

Anchorage ARC VEC

Volunteer Examiner Guide



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1 Introduction

1.1 Contact Information

Here is the contact information for the Anchorage Amateur Radio Club VEC Headquarters and VEC Chairman:

Kent Petty, KL5T
Chairman, Anchorage ARC VEC
PO Box 190192
Anchorage, AK 99519

Phone: 907.632.3963
E-mail: vec@kl7aa.org

1.2 Overview

The Anchorage Amateur Radio Club, Inc. Volunteer Examiner Coordinator (AARCVEC), hereinafter referred to as the “Anchorage ARC VEC”, is one of 14 VECs that have entered into an agreement with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to serve as a VEC. [§97.521] While each VEC might share common goals, the policies, procedures, and instructions on how to achieve those goals will vary among the VECs.

The AARCVEC examining system is comprised of local teams that administer examinations to the examinees. Each team has a Session Manager (Lead) Volunteer Examiner (VE) who must be an Amateur Extra class licensee and who reports directly to the VEC Chairman. This strong person-to-person accountability helps maintain program integrity.

VEs provide an invaluable service to the amateur radio community. The AARCVEC takes great pride in being the first VEC in the country to administer a license exam after the program was inaugurated in 1984.

We only get one chance to make a first impression. We are the “face of amateur radio” for most people who arrive to take their first amateur radio exam and we should do everything possible to make them feel comfortable. A kind greeting to each applicant, accompanied with a smile, will go a long way to shake off some of the nervousness newcomers and even old-timers experience before an exam.

We should pride ourselves in being “user friendly”. When an applicant arrives at a testing session, introduce yourself and engage him or her in light conversation. This is a great way to help reduce the amount of stress he or she may be feeling. Ask about their amateur radio experience, why they want to become a ham, how long they have been licensed, etc.

Everything each of us does during an exam session reflects upon all of us. Each AARCVEC certified VE must perform their duties in a dedicated, courteous, and professional manner throughout the exam session.

Each VE must perform their duties fairly, honestly, and accurately without favor or prejudice. Nothing we do individually or collectively should give the impression that we are doing otherwise.

1.3 Mission

In accordance with the laws and agreements that set up the VEC system, the VEC’s have been tasked with certain requirements. They are:

- To recruit, train and accredit a corps of VE’s.
- To coordinate examination sessions as needed with accredited VE’s.

- To inform VE's of additions, changes, and deletions to the VE program rules.
- To provide a source of license testing materials (exams) for all VE teams accredited by the AARCVEC.
- To provide a source of requisite forms required to correctly document the entire examination process.
- To collect and archive successful applications, including all related documentation.
- To prepare and maintain records of each testing session, including passes, failures, etc.
- To screen, approve, and forward successful applications to the FCC for further processing and issuance of licenses.
- To resolve errors or defects in applications or documentation before the information is forwarded to the FCC.
- To monitor the activities in all testing sessions, including having the authority to invalidate a testing session and disaccredit VE's should the need arise.
- To assist in the development and/or revision of a common pool of test questions.
- To evaluate test questions for clarity, accuracy, and completeness, and forward the results of their evaluations and their recommendations for any changes to the VEC Question Pool Committee (QPC).

1.4 Core Values

The AARCVEC operates under these core values:

- Compliance - Compliance with the FCC rules and VEC policies.
- Communications - Open, two-way, and responsive.
- Service - Service to others before self.
- Respect - Respect others at all times.
- Accountability - Accountable for our actions at all times.
- Honesty/Integrity - Honest with each other and with the people we serve.
- Knowledge - Know and understand the current rules and policies that govern our duties, procedures, and responsibilities.
- Trust - Trust in each other to perform our duties and responsibilities according to the FCC rules and VEC policies.
- Excellence - Commitment to excellence in everything we do.
- Accessibility - Being able to offer amateur radio license examinations to applicants anywhere.
- Approachability - Being able to work with anyone, anywhere and at any time, regardless of the situation.
- Professionalism - Commitment to going above and beyond the call of duty in service to our community.
- Sustainability - Continued commitment to the modernization of amateur radio license examinations using cutting edge technology.

1.5 Compliance

The policies, procedures, and instructions of the AARCVEC are unique to the AARCVEC. The policies, procedures and instructions contained herein supersede any other policies, procedures, and instructions contained in any other AARCVEC documents except the rules of the FCC. Only by coincidence may any or all other VEC's have policies, procedures, and instructions that are similar or the same as ours.

The policies, procedures, and instructions of the AARCVEC augment, but do not diminish, the authority or the requirements of the rules and regulations of the FCC.

This document establishes the policies, procedures, and instructions of the AARCVEC, which are necessary to accomplish its mission and are applicable to all VE's accredited by the AARCVEC.

All VE's accredited by the AARCVEC must comply with the policies, procedures and instructions contained herein and the rules and regulations of the FCC.

The principal statutory authority for amateur radio license exams is CFR Title 47, Part 97, Subpart F - Qualifying Examination Systems, and is the foundation of the AARCVEC policies, procedures, and instructions regarding activities related to the amateur radio licensing system.

Each VEC adheres to the rules contained in Part 97. Several, if not all VEC's, have additional rules, policies, procedures, and instructions for preparing and administering amateur radio license exams. Some of these may be common among all VEC's while others are unique to a specific VEC.

The policies, procedures and instructions in this document apply to all VE's accredited by the AARCVEC. Each AARCVEC accredited VE, individually and collectively as a member of a team, agrees to comply with these instructions and policies and Part 97 while preparing, administering, and processing examinations coordinated by the AARCVEC. Additionally, teams will follow instructions of their Session Manager and the VEC Chairman.

Questions about the policies, procedures and instructions described in this document may be referred directly to a Session Manager or the AARCVEC Chairman.

2 Organizational Structure

2.1 Anchorage ARC VEC

The AARCVEC is a function of the Anchorage Amateur Radio Club, Inc. (AARC) and is organized with a chairman, VE teams led by Session Managers, Lead VEs, and VEs. The AARCVEC is a member of the National Conference of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators (NCVEC) and operates as an independent VEC.

2.2 VEC Chairman

The Chairman of the Anchorage ARC VEC is appointed by and at the pleasure of the Anchorage ARC Board of Directors. The AARC Board of Directors appoints the Chairman of the AARC VEC and maintains authority over the AARCVEC in matters related to its general scope of operations, dealings with third parties, and in any matters that may reflect upon the AARC, especially in those matters which may have an impact on the AARC's 501(c)(3) status.

The Anchorage ARC VEC Chairman is responsible for organizing, operating, and setting policies for the Anchorage ARC VEC in accordance with the rules and guidance of the FCC and the AARC.

The Chairman of the Anchorage ARC VEC provides monthly reports to the AARC Board of Directors which include monthly examination statistics, trends, major events and changes to the

program, and dealings with external organizations. These reports are delivered to the President and Secretary prior to the following month's Board of Director's meeting so they may be included with the pre-meeting package as distributed by the Secretary. The Chairman shall make every effort to attend the monthly Board of Directors meetings in person or by telephone.

2.3 Teams and Leadership

Anchorage ARC VEC VE teams are groups of VE's who are accredited by the Anchorage ARC VEC and are given permission to establish their team by the VEC Chairman. A VE team consists of at least 3 VE's, one of whom must be a VE holding an Amateur Extra class license and designated as the Session Manager / Lead VE.

2.4 Session Mangers and Lead VEs

Session Managers are Anchorage ARC VEC accredited VE's who hold Amateur Extra Class licenses and are appointed or elected by the organization that sponsors testing, if appropriate. Session Managers are appointed by the VEC Chairman in the event a particular team is not sponsored by an amateur radio club or other organization. One VE at each session will be designated as the "contact" or "Lead VE"; this should be reflected on the "green sheet". If a Session Manager is leading an examination session, he/she is also the Lead VE for the session.

Lead VEs are responsible for assuring that all VE's at the session meet the requirements for administering exams at that session, including verifying that each VE is of an appropriate license class to administer a particular exam. This person is also responsible for assuring that all forms and exam materials are filled out correctly and promptly. They shall ensure that only VE's holding an Extra Class license are permitted access to Element 4 examination material and that only VE's holding an Extra Class or Advanced Class license are permitted access to Element 3 examination material.

2.5 Requirements to Serve as a Session Manager and Lead VE

- Session Managers and Lead VEs are accredited as VE's by the Anchorage ARC VEC. [§97.513(a)]
- Session Managers and Lead VEs must hold an Amateur Extra class license.
- Session Managers may serve concurrently as administering VE's at exam sessions or may appoint Lead VEs for each session. [§97.513(a)] and [§97.513(c)]

2.6 Duties and Responsibilities of Session Managers

- Session Managers conduct all transactions between the teams and the Anchorage ARC VEC Chairman. [§97.513(b)]
- Session Managers act as Lead VEs at exam sessions or may appoint a qualified VE as Lead VE.
- Session Managers are responsible for maintaining active contact with the Anchorage ARC VEC Chairman. Session Managers shall remain current on all Anchorage ARC VEC policies.
- Session Managers are responsible for administration and certification of amateur radio license examinations in accordance with Part 97 of the FCC Rules and policies set forth by the Anchorage ARC VEC.

