



SPECIALTY CERTIFICATION AND RESIDENCY TRAINING MANUAL: LARGE ANIMAL INTERNAL MEDICINE (LAIM)

Certification and Residency Training Manual (LAIM CM) for Residents, Candidates, Sponsoring Institutions, Program Directors, Resident Advisors, Supervising Diplomates, and Secondary-Specialty Supervising Diplomates

Effective July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025

The information contained in this Manual becomes effective on July 1, 2024. It represents the current policies, procedures, and requirements for individuals involved in the certification processes of the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine (synonyms: ACVIM or the College).

ACVIM policies, procedures and requirements are subject to periodic review and change. All residents, Candidates, sponsoring institutions, program directors, resident advisors, supervising diplomates, and secondary-specialty supervising diplomates must read the current and relevant Certification and Residency Training Manuals.

While a concerted effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this document, if clarification is required, program directors, resident advisors, supervising Diplomates, secondary-specialty supervising Diplomates, residents, and Candidates should contact the ACVIM certification and accreditation staff at the ACVIM office, preferably by email at certification@acvim.org, or by mail or phone, as referenced below.

If program directors, resident advisors, supervising Diplomates, secondary-specialty supervising Diplomates residents, and/or Candidates have any questions, or if concerns arise about proposed or actual changes that could impact the certification and/or residency training processes, they should contact the ACVIM certification and accreditation staff at the ACVIM office, preferably by email at certification@acvim.org or by mail or phone, as referenced below.

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CONTENTS

SPECIALTY CERTIFICATION AND RESIDENCY TRAINING MANUAL:	
LARGE ANIMAL INTERNAL MEDICINE (LAIM)	i
1 LAIM DOCUMENTS AND FORMS	4
2 DEFINITIONS FOR LAIM CANDIDACY AND RESIDENCY TRAINING PROGRAMS	4
3 LARGE ANIMAL INTERNAL MEDICINE RESIDENCY TRAINING PROGRAMS	4
3.A ACCEPTABLE LAIM RTPS	5
3.B LAIM RTP REGISTRATION AND EVALUATION	5
3.C LAIM CANDIDATE REGISTRATION	5
3.D GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF THE LAIM RTP	5
3.E SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR THE LAIM RTP	7
4 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES ASSOCIATED WITH LAIM CANDIDACY AND RTPS	13
4.A ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SPONSORING INSTITUTION (SI)	13
4.B RESPONSIBILITIES OF SECONDARY TRAINING SITES	14
4.C RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LAIM PROGRAM DIRECTOR (PD)	14
4.D RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LAIM RESIDENT ADVISOR	15
4.E RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LAIM SUPERVISING DIPLOMATE (SD)	16
4.F RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LAIM RESIDENT	16
4.G RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LAIM CANDIDATE	16
5 CLINICAL MILESTONES FOR LAIM RESIDENTS	16
5.A CLINICAL MILESTONES OFR FIRST-YEAR LAIM RESIDENTS	16
5.B CLINICAL MILESTONES FOR SECOND-YEAR LAIM RESIDENTS	17
5.C CLINICAL MILESTONES FOR THIRD-YEAR LAIM RESIDENTS	17
6 RESIDENT EVALUATION	17
6.A RESIDENT CASE LOGS	18
6.B RESIDENT PROCEDURE LOGS	18
6.C EDUCATION LOGS	18
7 PUBLICATION REQUIREMENT	18
8 THE ACVIM GENERAL EXAMINATION	20
9 LAIM CREDENTIALS	20
9.A PROCEDURES FOR SUBMITTING LAIM CREDENTIALS	20

9.B	LAIM CREDENTIALS ITEMS TO SUBMIT	21
9.C	EVALUATION OF CREDENTIALS FOR LAIM SPECIALTY EXAMINATION	21
10	LAIM SPECIALTY EXAMINATION	22
10.A	LAIM SPECIALTY EXAMINATION REGISTRATION AND FEE	22
10.B	LAIM SPECIALTY EXAMINATION CONTENT AND FORMAT	22
11	CORRESPONDENCE, INQUIRES, ISSUES AND COMPLAINTS	23
12	MAINTENANCE OF CREDENTIALS (MOC)	23
	APPENDIX A: IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS	24
	LAIM CLINICAL WRITING ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION COMMITTEE (CWADC)	24
	LAIM CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE (LAIM CC)	24
	LAIM OMBUDSPERSON	24
	LAIM PROGRAM DIRECTOR (PD)	24
	LAIM RESIDENCY TRAINING COMMITTEE (RTC)	24
	LAIM RESIDENT ADVISOR (RA)	25
	LAIM SECONDARY-SPECIALTY SUPERVISING DIPLOMATES (SSSDS)	25
	LAIM SUPERVISING DIPLOMATE (SD)	25
	LAIM TRAINING HOURS	25
	LAIM TRAINING WEEKS	25
	NON-TRADITIONAL RESIDENCY TRAINING PROGRAM IN LAIM	25

The ACVIM certifies specialists in large animal internal medicine (LAIM). Large animal internists focus on treating diseases of the internal systems in horses, cattle, sheep, goats, camelids, and pigs. This Manual explains the policies, procedures and requirements for Candidates working towards certification in this specialty, and the specific requirements for ACVIM LAIM residency training programs (RTPs), that are in addition to the requirements specified in the Certification Manual (CM), which are required of all Candidates in all specialties.

1 LAIM DOCUMENTS AND FORMS

The following may not be an exhaustive list of applicable documents and forms. Please navigate the ACVIM website for additional documentation and forms.

- [Online Candidate Registration Form](#) (via Candidate Dashboard)
- [Registration to take the General Examination](#) (via Candidate dashboard).
- [General Examination blueprint, reading list & study resources](#) (60 days before the examination date).
- [LAIM Credentials packet](#) (prerequisite for the Specialty Examination)
- [LAIM CWA Information Packet \(2022-2023\)](#) (submitted via Candidate Dashboard)
- [Registration to take the LAIM Specialty Examination](#) (via Candidate dashboard).
- [LAIM Specialty Examination blueprint, reading list & study resources](#) (60 days before the examination date).

2 DEFINITIONS FOR LAIM CANDIDACY AND RESIDENCY TRAINING PROGRAMS

Review important definitions related to the specialty of large animal internal medicine (LAIM) in [Appendix A: Important LAIM Related Definitions](#). These definitions expand upon those provided in the ACVIM Certification Manual as they pertain specifically to the specialty of LAIM.

3 LARGE ANIMAL INTERNAL MEDICINE RESIDENCY TRAINING PROGRAMS

The residency training program (RTP) is the foundation for the education and training of ACVIM LAIM Candidates seeking certification as ACVIM LAIM Diplomates.

