



Dressage Judges Training Program

Requirements and Procedures for Obtaining Registered "R" Status

Eligibility to enter a program:

- Applicants must have been licensed by the United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) as a recorded "r" judge for at least two (2) years; they cannot start with their application procedures before the two years (24 months) have actually been completed.
- Candidates also must have judged at a minimum of ten (10) Federation licensed competitions. These open Dressage competitions must include Second Level rides, with a total of 40 Second Level, Test 4 rides (2007 and earlier USEF tests) and/or Second/3 rides starting with the 2011 USEF tests.
- All applicants must demonstrate knowledge and experience by earning five (5) riding scores of 65 % or better at Prix St. Georges or above from at least four (4) different judges at Federation licensed open dressage competitions. (Freestyle does not count)

Once the above requirements have been fulfilled, application can be made to the USEF Licensed Officials Committee for approval to enter a program. Documentation of the above must be included with the application. If approved, the applicant may participate in a Dressage Judges Training Program approved by the USEF Dressage Committee.

The requirements for entrance into the "R" program must be fulfilled and documented within the 8-year period prior to application. Undocumented activities cannot be considered. In rare instances and on the recommendation of the USEF Dressage Committee to the USEF Licensed Officials Committee, the 8-year requirement can be waived.

The USEF office will send the following material to the candidate after he/she is approved into the training program:

- Guidelines for apprentice-judging
- Tabulation form
- Verification form for apprentice-judging
- Evaluation form for apprentice-judging
- Synopsis of requirements
- Evaluation form to be completed by Competition Manager
- List of judges approved by the Dressage Committee to accept apprentices
- Confirmation of Completion of Program Form

Upon successful completion of the program, the applicant will again be reviewed by the USEF Licensed Officials Committee and a decision regarding licensing of the individual will be made.

The Dressage Judges Training Program:

After receiving approval from the USEF Licensed Officials Committee, candidates are allowed two years to complete a training program approved by the USEF Dressage Committee. If none is offered, they must attend the next possible program.

Format and Duration:

The program consists of:

1. Classroom session of at least 6 hours.
2. A structured training sessions to practice judge movements and figures of Third and Fourth level tests.
3. A day at a USEF licensed dressage competition to practice-judge full Third and Fourth Level tests.
4. Final examination (written, oral and practical)

This program must be offered in two sections (weekends), the first weekend of three (3) days being the training part and the second weekend being the written exam in an evening session, oral questions and practical exam of 1 ½ days (total of five days). There should be a minimum of 8-12 months between the two sections. All apprentice-judging must be complete before taking the exam.

Scribes are not mandatory for either of the practice judging sessions. However, if a candidate feels more comfortable having a scribe, he/she should plan to bring his/her own scribe with him or ask the organizer for suggestions of local scribes who may be willing to work with an applicant.

Clinic:

Applicants must attend an USEF National Level Dressage Judges Forum during the year that they are enrolled in the program. If none is offered, applicants must attend a forum the following year.

Only 10 applicants per program can be accepted and no auditors are allowed.

Schedule – Training Course

All of the following subjects and aspects of judging **will** be covered during the program in theory and/or practical sessions.

What candidates should bring to the classroom and practice judging sessions:

- Note book, pencils, pens, clipboard
- Calculator
- His/her own diagrams for all tests to be judged
- USEF Rule Book and any rule book supplements.
- Glossary (USDF).
- Freestyle, Pas de Deux and Quadrille guidelines and score sheets.
- Dressage Seat Equitation judging guidelines and score sheets.
- Materiale Class judging guidelines and score sheets.

1. **Classroom Session:** (every program begins with this session, which should last about 6 hours).
 - a) Recap of rules, procedures, and directives, including current changes and/or additions, including freestyle judging, Dressage Seat Equitation, and Materiale classes.
 - b) Judging methodology and criteria of the various gaits and paces, as well as the key figures and movements for Third and Fourth Level.
 - c) Vocabulary and remarks pertaining to Third and Fourth Level, Freestyle, Dressage Seat Equitation, and Materiale Classes.

2. **Practice Judging Session on Figures and Movements:**

In this session the candidates will practice judge all key figures and movements from all Third and Fourth Level tests. This may be a structured session or it may take place during a USEF licensed Dressage Competition.

3. Practice Judging of Entire Tests, including Collective Marks.

This session must be done at a USEF licensed Dressage Competition. Entire tests, including Collective Marks, must be judged and discussed. At least 8 to 10 horses per level should be judged.

The instructor is required to evaluate each candidate and return the evaluation form to the USEF Licensed Officials Department. Following the completion of the practice judging session, the USEF Licensed Officials Department will send a summary of the instructor(s) evaluation to each of the participants.