- Session Managers are responsible for organizing examination sessions in accordance with the policies outlined in this Guide. In addition, Session Managers are to maintain a list of all accredited VEs in the area they serve and make every attempt to use all active VE's in their area to help those VE's maintain an understanding of our current policies and procedures.
- Session Managers may be asked to generate session data in electronic format for submission to the FCC. Should they be unable to do that, they will be required to ensure all session related documentation has been completed and sent to the VEC.
- Session Managers must ensure that all session electronic documents have been completed and submitted to the VEC as soon as possible after the session is completed.

2.7 Lead VE

The Lead VE is the person in charge of and manages a specific examination session. This person may be the Session Manager, or another qualified VE as appointed by the Session Manager. [§97.513(a)]

2.8 Failure to Comply

The certifying VE's are jointly and individually accountable for the proper administration of each examination element reported. The certifying VE's may delegate to other qualified VE's their authority, but not their accountability, to administer individual elements of an examination. [§97.509(i)]

No VE may administer or certify any examination by fraudulent means or for monetary or other consideration including reimbursement in any amount in excess of that permitted. Violation of this provision may result in the revocation of the grant of the VE's amateur station license and the suspension of the grant of the VE's amateur operator license.

[§97.509(e)] Failure to comply with the FCC rules and regulations, or the policies, procedures, and instructions of the Anchorage ARC VEC may result in the following:

- Suspension or complete revocation of the VE Team as determined by the Chairman of the Anchorage ARC VEC;
- Suspension or revocation of VE status as determined by the Chairman of the Anchorage ARC VEC;
- Suspension or revocation of the participating VE(s) license(s) by the FCC [§97.509(e)]; and
- Other penalties as determined appropriate by the FCC.

In addition to the above, the VEC Chairman may disaccredit VE's for:

- Intentional failure to comply with FCC rules and/or VEC policies;
- Repeated unintentional failure to comply with FCC rules and/or VEC policies;
- Lying;
- Failing to constantly monitor examinees at a session (i.e., playing on a computer, smartphone, tablet or reading); and
- Non-responsiveness to the Anchorage ARC VEC Chairman.

3 Sessions

3.1 Who May Administer Examinations?

VE's holding a valid General, Advanced or Amateur Extra class amateur radio license may administer exams for the groups listed. At least 3 examiners holding the necessary license are required to administer an exam element. If all of the VE's at a session are NOT of the same license class, then only those elements for which at least 3 qualified examiners are present may be given. The elements that can be administered by qualified VE's is below:

- Technician class (Element 2) license examinations may be administered by VE's holding a General, Advanced or Amateur Extra class license.
- General class (Element 3) license examinations may be administered by VE's holding an Advanced or Amateur Extra class license.
- Amateur Extra (Element 4) class license examinations may ONLY be administered by VE's holding an Amateur Extra class license.

3.2 Fees

Almost all VEC's charge a nominal fee to cover the costs of operating their programs. This is permitted by the FCC rules that established the VEC program. The Anchorage ARC VEC charges a fee to cover the costs of the program as permitted by Part 97. The fee is periodically adjusted as costs of the program change.

This fee is intended to cover direct and indirect costs associated with operating the program. The fee allows the applicant to take as many examinations as is possible and practical at a single session in accordance with the other guidance contained in this document. The fee is good for the session indicated on the receipt and is not refundable.

Examiners accredited via the Anchorage ARC VEC are prohibited from charging examinees directly for any aspect of their testing. If an accredited VE incurs expenses related to operation of the Anchorage ARC VEC, they should first coordinate with the Chairman to ensure the expenditure is authorized, and if so, submit a request for reimbursement (with receipts) to the Treasurer of the Anchorage ARC VEC.

VE Team Members are not permitted to accept payment for test sessions of any kind. Applicants must pay their test session fee on the Anchorage ARC website. If the applicant arrives at a test session and has failed to pay in advance, they may access a smart phone, computer, or other device to make payment in real-time, if it is available. Under no circumstance shall an applicant be permitted to sit for an examination unless it can be verified that the session fee has been paid.

3.3 Scheduling Examination Sessions

Exams may be scheduled at any time. When practical the date, time, location, and contact information for the Lead VE should be publicly announced beforehand. This announcement may take any of several forms and should be available on the exam calendar at least 7 days before the session is to take place.

NOTE: If the session is a closed session (not available to walk-in's) then the exam session need not be publicized. Reasons for closed sessions might be that it is for one or more handicapped applicants who have special requirements, or as part of a ham radio class, etc.

Regularly scheduled exam sessions do not require additional notice to the public. Given that applicants are required to pay a fee for examination sessions in advance, there should be few walk-in applicants.

However, if a walk-in applicant shows up on time, space is available, they are able to pay the session fee and complete the required electronic documents, they should be permitted to test. Since prepaid session fees are required, this is effectively pre-registration for a session. This is one way to be sure that at least some minimum number of applicants will be present.

3.4 Number of VEs Required and Prohibited Practices

At least 3 Anchorage ARC VEC accredited examiners must be present during the entire session (4 examiners is a better arrangement if sufficient personnel are available). Only VE's holding accreditation by the Anchorage ARC VEC may participate in exam sessions. Note that being a VE for another organization, such as ARRL or W5YI, does not prevent a person from also being a VE for the Anchorage ARC VEC. A person may hold accreditation from as many separate VEC groups as he or she wishes.

Make sure all VE's at the session are accredited and qualified! Each accredited VE with the Anchorage ARC VEC will be listed on our website, with his or her name, call sign, class of license, and any other pertinent information. Only when a VE is listed on the website should they be considered accredited.

The reason this is important is that if it should turn out that an examiner is not Anchorage ARC VEC accredited and signs any of the paperwork for an applicant, it becomes void! The application cannot be processed, and the applicant will have to resubmit his or her application and be required to retake (and pass) any examinations. This creates ill will and is unfair to the applicant.

To make sure this unfortunate situation does not occur, make sure each VE at the session is accredited and listed as an active Anchorage ARC VEC accredited VE. The Anchorage ARC VEC web site may be accessed by going to: <https://kl7aa.org/vec>. Lacking any of this, you can also contact your Session Manager or the VEC Chairman. Each application will be cross checked before it is submitted to verify that only Anchorage ARC VEC accredited VEs have signed the forms.

VEs who are accredited with the Anchorage ARC VEC are not permitted to participate in exams given to family members where the examinee's relationship to the VE is any of the following: spouse or spouse equivalent, child, parent, brother or sister, aunt or uncle, niece or nephew, grandparent or grandchild, or direct in-law (mother, father, brother, or sister-in-law). This also applies in cases where there is a "step" relation, as in stepparent or stepchild. Examiners may not discuss (with examinees, or anyone else who is not an accredited VE) actual exam materials, or which test series is being used for the examination session.

3.5 Examination Day

So, we have made it to exam day, and we need to make sure we are ready to welcome applicants to the session. Here are some things to keep in mind:

- Have a reliable telephone number you can be reached at. Many applicants may not know where the test site is located and having the capability to give accurate directions will help get applicants in on time. Also, make sure you have a good point of contact via email. Some people don't use a phone but will be able to send an email.
- Make sure an announcement is made on any local nets you can access, as well as any amateur radio newsletter for your area to announce your upcoming testing session. Don't be bashful about checking in with other clubs to notify them of a testing session because you may never know who wants to take a test.

- Make sure you have enough room if you expect a large number of applicants. From time to time, a session may have 10 or more applicants testing and having the ability to spread them out is helpful. Make enough room to accommodate all applicants in one sitting, if possible. If you are unable to make room, you would be wise to have a fourth VE present who can get applicants into the building and to assist with staggering examinations.

3.6 What Applicants Need to Bring

Provided the applicant has already completed their registration via our web platform, they will need to bring the following:

- A calculator that can have its memory cleared by the VE team
- Valid, government-issued photo identification

NOTE: Applicants may not bring any written notes or calculations into the exam session. Slide rules and logarithmic tables are acceptable, so long as they are free of notes and formulas. Cell phones must be silenced or turned off during the exam session and the mobile phone calculator function may NOT be used. Smartphones, tablets, and all similar electronic devices with a calculator capability may NOT be used.

4 Examination Application Process

All examinees must register for examination on our web-based examination platform. This process may change over time as it is refined. However, the process generally consists of three steps:

1. Applicant registers on the examination platform.
2. Applicant pays for the session on our website. They will receive a receipt with receipt number.
3. Applicant completes the online Examination Agreement form.

Note: No applicant shall be permitted to test until the VE team verifies that all three steps of the registration process have been completed.

5 Testing Session Procedures

5.1 General

As we all know, coming to a testing session for amateur radio licensing can be an exciting time, or for some can be an extremely uncomfortable experience. Everyone will go through different emotions, as some applicants don't want to feel like a failure. The Lead VE should make every possible effort to give an applicant the needed environment to concentrate on the task at hand, which is for them to pass their examination.

