

## **Internal Procedures for the Handling of Complaints Concerning Judges' Alleged Misconduct**

1. All complaints shall be investigated by the Director or head of the applicable department, which shall include, but not limited to, conduct addressed by an Event Committee involving a judge, where further review by the applicable department determines additional action may be warranted specific to their judging privileges.
2. Working within the department's normal guidelines additional information is gathered relative to the complaint and a written notice of the complaint is mailed to the accused giving ample time for a response.
3. If the matter requires investigation beyond the ability and resources of the department, the head of the applicable department will refer the matter to the President with a request for permission to obtain assistance from outside the department to do the necessary investigative work.
4. If the President concurs, direction will be given as to which other departments or employees are to assist in the investigation process, as well as the extent of that involvement.
5. A complete review is conducted to determine if the complaint has been substantiated. When appropriate, said review shall include a consultation with AKC's Legal Department.
6. If the department determines disciplinary action is warranted, the accused individual is notified in writing of the allegations and recommendation. The Staff's recommendation (to include a penalty and prior examples of action taken, if available) is then submitted to the Board for adjudication.
7. If the Board concurs with the Staff's recommendation, the accused individual is notified in writing of the Board's action. The effective date for a suspension of judging privileges is 30 days from the date of notification of the Board's action. Extenuating circumstances and/or extreme transgressions may warrant an immediate effective date.
8. Final determination of discipline imposed to affect one's judging privileges is the authority of the Board. The Board may recommend a matter be referred to the Compliance Department for further action pursuant to **Article XII Section 4** of the *Charter and Bylaws of the American Kennel Club* if the Board of Directors is of the opinion the misconduct warrants penalty to affect event or all privileges.
9. Judge should be marked inactive during the period of suspension and until receipt of payment of fine. Payment of fine prior to the expiration of the period of suspension will result in the judge being reactivated but will not be published in AKC's online directory until the suspension has expired. A with a judging referral will be placed until the expiration date of the suspension, as they may not be approved to judge at events that occur during the suspension period. The accused individual has 30 days from the date of the Board's letter to file an appeal with the Judging Operations, Performance or Companion Events Department. Receipt of appeal will delay any suspension until after the Appeals Hearing.
10. The accused individual has 30 days from the date of the Board's letter to file an appeal with the Judging Operations, Performance or Companion Events Department. Receipt of appeal will postpone any imposing of disciplinary action until the matter is heard by the Board Appeals Committee.
11. If an appeal is filed, the Director or head of the applicable department schedules a meeting with the Board Appeals Committee (BAC). The accused individual may; 1) attend via video/tele conference, with or without counsel, for a 30-minute presentation; or 2) make a written appeal with pertinent additional information. Applicants who wish to present their appeal but do not have the ability to appear via video/tele conference may request to appear in person. Notice must be provided to the AKC in advance if counsel will be present.
12. The BAC reviews all material submitted and may concur with the recommended disciplinary action, amend the disciplinary action, or may recommend all disciplinary action be overturned. Any recommendation by the BAC to amend or overturn requires the approval of the full Board.
13. Once the Appeal Process is concluded, judge is notified in writing of the decision of the Board of Directors. Except in the case that all disciplinary action is overturned, notification of the suspension and/or fine shall be published in the AKC Gazette, and the effective date for any resulting suspension following the appeals hearing is immediate
14. Where discipline is a reprimand and fine, judge will have 30 days to pay the fine. Failure to pay will result in judge's status being marked as inactive until receipt of payment.

## Judges Disciplinary Guidelines

- The *Charter and Bylaws of the American Kennel Club* assigns the authority to the Board to issue and revoke licenses to judge.
- Complaints against a judge at an event which involve deviation from standard judging procedure and responsibilities are to be reported to the Field Representative in attendance or the applicable AKC department and handled internally by the AKC.
- Conduct addressed by an Event Committee involving an individual who is an AKC approved judge, may lead to review by the applicable AKC department to determine if further action is warranted specific to the person's judging privileges.
- Month is abbreviated as "mo.". A month suspension is defined as being thirty (30) days.
- The following Guidelines are used by staff in determining recommendations to the Board concerning the discipline of judges. The schedule represents potential penalties for judging infractions and the authority to impose discipline and the final determination of the conditions of any discipline imposed is solely the discretion of the AKC Board of Directors. It should not be viewed as a complete and comprehensive list.

