

September 2022

**Minnesota Certified Crop Adviser Board Guidelines & Procedures
Section I - Purpose and Objective**

The purpose of the Minnesota Certified Crop Adviser (MCCA) Board of Certification is to develop standards and procedures for administering competency exams, reviewing credentials and certifying individuals as crop advisers.

Section II - Board

The MCCA board, subsequently referred to as “the board,” shall be composed of at least seven members. Composition shall include three fixed positions (state environmental agency, state agribusiness, university Extension service).

The board shall include voting members and nonvoting (ex-officio) technical experts. All board members shall serve without compensation.

Any member of the board who has a direct and substantial personal, financial or employment interest in any matter before the board that is likely to affect his/her impartiality or judgment, shall make known the interest and refrain from participating in, or voting upon, the matter.

Duties of the board: The board shall serve as the State Board of Certification of the International Certified Crop Advisor (ICCA) program. The board shall maintain the criteria for certification, which will be subject to review by the ICCA Board. The board shall also maintain and administer state specific competency examinations and review courses and materials for eligibility of continuing education credits. The board shall provide peer review for approval and disapproval of candidates for certification, and shall also be responsible for suspension, appeal, and revocation actions.

Section III - Meetings

The board shall have at least one annual meeting.

Electronic communication (e-mail) will serve as the official notification method for MCCA activities.

The Chair may call special meetings as needed to transact business between annual meetings. Notice of the date and place of any special meeting shall be transmitted at least 14 days in advance of the meeting date, unless waived by majority consent of the board. At least 7 days prior to the special meeting, a copy of the agenda shall be sent to every member of the board as well as to each party involved in the meeting. Communications will also be sent to persons providing timely requests of the board's agenda.

The first order of business at special meetings shall be adoption of the agenda, which may be amended or modified by the board prior to taking up other business

Any voting member of the board may make a motion for consideration of a matter by the board. A second is required for motions except as provided in Robert's Rules of Order.

The board or their agent shall keep full and accurate minutes of all meetings.

Except as specifically provided in these operating procedures, Robert's Rules of Order shall govern any question of parliamentary procedure which may arise at any meeting of the board.

Business may be transacted by electronic ballot. Ballots returned by at least 2/3 of the voting board members and received by the Chair in a period not to exceed two weeks (14 days) from the mailing date of the ballots to the members shall be counted and filed in the records of the board. A majority of affirmative votes shall be required for approval.

A majority plus one member of the board shall be required for a quorum at any meeting. For a motion to carry, a majority shall be required.

Section IV – Officers

The officers are Chair, Chair Elect and Prior Chair.

The Chair Elect shall be elected by the members of the board. To be elected Chair Elect, a person must have at least two years remaining in the three-year term of appointment.

The term of office of the Chair and Chair Elect shall be for approximately two years and election by ballot shall be held at the regular annual board meeting following the annual meeting of the members.

In the event that the Chair is unable to serve for a particular meeting, the Chair Elect will serve as Chair for that meeting.

The duties of the officers shall be those imposed on them by these guidelines and procedures.

The principal duties of the Chair shall be to preside at all meetings of the board and to provide leadership in the promotion of the objectives of the MCCA program. With the approval of the board or upon being directed by the board, the Chair may appoint ad hoc committees and/or other individuals and charge them with specific activities in pursuit of the objectives of Certified Crop Advisers (CCAs).

Section V - Powers

The board shall have powers that are consistent with the purposes of its activity and with those of the ICCA program.

In the exercise of its powers, coincident with the purposes for which the board is organized, special emphasis shall be given to the ultimate purpose of reviewing the credentials of the MCCAs that meet the minimum requirements determined by the MCCA Board.

The board shall provide information on purposes, standards of registry, certification requirements, mechanics of certification, and code of ethics.

The board appoints the Minnesota Crop Production Retailers (MCPR) to serve as their agent and administer the program in the state. As the agent of the board, the MCPR shall be responsible for carrying out the directives of the board and providing clerical and financial support.

Section VI - Amendments

Amendments to the Guidelines and Procedures shall require two-thirds affirmative votes by board members. To amend the Guidelines and Procedures, a notice of the recommended proposed changes must be delivered to all members of the board, at least 30 days before voting. Where an amendment has not been discussed at a board meeting, the vote may be delayed until it is discussed at a meeting of the board, if requested by at least seven (7) board members.

Section VII - Prohibitions

The activities of the board shall not include lobbying and shall not include participation in any political campaigns.

Section VIII - Indemnification

Board members shall be indemnified by the American Society of Agronomy, Inc., incurred by or imposed upon any one of them, in connection with or resulting from, any claim, action, suit, or proceeding which may be brought against the board or any one of its members by reason of the board or any one of the board members acting as a member of the board, providing they were acting within the scope of their authority. The foregoing right of indemnification shall not be exclusive of other rights to which the board or any one of its members may be entitled as a matter of law.

Section IX - Standing Committees

Examination and Continuing Education Committee:

The Examination and Continuing Education Committee shall have a chair, termed the Chair of the Exam Committee, that is elected by the MCCA Board.