All the general requirements for residents and residency training found in the ACVIM Certification Manual must be met, in addition to the specific LAIM requirements contained in this Manual. The standards contained in this Manual are the minimum requirements for the specialty of LAIM. Any ACVIM-approved LAIM RTP may include additional requirements above the minimum required by this Manual. Those additional requirements then become part of that specific RTP. A resident in such an RTP must fulfill all the additional requirements of that RTP, along with the minimum requirements in this Manual, in order to become an ACVIM LAIM Diplomat, as those additional requirements are necessary for that resident to complete the RTP and obtain a residency certificate.

3.A ACCEPTABLE LAIM RTPS

A registry of the current ACVIM-approved LAIM RTPs, as evaluated by the RTC, is available via the ACVIM website, or upon request from the ACVIM office.

3.B LAIM RTP REGISTRATION AND EVALUATION

The ACVIM's policies, procedures and criteria for RTP registration, annual re-approval, probation and termination are standardized across all ACVIM specialties and are described in the Certification Manual (sections 3.C.4-6).

3.C LAIM CANDIDATE REGISTRATION

The ACVIM's policies, procedures and criteria for resident registration as an ACVIM Candidate in an ACVIM-approved RTP are standardized across all ACVIM specialties and are described in the Certification Manual (sections 3.C.3).

3.D GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF THE LAIM RTP

3.D.1 PATIENT CARE AND TECHNICAL SKILL

A LAIM RTP ensures that residents provide primary patient care to which they are capable based on their level of training. They manage cases in all facets of veterinary internal medicine, including clinical pathology, pathology, radiology, ultrasonography, advanced imaging, and endoscopy.

A LAIM RTP will meet objectives related to patient care and technical skill so that upon completion of the RTP, residents will be able to do the following:

- Design a comprehensive diagnostic and treatment plan for either one animal or for a group of animals as appropriate for the circumstances.
- Design a plan to relieve the pain and suffering of patients.
- Provide emergency and intensive care for patients.
- Employ all medical, diagnostic, and treatment procedures considered essential in the LAIM job or task analysis competently.

3.D.2 KNOWLEDGE OF LARGE ANIMAL INTERNAL MEDICINE

A LAIM RTP will meet objectives related to large animal internal medicine so that upon completion of the RTP, residents will be able to do the following:

- Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of large animal medical diseases, etiology, epidemiology, pathophysiology, immunology, pathology, and therapy.
- Demonstrate competency in the problem-oriented approach to patient diagnosis that includes the following:
- Collecting signalment and history.

- Performing a thorough physical examination.
- Developing an appropriate problem list.
- Listing differential diagnoses for the identified problems.
- Knowing which follow-up procedures or tests are required to rule in or out each of the differential diagnoses (e.g., laboratory tests and imaging).
- Demonstrate knowledge of the disposition of drugs used to treat a food animal, including the potential for adulteration of the food supply, and know how to mitigate the potential for residues in meat and milk.
- Demonstrate a working knowledge of the Animal Medicinal Drug Use Clarification Act.
- Design and implement disease prevention and biosecurity protocols.

3.D.3 TEACHING SKILLS AND LIFELONG LEARNING

A LAIM RTP will meet objectives related to teaching skills and lifelong learning so that, upon completion of the RTP, residents will be able to do the following:

- Demonstrate effective clinical teaching and instructional skills that result from participating regularly in ward rounds; giving seminars to veterinary students, supervisors, or resident peers; and being involved in other educational endeavors.
- Evaluate and assimilate scientific evidence as a lifelong learner to continually improve patient care.

3.D.4 INTERPERSONAL AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS

A LAIM RTP will meet objectives related to interpersonal and communication skills so that upon completion of the RTP, residents will be able to do the following:

- Use skills for clearly communicating with clients, students, colleagues, staff, and the public.
- Articulate findings clearly in writing as demonstrated by medical recordkeeping, patient discharge summaries, and peer-reviewed publications.

3.D.5 RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES

A LAIM RTP will meet objectives related to scholarly activities so that upon completion of the RTP, residents will be able to do the following:

- Extend their knowledge of the basic principles of research for testing hypotheses and answering clinically important questions.
- Understand the principles of evidence-based medicine.
- Participate regularly in critical review of the LAIM literature (journal club).
- Participate in scholarly activities, such as research projects and peer-reviewed publication.
- Present their findings at scientific meetings.

3.D.6 PROFESSIONALISM

A LAIM RTP will meet objectives related to professionalism so that upon completion of the RTP, residents will be able to do the following:

- Demonstrate professionalism including tact and diplomacy, composure under pressure, initiative, organization, and receptiveness toward guidance.
- Demonstrate compassion and practice excellent patient care while adhering to ethical principles.

3.E SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR THE LAIM RTP

It is incumbent upon the SI, PD, RAs, SDs, SSSDs, residents and Candidates, as well as relevant ACVIM staff and committee members, to be aware of these RTP requirements, and to collectively work towards ensuring they are being fulfilled.

3.E.1 DURATION OF A LAIM RTP

An approved LAIM RTP must be a minimum duration of 104 weeks.

3.E.2 INTENSIVE CLINICAL TRAINING IN LAIM

A minimum of 52 of the 104 weeks of a LAIM RTP must consist of intensive clinical training in LAIM. Additional weeks spent in LAIM training are desirable. During this time, the resident must be under the direct supervision of 1 or more LAIM SDs.

Residents must actively participate in patient management, including initial evaluation, diagnostic test selection and interpretation, case management and decision-making, client (owner) communication, appropriate follow-up, and prompt professional communication with referring veterinarians. An ACVIM LAIM SD must directly supervise and review case management.

Residents must maintain complete medical records for all patients.

During LAIM clinical training involving patient management, residents must attend and participate in daily (weekday) clinical rounds with at least one LAIM SD present. In an RTP where veterinary students are integral to and participating in hospital activities, residents should lead rounds discussions at least once weekly with an SD present.

3.E.3 INTENSIVE CLINICAL TRAINING IN ACVIM SECONDARY SPECIALTIES

A minimum of 16 weeks of the remaining minimum of 52 weeks of a LAIM RTP must consist of clinical training under the direct supervision of 1 or more SDs and/or SSSDs who are ACVIM Diplomates or ECEIM Diplomates.

At least 6 of these 16 weeks must be under the supervision of Diplomates other than the primary SDs, which can include ACVIM Diplomates in cardiology, neurology, nutrition, oncology and/or SAIM, or additional ACVIM LAIM Diplomates or ECEIM Diplomates. These 6

weeks cannot be supervised by the SDs supervising the aforementioned 52 weeks of intensive clinical training in LAIM at SI, if the RTP has fewer than 2 ACVIM LAIM Diplomates at either the primary or other sites.