When an applicant first comes in, they should expect a greeting...The VE team should always greet an applicant with kindness and make that person feel welcome. Most of us, at some point, were in their situation. Knowing the challenge that lies ahead, we must strive to make sure they can be as comfortable as possible by giving them a good welcome. It never hurts to have some light conversation too. Finding out a little bit about them and why they are pursuing amateur radio may lead into other interesting things that you may not have thought of, so a little conversation at the beginning of a session is always a good thing.

Make sure the candidate has registered online through our exam platform. Walk-in applicants will be sent the registration link via email and it must be completed before taking an examination. They must have access to their email to receive the registration URL.

The VE team must ask the candidate to show valid, government-issued photo identification. Permissible forms of identification are listed in the Applicant Identification section of this guide. We cannot administer their examination without satisfactorily verifying the applicant's identification. This is to protect the candidate and the integrity of amateur radio.

If everything is completed to the satisfaction of the VE team, return the identification to the candidate. If, and only if, the mailing address does not match their identification, it is the VE team's responsibility to ensure that satisfactory evidence pertaining to their mailing address is provided. Be advised that Anchorage ARC VEC reserves the right to further verify the information if there is reason to believe the data collected doesn't match documentation provided for address verification. Once everything is correct and accurate to the satisfaction of the VE team, proceed.

5.2 Applicant Identification

5.2.1 Applicants Aged 18 and Over

We accept any U.S. government-issued unexpired photo identification for applicants over the age of 18. These may be issued by U.S. government federal, state, tribal, or territorial entities. We do not accept identification documents issued by foreign governments. We will not process an application where the name on the license application does not match the name on the U.S. government-issued photo identification document.

5.2.2 Applicants Under the Age of 18

Amateur radio applicants under the age of 18 may prove their identity by presenting as photo ID as described for applicants aged 18 and over. However, if such a photo ID is not available, they must:

1. Present a signed letter from a parent or guardian attesting to the positive identity of the applicant. A clear photocopy of the parent or guardian's U.S. government-issued photo identification must be attached to the letter.
2. Provide 2 of the following:
 - Certificate of Citizenship or Naturalization
 - An original or certified copy of a U.S. birth certificate (Certified Informational Copies are NOT valid for identity purposes.)
 - Employee Identification Card from an employer with a U.S. address
 - Health Insurance Card indicating a U.S address
 - School Identification Card from a school based in the U.S.

Note: If this is a remote testing session, then the applicant's parent must be present at the start of the session to attest to the positive Identity of the applicant and present their own photo ID.

5.3 Federal Registration Number and Applicant Address

5.3.1 Federal Registration Number

The Anchorage ARC VEC requires that applicants provide a Federal Registration Number (FRN) on all license applications.

5.3.2 Applicant Address

All license applicants must provide a valid mailing address in the United States.

5.4 The “Felony” Question

Pursuant to FCC Public Notice DA-17-741 dated August 7th, 2017, applicants are required to answer the Felony question only if they are filing an application for a new license (Application Purpose of New (NE)), an application to modify (Application Purpose of Modification (MD)) or renew and modify (Application Purpose of Renewal/Modification (RM)) an existing license, a Renewal Only (RO), Renewal with Modification (RM) or an amendment (Application Purpose of Amendment (AM)) to a pending NE,MD, or RM.

If the applicant answers “yes” to this question, they may still take the exam. Grade the exam as for any other applicant, indicating “Pass” or “Fail” as appropriate. Instruct the applicant that they will need to supply additional information directly to the FCC as explained on the reverse side of the 605 form. The Anchorage ARC VEC has no part in this and does not get involved with the FCC regarding whether or not a license will be issued in this instance. If a person has additional questions regarding this issue, have them contact the VEC Chairman for more information.

5.5 Accommodating Additional Examinees on Test Day

If more examinees arrive for an exam session than there are testing stations available to accommodate all of the applicants in a single sitting, if possible, have those applicants that are waiting for their chance to take the exam wait in a separate room from the people taking the exam. If a separate area is not available, instruct the applicants who are waiting to be completely quiet so as to not disturb those who are actively taking examinations.

5.6 Examinations for Applicants with a Disability

Pursuant to §97.509(k), the administering VE’s must accommodate an examinee whose physical disabilities require a special examination procedure. The Anchorage ARC VEC does not discriminate when it comes to our willingness or ability to administer examinations. Our vision is to be flexible, approachable, and most importantly, accessible. The Anchorage ARC VEC requires documentation relating to a person’s disability that may prohibit them from testing in a normal environment or via normal means. That documentation will be verified by the Anchorage ARC VEC. If the documentation may not pass muster, further instructions will be given to the applicant. Once an applicant’s disability is verified, the Anchorage ARC VEC will gladly coordinate an exam session to meet the specific needs of the applicant.

Typically, applicants needing accommodation are visually impaired. The major modification usually needed for testing the visually impaired is for the tests to be given orally. Read the exam questions and multiple-choice selections to the candidate and then record the candidate’s response. Try to allow the candidate the same opportunity sighted people enjoy such as allowing them to use a process of elimination. Read the questions and remaining answers again, narrowing down the possibilities, skipping a question and returning later, and guessing. These examinations will take longer to complete

than most exams so plan accordingly. The examination questions should be read by an AARC VEC credentialed VE or vetted AARC VEC proctor. If a proctor is used, be sure to closely monitor their reading of the questions to ensure that terms and phrases associated with our craft are indeed pronounced correctly.

When it is required to read examinations to an examinee because of visual impairment, the examination should be prepared in such a way as to exclude questions with figures/schematics. This is easily accomplished on our web-based examination platform.

If the applicant is able to read the questions but has a hearing deficit or another disability prohibiting them from being in a large group setting, their exam should be conducted in a room separate from the other candidates if it is running concurrently with a session in progress. Be sure to staff the extra room with three qualified and accredited VE's before administering the test! The same rules apply to constant monitoring of the applicant, regardless of disability. If the applicant requires a large print examination, have them use the control+ keystroke to enlarge the size of the letters on the computer screen.

5.7 Examination Initiation and VE Conduct

5.7.1 Examination Delivery Method

All amateur radio written examinations administered by the Anchorage ARC VEC are conducted online via our web-based examination platform. We no longer do any "paper" examinations.

5.7.2 Examination Initiation

A URL will be given to the applicant to access our web-based examination platform (this may be given orally or may be set up as a link on a VE-provided computer at in-person sessions). Upon entering the credentials to access their examination, examinees will be instructed to verify their contact information as presented on their screen. Once the applicant has completed their examination, the results will be made immediately available on our web-based platform. Remember, the VE team must NOT rush any applicant!

Teams will staff the session with as many VE's as needed to smoothly administer the exams. Generally, one administering VE per four applicants is recommended, but the specific ratio will vary. More experienced teams can conduct an exam session with a lower VE per applicant ratio.

VE teams are required to ensure a minimum of three appropriately qualified and accredited VE's administer the exams and they must CONSTANTLY observe the applicants while they take their exam. The administering VE's must be present in the room where and while applicants are taking exams or be observing the examinee with our web-based examination system.

5.7.3 VE Conduct

The administering VE's may not read books, magazines, newspapers, use electronic devices such as a cell phone, tablet, or any other device during examinations other than that required to administer the examinations. The administering VE's may not engage in conversation with anyone including applicants or other VE's unless it is in the performance of their duties and is done as discretely as possible as to not disturb the examinees. **The single, most noted complaint about examination sessions is about VE's engaging in unnecessary conversation during examination sessions!** Please, do not talk unless you have to!

Lead VEs shall ensure that examination team members abide by our VE conduct policy. Taking your attention away from any examinee allows the potential for cheating, and therefore compromises the examination. We stand firm on the belief that amateur radio examinations must be administered with honesty, integrity, and commitment to quality of service in the work we do. VEs who fail to follow our policy relative to VE conduct are subject to discreditation.

5.8 Examination Composition

Each theory exam consists of either 35 questions (Technician and General) or 50 questions (Extra). There is no time limit for the completion of the exam. Examinees must achieve a minimum score of 74% to pass any examination. Our web-based examination platform generates and grades each exam. Every exam is completely unique and is given one time, thus eliminating the chance to compromise any of these examination materials.

5.9 Order of Elements

There is no requirement for an applicant to take examination elements “in order.” If a person takes an element out of sequence, they must be issued a CSCE for that element, but no other action will be taken until the “previous” elements have been passed or otherwise credited.

5.10 Time Limits and Additional Examination Attempts

There is no minimum waiting period for an examinee to retake a failed examination. If a person fails an element, he or she may take the test again immediately. It is up to the VE team (not the applicant) to determine if immediate retesting is appropriate, can be accommodated, and will be allowed. The VE team’s decision is final. There is no additional fee charged for an applicant to retest or attempt additional element examinations during the same session.

Following is some general guidance for VE teams when determining if an immediate examination retake should be allowed:

- For the Technician and General class exams, allow the examinee to retest one time if they were within 5 questions from passing.
- For the Amateur Extra class exam, allow the examinee to retest one time if they were within 8 questions from passing.

