

## DogsNZ Agility Standing Orders - Section 4

### Judges

The Agility Judges panels are maintained by the Agility Committee which can delegate the responsibility for investigating and making recommendations for promotion etc to the Judges Subcommittee.

The panels are outlined in the regulations as is the process for promotion.

Judges fees are paid annually to DogsNZ. The fee is usually paid by the Agility Committee.

The Agility Committee requires all judges to complete a questionnaire annually which allows them to update contact details and confirm they have kept up requirements for Senior panels etc. There are a variety of pages on the website for judge's education. In lieu of seminars, a judge may complete the quizzes and other education opportunities provided on the website.

### Regulations

The current regulations along with a document showing the most recent changes are available on the Agility Committee website. It is the responsibility of each judge to ensure they have access to a copy. Notification will be sent to all judges if and when regulations are updated.

### New Judges

New judges are required to nominate two judges from the Mentor panel who will help guide them through the process as they learn and advance through the grades. It is advisable to have mentors from separate islands. The Agility committee reserves the right to appoint one mentor.

New judges should receive input from a variety of judges, so it is recommended that the new judge do not use their mentors to perform all of their probationary appointments with them but undertake probationary appointments supervised by other judges as well.

A "new judge's" pack should be provided to each judge as they join the Trainee panel and be provided links to any material which will aid them in their journey.

## **Guidelines for Probationary Appointments**

Please read the following in conjunction with the regulations.

Trainee Judges and Ribbon Trial panel judges can undertake probationary appointments.

Senior agility judges may conduct or oversee probationary appointments.

The appointments may be undertaken on any class at an Open show or Ribbon Trial. Where a probationary is undertaken at a Championship Event, it may not be done on either a Senior or Jumpers A class.

It is important that the probationary judge gains experience judging all types of equipment so it is desirable that all compulsory probationary appointments are conducted on agility classes with any jumpers probationary classes additional and should include all levels including Senior at Ribbon Trial.

A maximum of one probationary may be conducted per day at any event and permission must be sought from both the judge officiating and the club running the show. Notice of the probationary should be included on any fliers for the event and on the published schedule where applicable. Notice must be published at least one week prior to any event of a probationary being held at that event.

The judge conducting the probationary must produce a report on completion which should be forwarded to the Agility committee. A standard form is available on the Agility Committee website.

### ➤ **Before the Day**

The judge completing the probationary appointment must submit his course to the officiating judge prior to the show. Discussion around the course should take place so that by the time it goes on the ground both are happy with it.

### ➤ **On the Day**

The probationer should come appropriately dressed (tidy) and bring the items necessary including a copy of the Agility regulations, measuring tape, calculator etc.

The probationer should be left to work with the ring staff to set the course up as per the plan. Once he is happy with it, the officiating judge should walk it with the probationer and ensure it meets the plan and there are no areas of concern. Of importance, is ensuring lines in the lower level courses are straight with safe approaches to contact gear, hoops etc and that the course meets the regulations in terms of distances.

Things to discuss during this walk through.

- Judges line
- Judgeability
- Dangerous or poor placement of obstacles and possible remedies
- Course flow
- Areas of challenge and suitability of the course for the level

The probationer should brief the ring staff and should ensure that everyone understands their job. The setup of the timers and instruction on items like the restart button should be demonstrated.

During the official course walk the probationer should be available and be observed answering any questions which may arise.

During judging the probationer should demonstrate a sound knowledge of the regulations and be prepared to back up their calls with a suitable regulation response.

The officiating judge remains in control of the ring, must be actively present in the ring during the probationary appointment and has the final decision on any judging matters.

When the class is complete, it is good to sit down and have a discussion about how it went and answer any questions the probationer might have. It is often good to discuss any difficult calls and outline where things are going well and where improvements can be made.

➤ **After the Appointment**

The officiating judge should complete a report on the probationary and include any copies of the course submitted originally and the versions ultimately run.

The report should be forwarded to the Agility Committee and copied to the probationer. Nothing in the report should be a surprise and any recommendations made should have been discussed with the probationer previously.

A downloadable pdf is available from the Agility website, under "Other forms"

[http://www.dogagility.org.nz/judge\\_forms.html](http://www.dogagility.org.nz/judge_forms.html)

It is essential that the officiating judge be honest and fair. If they think the understanding of either the rules or of the concept of course design need more work, then they should say so. It is preferable that an applicant receives more training if they require it.

➤ **Re-admission to the panel after resignation**

Any judge which leaves the panel for longer than one calendar year and then applies to be reinstated, will need to follow the steps as outlined in the following protocol which outlines the requirements for re-admission to the panel.