Schedule – Examination

1. Examination:

After the candidate has completed ALL requirements of the training program, they will be examined at a Federation licensed dressage competition, by two examiners approved by the USEF Dressage Committee. The examination generally consists of a 2-hour evening session to complete the written exam plus 1 ½ days of oral questions and practical evaluation through judging of actual rides. The exact time frame depends on the schedule of the competition selected for the examination.

The examination includes:

- a) **A closed-book written examination** on the USEF rules (the dressage rules, including criteria of paces, figures and movements as stated in the USEF Rule Book, on regulations governing judges, any relevant regulations from the General Rules, and the USDF Glossary,). The written test usually takes place on the evening prior to the oral examination and practical testing. All candidates must take the written examination at the same time. No resource materials, including computers, may be used for the written test.
- b) **Oral examination** will include questions pertinent to judging e.g. the criteria and essence of a particular movement as well as questions about vocabulary or methodology of judging.
- c) **Practical judging:**
At least six (6) rides each at Third and Fourth level, or Prix St. Georges, Young Rider or Developing Young Horse Tests must be judged.

What should candidates bring to this session:

- His/her own scribe or ask the organizer for suggestions of local scribes who may be willing to work with an applicant.
- His/her own diagrams for all tests to be judged.
- Pens (not pencils) and clipboard.
- Calculator
- USEF Rule Book

2. Grading of the examinations

- a) **Closed-book written examination** -for a successful completion, the candidate must attain a passing score of 80% or better. If the candidate fails the written exam, a one-time only make-up exam can be taken in a proctored situation but not until at least six months after the first attempt.
- b) **Oral examination and practical judging** - If a candidate fails the practical test (includes oral examination), he may repeat the practical exam by joining a current program.
- c) If the candidate fails either portion of the exam twice, the entire program must be repeated.
- d) The Federation office informs the candidates about the results of the written examination only. Examiners must never advise any candidate of the result.

Other requirements to be met outside the structured classroom and practice sessions but only after acceptance into the training program:

1. Apprentice -judging: It is recommended that candidate begin the apprentice judging after completing the first portion of the training program. No more than 25% of the apprentice judging can be completed prior to the first session of the training program. Group apprentice work, approved in advance, will be allowed only after attending the first portion of the training program.

- It is required that you apprentice judge at least 3 Federation licensed open dressage competitions with at least 2 different approved USEF judges for a total of 18 classes, 9 at Third Level, 9 at Fourth Level. Note: at least 3 classes must be Fourth Level, Test 3, PSG or FEI YR or developing horse test (Freestyle does not count).
- A total of at least six classes must be apprenticed outside of the applicants home (USDF) region.
- A minimum of four riders are required in each class before credit can be given for the class. For specifics, please see the enclosed synopsis.
- In some cases, when the required class has less than four (4) entries, classes at the same level may be combined. Example: the competition offers a Third Level Test 3 class for open riders and a separate 3/3 class for adult amateur riders. Both classes have three entries. Since the horse/rider combinations are different but the test is the same, the classes can be combined to count as one class (3/3) with six riders.
- Please refer to the list of approved judges to make sure that the judges you wish to apprentice with are approved by the Dressage Committee.

NOTE: Apprentice-judging only counts towards requirements if the recognized instructor-judge has given written or oral feedback and has filled out the proper evaluation form. For apprentice judging, the presiding judge uses carbon copies of his score sheets for later comparison with the tests of the candidate. As an alternative to carbon copies, the apprentice can bring his own copy machine and paper, or may make, in advance, financial arrangements with the competition to copy completed tests at the competition.

Arrangements for apprentice-judging must be made ahead of time by candidate. This includes:

- 1) obtaining permission from the competition management and from the presiding judge and
- 2) providing his or her own test sheets and scribe, as well as the copies and carbons and the evaluation form which the presiding judge will return directly to the Federation office.

Apprentice-judges may not work with more than one judge per day so as not to interfere with the discussion time between instructor-judge and apprentice-judge. A judge should not accept more than one apprentice for any day of a competition.

2. Sit as an observer: Must have sat as an observer at a minimum of three (3) Federation-licensed open dressage competitions at Third and Fourth Levels. This must include a minimum of three (3) rides of each test at each level (3 each of Third Level Test 1, Third 2, Third 3, Fourth Level Test 1, Fourth 2, Fourth 3) for a minimum total of eighteen (18) tests. This must be done with three (3) different USEF Senior or FEI judges. E-scribing at competitions can be counted towards the sitting requirements. Candidates are also encouraged to sit and observe as many Prix St. Georges tests as possible. Documentation must be submitted to the Federation Licensed Officials Department.

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