3.E.4 TRAINING IN NON-ACVIM SECONDARY SPECIALTIES

The remaining minimum of 36 weeks of a LAIM RTP, should consist predominantly of additional LAIM training or training in related fields. This may include rotations in related clinical fields, such as dermatology, ophthalmology, surgery, theriogenology, emergency medicine and critical care, clinical pharmacology, and/or anesthesiology.

Some of these 36 weeks must also include nonclinical responsibilities, such as writing, research, teaching, attendance at scientific meetings, study time for examinations, and vacation. However, no more than 2 weeks (10 business days) of vacation per year can be counted toward these 36 weeks. The following required experiences in radiology and pathology can also be counted within these 36 weeks.

3.E.5 DIAGNOSTIC IMAGING TRAINING

This remaining minimum of 36 weeks of a LAIM RTP must include two weeks (80 hours) training in diagnostic imaging. A minimum of one week (40 hours) must be in direct, one-on-one contact with a Board-Certified veterinary radiologist interpreting radiograph, learning, and evaluating the results of special imaging techniques, and attending radiology rounds and/or seminars. The second week (40 hours) of diagnostic imaging must be spent training in ultrasonography, under the direct supervision of a ABVS or EBVS Board-Certified radiologist and/or under the direct supervision of an ACVIM LAIM Diplomate with advanced skills in ultrasonography. The diagnostic imaging training may be accrued in training hours rather than training weeks.

3.E.6 PATHOLOGY TRAINING

This remaining minimum of 36 weeks of a LAIM RTP must also include one week (40 hours) in direct, one-on-one contact with a Board-Certified veterinary clinical pathologist or anatomic pathologist; remote training is acceptable when necessary. The training includes evaluating clinical pathologic findings, performing necropsy examinations, reviewing cytology preparations and biopsies, and attending clinical pathologic conferences or seminars. The pathology training may be accrued in training hours rather than training weeks.

3.E.7 EXTERNAL (AFFILIATED) ROTATIONS

Residents may participate in external rotations during LAIM clinical training that are not specified in the RTP registration document. However, the PD or the RA must request approval for these rotations from the LAIM RTC before the resident starts the rotation for the rotation to count toward the 104 weeks of a LAIM RTP.

3.E.8 RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY ACTIVITY

At least 12 weeks of the remaining 36 weeks of a LAIM RTP must be allocated for research and scholarly activity in the pursuit of publication. Residents are encouraged to participate in clinical or laboratory research projects, including the design, execution, evaluation, presentation of an abstract at the annual ACVIM Forum, and publication.

Documentation of the completion of at least one of the above activities is required as part of the completion of the residency training overview form submitted as a component of the LAIM credentials packet.

Proof of completion of this research requirement can include any of the following:

- Copy of a first author published research paper in a peer-reviewed journal documenting original work undertaken predominantly during the RTP, or letter of acceptance (unconditional) of a first-author research paper from a peer-reviewed journal, documenting the same.
- Evidence of presentation of an abstract (oral or poster) at a scientific meeting, documenting original work undertaken predominantly during the RTP.
- Documented (letter from RA) completion of a prospective or retrospective research project, undertaken predominantly during the RTP, that is unpublished (e.g., thesis).
- Documented (letter from RA) submission of a prospective research grant/project formulated predominantly during the RTP, pertinent to the Candidate's specialty.
- Documented (letter from RA and/or transcript) completion of graduate course work in research methods, biostatistics, and/or research ethics.
- Documented (letter from RA and/or certificate) completion of a minimum of 25 hours of research-focused seminars or classes of an appropriately advanced level. These may be offered by the ACVIM, through online programs, or by other institutions. These seminars or classes will cover subjects such as the following:
 - Critical evaluation of the veterinary medical/biomedical literature.
 - Grant writing.
 - Study design and participation in clinical trials.
 - Biostatistics.
 - Research ethics.

3.E.9 PUBLICATION REQUIREMENT

A publication is a requirement for candidacy in LAIM, i.e., to become a Diplomate of the ACVIM in LAIM. However, a publication is not a mandatory requirement of an ACVIM-approved LAIM RTP. Despite this clarification, the ACVIM expects the SI, PD, RA and SDs to provide adequate support in the Candidate's work towards a publication. Moreover, if an ACVIM-

approved LAIM RTP decides to specifically require a publication, a certificate of RTP completion cannot be presented to the Candidate until the publication requirement is fulfilled. The research and scholarly activity requirement of an ACVIM-approved LAIM RTP may be fulfilled by an approved publication, or alternative means.

3.E.10 CLINICAL WRITING ASSESSMENTS (CWAS)

In addition to the publication requirement, LAIM residents and Candidates must complete two CWAs.

The purposes of the CWAs are to:

- Verify that the resident has been working in the area of LAIM.
- Demonstrate the resident's ability to use medical principles in the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of animal disease.
- Display the resident's ability to communicate medical observations and data to colleagues in a clear, concise, and organized written manner.

The CWA requirement is both a training exercise and an assessment tool. It is expected that residents will learn and benefit from the experience by reviewing cases in-depth and communicating their thought processes clearly and professionally. Through a back and forth-writing process with one or more internal reviews by their RA and/or SDs, residents are expected to improve their written communication skills by developing concise and organized writing skills. Additionally, the CWA is used by the RA to assess the resident's ability to reach an acceptable level of expertise in written communication of medical principles in the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of animal disease.

The LAIM credentials packets for both 2-year and 3-year Candidates, available on the ACVIM website, or by request from the ACVIM office, provide more detailed guidelines for case selection, preparing, formatting and submitting CWA documents.

3.E.11 LAIM JOURNAL CLUB

Large animal internal medicine residents must participate in at least 80 hours of journal club throughout the RTP as stated in the Certification Manual. The objective of the journal club is to foster critical thinking and improve the resident's understanding of and ability to interpret scientific and clinical data, including statistical analysis. Journal club typically consists of 1 hour of protected time at which at least one SD must be in attendance, unless extenuating circumstances develop. SSSDs and experts in other disciplines, including statistics, should also be invited to attend. This Manual allows for remote journal club and joint journal clubs between SIs or training sites.

Large animal internal medicine residents are encouraged to keep a log of journal club activities that includes the date, journal articles discussed, and those in attendance.

3.E.12 DIDACTIC LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Residents must participate in the following didactic learning opportunities, facilitated by the SI: LAIM topic review sessions, formal conferences, continuing education conferences, and formal examination preparation sessions.

Residents are encouraged to keep a log of all seminars and didactic lectures they attend for presentation to their RAs and other SDs during a progress review. Each log entry should include the seminar or lecture date, topic, and presenter.

