



AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB™

The preservation of the quality of AKC Conformation dog shows depends on the exhibitor's full faith that AKC is providing knowledgeable and competent judges at its events. This is the factor that separates it from all other show giving organizations. The Judges Approval Committee is committed to uphold and improve the judging process by screening all New Breed and Approved Breed judge applicants and appropriately promote those individuals according to the commitment and competence they demonstrate.

What is paramount with any policy is that the approval to judge is a privilege granted at the will of the American Kennel Club. It is not a right available on any condition. To devise and implement an effective approval process it is important to understand the difference between equality of opportunity to judge and the treatment of unique applicants to judge. Among various individuals, the ability to judge effectively is decidedly unequal despite frequently remarkably similar backgrounds and experience. It is essential to recognize the disparity among applicants and act accordingly. The greater emphasis on the unique abilities of each applicant to judge new breeds, the better the approval process will work. This new system is designed to identify and promote a significantly higher level of expertise in the judging process at all AKC shows. Judging competence will be paramount to advance under this approval process.

You will find within this enhanced application process the concerns of the fancy have been addressed in an efficient and effective manner. The opportunity for new judging applicants will not alter, as they will continue to be afforded the opportunity to apply for up to one complete group or combination of breeds not including a complete group of the numerical equivalent of the breeds in the largest group based upon their experience within the sport.

The advancement of approved judges will rest upon merit with a benefit of a reduction in paperwork necessary to apply. The elimination of the one for one policy coupled with ability to apply for a maximum of 14 breeds with each application regardless of the number of currently approved breeds will provide judges that have displayed proficiency through previous assignments the opportunity to advance at a much greater pace. As there are no specific requirements after the first application and relatively few limitations, the rate of advancement will be determined by their judging performance as displayed through evaluations by the AKC Executive Field Representative as well as preparation through experience and education.

Judges may receive an invitation from the Judges Review Committee to apply for up to a complete group. Recommendations to the Judges Review Committee may be made by AKC Executive Field Representatives, Breeders, Parent Clubs, Professional Handlers, Judges and Show Chairpersons. In addition, the new approval policy will address those judges that have displayed challenges within their performance of breeds in a more defined and abbreviated manner.

This policy will welcome the input and opinion of our constituents through various means. Parent Clubs will have the ability to make recommendations to the Judges Review Committee for AKC approval of a member to be approved to judge their breed. In addition, Parent Clubs will have the capability to request of the Committee to invite eligible individuals such as professional handlers or non-judge breeders to judge their specialties. This policy allows the AKC Executive Field Staff to seek and consider the opinions of the fancy for their evaluations and recommendations.

The enhancements found within this policy will undoubtedly present the opportunity for a large portion of the judging community to advance at a much greater rate and achieve a greater number of approved breeds and/or groups in a reasonable time.

This policy addresses the challenges associated with the assignment of judging panels utilizing Visiting Judges. Visiting judges approved for complete groups in their country of origin whose corresponding AKC groups contain breeds not registered in their country (FSS/American) will have the opportunity (pending approval) to be assigned to judge those breeds in addition to the breeds in which they are approved and the group competition. It will be mandatory for Visiting Judges who wish to continue to judge the group containing these breeds to request this privilege to the Judging Operations Department through submission of a \$25.00 fee per FSS/AKC recognized breed and passing the applicable breed exams.

What will remain unchanged is that the successful development of judging competency requires talent, yet passion, individual motivation, significant personal effort, and ongoing study of even approved breeds is essential. This enhanced application process recognizes the importance of preparation, continuing education, real canine knowledge, lifetime experience and dedication to the sport. However the focus of this process is on the identification and promotion of the talent to successfully use all of the assets to judge.

The open design of this program places the responsibility for advancement in the hands of the applicant. This enhanced application process recognizes the overwhelming concern and requests from the fancy for a reduction in paperwork required for additional breed applicants and in a more efficient and timely manner of distinguishing struggling judges from proficient judges. Struggling judges will be stopped sooner and proficient judges will be advanced faster.



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Judging Approval Process

Effective March 1, 2012

Questions & Answers

1. What is the role of the Judges Review Committee?

After an application has been submitted, verified by the Judging Operation Department that it meets the criteria to be submitted, any applicable exams have been passed, and the applicant has been interviewed by an Executive Field Representative it is then reviewed by the Judges Review Committee (JRC). Based upon their review of all documentation submitted, the results from the interview with the Executive Field Representative and previous Evaluations and Observations if applicable, the JRC determines whether to approve the applicant on Permit status for the breeds in which they have applied in part or entirety. In addition, the JRC also acts upon requests for re-evaluation from applicants if they have met the criteria for re-evaluation.