When considering if an examination retake should be allowed, also consider the availability of the VE team members. They may have carved out an hour of their day to assist with examinations and may not be available for an extended session under these circumstances.

NOTE: applicants who fail a specific element three times in one session **SHALL NOT** be permitted to retest a fourth time at the same session. No exceptions will be given.

If the applicant fails their third attempt, the VE team must complete the session package and indicate that the applicant did not earn any license at that session. VE teams should invite the applicant to come back and try again at a future session.

If the applicant passes their exam, congratulate them! The VE team should gladly allow them to attempt the next exam if they feel ready to try. If the applicant does not want to take the next test, don’t be offended if they say no; **don’t pressure them into attempting the next exam** as it could be embarrassing and uncomfortable for all involved!

5.11 After the Examination is Complete

After the examination is complete and graded, the VE team must promptly notify the applicant if they passed or failed (this is accomplished automatically on our web-based examination platform). If the applicant missed any questions, VE teams may provide the question pool reference of any missed questions to the examinee if time permits and it will not cause a disruption of other examinations in progress or otherwise hinder the ability of the VE team to process the session.

5.12 Certificate of Successful Completion of Examination (CSCE)

The VE team will complete a session package within our web-based examination platform and then email a CSCE to the applicant from within the examination platform as soon as the results are certified.

5.13 Paper Upgrades

A person who has a currently valid (not expired) Technician class license and has proof that his or her original license was issued on or before March 21, 1987 can apply for an “instant” or “paper” upgrade” to General class. In this case, mark the CSCE data collection form with License as “Paper Upgrade” in the DocuSign package and it will display properly on the CSCE. Paper upgrades still require a completed (and signed) Form 605. Any “Paper Upgrade” requires review by and signatures of 3 qualified VEs.

5.14 CSCEs and Renewals

CSCE forms are not issued to the applicant if the only action being taken at the session is to renew an existing license. Licenses may be renewed anytime within 90 days before the license is scheduled to expire. Renewal applications cannot be processed if the request is made more than 90 days before license expiration. All renewals require a correctly filled out form 605 and a copy of the license. We STONGLY suggest that license holders simply renew their amateur radio license on the FCC Universal Licensing System website. There is no need to involve a VE team for simple renewals. However, if the applicant wishes us to file a renewal for them, they must provide us with a form 605 with section II filled out completely and signed by them. No VE signatures are required for simple license renewals.

5.15 Non-Exam-Related Filings

The Anchorage ARC VEC will file Administrative Updates for anyone that does not have access to the ULS, at no charge. The following types of Administrative Updates can be filed:

- Address Change
- Change of E-Mail Address / Telephone Number
- License Renewal
- License Renewal with Modification
 - Note: A license renewal with modification can consist of a new systematic call sign being issued or changing the licensee’s name.
- Systematic Call Sign Change (non-exam related)

All Administrative Updates filed through the Anchorage ARC VEC will require a form 605 to be completed and signed by the applicant. This will be in the form of a DocuSign package. In the event an applicant

needs the Anchorage ARC VEC to submit anything that is not exam related, the Lead VE is instructed to contact the VEC Chairman via email to get a DocuSign package sent out to the applicant.

6 Remote Testing

6.1 General

Pursuant to authorization granted in Report and Order 14-74, the FCC allows for remote testing of applicants to obtain their amateur radio license. The Anchorage ARC VEC offers our remote examination program services to those who have a reliable internet connection and necessary ancillary equipment. Remote testing is available to any eligible person worldwide that is authorized to receive a United States amateur radio operator license.

The Anchorage ARC VEC offers two options for remote testing: Fully Remote or Proctored Examination. We strongly encourage you to carefully read this entire section.

6.2 International Applicants

Per §97.23, the FCC requires that each license grant must show the grantee's correct name and mailing address. The mailing address must be in an area where the amateur service is regulated by the FCC and where the grantee can receive mail delivery by the United States Postal Service.

Additionally, Anchorage ARC VEC policy is to require that ALL applicants, including international applicants, provide a photo identification document verifying an individual's identity that has been issued by some arm of the U.S. government. This may be an ID issued by federal, state, territorial, or even tribal entities. We will not, under any circumstances, use a foreign-issued identification document to verify an applicant's identification.

6.3 Fully Remote Testing

6.3.1 Basic Requirements

Fully remote testing (no proctor) shall be available for those applicants who have the technological knowledge and abilities to setup a testing environment that optimizes a required configuration. To be eligible for a fully remote examination, applicants must have the following:

- A reliable internet connection, suitable to adequately run two video feeds and one audio feed.
- One computer with the Mozilla Firefox or Google Chrome web browser with a web camera that allows us to view the Examinee's head, face, and shoulders clearly, to be seen at all times during the examination. This same computer must have a microphone that allows the VE team to hear all sounds within the testing environment.
- Another computer with a web camera, a smart phone with a web camera, or a second web camera attached to their main computer. This camera must be positioned in such a way to allow the VE team to see the examinee's hands, workspace, work (on scratch paper and/or calculator) and the computer monitor that is being used to display the examination.
- A current installation of Zoom or another agreed-upon video conferencing package. Zoom is our preferred platform and is what our VEs are trained on.
- A quiet room to complete the exam, free from distractions or interruptions. The Examinee **MUST** be the only person in the room during the exam. No one is permitted to enter the room while the examination is in progress.

6.3.2 Important Information on Fully Remote Testing

Before scheduling an examination session, we want to make sure the applicant understands and is able to actually configure their cameras to meet our specifications. They **MUST** have a minimum of two cameras. One must allow their head, face, and shoulders to be in plain sight and the second must be viewing their work area, screen displaying the examination and hands.

The Lead (or other designated VE) should call the applicant prior to the examination to run a short technical configuration test via a short video conference via Zoom. The purpose of the conference is to verify that the applicant has sufficient bandwidth to support the video streaming requirements, can set up their cameras correctly, and has a suitable testing environment. We must ensure that our VE team will be able to monitor the examinee throughout the entire examination.

If the test conference indicates an inadequate technical arrangement, the applicant should be instructed to locate a proctor who meets our requirements. See the section on Proctor requirements.

6.3.3 Process Overview on Fully Remote Examinations

- Examinee must be at a table/desk with their computer. Only one display/monitor can be connected during the examination. If additional computer monitors are present, they must be turned off or covered.
- The Examinee must be alone in the room for the duration of the examination. Ensure the Examinee understands no one can enter the room while the examination is taking place. If someone does enter the room during the examination, the examination **MUST** be terminated immediately. Once the situation is resolved, a **NEW** examination may be started.
- The Examinee may not leave the room until their examination is complete.
- The examinee's desktop should be cleared of all unnecessary equipment and materials. It should be free of clutter. There should be no notes, equipment, or any materials that could be useful during the examination. An optimum configuration for the desk or surface the examination is to be taken on would include the computer monitor, keyboard, mouse, 1 sheet of scratch paper, a writing instrument, and a simple 4-function calculator.
- The Examinee may not wear a smart watch or headphones, or use a smartphone, computer, tablet, or similar device during the examination. They may only use a smartphone as a second camera.
- If the applicant is using a calculator, they must clear the memory and show the VE team the keystrokes on camera. The VE team must be satisfied this requirement has been met or the calculator may not be used.
- Once connected to the video conference and prior to the start of the examination, the Examinee must swing their second camera around the entire room (360 degrees). This must also include an inspection of the desktop, the floor in the vicinity of the testing area, and the ceiling above the examination area.
- The Examinee must present a valid and current, U.S. government-issued photo identification.
- The Examinee will be given a URL to access the examination platform with login information.
- During the examination, the cameras must clearly show: – The Examinee's head and shoulders; – Examinee's monitor/laptop screen; and – The Examinee's work area, hands, keyboard, and mouse.

- Just before the examination starts, the VE team will instruct the examinee to remain in full view of the cameras for the duration of the examination. The examination cannot be voluntarily stopped and restarted.
- The VE team will ensure the Examinee understands if they are found to be looking around at another part of their room and away from their workspace, the examination will be immediately terminated and rendered void.
- The VE team will instruct the Examinee that if their internet connection video connection drops, they must remain seated until the VE team resolves the issue at hand. The same shall apply if their examination somehow has an issue and suddenly stops. Should the Examinee's internet connection not be immediately restored, the Lead VE will establish a telephone connection with the Examinee. If this situation occurs, examination that is in progress must be terminated and a new examination may be started.

6.4 Remote Testing with an Approved Proctor

6.4.1 Basic Requirements

Proctored examinations are administered similarly to fully remote exams, except that only one camera is required. An approved proctor is responsible for ensuring that the room and testing environment meets all necessary conditions prior to and throughout the examination. Communication with the proctor may be maintained through the video conference link established with the examinee, or with their own conference link.