This Manual allows for remote participation (primarily RACE acceptable) when necessary.

FORMAL TOPIC REVIEW AND EXAMINATION PREPARATION SESSIONS

A LAIM RTP must provide intensive review sessions or courses for residents on topics covered in the General Examination and LAIM Specialty Examination. The resident must attend or participate in at least 80 hours of such review sessions or courses during the RTP.

Attending daily clinical rounds does not fulfill this requirement, although structured courses and seminars may.

This requirement can be met in part by attending or participating remotely in an ACVIM advanced continuing education (ACE) course, the ACVIM Forum, or other high-quality continuing education conferences or meetings (with prior approval by the RTC).

FORMAL CONFERENCES

Large animal internal medicine residents are expected to attend formal conferences in LAIM and related disciplines throughout the RTP. Examples may include conferences or seminars in clinicopathology, anatomic pathology, internal medicine and/or other LAIM-related disciplines. Conferences or seminars given within a veterinary practice or hospital, or at a medical school or medical teaching hospital, are acceptable. Remote participation is acceptable.

FORMAL PRESENTATION(S)

The LAIM resident must give 1 formal presentation at such a formal conference a minimum of once per residency year. A presentation at a regional, state, or national meeting may also fulfill this requirement. Remote presentations at approved conferences and meetings are acceptable. Documentation of these presentations, for example a copy of the program from the regional, state, or national meeting, must be included in the LAIM credentials packet.

CONTINUING EDUCATION CONFERENCE(S)

Large animal internal medicine residents must attend or participate in at least 1 major state, regional, national, or international veterinary medical or human medical continuing

education conference during the RTP. Documentation of attendance at the conference must be included in the LAIM credentials packet.

LAIM residents are strongly encouraged to give a scientific presentation at a regional, state, or national meeting at least once during the RTP. This may fulfill the aforementioned requirement for a formal presentation.

3.E.13 STUDY TIME

A minimum of 4 weeks (preferably without emergency duty) of study time must be allocated to the resident to prepare for the ACVIM General Examination. Study time should be scheduled to immediately precede the examination date by as much as is practical.

An additional minimum of 4 weeks (preferably without emergency duty) of study time must be allocated to the resident to prepare for the LAIM Specialty Examination. Study time should be scheduled to immediately precede the examination date by as much as is practical.

3.E.14 VACATION AND PERSONAL TIME

Vacation time varies between SIs, but no more than 6 weeks in total can be included in the 36 weeks for 3-year RTPs, and no more than 4 weeks in total can be included in the 36 weeks for 2-year RTPs. Additional vacation and personal time, however, may be granted to a resident, just not counted in RTP training time.

An RTP is expected to provide reasonable accommodation for a resident's medical needs (e.g., doctor's appointments, etc.).

3.E.14 RESIDENCY TRAINING PROGRAM INTERRUPTION

In some circumstances, a resident may need to take a leave of absence that prevents them from completing an RTP on time. In such cases, the LAIM RTC must be contacted to approve an extension of the RTP. When residency training resumes, training must be accomplished in blocks of at least 2 consecutive weeks, with at least 12 weeks of training completed in each residency year (a residency year is the 12-month period immediately following the resident resuming their training program). When a leave of absence is necessary, the resident has a maximum of 5 years from the end of completing the *RTP* to achieve board certification in LAIM.

Training interruptions may also occur if a resident must switch from one RTP to another to fulfill all RTP and credentialing requirements. In such cases, the following steps must be taken:

- A new training program must be identified and that RTP's PD must submit a proposal for a non-traditional RTP for that resident to the LAIM RTC.
- The resident must re-register with the ACVIM in the new RTP.
- The LAIM RTC must approve the new RTP before the onset of clinical training.

3.E.15 RTP VARIANCES

Variations to LAIM RTPs may be permitted by the RTC, but a request for a variance will require a detailed explanation from the PD to the RTC, and written permission from the RTC must be granted. In general, such approval will relate to combined residency-graduate degree programs or RTPs that include significant resident research commitments. Variations must be approved by the RTC before the resident includes them as part of the RTP. Documentation relating to approved variations must be included with the Candidate's credentials packet.

3.E.16 ONLINE EXIT INTERVIEW SURVEY

Within 90 days of completing an RTP, residents are strongly encouraged to fill out an online survey regarding the quality of their RTP experience.

Responses are shared with the appropriate PD to provide important feedback regarding their RTP. Data, held strictly confidential, will be published as a 5-year rolling average score per surveyed category calculated for each RTP and will be released every 3 years to ensure the anonymity of Candidates who completed smaller RTPs.

4 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES ASSOCIATED WITH LAIM CANDIDACY AND RTPS

These descriptions expand upon those required by the Certification Manual, as they pertain specifically to the specialty of LAIM.

4.A ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SPONSORING INSTITUTION (SI)

The SI for a LAIM RTP, in partnership with the PD, RA, SD and SSSDs, must ensure a healthy and safe learning and working environment that promotes resident professional advancement, as well as psychological, emotional, and physical well-being. The SI must ensure the availability of all necessary professional, technical, and clerical personnel to best support the cardiology RTP.

4.A.1 DOCUMENTATION AND VERIFICATION

Described in under registration of the RTP. Failure to respond to LAIM RTC requests for information may result in RTP probation or in RTP termination.

4.A.2 LAIM SUPERVISION

In order to host a LAIM RTP, the SI must have at least 2 full-time ACVIM Diplomates, 1 of whom must be an ACVIM Diplomat in the specialty of LAIM.

4.A.3 SUPPORTING DISCIPLINES REQUIRED

In order to host a LAIM RTP, the SI must ensure at least 1 board-certified radiologist, 1 board-certified clinical pathologist, 1 board-certified anatomic pathologist, 1 board-certified

neurologist, and 1 board-certified cardiologist are available for direct or interactive remote consultation with residents.

For fulfillment of the 40 hours of required training with a Board-Certified radiologist and 40 hours of required training with a Board-Certified pathologist, these hours must be spent in one-on-one consultation (face-to-face or remotely) either in defined blocks of time or during the course of case management. For these requirements, the definition of training hours, rather than training weeks, may apply.

4.A.4 FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

The SI must have the following facilities and equipment:

- Standard radiographic, ultrasonographic, electrocardiographic, and endoscopic equipment.
- The ability to provide resident instruction in ultrasonography, endoscopy, blood pressure measurement, and electrodiagnostics by appropriate specialists.
- Ready access to clinical pathology services, including CBC, serum chemistries, blood gases, urinalysis, cytology, parasitology, microbiology, and endocrinology. If these services are not available at the SI, the SI must have arrangements with local and/or regional laboratories to provide these services.
- A 24-hour emergency and intensive care facility, with adequate staffing as allowed by state practice acts.
- Access to MRI, CT, and nuclear medicine is highly recommended but is not required.