This committee has the responsibility of developing the state specific portion of the CCA exam. This committee will ensure that the state test meets the guidelines provided by the ICCA Exam and Procedures Committee. This committee will consist of board members that represent university Extension, state or federal government, and agribusiness, and the Chair. The committee may seek from the board or outside the board representation from the disciplines of agronomy, soil science, weed science, plant pathology, entomology, horticulture, and other disciplines relevant to production agriculture.

The confidentiality of the exam is the responsibility of the exam committee. The Chair of the Exam Committee shall have the responsibility of distributing and collecting exams as the exam is designed and revised. The complete exam should only be seen by the committee or by other board members on a need-to-know basis approved by the Chair and the Chair of the Exam Committee.

This committee shall be responsible for reviewing which courses and materials are eligible for continuing education credits submitted by applicants. This committee shall use the state and national performance objectives and/or CEU areas as guidelines for approval.

Minimum required representation on the committee:

1. Extension educator (1)
2. Agribusiness association (1)
3. State regulatory agency (1)
4. Exam committee chair

Ethics and Standards Committee

The Ethics and Standards Committee shall have a chair, termed the Chair of the Ethics and Standards Committee, elected by the MCCA Board.

This committee shall review the work summary packages of applicants. The role of this committee is to ensure that applicants meet the eligibility requirements as prescribed by the ICCA Board. The committee shall consist of at least three board members. A board member that represents a state government regulatory agency must be a member of this committee. A majority of this committee must approve a work summary package. The committee will determine an applicant's years of experience. Higher education may substitute for two years of experience.

This committee will also review complaints that registrants have violated the code of ethics. This committee can reprimand, suspend, or revoke the certification of a registrant by majority vote. This committee will follow the investigation procedures supplied by ARCPACS. A registrant may appeal to the board any action taken against him or her within 30 days of notification by the Chair of the Ethics and Standards Committee. A vote of two-thirds of the full board is needed to overturn a decision of the ethics committee.

The committee will also review transfer requests from other states. Those CCAs who are certified in the surrounding states of North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Iowa and wish to transfer their certification to Minnesota, will be eligible to do so without being required to take the local Minnesota exam. If the CCA is currently certified in a state other than the states listed above, the CCA will be subject to a review from the committee, who will in turn provide a recommendation to the MCCA Executive Committee.

Minimum required representation on the committee:

1. State regulatory agency (1)
2. Appointees of the board (2)

Finance Committee

The Chair elect shall serve as Chair of the Finance Committee.

The Finance Committee shall prepare an annual budget, recommend dues and sources of revenue, and forward their proposals to the board for their consideration and review. The Finance Committee shall also assure that all books of accounting and records pertaining thereto are properly kept and that assets and property are properly safeguarded.

Minimum required representation on the committee:

1. Chair
2. Chair Elect
3. Prior Chair

Section X - Membership

Individuals approved for CCA certification by the board are considered a member. As a member, each individual shall be entitled to one (1) vote.

The board may ask members to declare which of the following membership categories most accurately describes themselves:

1. Crop Production Retail dealer (2)
2. Crop Nutrient Industry
3. Crop Protection Industry
4. Crop consultant, designated by the Minnesota Independent Crop Consultant Ass'n.
5. University of Minnesota Extension
6. Production agronomist

7. Farmer
8. Regulatory agency (federal or state)
 - A: Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA)
 - B: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)
 - C: Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
9. State agribusiness (MCPR board member)
10. Seed industry representative
11. Certified Professional Agronomist (CPAg)

Section XI - Annual Fees

The annual fees for each membership category shall be the same and shall be set by the board at a regularly scheduled meeting. The fees shall be adopted if they receive a two-thirds vote of the voting board members present.

Section XII - Voting & Elections

Officers of the board shall serve as a Nominating Committee in the selection of board members and request nominations from the group or organization of the position being filled. The slate of candidates and a profile of their experience and education background shall be submitted to the membership at the annual meeting.

At the annual meeting of the board, there shall be an election of the board members. The Nominating Committee shall place in nomination at the annual meeting the names of persons to be voted upon for each board position to be filled by the election. In addition, the Chair shall call for the nominations from the floor during the annual meeting.

At all member meetings, each MCCA in good standing shall have one vote. At all board meetings, each elected board member and appointed board member shall have one vote.

At any meeting, an ex-officio board member shall not be entitled to vote. Proxy votes shall not be permitted at meetings of members or at meetings of the board.

A majority of the votes cast shall govern in every election and matter voted upon.

There shall be one board member from each membership category.

Initially, board members shall be appointed to serve a one, two, or three year term as designated. After that, each board member shall be elected to serve a three year term.

Any board member shall be eligible for re-election. In the event of death, incapacity, resignation, or removal of a board member, the remaining board members shall appoint a successor to fill the unexpired term.

Board members are limited to two consecutive 3 year terms. In the case of an appointee to a partial board term, an appointment of 1.5 years or more shall be considered to be a full term and apply against the two term limit.