



MEMORANDUM

To: Potential Applicants for the 2027 U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions

Date: June 10, 2026

From: Kristen Brett, Director, Dressage Special Events

Copy: Hallye Griffin; Laura Roberts

Re: Qualifying Dates and Competitions for the 2027 USEF Dressage National Championships for the Children, Pony Rider, Junior, and Young Rider Divisions.

This preliminary information is being provided to assist you with your competition planning and may be subject to change. Please remember that this information is based upon the recommendations of the USEF Dressage Sport Committee and the final qualifying requirements are subject to approval by the USEF Board of Directors or the USEF Executive Committee.

Date and Location: The 2027 U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions ("Championships") is scheduled to take place on August 23-29, 2027, at HITS Lamplight Equestrian Center in Wayne, IL.

Qualifying Period: The Qualifying Period for the 2027 USEF Dressage National Championships ("Championships") for the Young Rider, Junior, Pony Rider, and Children divisions will begin on July 28, 2026, and end on TBD (the "Qualifying Period").

For these Championships, qualification is athlete/horse or athlete/pony combination based. Therefore, the athlete cannot change during the qualifying period.

Qualifying Competitions: Qualifying Competitions include national USEF/NAYC Qualifying Competitions, as well as U.S. and foreign CDI-Ch, CDI-P, CDI-J, or CDI-Y events. However, a combination cannot earn a score in a national Qualifying Competition if their respective CDI division is also offered at the same event. Qualifying Competitions held over the course of a weekend are considered one qualifying opportunity, even if they have separate license/recognition numbers.

The list of national USEF/NAYC Qualifying Competitions is available on the USEF website [here](#). The 2026 FEI Calendar can be found [here](#) and please note that the 2027 FEI Calendar will not be published on this link until approved by the FEI, no later than December 31, 2026.

Scores earned from the 2026 U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions cannot be used towards qualifying for the 2027 U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions.

Scores earned from the 2026 FEI NAYC can be used towards qualifying for the 2027 U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions if held during the qualifying period.

Age Requirements for Athlete and Horse:

A combination must fit into one of the following age categories to earn scores and to compete at the Championships:

- a. Children:
 - Athletes are eligible to compete in this Championship from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach twelve (12) until the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of fourteen (14).
 - Horses/Ponies must be six (6) years old or over.
 - Both horses and ponies are eligible to compete in this division.
- b. Pony Rider:
 - Athletes are eligible to compete in this Championship from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach twelve (12) until the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of sixteen (16).
 - Ponies must be six (6) years old or over.
 - Only ponies are eligible to compete in this division.
- c. Junior:
 - Athletes are eligible to compete in this Championship from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach fourteen (14) until the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of eighteen (18).
 - Horses must be six (6) years old or older.
- d. Young Rider:
 - Athletes are eligible to compete in this Championship from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach sixteen (16) until the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of twenty-one (21).
 - Horses must be seven (7) years old or older.

Qualifying Tests: Hors de Concours entries are not permitted in USEF/NAYC Qualifying classes.

Combinations must obtain at least two (2) scores from the current editions of the FEI Team Test and the FEI Individual Test in their respective age division during the qualifying period.

Qualifying tests at national Qualifying Competitions must be judged by a panel of at least two (2) FEI and/or USEF 'S' judges. For CDI Events, [FEI Dressage Rules](#) apply.

GAIG/USDF Regional Championship competitions will be required to hold the following tests designated as USEF/NAYC Qualifying in the non-championship portion of the competition:

- FEI Junior Team, Individual, and Freestyle Tests
- FEI Young Rider Team, Individual, and Freestyle Tests
- FEI Children Team and Individual Tests

Ranking List Score Calculation:

- a. USEF will automatically track scores for combinations which are earned at national Qualifying Competitions.
- b. For all divisions, scratches, eliminations, and withdrawals will not be penalized.
- c. CDI Scores: CDI scores are calculable at the option of the athlete and will only be computed into the combination's overall average upon receipt of a USEF CDI/CPEDI Report Form within the specified deadline stated on the form to the USEF Dressage Department. Scores submitted late will not be accepted. Changes to a submitted USEF CDI/CPEDI Report Form will not be accepted following the specified deadline stated on the form to the USEF Dressage Department. It is the sole responsibility of the athlete to ensure that all qualifying CDI scores for these Championships are submitted to USEF on time and are accurate.

Questions: If you have any questions regarding the above, please do not hesitate to contact the USEF Dressage Department at festival@usef.org.