4.A.5 DIDACTIC LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

The SI must provide LAIM residents with the aforementioned didactic learning opportunities.

4.B RESPONSIBILITIES OF SECONDARY TRAINING SITES

If adequate personnel or facilities are unavailable for all required resident training at the primary training site, the PD must make arrangements at a secondary training location(s) to fulfill all RTP requirements. The LAIM RTC must approve all secondary training experiences before residents participate in external rotations that contribute to the minimum training requirements of the program.

4.C RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LAIM PROGRAM DIRECTOR (PD)

As defined in Appendix A, a LAIM program director (LAIM PD) is the individual at the SI who assumes overall responsibility for the conduct and integrity of that institution's RTP(s). Unlike some specialties, the specialty of LAIM requires that a LAIM PD must be an ACVIM Diplomate in the specialty of LAIM. When an SI has more than 1 LAIM RTP, 1 PD can be responsible for all RTPs at the SI. There can also be a unique PD for each RTP (typically one PD for a food animal RTP and another PD for an equine RTP), providing each PD is an ACVIM Diplomate in the specialty of LAIM. There will not be more than 1 PD for each LAIM RTP.

Examples of information that a PD must report to the LAIM RTC:

- Changes (addition or deletion) in supervisory personnel such as having too few RAs or SDs for the number of residents in the RTP; no program may have more than three residents for each RA that is listed in the RTP description.
- For programs placed on probation, the PD must provide the LAIM RTC with an updated plan for what will happen to any current residents if no resolution occurs within a 12-month probation period. During that period, the PD provides written updates every 3 months to the LAIM RTC on what is being done to correct the program deficiencies. If the deficiencies are not resolved within the 12-month probation period, the LAIM RTC may terminate the program.
- Alteration of program duration (any proposed alteration must be approved by the RTC before implementation).
- A resident transferring from 1 RTP to another (any proposed transfer requires prior review and approval by the RTC).
- A resident either being placed on probation or being dismissed from the program.
- A resident beginning another RTP.
- A resident enrolling in an institutional graduate program.

At the time of annual RTP renewal, PDs and RAs may be asked to verify resident activities.

If the PD, regardless of RTP standing, fails to acknowledge the LAIM RTC's request for documentation regarding the RTP within 14 days of the request or fails to provide the requested documentation within 30 days of the request, the LAIM RTC will place the RTP on probation. Failure to comply with the LAIM RTC's requests or recommendations in a timely manner while on probation may lead to program termination.

4.D RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LAIM RESIDENT ADVISOR

As defined in Appendix A, the LAIM resident advisor (RA) is the primary individual who monitors the LAIM resident's progress during residency training. A LAIM RA must be an ACVIM Diplomate in the specialty of LAIM. Each LAIM RA may not advise more than 3 residents at any one time. A LAIM RA must also be actively involved as an SD for the assigned residents and be substantially involved in the clinical supervision of assigned residents.

The RA monitors the progress of residents encourages achievement of clinical milestones in a timely manner. The RA must provide each resident with at least two comprehensive written performance evaluations per year, and the results of these evaluations must be shared in person with the resident. Residents should also receive a copy of the written evaluations, and the resident is to sign the RA's copy of the evaluation to document that the resident has received the assessment. If needed to reconcile discrepancies, the LAIM RTC may request copies of these evaluations.

4.E RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LAIM SUPERVISING DIPLOMATE (SD)

As defined in Appendix A, a LAIM supervising diplomate (SD) must be a Board-Certified specialist in the specialty of LAIM. Here, for LAIM SDs, Board-Certified refers to both ACVIM LAIM Diplomates and ECEIM Diplomates. A LAIM SD must be actively involved in the practice of LAIM, maintain clinical competency in the field, and be substantially involved in the clinical supervision of assigned residents.

For the specialty of LAIM, the SD regularly reviews, generally daily, the medical care of patients assigned to a resident. The SD conducts these reviews face-to-face with the resident. If necessary for public health reasons, these reviews may be conducted remotely.

Consultation with other qualified individuals is encouraged; however, it does not replace the regular reviews with a LAIM SD. During after-hours periods (evenings and weekends) the SD should also be available for electronic discussion and consultation, such as telephonic or video conversations, on the care of patients assigned to a resident.

4.F RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LAIM RESIDENT

It is the responsibility of the resident to fulfill all the requirements of the specialty's RTP as outlined in this Manual, while adhering to the highest professional standards and the ACVIM's code of conduct.

4.G RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LAIM CANDIDATE

It is the responsibility of the Candidate to fulfill the requirements of the specialty's certification process as outlined in this Manual, while adhering to the highest professional standards and the ACVIM's code of conduct, in order to become a Diplomate of the ACVIM in the specialty of LAIM. The certification process includes, but is not limited to, fulfilling all the requirements of the specialty's RTP as outlined in this Manual.

Candidates can access this Manual, other relevant information, all relevant forms, and deadlines on the ACVIM website or request said information from the ACVIM office.

It is the Candidate's responsibility to be aware of all certification and RTP requirements, other relevant information and deadlines. It is the Candidate's responsibility to maintain a record of all communications, receipts, and essential documentation.

5 CLINICAL MILESTONES FOR LAIM RESIDENTS

5.A CLINICAL MILESTONES OFR FIRST-YEAR LAIM RESIDENTS

By the end of the first year, residents should strive to meet the following clinical milestones:

- Register with the ACVIM within 90 days of beginning the RTP.
- Complete online learning objectives or a webinar series on understanding the credentialing process.

- Submit the Residency Training Oversight (RTO) form by the posted deadline. Candidates who began their RTP off-cycle and have not completed 4 months of RTP by the submission deadline are exempt from this requirement.

5.B CLINICAL MILESTONES FOR SECOND-YEAR LAIM RESIDENTS

By the end of the second year, residents should strive to meet the following clinical milestones:

- Complete at least 1 training week equivalent to 40 training hours of the diagnostic imaging requirements.
- Complete one training week equivalent to 40 training hours of the pathology requirement.
- Take the ACVIM General Examination (strongly recommended).
- Submit their credentials packet after completing at least 20 months of the RTP. For credentials to be reviewed, the Candidate must first pay the credentials fee.

5.C CLINICAL MILESTONES FOR THIRD-YEAR LAIM RESIDENTS

By the end of the third year, residents should strive to meet the following clinical milestones:

- Submit two CWAs (together or separately throughout the second and third year; first years are not eligible to submit a CWA).
- Complete the remaining training week equivalent of 40 training hours of the diagnostic imaging requirements.
- Submit a manuscript (strongly recommended) to a peer-reviewed journal for consideration as a publication.
- Take the LAIM Specialty Examination (strongly recommended).
- Submit their credentials final documentation, if applicable.