2. Are Evaluations and/or Observations still required from the Executive Field Representatives?

Yes. As part of the requirements for applying for regular status for breeds, Permit judges must receive three (3) evaluations from the Executive Field Staff in any combination of their Permit breeds. For example, if a judge is Permit status for eight breeds, their Evaluations can be from any combination of those breeds. Pending conflicts and availability, the Field Staff will traditionally observe judges in those breeds with the greatest entry in the classes as it will provide the best opportunity for the judge to display their capabilities in judging the respective breed.

3. How does the new application process differ from the previous for a first-time applicant?

For a first-time applicant the process and the forms are unchanged.

4. Is being an AKC Breeder of Merit of any assistance in the application process?

Yes, being a Breeder of Merit is one of the possible criteria that can be listed on the New Breed Alternative application for initial applicants.

5. I will be applying for breeds for the first time and would like to apply for multiple breeds. Am I required to use the same application (12-5-4 or New Breed Alternate) for all of the breeds that I intend to apply?

No. New Breed applicants are advised to complete whichever application is appropriate for the respective breed in which they are applying based upon their experience in that breed. The applications submitted for bank of breeds in which you apply may be a combination of both the 12-5-4 and the New Breed Alternative forms. However, applicants are required to submit the 12-5-4 form for breeds in which they meet the criteria.

6. Are applicants still required to complete a Pre-Application interview prior to submitting the application to the AKC Judging Operations Department?

No, a Pre-Application interview is no longer required. The applicant will still be required to be interviewed on the respective breed(s) applied for by an AKC Executive Field Representative. This interview will be scheduled by the AKC Judging Operations Department after the application has been processed.

7. How fast can I get breeds?

From submission of an application to becoming permit for the breeds applied for can take as little as three to four months.

8. What is the difference between "Permit" and "Provisional" breeds?

"Permit" is the same as the previously used "Provisional".

9. If I apply for a breed and am denied and I reapply for the same breed later, do I have to pay the \$25.00 application fee again?

Yes, the fee is a \$25.00 application processing fee per breed(s). The application is processed regardless of whether a breed is granted or denied with each submission, and therefore the fee is relative to each individual breed for each application.

10. Are the breed standard tests still required for approval?

No, except for the FSS breeds and newly recognized breed(s) coming into a Group or for visiting judges.

11. With the elimination of most breed standard tests, will breed standards be reviewed with the AKC Executive Field Representatives?

Yes

12. I am currently approved for measurable breeds. Is the wicket and/or scales test still required when I apply for additional breeds?

Yes, the applicable wicket and/or scales test is mandatory for all applicants of measurable breeds regardless of the breeds in which they are currently approved.

13. If I pass the interview with the Executive Field Representative for a breed in which I have applied, does that assure my approval for that breed?

No, passing the interview is one portion of the overall application process that will be taken under consideration by the Judges Review Committee. However, passing the interview is a requirement for the applied breed to be considered by the JRC, thus failure will result in that breed being pulled from consideration.

14. Once my application has been reviewed by the Judges Review Committee and any breeds have been approved, how soon may I accept assignments?

Following the review by the Judges Review Committee, a letter will be mailed/emailed to the applicant. Upon receipt of this letter the applicant may now accept assignments on a Permit basis. Notification of the application will be published in the next possible publication of the Gazette affording the fancy an opportunity to comment.

15. After I am approved for my first breeds, how soon can I apply for more?

You may apply for additional breeds as soon as you have been granted approved status on all of your permit breeds.

16. Are Additional Breed applicants still restricted on the first four applications to the one for one policy?

No, individuals may apply for up to one-half the number of the breeds in the largest Group.

17. Will there be forms to complete for additional breed applicants in the new process?

Additional breed applicant will still be required to complete an Additional breed questionnaire as before. However, the individual breed application will differ as there will no longer be "boxes to check" to attain a minimum number of components. The application will primarily be based upon a letter of synopsis for each breed. An optional synopsis form is available on the AKC website.

18. As a current approved judge, how does this policy differ from the previous policy when I decide to apply for more breeds?