Proctored examinations shall be available for those applicants who have the technological knowledge and abilities to setup a testing environment that optimizes a required configuration. To be eligible for a proctored examination, applicants must have the following:

- A reliable internet connection, suitable to adequately run one video feed and one audio feed.
- One computer with the Mozilla Firefox or Google Chrome web browser with a web camera that allows us to view the Examinee's head, face, and shoulders clearly, to be seen at all times during the examination. This same computer must have a microphone that allows the VE team can hear all sounds within the testing environment.
- A current installation of Zoom or another agreed-upon video conferencing package. Zoom is our preferred platform and is what our VEs are trained on.
- A quiet room to complete the exam, free from distractions or interruptions. The Examinee **MUST** be the only person in the room during the exam. No one is permitted to enter the room while the examination is in progress.
- A qualified, vetted, and approved Proctor.

6.4.2 Who May Serve as a Proctor?

Any proctor must be approved by the Anchorage ARC VEC. Eligible persons to serve as a proctor may include the following individuals who are **CURRENTLY** serving in one of the following capacities ("retired" or "former" status is **NOT** adequate):

- Primary or Secondary Education Teachers
- College or University Faculty or Adjunct Faculty (must be faculty, that is, a person who actually is credentialed as an individual who actually renders educational instruction).
- Sworn Law Enforcement Officers (Federal, State, or Local)

- Firemen and emergency response personnel (personnel who respond to emergency situations, typically dispatched from a fire station. I.e. – those who ride in fire trucks, ambulances, and similar response equipment).
- Judges or Magistrates
- Active Duty, Active Reserve, or Active National Guard Military Commissioned Officers, Warrant Officers and Senior NCOs (E7 – E9) (Retirees and inactive reserve are not authorized)
- Civilian federal employees in the grade of GS-7 or above
- Elected government officials such as mayors, city council members, city assembly members, senators, congressmen, etc.
- State, municipal, city, borough, township, or other similar government subdivision employees in a management or supervisory position.
- An amateur Extra, Advanced*, or General Class** license holder. They must provide a signed copy of their OFFICIAL license.

Note * - May only proctor for Technician and General Class license examinations

Note ** - May only proctor for Technician Class license examinations

Further, proctors MAY NOT proctor examinations for his or her spouse, children, grandchildren, stepchildren, parents, grandparents, stepparents, brothers, sisters, stepbrothers, stepsisters, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and in-laws.

IMPORTANT NOTE ON PROCTORS: While individuals not holding amateur radio licenses may be proctors, individuals with a Novice or Technician class amateur radio license are **NOT** eligible to be proctors. If the potential proctor holds a General, Advanced or Amateur Extra class license, they can be proctors, but need to provide us with a signed copy of their OFFICIAL license. This can be attached to the electronic proctor application. Submitting a CSCE proving your class of license will NOT be accepted! Please know that we do check the Universal Licensing System to see if a proctor applicant is also a licensed amateur.

6.4.3 How Are Proctors Identified and Vetted?

Proctors are identified by individual examination applicants. We do not maintain a “pool of proctors” since we don’t know when or where a proctor may be needed.

When the applicant completes the online Examination Agreement form and select “proctored examination”, they are then required to provide the name, telephone number, e-mail address, and qualifications of their proctor nominee. The Anchorage ARC VEC then sends the proctor nominee a proctor application package via DocuSign. Among other things, the proctor must provide a copy of a current U.S.-issued photo ID, as well as a copy of proof of their current qualifications.

When the proctor application is completed, the Anchorage ARC VEC then “vets” the proctor. A thorough review of the application is performed and various efforts are undertaken to check and verify the information submitted. For exam, we may perform Google searches, may do public records checks, may contact their employer to confirm their employment, etc.

Once the proctor has been vetted and approved, only then may they perform the duties of a proctor at any examination session.

6.4.4 Process Overview on Proctor Examinations

- Examinee must be at a table/desk with their computer. Only one display/monitor can be connected during the examination. If additional computer monitors are present, they must be turned off or covered.
- The Examinee must be alone in the room for the duration of the examination. Ensure the Examinee understands no one can enter the room while the examination is taking place. If someone does enter the room during the examination, the examination MUST be terminated immediately. Once the situation is resolved, a NEW examination may be started.
- The Examinee may not leave the room until their examination is complete.
- The examinee's desktop should be cleared of all unnecessary equipment and materials. It should be free of clutter. There should be no notes, equipment, or any materials that could be useful during the examination. An optimum configuration for the desk or surface the examination is to be taken on would include the computer monitor, keyboard, mouse, 1 sheet of scratch paper, a writing instrument, and a simple 4-function calculator.
- The Examinee may not wear a smart watch or headphones, or use a smartphone, computer, tablet, or similar device during the examination. They may only use a smartphone as a second camera.
- If the applicant is using a calculator, they must clear the memory and show the VE team the keystrokes on camera. The VE team must be satisfied this requirement has been met or the calculator may not be used.
- Once connected to the video conference and prior to the start of the examination, the Examinee must swing their second camera around the entire room (360 degrees). This must also include an inspection of the desktop, the floor in the vicinity of the testing area, and the ceiling above the examination area.
- The Examinee must present a valid and current, U.S. government-issued photo identification.
- The Examinee will be given a URL to access the examination platform with login information.
- During the examination, the cameras must clearly show: – The Examinee's head and shoulders; – Examinee's monitor/laptop screen; and – The Examinee's work area, hands, keyboard, and mouse.
- Just before the examination starts, the VE team will instruct the examinee to remain in full view of the cameras for the duration of the examination. The examination cannot be voluntarily stopped and restarted.
- The VE team will ensure the Examinee understands if they are found to be looking around at another part of their room and away from their workspace, the examination will be immediately terminated and rendered void.
- The VE team will instruct the Examinee that if their internet connection video connection drops, they must remain seated until the VE team resolves the issue at hand. The same shall apply if their examination somehow has an issue and suddenly stops. Should the Examinee's internet connection not be immediately restored, the Lead VE will establish a telephone connection with the Examinee. If this situation occurs, examination that is in progress must be terminated and a new examination may be started.

7 Information Required to Submit for VEC Processing

7.1 Session Package Submission List

- Completed session package (form 605 and CSCE, typically downloaded from our examination platform);
- Green Sheet, filed electronically through Google Forms

7.2 The Green Sheet

The Green Sheet is the form that is filled out by a VE team to report the particulars of a session. The Green Sheet is submitted electronically online and is automatically sent to VEC headquarters.

When you open the form, here is what you will see and expect:

1. You will be asked to type in your callsign as the submitter of the Green Sheet.
2. Exam Location. Enter the City and State where the examinee(s) are physically located and taking the examination.
3. Next item will ask what type of session you had. The available options are In-Person, Remote, and Mixed.
 - a. In-Person: All examinees and all VEs are physically present at the testing location.
 - b. Remote: All VEs are remote from the examinee(s).
 - c. Mixed: This means some of the applicants were physically present for an in-person examination and some were remote. It can also mean that applicants were physically present and one or more of the observing VE's were watching from a different location.
4. Date of Exam. Enter the examination date and click "Next".
5. When the next page loads, you will begin to enter examinee data. Begin by typing in the examinee's name.
6. If the examinee is currently licensed, enter their callsign.
7. You will now see a series of boxes for each element (2, 3, and 4). Each column consists of Passed, Failed, License Credit, CSCE Credit, or Not Attempted. If the examinee is already licensed for a particular element, then you will select the "License Credit" box. That also applies if they have an expired license that can be reissued under the Grandfather clause in Part 97 (see this section in the VE Guide for more information). Select the appropriate box(es) and move on to the next step. Make sure that each row of each element in this section has a box selected otherwise you will not be able to continue the form.
8. Next question asks if a CSCE was issued to the applicant for passing an exam. This should always be checked "Yes" as we should always be issuing a CSCE for element credit given/earned at a session. If for some reason you select "No", you will need to explain in the Comments section as to why. You should also contact the Chairman to advise.
9. If the examinee presents a CSCE for element credit, enter the name of the issuing authority (which VEC), the date, and what element credit is given.
10. Enter any explanatory notes in the Comments section related to element credit being given for other than CSCE purposes.
11. You will be asked if you have another applicant to enter. If you answer "Yes", you will be brought back to another page identical to the one you just completed for another applicant to be entered into the Green Sheet. If you answer "No", you will be taken to another page.
12. The next section is for Session Summary Data.

- a. First question asks for the Number of People Tested. This is a box where you need to write in the number of people who took examinations. If you had 4 applicants testing and 3 doing administrative updates, you would only indicate that you had 4 people taking a test. The number "Tested" should be the sum of the "No. PASSED" and "No. FAILED".
 - b. Next question asks you to type in the number of people that passed at least ONE examination. Even if one or two failed their first attempt and passed a second exam, you still count that as an applicant who "passed".
 - c. The next question is the number of applicants that did NOT pass an exam **whatsoever** during the session.
 - d. The next question is a count of the number of examinations that were passed during this particular testing session. Simply count the total number of examinations that were passed during the session.
 - e. The last question asks for a count of the number of examinations that were failed during this particular testing session. Simply count the total number of examinations that were failed during the session.
13. Once you have completed those questions, click Next.
 14. When the next page loads, you will begin to list each VE that participated in that particular session. The Session Manager is always going to be added first.
 15. Make sure you log the amount of time that was spent by each VE at the session, typically from the time of arrival until the last examination is completed.
 16. If you have any comments for a particular VE or particulars that relate to the conduct of a VE that needs to be brought to the attention of the VEC, you will enter it into the Comments section of that page.
 17. If you have a proctor to add, you will need to answer "Yes" to that question and it will take you to another page where you enter their information, just like you would for another VE. If you do not have a proctor to add, make sure you select "No" and proceed to add the additional VE's that participated in the session.
 18. Once you have finished entering the third VE in the Green Sheet, you will be asked if more need to be added. If not, you will select No and click "Next", otherwise, select Yes and add the next VE.
 19. The last question will ask you to "...Click submit to finish." Click on the "Submit" button to send the Green Sheet to VEC headquarters.
 20. You have now completed the Green Sheet.