6 RESIDENT EVALUATION

RTPs are responsible for conducting performance evaluations (verbal and written) of each resident every 6 months, preferably including feedback from all SDs and other SSSDs, who have overseen training in the preceding 6 months.

Evaluations should include a rubric that measures various aspects of clinical performance, teaching ability (when applicable), communication skills, and scholarly activity as well as progress toward clinical milestones.

The resident must sign the RA's copy of the written evaluation to document that the RA has reviewed the evaluation with the resident and provided the resident with their own copy of the evaluation. The LAIM RTC may request copies of these evaluations during a program review.

RAs must also ensure that residents who have completed 6 months or more of their program and have not or are not submitting their credentials submit annual progress reports to the ACVIM by the required deadline.

6.A RESIDENT CASE LOGS

Residents are encouraged to keep a log of their cases for presentation to their RAs and to other SDs during a progress review.

6.B RESIDENT PROCEDURE LOGS

Residents are encouraged to keep a log of all procedures they complete for presentation to their RAs and other SDs during a progress review.

6.C EDUCATION LOGS

Residents are encouraged to keep a log of all seminars and didactic lectures they attend for presentation to their RAs and other SDs during a progress review. Each log entry should include the seminar or lecture date, topic, and presenter.

7 PUBLICATION REQUIREMENT

While it is not a requirement of the LAIM RTP, a publication is required for a Candidate to become Board-Certified in LAIM. The Candidate must publish at least one first-author scientific manuscript relevant to LAIM in a refereed scientific, medical, or veterinary medical journal. The purpose of the publication requirement is to ensure that Candidates demonstrate skill in written scientific medical communication, in particular that they display the ability to organize scientific data, communicate these data accurately in writing, and are capable of discussing the scientific findings in the context of the current medical literature. Ideally, the manuscript documents a completed laboratory or clinical investigative research project undertaken during the RTP. Retrospective studies and comprehensive reviews may also be acceptable. The resident must submit an electronic copy of the published or accepted manuscript, with the resident as first author, relevant to the discipline of LAIM that demonstrates critical thinking and expertise in LAIM as part of credentials submission. Manuscripts that were published within the 3 years before the resident's start date may also be submitted to the LAIM CC for consideration toward fulfillment of the publication requirement. The resident must submit to the LAIM CC chair in writing any questions concerning the acceptability of a publication before submitting the publication as part of the LAIM credentials packet.

The manuscript must be written in English and published in a refereed journal. A refereed journal is one governed by policies and procedures established and maintained by an active editorial board that requires critical review and approval of papers submitted by at least one recognized authority on the manuscript's subject. Mainstream journals of major disciplines are acceptable, provided that they adhere to the principles of peer review, and providing the manuscript's subject is in the field of LAIM.

Due to variability in editorial quality and process and due to the proliferation of online journals, the LAIM CC must approve all journals not listed on the acceptable journal list used to meet the publication requirement by a resident, preferably before the resident submits the manuscript for publication. The LAIM publication

requirement guidelines contain details on the LAIM CC journal review process and a list of acceptable journals. Residents seeking approval of a journal not on the acceptable journal list must provide documentation as described in the publication requirement guidelines to the CC. The LAIM CC reviews and may update the acceptable journal list annually based on changes in journal availability, editorial process, and impact factor.

The LAIM CC determines the relevance of the manuscript to the topic of LAIM by assessing whether it meaningfully impacts the scientific understanding of a subject relevant to LAIM or the diagnosis or management of a clinical condition by a specialist in LAIM. The manuscript should demonstrate the proficiency of the resident in understanding the scientific method and study design, including statistics and conducting a comprehensive literature review. The LAIM CC publication requirement guidelines contain current information on factors the LAIM CC considers in assessing the quality of a manuscript. As publication requirement guidelines are certification policies, not residency training requirements, they may change during a residency. As such, every resident and RA should check the most current publication requirement guidelines before submitting a paper for publication to ensure that it will be acceptable to the LAIM CC. A publication is subject to the guidelines in effect at the time the article was submitted to the journal. If guidelines changed after the submission of the manuscript, the Candidate can provide proof of the submission date to ensure that the original guidelines will be used in evaluating their submission.

A resident may submit a published scientific manuscript or a copy of the final acceptance notification from the journal editor to the ACVIM office at any time after the resident successfully registers and enrolls in an approved LAIM RTP. An accepted manuscript is not required before the resident takes the LAIM Specialty Examination. However, the resident is strongly encouraged to meet this requirement before taking the Specialty Examination. The manuscript must be accepted for publication no more than 5 years after the resident completes their RTP.

If the manuscript has not been published, then the resident must submit an electronic copy of the accepted manuscript and acceptance notification. Otherwise, the publication will not be considered by the LAIM CC. The ACVIM Board of Regents (BOR) adopted a standard definition of a manuscript accepted for publication. A manuscript is deemed as accepted for publication when the corresponding author receives one of the following:

- An email from the official email address of the journal or a letter on the journal's letterhead from the editor stating that the manuscript has been accepted for publication.
- An email from the official email address of the journal or a letter on the journal's letterhead from the editor stating that all reviewers have approved the manuscript for publication and the manuscript awaits editing before publication.
- A galley proof of the manuscript with an email from the official email address of the journal or a cover letter from the editor on the journal's letterhead stating that the manuscript is scheduled for publication.

A notice from an editor that states the corresponding author must address reviewer comments, no matter how minor, is considered unacceptable for credentialing purposes. Such a notice implies that the final review of the manuscript is incomplete and that it has not yet been accepted. If a resident is unsure

whether a response from a journal is final acceptance, then that individual should petition the LAIM CC chair in writing for a determination.

Book chapters and conference proceedings are not acceptable to fulfill the publication requirement. Case reports, clinical vignettes, short communications, brief communications, and serial features (e.g., ECG of the month or drug topic of the month) are also not acceptable.

8 THE ACVIM GENERAL EXAMINATION

All ACVIM LAIM Candidates must pass the General Examination in order to be eligible to attain Diplomate status (board certification). Information about the General Examination is outlined in the ACVIM Certification Manual.

9 LAIM CREDENTIALS

Credentials approval (or conditional approval) is a prerequisite for taking an ACVIM Specialty Examination, and for board certification.

9.A PROCEDURES FOR SUBMITTING LAIM CREDENTIALS

*****Always check the ACVIM website for the most up-to-date information before submission; this process is subject to change.*****

The information listed in this section provides an overview of the procedures for submitting credentials. Specific guidelines are in the applicable LAIM credential information packet. Because application requirements change periodically, Candidates must be certain that they are using the most current application and credentials packet. If Candidates have any questions regarding the application process, they should request clarification in writing from the ACVIM office or from the LAIM CC chair well before the submission deadline.

