment and treatment planning.

An Advanced, Rehabilitation-Focused Credential

The SCBC is an advanced professional certification built on a minimum of three years of documented professional experience in canine behavior or behavior consulting. It certifies readiness to manage the full arc of complex behavior rehabilitation — comprehensive assessment, individualized program design, implementation, long-term monitoring, and modification of treatment as cases evolve.

What the Certification Represents

Successful SCBC certification represents demonstrated advanced competency in behavior assessment, clinical case management, professional judgment, and ethical decision-making, along with the ability to manage complex behavioral cases independently while upholding the highest standards of client care and animal welfare.

What the Certification Does Not Represent

SCBC certification, while advanced, is not the Board's highest credential. The Board's most exceptional cases, and the leadership expectations that accompany the Board's top tier, remain the domain of the Board Certified Canine Behaviorist (B.C.C.B.) credential, as described in Section 14 (Scope of Practice).

Relationship to B.C.C.B.

The SCBC builds directly on the professional competency established by the CBC and, in turn, establishes the advanced case management experience upon which the Board Certified Canine Behaviorist (B.C.C.B.) credential builds. Certified SCBCs are encouraged to pursue continued education, mentorship, and professional leadership toward this highest credential as their careers progress.

Professional Expectations of an SCBC

Individuals holding SCBC certification are expected to manage complex behavior rehabilitation independently, uphold the Board's Code of Ethics, collaborate effectively with veterinarians, mentor less experienced professionals where appropriate, and exercise the advanced professional judgment the credential represents.

Section 3 Eligibility Requirements

The SCBC certification requires substantial, verifiable professional experience, including third-party confirmation of an applicant's professional conduct. Eligibility is based on age, documented experience, demonstrated competency, integrity, and a commitment to ethical practice.

To be eligible to apply for SCBC certification, applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Be at least 18 years of age at the time of application.
- Demonstrate experience assessing and managing canine behavior modification cases.

- Have a minimum of three years of documented professional experience in canine behavior or behavior consulting.
- Demonstrate advanced professional competency in canine behavior assessment and case management.
- Agree to abide by the Board's Code of Ethics throughout the duration of certification.
- Submit a completed application.
- Submit a Professional Experience Declaration.
- Submit a written description of professional experience.
- Submit one professional recommendation letter from a licensed veterinarian or board-certified veterinary behaviorist, following application approval and prior to examination scheduling.

Recommendation Letter Requirements

The required recommendation letter must:

- Be written on official practice letterhead.
- Include the veterinarian's credentials and contact information.
- Be signed and dated within the previous twelve months.
- Confirm the veterinarian's familiarity with the applicant's professional work.
- Address the applicant's ethical conduct, professionalism, and suitability for advanced behavior rehabilitation work.

The Board reserves the right to verify any recommendation letter submitted, and to request additional supporting documentation from an applicant where necessary to verify eligibility. Eligibility requirements are established by the Board and are subject to change; the version published on the Board's website at the time of application shall govern.

Section 4 The Certification Process

Certification is earned through a structured process: submitting an application, receiving approval, submitting a veterinary recommendation letter, and completing payment to schedule the certification examination.

Step 1 — Submit Your Application

Applicants begin by submitting the online application, Professional Experience Declaration, and written description of professional experience, together with the non-refundable application fee. The Board's team reviews each application against the eligibility requirements described in Section 3.

- The application fee is \$100 USD and is non-refundable.
- If approved, the application fee is credited toward the total certification fee.
- Application review is generally completed within 72 business hours.
- Applicants are notified of approval or denial by email.

Step 2 — Submit Your Recommendation Letter and Schedule Your Examination

Following approval, candidates submit the required veterinary recommendation letter described in Section 3. Once the letter has been received and the remaining examination fee has been paid, the candidate is granted access to the Official SCBC textbook and Candidate Handbook, along with instructions for scheduling the examination.