## **Application for re-instatement to judging panel after retirement**

Application must be made in writing to Dogs NZ Agility Committee. Application must detail:

- panel applicant wishes to be re-instated to
- panel held prior to retirement
- experience prior to retirement (e.g. length of time on panel/s, number of judging appointments, classes judged, clubs judged at)
- involvement in agility since retirement
- complaints lodged against applicant
- reasons for retirement
- reasons for wish to be re-instated

The following table provides the standard re-instatement process, however Dogs NZ Agility Committee may take special circumstances into account when considering which panel the applicant may be re-instated to. Applicants will be advised of the decision, requirements to complete re-instatement and reasons for departure from the standard process.

Time since last appointment	Panel at time of retirement			
	Trainee	Ribbon Trial	Agility	Senior
Less than 1 year	Reinstated to previously held panel, unless applicant wishes to opt to reinstate to a lower level			
1 year to less than 2 years	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Re-sit and pass judges' exam.</li> <li>2. Reinstated to Trainee panel.</li> <li>3. Previously completed probationary appointments extinguished.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Re-sit and pass judges' exam.</li> <li>2. Re-instated to Ribbon Trial panel, unless applicant wishes to opt to reinstate to Trainee panel.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Re-sit and pass judges' exam.</li> <li>2. Re-instated to Agility panel, unless applicant wishes to opt to reinstate to a lower panel.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Re-sit and pass judges' exam.</li> <li>2. Re-instated to Senior panel, unless applicant wishes to opt to reinstate to a lower panel.</li> </ol>
2 years to less than 5 years	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No reinstatement available. New application required. Trainee process starts from the beginning.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No reinstatement available. New application required. Trainee process starts from the beginning.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Re-sit and pass judges' exam.</li> <li>2. Submit one course plan for each level of agility and jumpers which will be assessed for suitability by DNZAC.</li> <li>3. Re-instated to Agility panel, unless applicant wishes to opt to reinstate to a lower panel.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Re-sit and pass judges' exam.</li> <li>2. Submit one course plan for each level of agility and jumpers which will be assessed for suitability by DNZAC.</li> <li>3. Re-instated to Agility panel, unless applicant wishes to opt to reinstate to a lower panel.</li> <li>4. Applicant may apply for promotion to Senior panel after completion of a minimum three appointments, and having judged at least two each of Senior and Jumpers A at ribbon trails/open events.</li> </ol>
5 years plus	No reinstatement available. New application required. Trainee process starts from the beginning.			

## **Mentor Judges**

### **Position Description**

Becoming a mentor is a good way for more experienced judges to share their experience and support with newer judges coming up through the ranks. The mentor is primarily there to support, guide and to answer any questions the newer judge may have. It is ideal if the new judge utilises their mentors right through the grades.

### **Qualities of a great Mentor**

The following is a list of qualities which a great mentor will have.

- Professionalism - In relation to the role of a judge, the mentor will be seen as professional and fair
- Communication skills – A good mentor can communicate well and get information across without demeaning and while ensuring the trainee understands what is being conveyed.
- Availability – The ability to be able to answer questions and queries within a reasonable timeframe is important.
- Confident but not superior – Mentors who have confidence in their own judging ability but who recognise that nobody knows everything and are willing to discuss and learn are the ideal.
- Recognise and encourage diversity in style – One of the best qualities of a great mentor is one who can assist to build safety and consideration of the appropriate levels for courses without heavily influencing a new judge's style.

### **Responsibilities**

The following is a list of responsibilities of a mentor judge

- Assist the new judge to find probationary appointments and suggest judges to do them under to gain a wide variety of experience
- Get feedback from the after each probationary and answer any questions or concerns they may have.
- Assist them to understand any regulations they are unclear on and help them find any other relevant documents
- Provide advice on course design during their progression and encourage them to get their courses checked prior to their appointments for the first few years.
- Provide support and encouragement when things aren't perfect and help them to learn from things which could have gone better.
- Help build confidence in new judges that they have the skills and knowledge to make decisions which they can stand behind even when they may not be popular.
- Provide a report to the Agility Committee on the person you are mentoring as required under the regulations when they apply for promotion.

### **Relevant Tools and written material**

- Agility Regulations
- Agility Standing Orders
- Show Regulations
- Course Designer
- Online course depositories and tools

### **Stakeholders**

The roles and people who need to be considered in the execution of this role include:

- The new judge
- The Agility Judges Sub-Committee
- The Agility Committee
- The Agility clubs

### **Procedures and Organisation**

Follow the process with the new judge and make sure they understand what is required of them and when.

It is important that the mentor judge acts in a manner which encourages interaction from the new judge and builds their confidence, so they feel supported and encouraged.

Be open and honest and have the ability to find the good bits in every course as well as those bits which could do with improvement.

Always explain why things are done a certain way and help the newer judge to find their own style while designing courses which are safe and appropriate.

The end goal are judges who have the confidence, knowledge and the skills to be able to enjoy their judging well into the future but who are prepared to continue to learn and interact with other judges.