As opposed to checking boxes for criteria which you have met, a letter of synopsis detailing your experience and education for each respective breed will be considered, coupled with your judging abilities previously displayed through your Judging Evaluations completed by the Executive Field Staff.

19. Additional Breed application, do I still need components?

No, in the letter of synopsis each applicant must provide qualifications to judge each breed, documenting experience, background and education.

20. What should be included in the letter of synopsis for Additional Breed Applicants?

The letter of synopsis should include all information that may be relevant relating to the applicants education and experience for each breed in which they have applied. This should include but not limited to seminars, workshops, institutes, mentors, personal experience with the breed and previous judging experiences. All experiences should include dates and be verifiable.

21. With the new application process, will previous seminars, workshops, etc.. still be considered or will they no longer be of consequence?

Education and preparation will remain a vital part of one's application. Seminars, workshops and institutes will still be considered for applicants as they are all part of that individual's education for that breed. The applicant will be able to include these items within their letter of synopsis for consideration.

22. Additional breeds: What kind of Institute or Seminar? Where can I find a list?

Breed specific seminars, workshops or institutes will count toward ongoing education. You can learn of upcoming Institutes in the judge's newsletter "The Standard" and on the AKC website under "Seminars". Institutes that in the past had received a two (2) component credit will be considered of greater value when reviewed by the JRC.

23. Do I need to submit documentation for educational experiences?

Yes, copies of certificates or other educational experiences should be submitted with your application.

24. Where can I get ringside mentoring?

Ringside mentoring is only accepted by Parent Club approved mentors at National or Regional specialties only where formal ringside mentoring is organized by the host club.

25. Will applications be accepted by email or fax?

Not at this time. All applications must still be submitted in hard copy by mail to the AKC Judging Operations Department.

26. How many "permit" assignments are required?

You must complete a minimum of three assignments in each breed with dogs present of acceptable quality and attain a minimum of three observations by AKC Executive Field Representatives in combination of all permit breeds.

27. What determines “sufficient dogs present of acceptable quality to demonstrate sufficient competence in the breeds”?

To receive an evaluation in a breed, there must be enough entries present of quantity and quality to provide an opportunity for the judge to display their ability to prioritize and make decisions. Very small entries do not present this. Entries of extreme poor quality do not either. A rule of thumb is a minimum of four entries in a class of varying quality will usually be sufficient, but other variables may determine whether the entry is sufficient or not. Please remember, specials are not a consideration when determining whether an entry is sufficient to evaluate. The Field Staff in special circumstances will consider for breeds on the Low Entry list the specials class in determining whether an entry is sufficient to evaluate.

28. As we are now permitted to request for regular status individually on our bank of permit breeds, can I immediately apply for additional breed(s) as I am granted regular status individually?

You are permitted to apply for regular status for individual breeds as you obtain the minimum criteria for approval for that breed. However judges can not apply for additional breeds until they have attained regular status for all of their permit breeds.

29. I expect to be granted provisional/permit status with my current application prior to March 1, 2012. How does this change in Policy affect my provisional status?

Requests for regular status prior to March 1, 2012 must meet the criteria of the policy adopted in 2000 and most recently updated in 2007. Request for regular status submitted after March 1, 2012 must meet the criteria of the newly adopted policy regardless of when the breeds had been approved.

30. Is the requirement for regular status the same for Low Entry breeds?

Low Entry breeds requests are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

31. Are there any changes to the Re-evaluation or Appeals process?

The process for Re-evaluation or Appeal has changed in that they now require the submission of a \$25 non-refundable processing fee.

32. As a group judge, what will be the approval process for newly approved breeds in the groups that I judge?

When a new breed enters a group, all judges of that group will automatically be granted the breed once they have passed the breed exam and submitted the \$25 non-refundable processing fee.

33. Are the requirements for Best in Show changing?

The requirements to apply for Best in Show have not changed as judges will continue to be eligible to apply for Best in Show once they are approved for a minimum of one complete group and have judged the group competition on a minimum of five occasions. However, a \$25 processing fee will now be required for those requesting the approval to judge Best in Show.

34. For Adjunct and FSS/AKC breeds relative to Visiting judges, what happens if I fail the exam or refuse to pay the processing fee?

Judges who fail to pass the breed exam in two attempts or refuse to submit the processing fee will lose their Group approval status.

