

APPENDIX B—JUDGES’ GENERAL GUIDELINES

Judges are the backbone of the sport and their actions and opinions influence conduct beyond the performance ring. Because of that influence, the United States Dog Agility Association, Inc. has established stringent education and testing procedures for approving judges in the sport.

Persons meeting these qualifications may be added to the “Approved Judges List”. In connection with such qualification, the list shall be divided into class levels, based on the extent of knowledge and training demonstrated through examination and experience. Further delineation may be made by class type, should circumstances warrant.

Standards for Judges

Qualified individuals must meet the following requirements before being placed on the Approved Judges List. A person must—

- have sufficient experience to competently perform the judge’s responsibility as may be evidenced by active participation in the sport, indicated by earning a title, being an active member of an agility club, training group or school that has routinely followed or taught USDAA rules and regulations for a significant period of time, or other significant experience to demonstrate a person’s ability,
- have satisfactory attendance, participation and completion of an approved USDAA judging clinic & examination, demonstrating sufficient knowledge, self-confidence, creativity, physical mobility and effectiveness while judging, and
- be of good character and in good standing, setting forth a professional image for the sport and USDAA.

The judging clinic requirement may be satisfied prior to other requirements; however, an individual must be retested if all requirements are not fulfilled within one year from the date of satisfactory completion of the judging examination.

In order to maintain a position on the Approved Judges List, each judge must—

- have satisfactory attendance, participation and completion of an approved USDAA judging clinic & examination once every three years at the Advanced and Starters levels,
- attend a rules & course design clinic once in a five (5) year period in order to stay abreast of current rules, issues and course design techniques,
- periodically pass the short form examination dealing with rule changes,
- maintain an active role in the sport,
- comply with all policies, and
- be of good character, setting forth a professional image for the sport and USDAA.

Code of Conduct

Persons on the Approved Judges List—

- are expected to uphold an image of integrity and as a competent professional, both on and off the course. An integral part of this image is to wear appropriate attire consisting of slacks with a coordinating shirt bearing the USDAA logo. Wear weather or extreme climate conditions may warrant, a suitable departure from this attire is permitted while retaining a professional appearance in the ring. A judge shall not wear any apparel bearing business, sponsor or other organization insignia without the express written consent of USDAA.
- shall recognize their role as a judge is a privilege and not a right.
- shall diligently fulfill all responsibilities with regard to judging assignments including, but not limited to, timely filing of course plans and judge’s reports as required by USDAA policy.
- shall not become an activist in disputes, make public criticisms, or otherwise engage in behavior that may be generally viewed by the USDAA Board in their sole discretion as inappropriate conduct or that may create a conflict of interest as a representative of USDAA. Any criticisms should be discussed internally while maintaining a public position of organizational support. Public statements in any media casting contrary position to official policy

may result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to removal from the Approved Judges List.

- should give of themselves freely as a representative of the sport to USDAA, its affiliated groups and the community in the promotion of dog agility as a sport for dogs without regard to pedigree.
- shall not at any time promote themselves as an authority in the sport on the principal basis of their standing as a USDAA judge or otherwise hold themselves out in personal endeavors as a USDAA judge.
- shall seek to assist fellow judges when needed in fulfillment of judging responsibilities when viewed in the best interest of the sport.
- shall judge a minimum of three sanctioned events in a two year period or judge a minimum of one sanctioned event per year combined with attendance, participation and completion of an approved USDAA judging clinic and examination within a three-year period. This provision applies to all levels of judges.

In accepting engagements, a judge shall refrain from—

- conduct a training class or seminar or judge a match or Intro Program Only event in the region of the event during a period of 10 days or less prior to the start of an event at which they may officiate as judge.

Judges shall comply with any USDAA policy statements that may be published from time to time that may supercede any part of these Guidelines.

Disciplinary Actions

A person on the Approved Judges List who shall violate or otherwise fail to uphold these standards in fact or in spirit shall be subject to disciplinary action in the form of reprimand, probation, suspension or removal from the Approved Judges List. All disciplinary action proceedings shall be conducted by the USDAA Regulations Advisory Board in “closed session” and shall remain confidential, except that the decision to suspend or remove a person from the Approved Judges List may, at the Board’s sole discretion, be published on the USDAA Web site or other official publication (if any).

The Board shall conduct inquiries into formal written complaints filed with USDAA. The Board shall review the results of such inquiries and statements of the parties to the complaint, along with any other information readily available regarding a complaint, in making its decision pursuant to guidelines established in Appendix C to these rules and regulations.

Upon rendering of its decision to suspend or remove a judge from the Approved Judges List, the judge (subject of the complaint) may request an appeal by providing any additional evidence in writing to the board pursuant to procedures for appeal as established in Appendix C. No additional judging assignments shall be accepted following the Board’s notification of its initial decision regarding suspension or removal until a person has been reinstated.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, a violation of standards of conduct that is objectively determinable may result in immediate removal from the Approved Judges List. In this case, the judge shall be notified within ten (10) business days of the removal.

In the event of suspension or removal of a judge’s name from the Approved Judges List, the Board shall—

- establish whether or not the judge shall be permitted to fulfill previous judging assignments for events already approved
- establish provision for reinstatement, if reinstatement will be allowed; the decision for reinstatement may be postponed pending a future hearing.

The Board shall establish on a case by case basis, except in the case of administrative grounds, consider the manner and timing of announcing the suspension or removal of a name from the Approved Judges List.