



## **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 2 rides and/or Test 3 rides starting with the 2011 USEF tests. (Eventing and Breed restricted competitions do not count towards the number of competitions needed to meet the above requirements).
  
- Applicants must demonstrate knowledge and experience by earning five (5) riding scores at a minimum of 65 % or better from four (4) different judges at Prix St. Georges or above at Federation licensed open dressage competitions (Freestyle does not count).

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

The requirements for the “R” program must be fulfilled. Undocumented activities cannot be considered.

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 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 Department, candidates are allowed two years to complete a training program approved by the USEF Dressage Department. If none is offered, they must attend the next possible program.

### **Format and Duration:**

The program consists of:

1. A series of online lectures and quizzes to be studied at home, prior to the start of the actual program
2. Classroom session of six to eight (6-8) hours.
3. A structured training sessions to practice judge movements and figures of Third and Fourth level tests. Videos may also be used for this session.
4. Two days at a USEF licensed dressage competition to practice-judge entire tests at Third and Fourth Level.
5. Final examination (written, oral and practical)

This program is being offered in two sections: the first section lasting four (4) days and being the training part and the second section being the examination. There should be a minimum of 8-10 months between the two sections. All apprentice judging must be completed before taking the exam.

### **Clinic:**

Applicants must attend a 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.

There are only 10 applicants per program accepted and no auditors are allowed. However, if there are at least six candidates waiting for a program, a program may be organized. Please contact USEF at [loinquiry@usef.org](mailto:loinquiry@usef.org) for further information.

### **Schedule – Training Course**

#### **1. Online Lectures and Quizzes**

The following topics have to be studied on line and 10 quiz questions answered:

- a. Apprentice & Regulations
- b. Biomechanics of the horse
- c. Dressage Seat Equitation
- d. Freestyle judging
- e. Young Horse judging
- f. PARA-Equestrian judging

#### **2. Classroom Session**

Every program must begin with this session. Six to eight hours should cover the following subjects:

- a. Introduction and briefing of candidates
- b. Answer questions candidates might have regarding the subjects that were taught on line
- c. Discussion of on line rule quiz
- d. Recap and discussion of all other pertinent USEF rules, procedures, and directives, including current changes and/or additions as listed in the Rule book supplement.
- e. Use of .5 marks
- f. Position and Aids of the Rider
- g. Discussion of methodology and use of decimals (0.1) in judging Rider Tests.
- h. Recap of judging methodology and criteria of the various gaits and paces, as well as the key figures and movements for the Third and Fourth levels.
- i. Recognizing correct basics at the Third and Fourth levels
- j. Vocabulary and remarks for the Third and Fourth levels (May be taught by using videos).

#### **What candidates should bring to the classroom sessions:**

- Note book, pencils, pens
- Laptop or other devices if at all possible
- All handouts that were downloaded for the various online lessons and current 'L' program handouts
- Their own diagrams for all Third and Fourth level tests
- USEF Rule Book and any rule book supplements.
- Glossary (USDF)

### **3. 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.

***Scribes are not mandatory for this session.*** However, if candidates feel more comfortable having scribes, they should plan to bring their own scribes with them or ask the organizer for suggestions for local scribes who may be willing to work with applicants. Please be advised that some scribes want to be paid.

The instructor is required to evaluate each candidate and return the evaluation form directly to the USEF Licensed Officials Department.

### **4. Practice Judging of Entire Tests, including Collective Marks.**

This session must be done at a USEF licensed level 2 or 3 Dressage Competition. Entire tests at Third and Fourth level, including Collective Marks and summaries under further remarks, must be judged and discussed. At least 8 to 10 horses per level should be judged.

***Scribes are mandatory for this session.***

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

### **5. Examination:**

After the candidate has completed **ALL** requirements of the training program, they will be examined at a USEF licensed dressage competition, by two examiners appointed by the USEF Dressage Committee. The examination consists of a 60–90 minute evening session to complete the written exam plus 1 ½ days of oral questions and practical evaluation.

**The examination includes:**

- a) A closed book examination** on the USEF Dressage Rules (including but not limited to rules pertaining to criteria for paces, figures and movements, conduct of Dressage classes, and rules governing judges), pertinent USEF 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. For a successful completion, the candidate must attain a passing score of 80% or better.
- 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** will require judging of entire tests, including Collective Marks and summaries under Further Remarks at Third and Fourth level (or equivalent tests).

**What should candidates bring to this session:**

- Their own scribe or ask the organizer for suggestions of local scribes who may be willing to work with an applicant.
- Test sheets with their own diagrams for all tests to be judged.
- Pens, pencils and clipboard.
- Calculator
- USEF Rule Book

### **Grading of the examinations**

- a) **Closed-book written examination** – The written examination is graded at the USEF Office. 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.

***The USEF office informs the candidates about the results of the examination. 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:**

- Candidates may only begin with apprentice judging after they have completed the training part of the judges program.
- The apprentice requirement listed below must include at least three (3) USEF Federation licensed open dressage competitions with at least two (2) different approved USEF Federation licensed judges for a total of 18 classes:
  - Nine (9) classes at Third Level
  - Nine (9) classes 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 (6) classes must be apprenticed outside of the applicants home (USDF) region.
- A class must have a minimum of four (4) riders to receive credit.
- 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.
- Large classes may be split but for the benefit of learning and having time for discussion, a class should not be split into more than 2 sections with at least 8-10 horses in each section (and same instructor).
- Please refer to the list of approved judges to make sure that the judges you wish to apprentice with are approved by the USEF Dressage Committee.
- Candidates may not apprentice judge with an examiner of a given training program. However, candidates may work with the instructor of a given program as long as this instructor is not involved in the final examination.

**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 candidate should 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 their own test sheets and scribe as well as their own portable copy machine.

Forms to be completed:

1. Apprentice Evaluation form which the presiding judge will complete and return directly to the USEF office.

2. Verification of Apprentice/Sitting form which the presiding judge will complete and return to the USEF office. Candidate may make a copy of this form for their records.
3. Competition Manager's Evaluation form is to be given to the manager to complete and return to the USEF 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.

Candidates must fulfill the required apprentice judging in a group setting. However, a maximum of one individual apprentice judging experience per candidate is permitted. (See "Guidelines for Sitting and Apprentice Judging" included in packet mailed from the USEF Federation once approved into the Dressage 'R' Training Program).

2. **Sit as an observer:** Must have sat as an observer at a minimum of three (3) USEF 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.

#### Applying for 'R' Registered Status

Upon successful completion of the program and its components, the applicant will be reviewed by the USEF Licensed Officials Committee and a decision regarding licensing of the individual will be made upon submission of the following information to the Federation by no later than the deadlines listed on the USEF's website:

- Completed Training Program Confirmation form
- Reference page

**Reference Evaluations:** No application will be considered unless and until 15 forms which actually evaluate the applicant per division are returned from USEF members, at least 12 of the 15 must be from licensed Dressage Judges, Dressage or Eventing technical delegates or members of the Federation Dressage Committee.

- Do **NOT** include members of the Licensed Officials Committee or the USEF Dressage Committee in your list of references as they will automatically receive your evaluation.
- A letter notifying you of the Committee's decision will be sent within approximately two to three weeks after the Committee meets.
- If the required number of Reference Evaluations has not been received, you will be notified in writing to:
  - Submit additional names and addresses to be used as references; and
  - Your application will be held for one additional meeting.

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