35. If I lose my Group status, how can it be restored?

Judges may apply for approval of any affected breeds after six months.

36. I am currently an inactive judge and considering applying for reinstatement, has the process for this changed from the previously adopted policy?

A non-refundable processing fee of \$25 is required with any request for reinstatement. Otherwise the process has not changed from the previously adopted Judging Approval Process.

37. How do I get approved to judge the Miscellaneous classes?

Any judge eligible to judge a Group on a regular status may also judge the Miscellaneous class.

38. Has the process for removal of breeds changed?

Yes, more than three unsatisfactory evaluations of "Marginal" or two "Does Not Meet" from AKC Executive Field Representatives in any combination of breeds will result in review by the Judges Review Committee for potential removal of a breed(s).

39. If I am on probationary status for non-permit breeds, how do I obtain observations from the AKC Executive Field Representatives in order to satisfy the criteria to be removed from this status?

The AKC Executive Field Representatives will be supplied with the names of those judges on probationary status and for what breeds. However, it is the responsibility of the judge to request an observation from the AKC Executive Field Representative in attendance at an event where they may be scheduled to judge a probational breed.

40. How do I receive an invitation for a breed(s)?

You must be recommended to the Judges Review Committee for invitation by AKC Executive Field Representatives, Breeders, Parent Clubs, Professional Handlers, Judges and Show Chairpersons.

41. When are recommendations accepted and if recommended am I required to apply immediately?

Recommendations will be accepted by the committee at any time. The recommendation will be reviewed by the committee and either approved or denied. If approved, it is not mandatory to apply immediately. It is required that the breed(s) or group invited for advancement be applied for in the next application cycle.

42. If recommended to the Judges Review Committee for advancement, am I automatically awarded that group or bank of breeds?

No, once recommended, if the recommendation is accepted, the applicant will still be required to submit a letter of synopsis for each breed detailing their experience, background and education and based upon previous judging ability why they should be advanced. The Committee will review all information submitted to determine whether the individual is approved in whole or part for all breed(s) recommended.

43. Can my parent club recommend me for breeds other than the breed in which they represent?

No, a parent club can only recommend its members to judge their own breed.

44. Who can a Parent Club invite an individual to judge the National?

A Parent Club may invite any eligible individual including professional handlers to be approved on a case-by-case, event-by-event basis.

45. How does a Parent Club recommend an individual to judge their breed at a Specialty?

The Parent Club must request in writing to the Judges Review Committee for an eligible individual to judge their breed at a specialty. The individual must meet all criteria, pay the \$25 processing fee, and pass the procedural and anatomy exams as well as a scale and/or wicket tests if applicable.

46. If a non-approved judge is recommended and approved to judge a specialty, can they judge that breed at other events as well?

No, parent clubs may request to invite eligible individuals to judge their National or Regional specialty. However, the approval is on an event-by-event basis and only available for specialty shows.

47. Can visiting judges be approved to judge more than 8 assignments?

Visiting Judges on the exempt list may be approved for an unlimited number of assignments. Those not on the exempt list will continue to be eligible to be approved to judge an unlimited number of specialty shows and no more than eight all breed shows.

48. I am a Visiting Judge now residing in the United States, may I still judge at AKC shows as a Visiting Judge?

Visiting Judges who are currently residents of the United states may only be approved as a Visiting judge for two years. At the end of the two year period, they must apply under the AKC system if they wish to continue to judge in the United States while residing here.

49. As a Visiting Judge, can I receive approval to judge breeds not recognized in my own country?

A Visiting Judge may request approval for breeds not recognized in their country. This only applies to FSS/AKC breeds related to groups in which they are approved in their country of registry. In order to maintain group status a Visiting Judge is required to pay a \$25 processing fee per breed and pass the applicable breed exam(s).

50. I am a Visiting Judge, can I still judge the Group if I choose not to pay the \$25 fee per breed and take the exam for those breeds not approved in my country in the groups that I judge?

No.

51. How can I add a visiting judge to the Exempt List?

Recommendations are submitted to the Judges Review Committee by AKC Executive Field Representatives, Breeders, Parent Clubs, Professional Handlers, Judges and Show Chairpersons.

52. I am a Visiting Judge; may I request to be on the exempt list?

Yes, you may request to be added to the list. Third party recommendations from AKC Executive Field Representatives, Breeders, Parent Clubs, Professional Handlers, Judges and Show Chairpersons will be accepted as well.