<sup>1</sup> Offense	Mitigated	Standard	Aggravated
a. Failure to Follow Procedures / Rule/Guidelines	Rep./\$100	3 mos./\$300	6 mos./\$500
b. Improper disqualification/excusal or failure to disqualify/excuse as required by AKC rules regulations and policies	1 mo./\$100	3 mos./\$300	6 mos./\$500
c. Asking about points or discussing the merits of a dog judged or may judge with individual other than the owner or agent	Rep./\$100	3 mos./\$300	6 mos./\$500
d. Accepting Gifts from exhibitors	Rep./\$100	1 yr./\$1000	Up to life/up to \$2000
e. Rudeness / Improper Demeanor with exhibitors or officials	Rep./\$100	3 mos./\$300	6 mos./\$500
f. Inappropriate, abusive or foul language	3 mos./\$300	6 mos./\$500	1 year/\$1000
g. Exhibiting Improprieties (as judge or exhibitor)	1 mo./\$100	3 mos./\$300	6 mos./\$500
h. Application misrepresentation  Does not apply to clerical errors or those due to a misunderstanding of the application requirements. In those cases, the application is held, and the applicant is provided the opportunity to correct.  <b>Mitigated</b> – inadvertent submission of inaccurate educational experience.  <b>Standard</b> – claimed educational, owner or breeder qualifications confirmed to be inaccurate and/or inclusion of numerous inaccurate educational experiences.  <b>Aggravated</b> - knowingly supplying inaccurate information and/or experiences on application for judging approval.	Denial of application and six-month suspension of application privileges by department.	Three-year suspension of application privileges and a \$1000 fine.	Up to Lifetime suspension of all judging privileges and up to \$5000 fine.
i. Falsification of Judge's book and/or results	1 yr./\$1000	5 yrs./\$2000	Up to lifetime / up to \$5000
j. Improper recording in Judge's book/results resulting in unresolved errors.	Rep./\$100	3 mos./\$300	6 mos./\$500
k. Having possession or viewing of catalog prior to or before the end of assignment	1 mo./\$100	6 mos./\$500	5 yrs./\$2000

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l. Unsportsmanlike conduct toward AKC Officials and/or Club Officials	6 mos./\$300	1 yr./\$1000	Up to lifetime/ up to \$5000
m. Solicitation for wins or entries	1 mo./\$100	3 mos./\$300	6 mos./\$500
n. Canceling / failure to appear for assignment without sufficient reason.	1 mo./\$100	3 mos./\$300	6 mos./\$500
o. Late for assignment without sufficient reason	Rep./\$100	2 mos./\$200	3 mos./\$300
p. Inappropriate social contact, traveling and/or staying with exhibitor(s) where assigned to judge and exhibitor is entered to compete under judge the same weekend, circuit, or cluster.	1 mo./\$200	6 mos./\$500	1 year/\$1000
q. Consistently socializing with handlers or exhibitors where assigned to judge and exhibitor is entered to compete under judge the same weekend, circuit, or cluster.	Rep./\$100	3 mos./\$300	6 mos./\$500
r. Inappropriate comments on social media/public forums promoting or criticizing dogs or individuals, or that bring embarrassment to the AKC.	3 mos./\$100	6 mos./\$500	5 yrs./\$2000
s. Inappropriate comments and/or conduct with exhibitors regarding but not limited to, race, color, religion, disability, national origin, age, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or are sexual in nature.	3 mos./\$300	1 yr./\$1000	Up to lifetime/up to \$5000
t. Inappropriate touching or activity directed towards a person of at least 18 years of age.	2 yrs./\$5000	5 yrs./\$10,000	Up to lifetime/up to \$20,000
u. Inappropriate touching or activity directed at a person younger than 18 years of age	4 yrs./\$5000	10 yrs./\$20,000	Up to lifetime/up to \$40,000
v. Attempting to influence other judges by promoting or criticizing other dogs or handlers	3 mos./\$300	1 year/\$1000	Up to lifetime/up to \$5000
w. Failure to return Judge's books to Superintendents or Show Secretary.	Rep./\$100	3 mos./\$300	6 mos./\$500
x. Failure to respond in a timely manner to an inquiry by an AKC Event-related department's or AKC Compliance department request. Event-related departments include Event Operations, Judging Operations, Companion Events, Performance	1 mo./\$100	3 mos./\$300	6 mos./\$500
y. Judge placing bets/gambling on any competition at an AKC event assigned to judge.	3 mos./\$300	1 year/\$1000	Up to lifetime/up to \$5000

<sup>1</sup> Not all offenses apply to all AKC sports.