A Candidate who intends to take the LAIM Specialty Examination must submit credentials for the LAIM Specialty Examination so that the ACVIM office receives the credentials packet no later than the date specified on the ACVIM website in the year preceding that examination date. **THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS DEADLINE. CREDENTIALS PACKETS MUST BE SUBMITTED ON THE DUE DATE TO ALLOW ADEQUATE TIME FOR REVIEW BY THE LAIM CC. CREDENTIALS PACKETS WILL NOT BE REVIEWED IF THE CREDENTIALS FEE HAS NOT BEEN PAID BEFORE THE SUBMISSION OF THE CREDENTIALS PACKET.**

Candidates may submit the completed credentials packet and credentials fee online to the ACVIM office following the completion of 20 months of the RTP. The LAIM CC only evaluates credentials packets for Candidates who have paid the credentials fee. Payment of the fee triggers a review of the submitted credentials packets for completeness and accuracy.

Each resident or Candidate is notified no later than 60 days after the submission deadline regarding the acceptability of the credentials packet as a prerequisite for the LAIM Specialty Examination. All

Candidates must submit the current standard LAIM application form along with the other required documents.

Candidates must carefully follow the instructions provided in the LAIM credentials packet. Inadequate attention to detail may cause the Candidate's entire credentials packet to be rejected.

Documentation of receipt of the Candidate's credentials application, receipt of the paid fee, and documentation of credentials approval, with the Candidate's unique identification number, must be maintained by the Candidate as part of their essential documentation.

Separate receipts for each ACVIM fee paid and application acknowledgement will be provided by the ACVIM, and must be maintained by the Candidate as part of their essential documentation.

9.B LAIM CREDENTIALS ITEMS TO SUBMIT

*****Always check the ACVIM website for the most up-to-date information before submission; this list is subject to change.*****

Candidates must include the following items in their credentials packets and submit them online to the [ACVIM office](#) by the date specified on the [ACVIM website](#) in the year preceding the date of the special examination:

- The completed [LAIM Specialty Examination credentials packet](#) as described in the [LAIM credentials information packet](#).
- The completed current [LAIM credentials application form](#).
- One peer-reviewed published manuscript, manuscript and acceptance letter from a journal, or a signed [letter of understanding](#) stating that a publication and documentation of its acceptance will be submitted upon acceptance of a publication by a journal.
- [Reference forms or letters](#). Candidates must have 3 references that meet the criteria specified on the Candidates' pages of the ACVIM website for acceptable referees and submission format.

It is the Candidate's responsibility to submit all credential items before the deadline, as late applications will not be reviewed.

9.C EVALUATION OF CREDENTIALS FOR LAIM SPECIALTY EXAMINATION

The ACVIM office and the LAIM CC review all eligible (i.e., fees paid) LAIM Candidate credentials packets.

A reviewer assigned by the LAIM CC evaluates and rates a Candidate's credentials as acceptable or unacceptable. The reviewer records the evaluation results on a standard form, which the ACVIM office retains. The LAIM CC chair compiles the reviewer's comments about whether a Candidate's credentials packet is complete and acceptable. The LAIM CC notifies Candidates regarding

acceptance (or conditional acceptance) or rejection of their credentials within 60 days of the deadline for credentials submission.

Conditional acceptance of credentials may be attained if a Candidate has not met the publication requirement, the case report or CWA requirement, or both. With conditional acceptance, the Candidate may take the LAIM Specialty Examination. However, the Candidate cannot achieve Diplomate status or receive a Diplomate certificate until that individual completes the approved RTP and fulfills the pending publication and case report or CWA requirements.

During the credentials review period, the LAIM CC reviews a resident's credentials, after which the chair will notify individuals of any deficiencies in any area and indicate which action(s) the resident must take to remedy the deficiencies (via a credentials results letter). After correcting and completing all deficiencies, the resident submits a final RTO for the LAIM CC to review. Once verified, the LAIM CC chair notifies the ACVIM office that the resident completed all requirements. No Candidate can become a Diplomate, even if the Candidate passes the General Examination and LAIM Specialty Examination until the Candidate has completed all requirements, including their RTP.

10 LAIM SPECIALTY EXAMINATION

10.A LAIM SPECIALTY EXAMINATION REGISTRATION AND FEE

Once credentials are approved, Candidates may register for the LAIM Specialty Examination and pay the Specialty Examination fee online by the date specified on the [ACVIM website](#) of the year preceding the examination date. Late registration and fee payment will result in the Candidate being unable to sit for the examination that year. Also, see the Certification Manual for procedures common to all Candidates.

Documentation of receipt of the Candidate's LAIM Specialty Examination registration, receipt of the paid fee, and documentation of credentials approval, with the Candidate's unique identification number, must be maintained by the Candidate as part of their essential documentation.

Separate receipts for each ACVIM fee paid and registration acknowledgement will be provided by the ACVIM and must be maintained by the Candidate as part of their essential documentation.

10.B LAIM SPECIALTY EXAMINATION CONTENT AND FORMAT

*****Always check the Candidates' exam webpage(s) on the ACVIM website for the most up-to-date information pertaining to ACVIM Examinations. Examination format/design, item types and standard setting/cut score determination method(s) are subject to change, as necessary to continue to align the examination with best practice and accreditation industry standards. Any changes will be reflected in the current examination blueprint and/or information provided to Candidates.*****

A blueprint of the LAIM specialty examination is posted on the ACVIM website at least 60 days before the Specialty Examination date.

11 CORRESPONDENCE, INQUIRES, ISSUES AND COMPLAINTS

Residents and/or Candidates with queries and/or complaints regarding RTP noncompliance, especially concerns that are not sufficiently resolved by the RTP's PD, should direct concerns in writing to the [LAIM ombudsperson](#) and/or to the current LAIM RTC chair. Residents can obtain the names and contact information of these individuals from the [ACVIM office](#) or [ACVIM website](#). A response to the query and/or complaint can be expected within 4 weeks. Assistance from the LAIM ombudsperson can also be sought for situations that are difficult to resolve. The LAIM ombudsperson can be contacted directly by email at LAIMOmbuds@ACVIM.org. The ACVIM can only address matters related to adherence to this Manual's requirements. Personnel matters are unique to each SI and its human resources policies and procedures and are not subject to ACVIM review.