- The examination fee is \$1,795 USD.
- The examination fee, combined with the application fee, brings the total certification cost to \$1,895 USD.
- The Official SCBC textbook is released once the examination fee has been paid.
- Upon payment, the candidate receives a scheduling code to book the remote certification examination.

Item	Amount	Notes
Application Fee	\$100 USD	Non-refundable; paid at Step 1
Examination Fee	\$1,795 USD	Paid at Step 2, following approval
Total Certification Cost	\$1,895 USD	Application fee credited toward total

The examination must be scheduled within six months of payment. Extension requests are considered by the Board on a case-by-case basis; see Section 8 for full scheduling policy. Successful completion of the certification examination results in the award of SCBC certification.

Section 5 The SCBC Certification Examination

The certification examination provides an independent, standardized assessment of a candidate's advanced professional competency against the Board's published examination blueprint. It exists to verify — objectively and consistently — that every certified individual can apply advanced behavioral science, clinical reasoning, and professional judgment to complex rehabilitation cases, regardless of their prior training background.

The examination consists of two integrated components:

Knowledge Assessment

200 multiple-choice questions covering the domains described in Section 11.

Professional Competency Assessment

Five randomized advanced behavior cases, assessing clinical reasoning, functional behavior assessment, differential considerations, risk assessment, behavior rehabilitation planning, follow-up case progression, and modification of treatment recommendations as new information becomes available (see Section 6).

Key examination details:

- The examination is closed-book.
- Candidates have five hours to complete the full examination.
- A passing score of 80% is required to earn certification.
- Each examination fee payment covers one examination attempt.
- The Knowledge Assessment and the Professional Competency Assessment are scored together as a single, integrated assessment.

The Board reserves the right to revise examination content, format, and procedures over time to ensure the examination continues to reflect current knowledge and professional practice. The version of the examination blueprint in effect at the time of scheduling shall govern.

Section 6 Professional Competency Assessment

The Professional Competency Assessment (PCA) is the applied, case-based component of the SCBC examination. Where the Knowledge Assessment tests command of advanced behavioral science, the PCA tests a candidate's ability to manage a complex rehabilitation case from assessment through evolving follow-up — the core work of a Senior Canine Behavior Consultant.

Across five randomized advanced behavior cases, candidates demonstrate competency in:

- Case assessment.
- Functional behavior assessment.
- Differential considerations.
- Risk assessment.
- Welfare assessment.
- Rehabilitation planning.
- Prioritization.
- Client education.
- Veterinary collaboration.
- Professional judgement.
- Ethical decision-making.
- Progress evaluation.
- Modification of rehabilitation strategies.
- Determining referral, where appropriate.

Professional Competency Assessments are evaluated by Board Assessors using standardized marking criteria established by the Board, ensuring every candidate is held to the same rigorous, consistent standard.

Why the PCA Matters

- An SCBC manages rehabilitation, not just intervention — a case that evolves over weeks or months, with treatment strategies that must be revisited as new information emerges. The Professional Competency Assessment exists to verify that a candidate can manage that full arc, not just diagnose a single moment in a case.

Section 7 Remote Examination & Proctoring

The SCBC certification examination is completed remotely under live proctoring. This allows candidates to test from a location of their choosing while preserving the integrity and consistency of the examination process.

Technical Requirements

- A functioning webcam is required for the duration of the examination.
- A functioning microphone is required for the duration of the examination.
- A stable, reliable internet connection is required.
- The candidate's camera must remain active and visible to the proctor throughout the entire examination.

Before the Examination Begins

- Candidates will be asked to complete a room scan showing the full testing area.
- Candidates must present valid, government-issued photo identification for verification.

During the Examination

- No notes are permitted in the testing area.
- No electronic assistance of any kind is permitted.

Examination Integrity

- Cheating, attempted cheating, or examination misconduct of any kind may result in immediate termination of the examination, forfeiture of the examination fee, denial or revocation of certification, and permanent disqualification from future Board programs.