7.3 Checking Session Documentation

- Have you completed the Green Sheet for your session?
- Did you return original copies of all CSCE forms to examinees (from other sessions)? For completely remote sessions, the examinee must have provided an electronic/scanned copy of any CSCE for VE team review.
- Did you attach photocopies of any applicable CSCE forms via e-mail and send them to the VEC? These would be forms presented by the applicant that were earned at some previous session.

Keep in mind that the VE's signing the session package indicating that a new license is to be granted or a license is to be upgraded must have all necessary documents and materials attached with the package **before the document is signed**. Providing a note indicating that the applicant will send a copy of a

previous CSCE to VEC headquarters or requesting that the VEC locate a copy of a previously issued CSCE after the 605 is signed is **unacceptable**. If an applicant needs paperwork to accompany the 605, **ALL** that paperwork needs to be present and completely reviewed by the signing VE's prior to signing the 605. Therefore, applicants must ensure that they bring all necessary supporting paperwork to the test session.

8 Expired Licenses and Exam Credit

Mark the "License Credit" radio button on the Green Sheet for appropriate elements where applicable as described in this section.

The FCC offers partial credit for expired General, Advanced or Amateur Extra licenses. A license that has expired and gone beyond the two-year grace period will be canceled in the FCC system. The licensee will not automatically qualify for a new license. At a minimum, the previous license holder must take and pass the current Element 2 (Technician) exam at a VE exam session to return to Amateur Radio. The FCC will issue a new call sign and a new license when the Technician exam is passed. Please refer to Expired License Credit section below for further information.

The FCC also offers partial credit for pre-1987 Technician licenses. Please refer to the Pre-1987 Technician License "Grandfather" Credit section 8.3 below.

8.1 Expired License for Exam Element Credit

FCC Rule §97.505(a) offers partial credit to an examinee that has an expired General, Advanced, or Extra license. If an applicant held a General or Advanced license, and has proof of that holding, the FCC will afford credit for the General (Element 3) written exam only. If an applicant held an Extra license, and has proof, the FCC will afford credit for the General (Element 3) and Extra (Element 4) written exams. At VE exam sessions it is the applicant (not the VEs or coordinating VEC) who is responsible for supplying the evidence of holding valid expired license.

The section titled "Valid Forms of Exam Element Credit for Expired Licenses" explains how to verify the license status of someone eligible for such credit under Section §97.505 of FCC Rules.

If their license has been expired for less than 2 years (within the grace period), license holders can simply renew their license. No additional testing is required. Have them fill out a form 605 to indicate they are renewing an expired license, checking the appropriate blocks, or entering information as needed, and submit it with the other paperwork for that exam session. There is no charge for this service.

If their license has been expired for a period exceeding 2 years, they must first take and pass the Technician (element 2) exam. Once that exam is passed, they must then demonstrate proof of having held a license of a "higher" class, such as a General, Conditional, Advanced, or Amateur Extra Class. The fact that they once held a Technician, Technician Plus, or Novice class license does not allow them to skip this step.

Their application for a new Technician license will be processed as for any other applicant. If they have provided acceptable proof of having previously held a General, Conditional, Advanced, or Amateur Extra class license, they will also be upgraded as part of the same process.

The relicensing provisions will generate a new license and call sign. If, after they receive their new license, they want their old call sign back, they can apply via the vanity call sign program if the call sign is still available.

The Anchorage ARC VEC does not process vanity call sign applications. Vanity call signs may be obtained directly from the FCC, via their on-line filing procedures, or with the aid of a VEC that is authorized to process vanity call sign applications. Both the ARRL VEC (www.arrl.org) and the W5YI VEC (www.w5yi.org) can help them. The Anchorage ARC VEC website contains additional information about vanity licensing, and applicants interested in this provision should visit our web pages. If you have any questions about this program, please contact VEC headquarters.

8.2 Valid Forms of Exam Element Credit for Expired Licenses

At a test session, the VE's will review all credit documents presented by applicants. Applicants who hold an expired General or Advanced license receive General written exam (Element 3) credit per FCC Rules. Applicants who hold an expired Extra license receive General (Element 3) and Extra (Element 4) written exam credit per FCC Rules.

This can be verified if an applicant presents any of the following:

- Per FCC Rule §97.505(a), an original or copy of an original expired FCC issued General, Advanced or Extra license as indicated on the license.
- A REFERENCE COPY of the license printed from the FCC ULS license database or FCC archive database located on the FCC website at <http://wireless.fcc.gov/uls/index.htm?job=home>
- If licensed in the mid-'70s or after, the FCC will issue a 'License Verification Letter' indicating that the applicant was licensed. The FCC stated any requests for verification must be submitted in writing to: FCC, ATTN: Amateur Section, 1270 Fairfield Rd, Gettysburg, PA 17325. The request must include name, address, telephone number, date of birth, call sign issued at that time, and when the license was granted (if exact date is not known, give the approximate time frame). The FCC asks those inquiring to include any information that may be helpful in researching these requests, but it does not need to know details of the examination session, such as where the test was administered or who gave it. "These requests must be researched on microfiche, so they will be very time-consuming," an FCC spokesperson said, adding that no one should expect an overnight response.
- For 1966 or more recent records, the FCC's research retrieval service contractor, Best Copy & Printing, Inc. (BCPI), will obtain the General, Advanced or Extra license certification from FCC records. There is a charge for this service. For assistance in purchasing copies of FCC documents, please contact BCPI directly. Phone: 202-488-5300 or 1-800-378-3160. TTY: 202-488-5562. Fax: 202-488-5563. Email: fcc@bcpiweb.com Web: http://www.bcpiweb.com/fcc_research.php
- A 1967 Edition, or later, Radio Amateur Callbook listing is acceptable as proof provided the 'G' (General), 'A' (Advanced) or 'E' (Extra) license class appears on the page next to the call sign listing. Only Callbooks issued Fall 1967 or later will show the license class. Be sure to copy the year of publication reference, if not printed on the page.

8.3 Pre-1987 Technician License "Grandfather" Element Credit

FCC Rule §97.505(a) offers partial credit to pre-1987 Technician licenses. If an applicant held a "Technician" class license prior to 3/21/1987, and has proof, the FCC will afford credit for the General (Element 3) written exam only. The FCC does not require the applicant to have been continuously

licensed. At VE exam sessions it is the applicant (not the VE's or coordinating VEC) who is responsible for supplying the evidence of holding valid grandfather credit.

The section titled "Valid Forms of Exam Element Credit for Pre-1987 Technician License" explains how to verify the Technician grandfather credit status of someone eligible for such credit under Section §97.505 of FCC Rules.

8.4 Valid Forms of Exam Element Credit for Pre-1987 Technician License

At a test session, the VE's will review all credit documents presented by applicants. For General written exam (Element 3) credit, applicants who took a 50-question Technician/General written exam before March 21, 1987 receive Technician grandfather license credit per FCC Rules.

This can be verified if an applicant presents any of the following:

- Per FCC Rule §97.505(a)(4)s, an FCC Technician license issued before March 21, 1987, as indicated on the license.
- An original Element 3 Certificate of Successful Completion of Examination (CSCE) issued before March 21, 1987.
- If licensed in the mid-'70s or after, the FCC will issue a 'License Verification Letter' indicating that the applicant was licensed as a Technician licensee prior to March 21, 1987. The FCC stated any requests for verification must be submitted in writing to: FCC, ATTN: Amateur Section, 1270 Fairfield Rd, Gettysburg, PA 17325. The request must include name, address, telephone number, date of birth, call sign issued at that time, and when the Technician license was granted (if exact date is not known, give the approximate time frame). The FCC asks those inquiring to include any information that may be helpful in researching these requests, but it does not need to know details of the examination session, such as where the test was administered or who gave it. An FCC spokesperson said that "These requests must be researched on microfiche, so they will be very time-consuming . . . no one should expect an overnight response."
- For 1966 or more recent records, the FCC's research retrieval service contractor, Best Copy & Printing, Inc. (BCPI), will obtain the pre-1987 technician certification from FCC records. There is a charge for this service. For assistance in purchasing copies of FCC documents, please contact BCPI directly. Their contact information is as follows:
 - Phone: 202-488-5300 or 1-800-378-3160.
 - TTY: 202-488-5562.
 - Fax: 202-488-5563.
 - Email: fcc@bcpiweb.com
 - Web: http://www.bcpiweb.com/fcc_research.php
- A 1987 Edition, or earlier, Radio Amateur Callbook listing is acceptable as proof provided the 'T' (Technician) license class appears on the page next to the call sign listing. Only Callbooks issued Fall 1967 or later will show the license class. Be sure to copy the year of publication reference if year is not printed on the page.
- QRZ.COM has posted on their website a copy of their very first Amateur Radio CD ROM product as originally published in 1993. This searchable database contains license records from 1983 to 1993. A printout of such a listing from the CD ROM or the web page, showing a Technician license effective or begin date prior to 3/21/87 is acceptable.