12 MAINTENANCE OF CREDENTIALS (MOC)

As discussed in the Certification Manual every Diplomate who completed credentials and became a Diplomate on, or after, January 1, 2016, is awarded a Diplomate certificate that is valid for 10 years. These ACVIM LAIM Diplomates are subject to MOC. The MOC requirements are posted on the [ACVIM website](#). The [LAIM maintenance of credentials \(MOC\)](#) committee maintains a list of acceptable continuing education experiences and their associated points that count toward the renewal of LAIM credentials by the ACVIM. This information is available on the [ACVIM website](#), or by request from the [ACVIM office](#). It is the responsibility of each ACVIM LAIM Diplomate to maintain documentation of these activities.

APPENDIX A: IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS

LAIM CLINICAL WRITING ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION COMMITTEE (CWADC)

The LAIM clinical writing assessment (CWA) is designed to develop and refine resident written communication skills. Although CWAs are not graded, the clinical writing assessment documentation committee (CWADC) briefly reviews residents CWAs to ensure their acceptability. The CWA requirement will be satisfied when the resident completes 2 CWAs that meet the requirements of their RTP, as deemed acceptable by the resident advisor (RA) or supervising Diplomate (SD), and they are submitted to the CWADC via the ACVIM office and receive final approval. The LAIM [credentials packets](#) for both 2-year and 3-year residents provide more detailed guidelines for preparing and submitting CWA documents.

LAIM CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE (LAIM CC)

The LAIM CC evaluates a LAIM Candidate's progress during the ACVIM certification candidacy period, including completion of RTP requirements, General and Specialty Examination results, and fulfillment of any additional credentials requirements, such as the resident's logs and publication requirement. The LAIM CC is responsible for reviewing the LAIM Candidate's credentials packet and certifying that a Candidate meets all the requirements for becoming a Diplomate of the ACVIM in LAIM.

LAIM OMBUDSPERSON

Candidates and residents may contact the LAIM ombudsperson at LAIMOmbudsperson@ACVIM.org to discuss any questions or concerns that may arise during (or after) their RTPs. All communications are held in strict confidence.

LAIM PROGRAM DIRECTOR (PD)

The LAIM program director (LAIM PD) is the individual at the SI who assumes overall responsibility for the conduct and integrity of that institution's LAIM RTP(s). Unlike some specialties, the specialty of LAIM requires that a LAIM PD must be an ACVIM Diplomate and member in the specialty of LAIM. When an SI has more than 1 LAIM RTP, 1 PD can be responsible for all the LAIM RTPs of the SI. There can also be a unique PD for each RTP (typically one PD for a food animal RTP and another PD for an equine RTP). There cannot be more than 1 LAIM PD for each LAIM RTP.

LAIM RESIDENCY TRAINING COMMITTEE (RTC)

The LAIM residency training committee (RTC) specifies the residency training criteria that must be met for certification. The LAIM RTC reviews and approves all new LAIM RTPs. The LAIM RTC reviews and approves for renewal each registered LAIM RTP annually. The LAIM RTC also reviews any significant changes in a LAIM RTP (e.g., change in PD or resident advisor (RA), a resident or Candidate's early termination or failure to complete an RTP, alterations in program duration or content, and locations of secondary training sites) and notifies the LAIM CC of the approved changes. These reviews are normally based on documents submitted by the PD; however, if questions arise, the LAIM RTC may solicit supplemental documentation from other individuals who have knowledge of a particular RTP. The LAIM RTC also handles questions from the residents and Candidates or PDs regarding the interpretation of this Manual's guidelines.

LAIM RESIDENT ADVISOR (RA)

The LAIM resident advisor (RA) is the primary individual who monitors the LAIM resident's progress during residency training. A LAIM RA must be an ACVIM Diplomate and member in the specialty of LAIM. Each LAIM RA may not advise more than 3 residents at any one time. A LAIM RA must also be actively involved as an SD for the assigned residents and be substantially involved in the clinical supervision of assigned residents.

LAIM SECONDARY-SPECIALTY SUPERVISING DIPLOMATES (SSSDS)

A LAIM secondary-specialty supervising diplomate (SSSD) for a LAIM RTP must be a Board-Certified veterinary specialist in any specialty other than LAIM or equine internal medicine, who is contributing to the clinical training and didactic education of the LAIM resident in any specialty other than LAIM or equine internal medicine. Here Board-Certified may refer to any veterinary specialists certified by an ABVS or EBVS registered veterinary specialty. The Board-Certified veterinary specialist must be a Diplomate, and where relevant member, in good standing with the relevant ABVS or EBVS registered veterinary specialty. A LAIM SSSD must be actively involved in their area of specialty, maintain competency in the field, and be substantially involved in the training of the assigned residents.

LAIM SUPERVISING DIPLOMATE (SD)

The LAIM supervising diplomate (SD) must be a Board-Certified specialist in the specialty of LAIM. Here, for LAIM SDs, Board-Certified may refer to either ACVIM LAIM Diplomates and members, or ECEIM Diplomates. A LAIM SD must be actively involved in the practice of LAIM, maintain clinical competency in the field, and be substantially involved in the clinical supervision of assigned residents.

LAIM TRAINING HOURS

For the specialty of LAIM, it is recognized that certain fields or activities, specifically clinical pathology, anatomic pathology and imaging, are better suited to time being accrued in training hours rather than training weeks. The ACVIM defines a training hour as 1 continuous hour (60 minutes) of contact time with a SD or SSSD while actively engaged in a training field or activity.

LAIM TRAINING WEEKS

The LAIM specialty requires all RTP training be accrued in training weeks, excepting training in clinical pathology, anatomic pathology and imaging. The ACVIM defines a residency training week as a minimum of 40 hours accrued over a contiguous 7-day period.

NON-TRADITIONAL RESIDENCY TRAINING PROGRAM IN LAIM

For the specialty of LAIM, it is possible to achieve certification in a non-traditional RTP. The SI must provide thorough justification for a non-traditional RTP to the LAIM RTC, including the following:

- Details of how all training requirements of a traditional RTP will be satisfied, including training that may occur at multiple sites.
- Documentation that training will occur in blocks of no less than two consecutive weeks per block.
- Documentation by the PD, RAs, and SDs that training occurred as specified in the RTP proposal.

- Requests for approval of a non-traditional RTP must be submitted to the RTC at least 90 days in advance of a resident's start date. The LAIM RTC must approve the program before a Candidate can receive credit for time spent in a non-traditional RTP.

If a resident is unable to participate in the RTP continuously, then the time in training must be arranged in blocks of time of no less than 2 weeks each with a minimum of 12 weeks of training in any residency year (a residency year is the 12-month period which immediately follows a resident resuming their training program). The maximum duration of an RTP is 5 years.

For all RTPs, the maximum length of the training period is 5 years and the total time to achieve Diplomate status after completion of all RTPs may not exceed 5 years.