Section 8 Scheduling, Rescheduling & Retesting

Scheduling

Candidates must schedule their certification examination within six months of examination fee payment. If the examination is not scheduled within this window, the examination fee is forfeited unless an extension has been approved by the Board in advance. Extension requests are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Technical Issues

If a candidate experiences a verified technical issue that prevents completion of the examination, the matter will be reviewed by the Board. Where the Board determines that a technical failure was outside the candidate's control, the candidate may be offered the opportunity to reschedule at no additional cost.

Missed Examinations

Candidates who fail to attend a scheduled examination without prior notice to the Board will be treated as having used their examination attempt, subject to the retesting policy below.

Retesting

Candidates who do not achieve a passing score may retake the examination subject to the following conditions:

- A two-week waiting period is required before a retest may be scheduled.
- The entire certification examination, including the Knowledge Assessment and the Professional Competency Assessment, must be retaken.
- A retake fee of \$75 USD applies.
- The retake examination must be completed within two months of the original attempt.

Section 9 Preparing for the Examination

The purpose of examination preparation is to ensure candidates enter the certification examination with a solid, working command of advanced behavioral science, and the clinical reasoning and professional judgment needed to manage complex rehabilitation cases — not to memorize isolated facts.

The Official SCBC textbook is released once the examination fee has been paid. Candidates are encouraged to supplement the official textbook with the scientific literature and additional educational resources listed in Section 10, and to draw directly on their own practical experience managing behavior cases.

Suggested Study Approach

Candidates preparing for the SCBC examination are encouraged to combine three complementary sources of preparation: the Official SCBC textbook and recommended scientific literature for advanced theoretical grounding; case-based preparation, working through realistic rehabilitation scenarios end-to-end; and their own practical experience and professional judgment, which the Professional Competency Assessment is specifically designed to draw upon.

As noted in the introduction to this handbook, the Candidate Handbook itself is not intended to serve as study material. It governs the certification process; the Official SCBC textbook, recommended reading, and the candidate's own professional experience are the appropriate foundations for examination preparation.

Section 10 Recommended Reading

Required

Official Senior Canine Behavior Consultant (SCBC) Textbook — released upon examination payment.

Recommended

- A is for Aggression — Benjamin McGill.
- Clinical Behavioral Medicine for Small Animals — Karen Overall.
- Handbook of Applied Dog Behavior and Training — Steven R. Lindsay.
- Canine Behavior: Insights and Answers — Bonnie V. Beaver.
- Canine Behavior: A Photo Illustrated Handbook — Barbara Handelman.

- The Other End of the Leash — Patricia B. McConnell.
- How Dogs Learn — Mary Burch & Jon Bailey.

Recommended reading is intended to deepen understanding and is not mandatory unless otherwise specified by the Board. Candidates may use equivalent educational resources at their discretion.

Section 11 Examination Content Outline

The certification examination is built from the following blueprint. Each domain is weighted according to its relative importance to competent, independent management of complex behavior rehabilitation cases, and is assessed through the Knowledge Assessment, the Professional Competency Assessment, or both.

Examination Domain	Weight	What It Covers
Advanced Learning Theory	8%	Advanced application of learning theory to the design of long-term behavior rehabilitation programs.
Functional Behavior Assessment	8%	Comprehensive functional assessment integrating case history, observation, and environmental factors.
Behavior Rehabilitation Planning	10%	Design, sequencing, and prioritization of comprehensive rehabilitation programs for complex cases.
Advanced Canine Communication	5%	Nuanced interpretation of body language and communication across complex, high-stakes presentations.
Emotional States & Motivation	5%	The role of emotional processes and motivation in complex, treatment-resistant behavior.
Aggression	10%	Assessment and rehabilitation planning for aggression cases, including risk-aware management.
Fear & Anxiety	8%	Advanced assessment and rehabilitation of fear- and anxiety-driven behavior.
Reactivity	6%	Rehabilitation planning for reactivity across a range of triggers and contexts.
Resource Guarding	5%	Assessment and management of resource guarding, including multi-dog and family-safety considerations.
Separation-Related Behaviors	5%	Assessment and rehabilitation planning for separation-related behavior.
Multi-Dog Household Behavior	4%	Behavior dynamics and rehabilitation planning specific to multi-dog households.
Predatory Behavior	3%	Recognition and management of predatory behavior sequences.