8.5 CSCEs for Exam Element Credit

At an exam session the VE's will review all credit documents presented by applicants. Per FCC Rule §97.505(b), a Certificate of Successful Completion of Examination (CSCE) issued within the previous 365 days at a VEC sponsored exam session, is acceptable proof for the Element(s) indicated on the form.

All VE teams need to be fully aware that the applicant MUST present an original copy of the CSCE to receive credit for that element! Additionally, if a VE team can not verify the authenticity of a CSCE, the Lead VE should contact their Lead VE or Anchorage ARC VEC Chairman for further instructions. We can, and will, contact the issuing CSCE authority to verify its authenticity if we deem it necessary.

With the changes to the speed at which licenses are being granted by the FCC, this is not likely to come up unless the applicant took their exam on a Friday evening, gets their CSCE, and goes for an upgrade on that following weekend. Again, rare but if it does happen, make sure that the applicant presents their original CSCE.

CSCE Special exception: Photocopies may, in special circumstances, be acceptable provided they contain the valid original signatures (in ink) of 3 current Anchorage ARC VEC VE's (in addition to any signatures that may appear on the copied original) attesting that the copy is a certified copy of an original CSCE form, and a reasonable explanation of why the original is not available. Acceptance of photocopied CSCE forms will be considered on a case-by-case basis and is NOT guaranteed.

8.6 FCC Rule Pertaining to Element Credit

FCC Rule §97.505 Element Credit. The administering VE's must give credit as specified below to an examinee holding any of the following license grants:

Operator Class	Unexpired (or within the grace period)	Expired and beyond the renewable grace period
Amateur Extra	Not Applicable	Elements 3 and 4
Advanced, General, or Technician granted before March 21, 1987	Elements 2 and 3	Element 3
Technician Plus or Technician granted on or after March 21, 1987	Element 2	No Credit

9 Creating a New VE Team

The Anchorage ARC VEC gladly accepts new teams into our program. To be eligible, one must first meet some basic requirements and conditions prior to being approved as a team. They are as follows:

- The team must have a Lead VE and at least 2 other members. That Lead VE must hold a valid Amateur Extra class license and already be accredited or become accredited as a Volunteer Examiner with the Anchorage ARC VEC.
- The team must be willing to utilize our web-based platform for amateur radio license testing and electronic document preparation. This can be implemented by using several laptop or desktop computers with a reliable internet connection.

- Once approved as a new team by the Anchorage ARC VEC Chairman, the Lead VE and at least 2 VE team members will have thirty (30) days to successfully complete their written VE examinations and to establish accounts on the various web-based services we use. Failure to complete these activities will result on the team being dropped.
- The team must be willing to coordinate and sponsor the addition of new VEs in their group by sending them to our online application to undergo the accreditation process. Sponsorship simply means you are willing to take them on as part of your team and authorize them to submit an application. The Anchorage ARC VEC Chairman will rely on the Lead VE to ensure accuracy of this information and cross check all incoming applications for new VE's.
- As new VE's are added to a team, the Lead VE shall ensure that each VE meets our requirements to remain active in our program. This can be done by simply delegating VE's to participate in certain in-person and/or remote examination sessions to help team members remain active in our VEC program.
- The team must be willing to conduct a minimum of three sessions per calendar year. This gives any accredited VE's in their team an opportunity to easily fulfil the requirement of participating in at least 1 examination session over a 12-month period to remain active in our VEC program.
- All VEs must provide the Anchorage ARC VEC current contact information, which will be listed on our web site, to also include physical location for in-person examinations.

If the new VE team can meet the basic requirements, we welcome you to apply. To begin, please fill out the form on our web site and we will begin the process. The nominated Lead VE must complete this form and be able to provide information as to where examination sessions will be administered, etc. once the VEC Chairman approves the application. When we receive and approve the application, we will inform the prospective Lead VE that they are permitted to apply for accreditation into our program. For more information or additional questions, please direct any inquiries to the VEC Chairman via email at vec@kl7aa.org.

10 Volunteer Examiner Accreditation

10.1 Volunteer Examiner Requirements

VEs must meet the following requirements:

- Be accredited by the coordinating VEC (in our case, the Anchorage ARC VEC);
- They must be at least 18 years of age;
- Be a person who holds an amateur operator license of the classes specified below:
 - Amateur Extra, Advanced or General Class in order to administer a Technician Class operator license examination;
 - Amateur Extra or Advanced Class in order to administer a General Class operator license examination;
 - Amateur Extra Class in order to administer an Amateur Extra Class operator license examination.
- Not be a person whose grant of an amateur station license or amateur operator license has ever been revoked or suspended.
- MUST be sponsored and approved by the Lead VE from the team you will be serving with prior to applying (i.e., sponsorship); and

- You must agree to abide by the policies and procedures set forth by the Anchorage ARC VEC.

The following elements below can be administered by a qualified VE or proctor holding the appropriate class of amateur radio license:

- Technician class (Element 2) license examinations may be administered by VE's or an eligible proctor holding a General, Advanced or Amateur Extra class license.
- General class (Element 3) license examinations may be administered by VE's or an eligible proctor holding an Advanced or Amateur Extra class license.
- Amateur Extra (Element 4) class license examinations may ONLY be administered by VE's or an eligible proctor holding an Amateur Extra class license.

Note: As of April 15, 2000, no new tests are being administered for ADVANCED or NOVICE class licenses. Individuals holding such licenses may renew them as long as they wish. Also, testing for Morse Code is no longer required.

10.2 Applying to Become a Volunteer Examiner

You apply to become a VE by entering some personal data, such as your name, amateur radio call sign, mailing address, name of your sponsoring team and contact information on a standard web-based application form. You must certify that certain statements on the form are correct and that you agree with the terms and conditions detailed on the application form.

If you are applying as a new Lead VE, you MUST first apply to create a team. Upon having your team approved by the VEC Chairman, only then will you be allowed to apply for VE accreditation, provided your newly created team has been added to our list. Unless you receive prior approval from the Lead VE and plan to serve in south central Alaska, do NOT select the Anchorage Amateur Radio Club as your sponsoring VE Team!

The application for becoming a Volunteer Examiner is available ONLY as a web form from the Anchorage ARC VEC web page. Be sure you read the form and agree to the conditions it contains before submitting it. If you do not agree with these conditions, we cannot accept your application.

Once you have submitted your application, it will be reviewed by the Anchorage ARC VEC Chairman to confirm you are indeed eligible to become a VE and verify you have been authorized by the Lead VE of your sponsoring team to apply. As soon as your application is approved, you will be sent a link to take the 30 question, open book online examination.

The examination is intended to make sure VE applicants are familiar with the basic requirements and procedures of the VE program. The examination must be completed within 2 weeks of being assigned. A score of 85% is required to pass. Missed questions on a passed exam will be reviewed with the applicant prior to being accredited. Missed questions on a failed exam will NOT be reviewed with the applicant. This failure suggests that more review of the VE guide and of Part 97 is needed by the applicant.

10.3 Important Information About Maintaining Your VE Accreditation

To maintain your status as an active VE in our program, you are required to participate in at least one examination session every 12 months. This can be via a remote session or via an in-person session.

VEs who have not participated in at least one examination session over the past 12 months must simply retake and pass the VE open book examination to maintain their accreditation.

VEs who do not maintain their accreditation status as indicated will be discredited until such time as they retake and pass the VE open book examination.

10.4 Voluntary Accreditation Termination

You may voluntarily terminate your accreditation as a VE if the need arises. To do so, simply contact the VEC Chairman to advise your desire to be removed from the program. If you desire to become re-accredited in the future, you will need to apply as a new VE and re-take the open book VE examination.

11 Processing Relicensing Applications at Exam Sessions

11.1 General

The FCC released rules dealing with relicensing for individuals whose license has been expired for a period exceeding 2 years and 1 day from the expiration date of their last active license. These procedures are outlined in Section 8.1 of this VE Guide.

If an applicant wants to take advantage of this rule, they must provide you with their documentation, as clearly outlined in Section 8 of this VE Guide. We will keep copies of this documentation on file, so please make sure the applicant receives their originals back. Do make sure the copies of their documentation are legible! If they are not legible, we will NOT process an application for them to receive credit.

The applicant must take and pass a new Technician class license examination (element 2). VE teams shall administer the examination as if the applicant was a new operator. If you are a team that submits directly to the FCC, you MUST notify the VEC Chairman of an applicant who wishes to be relicensed under this rule.

