



Dressage Judges Training Program Requirements and Procedures for Obtaining Recorded 'r' Status



Eligibility to Enter a Program

1. Applicants must be Senior Competing members in good standing with the United States Equestrian Federation (US Equestrian) and be 21 years of age or older.
2. Applicants must graduate with distinction from the United States Dressage Federation's (USDF's) 'L' program within the prior five years. If it has been more than five years since the applicant graduated, the applicant will need to participate or audit Part I (sessions A, B, and C) of 'L' program prior to the start of the 'r' program and completed before taking the exam.
3. Applicants must demonstrate knowledge and experience by earning five riding scores of 65% or higher from the Fourth Level or above from four different 'R' or 'S' judges at USEF licensed open Dressage competitions (Freestyle does not count).

The requirements for the 'r' program must be fulfilled. Undocumented activities cannot be considered.

Once the above requirements have been fulfilled, the application can be submitted to the USDF Education Department 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 Judge Training Program approved by the USDF.

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

- Guidelines for Apprenticing/Observing
- Synopsis of Apprenticing Requirements
- Tabulation Form
- Evaluation Form from Competition Manager
- Verification Form for Apprenticing
- Mentor List
- Evaluation Form for Apprenticing
- Confirmation of Completed Training Program

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

The Dressage Judges Training Program

After receiving approval from the USDF, applicants are allowed two years to complete a training program. If no program 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. A classroom session of six to eight hours.
3. Structured training sessions to practice-judge movements and figures of Training through Second level tests. Videos may also be used for this session.
4. A day at a USEF licensed dressage competition to practice judge entire tests at the Training through Second levels.
5. A final examination (written, oral and practical)

This program is being offered in two sections. The first section lasting three days and being the training part and the second section being the examination. There should be a minimum of 10-12 months between the two sections. All apprentice must be completed before taking the exam.

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

Schedule – Training Course:

1. Online Lectures and Quizzes

Prior to the start of the program, the following topics have to be studied online and a quiz taken.

- a. Apprenticing and regulations
- b. Biomechanics of the horse
- c. Dressage Seat Equitation
- d. Freestyle judging
- e. Para-Equestrian judging

2. Classroom Session

Every program must begin with this session. 6-8 hours should cover the following subjects.

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

What applicants should bring to the classroom sessions:

- Notebook, pencils, pens
- Their own diagrams for Training through Second level
- All handouts that were downloaded for the various online lessons and current 'L program' handouts.
- USDF glossary
- USEF rulebook any rule supplements
- Laptop or other devices if possible

3. Practice Judging Session on Figures and Movements

In this session the applicants will practice judge all key figures and movements from Training through Second 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 applicants 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 instructors are required to evaluate each applicant and return the evaluation form to the USDF.

4. Practice Judging of Entire Tests, Including Collective Marks

This session must be done at a USEF licensed level 2 or higher Dressage Competition. Entire tests at Training through Second 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 instructors are required to evaluate each applicant and return the evaluation form to the USDF.

5. Examination

After the applicant has completed **ALL** requirements of the training program, they will be examined at a USEF licensed dressage competition, by two examiners appointed by the USDF. The examination generally consists of a 60–90 minute 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 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 applicants 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 applicant must attain a passing score of 80% or better.

- b. **An 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 involve the judging of entire tests, including Collective Marks and summaries under Further Remarks at Training, First, and Second level.

What applicants should bring to the final examination:

- Pens (not pencils) and clipboard
- Their own scribe (or ask the organizer for suggestions of local scribes who would be willing to work with an applicant)
- USEF Rulebook
- Calculator
- Their own diagrams for all tests to be judged.

Grading of the examinations:

- a. **Closed-book examination** - The written examination is graded at the USDF Office. If the applicant 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 applicant fails the practical test (including the oral examination), he may repeat the practical exam by joining a current program.
- c. If the applicant fails either portion of the exam twice, the entire program must be repeated.

The USDF office will inform the applicants about the results of the examination. Examiners must never advise any applicant of the results.

Other requirements to be met outside of the structured classroom and practice sessions.

1. **Clinic:** Applicants must attend a Federation/USDF Dressage Judges Clinic during the year that they are enrolled in the program. If none is offered, applicants must attend a clinic the following year.
2. **Apprenticing:** Applicants may only begin apprenticing after they have the training part of the Judges program.

Applicants must fulfill the required apprenticing in a group setting. However, a maximum of *one* individual apprenticing experience per applicant is permitted.

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

- a. It is required that the applicant apprentice at a minimum of four different USEF licensed open dressage competitions with at least two different approved USEF licensed judges for a total of 22 classes:
 - Six classes at the Training Level
 - Six classes at the First Level
 - Ten classes at the Second Level
 - NOTE: at least 20 rides must be at the Second Level, Test 2 or 3 (Freestyle does not count).
- b. A class must have a minimum of four riders to receive credit. In some cases, when the required class has less than four entries, classes at the same level may be combined. Example: the competition offers a First Level, Test 3 class for junior riders and a separate First Level, Test 3 class for adult amateurs. 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 (First Level, Test 3) with six riders. Test of Choice classes may not be used, nor may different tests at the same level be combined.
- c. 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 two sections with at least 8-10 horse in each section (and the same instructor).
- d. 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.

NOTE: Apprenticing only counts towards requirements if the recognized instructor-judge has given written or oral feedback and has filled out the proper evaluation form. For apprenticing, the applicant 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 apprenticing must be made ahead of time by the applicant. This includes:

- Obtaining permission from the competition management and from the presiding judge and
- Providing their own test sheets and scribe as well as their own portable copy machine.

Forms to be completed:

- Apprentice Evaluation Form, which the presiding judge will complete and return to the USDF office.
- Verification of Apprentice/Observing Form, which the presiding judge will complete and return to the USDF office.
- Competition Manager's Evaluation Form is to be given to the manager to complete and return to the USDF office.

Applying for Recorded 'r' Status

Once you have completed the training program and its components, please submit the "Completed Training Program Confirmation Form".

Upon receipt of your application and all necessary documentation, your application will be processed to determine if all requirements have been met. When the Licensed Officials Department has verified that you have fulfilled the requirements, they will send evaluations regarding your experience and abilities to the following:

- Members of the USEF Dressage Sport Committee (DSC)
- USDF

The Licensed Officials Committee meets three times a year. Meeting and deadline dates for receiving applications in the Federation office are available on www.usef.org.

A letter notifying you of the Licensed Officials Committee's decision will be sent within approximately two weeks after the Committee meets.

If you have any questions, please contact Kathie Robertson at loeducation@usdf.org.



United States Equestrian Federation, Inc.
Verification of Attendance
Sessions A, B and C of the USDF 'L' Training Program



Candidate Judge Name _____ USEF # _____

Session A:

Name of the program: _____

Name of the instructor: _____

Location & Date: _____

Name of Organizer (*print*): _____

Signature of Organizer _____

Session B:

Name of the program: _____

Name of the instructor: _____

Location & Date: _____

Name of Organizer (*print*): _____

Signature of Organizer _____

Session C:

Name of the program: _____

Name of the instructor: _____

Location & Date: _____

Name of Organizer (*print*): _____

Signature of Organizer _____

Candidate signature _____ Date: _____

Upon completion of the above, sign and return to USDF.