Welfare Assessment	5%	Ongoing welfare assessment throughout rehabilitation, including quality-of-life considerations.
Medical & Behavioral Differentials	6%	Distinguishing medical and neurological contributors from primarily behavioral presentations.
Veterinary Collaboration	3%	Effective collaboration with veterinarians and veterinary behaviorists across a case.
Risk Assessment	5%	Ongoing risk assessment and communication throughout a rehabilitation program.
Client Communication	3%	Communicating complex findings and evolving recommendations to clients.
Professional Ethics	3%	Application of the Board's Code of Ethics to advanced, high-stakes case management.
Professional Judgment	2%	Sound decision-making under the ambiguity and evolving conditions typical of complex cases.
Scope of Practice	1%	Recognizing the boundaries of the SCBC credential and referring to B.C.C.B. or veterinary care when appropriate.

Section 12 Certification After Passing

Candidates who achieve a passing score receive the following upon certification:

- A printable digital certificate.
- An official certification number.
- A digital certification badge for professional use.
- The official SCBC certification seal.
- A listing in the Board's public certification directory.

Digital certification materials remain available for download for the duration of the certification period, up to renewal. Newly certified professionals should review the Certification Marks section of the Board's Terms & Conditions for guidance on the appropriate use of Board certification marks, logos, and titles.

Certification carries ongoing professional responsibilities, including adherence to the Board's Code of Ethics, accurate representation of the credential, and practice within the defined scope described in Section 14.

Section 13 Renewal

SCBC certification is valid for three years from the date of issue. Unlike the CBA and CBC credentials, SCBC renewal requires documented continuing education.

- Thirty Continuing Education Hours are required during every renewal cycle.

- Continuing education may be completed through any reputable provider.
- Documentation of completed continuing education must be submitted to the Board.
- Renewal requires payment of a \$100 USD renewal fee.
- Renewal requires agreement to abide by the Board's current Code of Ethics.

Lapsed Certification

Certification lapsed for less than one year may be renewed upon Board approval, subject to submission of outstanding continuing education documentation and the renewal fee.

Retesting After Expiration

Certifications expired for one year or longer require successful completion of the current SCBC certification examination in order to reinstate certification. The Board reserves the right to revise renewal requirements over time; the requirements published at the time of renewal shall govern.

Section 14 Scope of Practice

Senior Canine Behavior Consultants are qualified to independently assess, develop, implement, monitor, and modify comprehensive behavior rehabilitation programs for complex companion dog behavior cases.

Within Scope

SCBC professionals are expected to:

- Manage advanced behavior rehabilitation cases.
- Develop individualized rehabilitation strategies.
- Monitor long-term progress.
- Modify treatment plans as cases evolve.
- Conduct advanced behavioral assessments.
- Collaborate with veterinarians.
- Recognize medical concerns requiring referral.
- Supervise or mentor less experienced professionals where appropriate.
- Exercise advanced professional judgement.
- Practice within the Board's Code of Ethics.

Outside Scope — Referral Required

Cases at the outer edge of professional complexity, and situations calling for the leadership responsibilities associated with the Board's highest credential, fall to the Board Certified Canine Behaviorist (B.C.C.B.). SCBC professionals should also recognize and refer any case in which a medical or neurological cause is suspected to a licensed veterinarian, consistent with the collaborative approach expected throughout the certification pathway.

A Note on Referral

- Referring a case outside one's scope of practice is not a professional shortcoming — it is a core ethical obligation. The Board's Code of Ethics requires certified professionals to practice only within the limits of their competence and to refer clients to appropriately qualified professionals when a case exceeds that competence.