If the applicant's documentation is questionable, you must contact the VEC Chairman. Issue a CSCE for a new Technician class license and submit an upload file for a new Technician class license. Hold the applicant's paperwork relative to the previous license class send it directly to VEC headquarters for further review. Be sure to have the applicant provide a telephone number in case we need to contact them for further information or documentation. If the applicant does not have all their upgrade documentation handy for the first submission, send in what you have and the VEC will work with the applicant to sort out the details from there.

VE teams are instructed to make their own assessment as to the validity of the applicant's upgrade request even if some of the documents are not yet available. Send additional notes and information to VEC headquarters for further processing.

For situations like this, any VE team processing an applicant for license credit is required to send a scanned or photocopy of the supporting documentation to VEC headquarters. Keep in mind, we already receive all of this for an applicant to receive a new Technician class license. You will add to this a completed and signed affidavit form and clear, legible copies of any proof they are providing in the form of an email attachment.

Once everything is received, it will be carefully reviewed. If everything is verified, a new form 605 will be prepared and circulated between the applicant and three AARC VEC VEs. Once the new form 605 is

completed, a CSCE will be provided to the applicant and the upgrade will be uploaded to the FCC so that the prior license class can be restored. If the materials concerning their previous license do not appear to be valid, the applicant will still hold a Technician class amateur radio license and they can still operate under the parameters afforded to that class of license.

11.2 Affidavit Forms and Verification of Facts

Every person wishing to take advantage of this rule must complete an affidavit that states they are entitled to receive credit for elements previously passed. This affidavit is their statement that they are the same person as shown on the expired license.

If the applicant's current name and address are the same as indicated on the expired license, only the applicant needs to complete the affidavit. However, if the applicant's current name OR address is different than indicated on the expired license, the affidavit will ALSO need to be signed by two witnesses who can attest to the applicant's identification.

The affidavit is required even if their current name and address match the expired license. Affidavits are completed via DocuSign and routed by VEC Headquarters. The affidavit is different from and separate from the regular Form 605 that all applicants submit. In the case of relicensing, both forms are required.

Even with a signed affidavit, additional scrutiny from the VE team is needed to determine if the declared facts are plausible. For example, does the age of the applicant seem appropriate for a person licensed previously? A person that presents an expired amateur radio license that was originally issued 30 or more years ago, but whose current identification (a driver's license, for example) indicates they are only 40 years old (or less) should raise a "red flag". Guard against a situation where someone is attempting to claim credit for an expired license that was held by someone else with a similar name or address. VE's should use their judgment and experience, along with any documentation provided by the applicant, to decide if the facts are indeed plausible.

Unless the applicant can show an expired General, Conditional, Advanced, or Extra class license that also shows the same name and mailing address as their current information, they will be required to provide additional documentation.

If the applicant presents an expired license where the mailing address on the license is different from their current information, they must also provide a satisfactory explanation for the discrepancies. The reasons for a discrepancy could be as simple as the applicant having moved one or more times since the issuance of the now expired license. Remember that the FCC requires licensees to keep them informed of their current mailing address. However, if the applicant's former license has been expired for several years, they would not have been required to keep the FCC informed of changes that occurred while the license was not in effect.

The applicant should be able to show documentation proving that they lived at the former address, or in the case of a name change, when and for what reason they changed their name. This could be established by other documents such as voter ID cards, old driver's licenses, old QSL cards, old bank statements or tax forms, etc. Our goal is to detect and disallow applications where someone is attempting to take advantage of a similar name, but who is not actually the person who held the expired license.

This situation will most often apply to an applicant has changed their last name because of changes in their marital status (but there could be other reasons, applicable to either a man or a woman). In any case, we are looking for similar documentation to that needed for address changes. Use the same basic verification processes as previously mentioned for address discrepancies.

Be absolutely certain that everything is in agreement before accepting someone's claim for element credit via an expired license. VE team members will not be held liable if they do not accept someone's credentials. In fact, we are not required to accept anything. In case of a dispute, the VEC Chairman will resolve the issue. It is up to the applicant to prove their case to the satisfaction of the examiners – be fair but be sure. If you are for any reason unsure, don't do it!

A closing set of instructions for all VE teams: If you are unable to immediately verify a person's previous license, you are required to contact your Lead VE or the Chairman as soon as possible for further instructions. These situations do not happen very often, and the general rule of thumb is to administer their Technician class license exam then send the paperwork in question to VEC headquarters for further review.

12 Morse Code Examinations

While Morse Code is no longer required for amateur radio licensing in the United States, many operators have asked about getting some sort of proof showing proficiency in international Morse Code for the purposes of overseas operating, whether it be temporary or in lieu of relocating as an immigrant.

Through approval from the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT), we are able to offer international Morse Code examinations to meet requirements in any country that is under agreement with CEPT. Anchorage ARC VEC offers examinations to prove proficiency in the Morse code at various speeds.

12.1 Morse Code Requirements

To receive certification attesting an operator's proficiency in Morse code, the following criteria must be met:

1. The operator must pass an examination that demonstrates their capability to send and copy at 5, 7, 10 or 12 words per minute. NOTE: It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure they become certified at the speed required for the country they are to operate. They should check with the country they are planning to operate in for their requirements. Most require the operator to be able to send and copy 10 or 12 words per minute.
2. The applicant must correctly send, by hand, a plain-language text provided by the examiner team, in international Morse code, for a minimum of three (3) consecutive minutes, at a speed of not less than 5, 7, 10, or 12 words per minute as appropriate for the certification being attempted, using an ordinary radiotelegraph key, a semiautomatic key or an electronic hand key.
3. The applicant must correctly receive, by ear, a plain-language text provided by the examiner team, in international Morse code, for a minimum of three (3) consecutive minutes, at a speed of not less than 5, 7, 10, or 12 words per minute as appropriate for the certification being attempted, copying legibly by hand, typewriter, or word processor.
4. A Morse code "word" consists of five characters based on the PARIS method. The letters A through Z are counted as one (1) character each, and figures and punctuation marks are counted as two (2) characters each.

5. Examinations for Morse code proficiency shall contain the following: Letters A through Z, numbers 0 through 9, the period, comma, question mark, the slant bar (i.e. - "/"), commonly used "Q-Signals", and commonly used prosigns such as "BT", "AR", "SK" and "EE".
6. The examination given for copying international Morse code can be administered by hand, cassette tape, or computer-generated code. Timing and length of text must be closely observed.
7. On the Copying Proficiency Examination, Morse code shall be sent using the Farnsworth method with a character speed of 12WPM and a word speed of 5, 7, 10, or 12 WPM as appropriate for the examination.
8. On the Sending Proficiency Examination, the speed of the characters sent by the applicant is immaterial, so long as the necessary number of characters is sent within the three (3) minute examination period. At 5 WPM, 75 characters shall be sent; at 7 WPM, 105 characters shall be sent; at 10 WPM, 150 characters shall be sent; and at 12 WPM, 180 characters shall be sent. Failure to send the necessary number of characters as indicated shall constitute a failure of the sending examination.
9. Operators seeking international Morse code certification for an amateur radio operator license issued by a foreign authority must be in possession of a valid license in their home country prior to an examination being administered.

12.2 Morse Code Grading Structure

Grading examinations for Morse code proficiency shall be graded by the following method:

1. Examiners shall allow three (3) minutes at the end of the receiving test for applicants to review their copy and make any changes or corrections, if necessary.
2. Each character missed on the sending and receiving evaluations shall reduce the final score by the following percentage points:
 - a. 5WPM - 1.33%,
 - b. 7WPM - 0.95%,
 - c. 10 WPM - 0.67%, and
 - d. 12 WPM - 0.56%
3. Therefore, the number of characters missed on each examination shall not exceed:
 - a. 5WPM - 15,
 - b. 7WPM - 21,
 - c. 10 WPM - 30, and
 - d. 12 WPM - 36
4. On the Sending Proficiency Examination, an applicant can correct an error by sending eight (8) dits in rapid sequence.
5. To pass, the operator must receive a final mark of 80 percent on the copying evaluation and 80 percent on the sending evaluation.

12.3 Morse Code Certification

Certifying results for international Morse code examinations must follow the following guidelines:

- Certification of results for examinations shall follow the certifying structure that is used in the licensee's home country for administering amateur radio operator licenses.
- To administer a Morse Code examination in the licensee's home country, only ONE examiner must be proficient in international Morse Code.

- The examiner who is claiming proficiency must be capable of sending and copying at least 15 words per minute.
- Results for international Morse code proficiency are valid for five (5) calendar years from the date of issue if the bearer does not hold a valid amateur radio operator license. If a licensed amateur radio operator in the United States is to use this certification for international operating where Morse code is still required, expiration of this document shall run concurrent with the bearer's amateur radio operator license grant that has been issued by the FCC and shall hold no additional operating privileges.

If an applicant is interested in taking a Morse Code proficiency examination, they are instructed to contact the VEC Chairman for more information and to setup an exam. As of this printing, there is no fee to take the Morse Code proficiency examination.