Section 15 Candidate Responsibilities

Every candidate is responsible for upholding the standards of the certification process, both during the application and examination process and afterward, as a certified professional. Candidates and certified professionals agree to:

- Submit an honest, accurate application.
- Conduct themselves professionally throughout every stage of the certification process.
- Practice ethically, consistent with the Board's Code of Ethics.
- Maintain the confidentiality of examination materials.
- Comply with all published Board policies.
- Uphold examination integrity at all times.
- Provide accurate information to the Board at all times.
- Communicate respectfully with Board staff, assessors, and fellow candidates.

Section 16 Appeals

Candidates who believe an error occurred during the application or examination process may submit an appeal to the Board within 30 days of the relevant decision or event.

Appeals are accepted only for the following:

- Administrative errors.
- Technical issues affecting the examination.
- Examination procedure irregularities.

Appeals are not accepted on the basis of disagreement with individual examination answers or scoring, including the Professional Competency Assessment.

All appeals are reviewed by the Board. The Board's determination following this review is final.

Section 17 Contacting the Board

The Board is available to assist candidates with questions at every stage of the certification process. To ensure the fastest response, please direct your enquiry to the appropriate contact below.

- General enquiries: info@caninebehaviorists.org
- Certification enquiries: certification@caninebehaviorists.org

- Technical support: support@caninebehaviorists.org
- Appeals: appeals@caninebehaviorists.org
- Website: www.caninebehaviorists.org

The Board aims to respond to all enquiries within two to three business days. As a global certification body, the Board does not maintain fixed office hours; enquiries are processed by staff across multiple time zones on an ongoing basis.

Appendix A Board Code of Ethics

All SCBC candidates and certified professionals agree to uphold the Board's Code of Ethics, which governs animal welfare, professional competence, scientific integrity, honesty, respect for clients, professional responsibility, collaboration with other professionals, conflicts of interest, continuing professional development, and public trust.

The complete Code of Ethics is published as a standalone Board document and is available on the Board's website and upon request. Agreement to the Code of Ethics is a condition of both initial certification and every subsequent renewal.

Appendix B Candidate Agreement

By submitting an application for SCBC certification, the candidate acknowledges and agrees to the following:

- I have read and understood the contents of this Candidate Handbook.
- All information provided in my application, including my Professional Experience Declaration and any supporting recommendation letter, is accurate and truthful to the best of my knowledge.
- I agree to abide by the Board's Code of Ethics throughout the duration of my certification.
- I understand that application, examination, certification, and membership fees are non-refundable except as described in this handbook or as required by applicable law.
- I understand that certification is awarded solely at the discretion of the Board in accordance with its published policies and procedures.
- I agree to maintain the confidentiality of all examination materials, including Professional Competency Assessment case content, and to refrain from any form of examination misconduct.
- I understand that providing false information, submitting a falsified recommendation letter, or engaging in examination misconduct may result in application denial, examination failure, permanent disqualification, or revocation of certification.

Appendix C Board Certification Pathway

The Board's certification pathway is designed to support professional growth over the course of a career. Candidates may progress through the following levels as their experience and expertise develop:

Canine Behavior Assistant (CBA)

The foundational credential for those beginning their journey in canine behavior.

Canine Behavior Consultant (CBC)

For professionals working independently and applying evidence-based practices to a broader range of behavioral concerns.

Senior Canine Behavior Consultant (SCBC)

Recognizes experienced professionals with advanced knowledge and a proven record of professional results. Addressed in full by this handbook.

Board Certified Canine Behaviorist (B.C.C.B.)

The Board's highest credential, recognizing exceptional knowledge, ethics, leadership, and experience within the profession.

Requirements, fees, and examination details for the CBA, CBC, and B.C.C.B. credentials are described in their respective candidate handbooks, available on the Board's website.

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