



AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB™

80% Policy for Requesting Group Status

Frequently Asked Questions

The Board of Directors at its October 2013 meeting adopted the policy that an AKC judge approved to judge breeds comprising 80% of the entries in a group the previous year could be approved to judge the group competition after passing the breed standard tests and submission of a \$35 non-refundable processing fee per breed for the remaining breeds in that group.

The Judging Operations Department strives to assist all current and aspiring judges by providing information to assist in the application process. We hope this FAQ section will help you better understand the Board policy regarding approval to judge the group competition at AKC Conformation shows.

1. How does one become eligible to judge groups at AKC events?

Two ways; (1) AKC judge approved for all breeds within a group are automatically eligible to judge the same group at AKC conformation shows and (2) judges approved for breeds constituting 80% of the entries in a group from the previous year may request approval to judge the group competition.

2. Is it 80% of the breeds or 80% of the entries?

80% of the entries. (Dogs in competition) There will be numerous combinations of breeds that could result in a judge exceeding the 80% threshold.

3. Do I have to be regular status in a breed for it to “count”?

No. All breeds approved to judge, regular or permit status, are included when determining if one meets the 80% criterion.

4. If a judge is approved for breeds that exceed the 80% threshold, will he/she automatically be eligible to be assigned that group on panels?

No, eligible judges must request approval to judge the group competition. Those interested are required to pass the 25 question AKC breed standard exam and submit a non-refundable \$35 processing fee for each breed not approved within the group.

5. How do I request group approval under the 80% policy?

Eligible judges must submit to Judging Operations (1) a completed [Group Status Request form](#), (2) a completed breed exam answer sheet for each breed not approved within the group and (3) a non-refundable \$35 processing fee per breed not approved within the group.

6. What constitutes failing the exam(s) and how does it affect my request?

Missing two or more questions or one question pertaining to a breed disqualification (marked by *) will result in a failure. Judges are provided a second opportunity to pass any failed exam. Failure on the second attempt will result in denial of the group status request. Judges whose request is denied may re-submit a request after six months.

7. Am I permitted to request approval to judge the group competition in more than one group?

Yes. Judges are permitted to request approval in each group that they meet or exceed the 80% threshold.

8. Who approves group status requests?

Approval for eligible judges requires passing the breed exams and submission of the applicable fees. Judging Operations will add the group competition approval to the judge's information once all criteria have been met.

9. If approved to judge the group under this policy, am I now eligible to be assigned to judge all breeds within the group?

No, judges will be eligible to be assigned those breeds previously approved by the AKC.

10. If I gain approval to judge a group competition under the 80% policy, is my approval for that group permanent?

No, the policy states the eligibility to judge that group will be for a three year period from the first group assignment. Judges must apply for and receive the balance of the group within the three year period.

11. What happens if the balance of the group is not obtained within the three year period?

At the end of the three year period, the status will be removed if the balance of the breeds has not been obtained. Once approved for all breeds within the group (regular or permit status), eligibility to judge the group competition will be reinstated.

12. When requesting approval to judge the group competition based on the 80% policy, a \$35 processing fee is required for each breed currently not approved within that group; am I required to pay the \$35 processing fee for each breed when applying for approval of the breeds that constitute the balance of the group?

Yes, the fees are specific for the approval to judge the group. The Judging Approval Process requires submission of the \$35 fee for each breed applied.

13. Are there additional requirements when new breeds are added to groups?

Yes, individuals approved to judge the group competition under the 80% policy are required to take and pass the AKC breed exam and submit a non-refundable \$35 processing fee when a breed is added to the group within the three year period. Failure of the exam after two attempts will result in removal of the approval to judge the group competition.

14. If approval for a breed is removed, am I still permitted to judge the group under this policy if the remaining breeds still exceed the 80% threshold?

No. Individuals who have had breed(s) removed under the provisions of the Judging Approval Process will not be approved for any additional assignments on removed breed(s) and affected Group(s) until such time as the breed has been re-instated. This applies to individuals approved to judge the group competition under the 80% policy.

15. Are judges approved to judge the group competition under the 80% policy permitted to accept assignments for groups at shows to be held after the end of the three year period?

No. Group assignments will not be approved on judging panels scheduled to be held following the expiration of the three year period. If the balance of the breeds in the group is applied for and granted prior to the end of the three year period, the expiration date will be lifted.

16. How do I know if I am eligible?

Judging Operations will notify those individuals eligible to request approval to judge the group competition based upon currently approved breeds after all events have been processed from the previous year. In addition, Judging Operations will notify those who become eligible to request the group competition as a result of additional breeds granted following the monthly JRC meetings.

The entry numbers (dogs in competition) and what constitutes 80% for each group has been posted in the [Judging Resource Center](#) on the AKC website. This information will be updated annually once all events have been processed from the previous year and is available for those who wish to consider this information when applying for additional breeds.

17. If I receive a letter of notification that I am eligible to request group status, must the request be submitted within a certain amount of time?

No. It is at your discretion when and if you elect to request approval to judge the group competition in accordance to the 80% policy. The requirements will be based upon the breeds approved to judge within that group at the time your request is submitted.

18. Am I required to take the breed exam if I took an exam for that breed when attending a breed seminar?

Yes. The exams distributed at the seminar are a truncated version of the full exam. The group policy requires passing the breed exam for each breed not currently approved to judge in that group.

19. If I request and receive approval to judge the group competition under the 80% policy, will my status be lost if my current breeds fall below the 80% threshold in subsequent years?

No. Once a judge requests and receives approval to judge the group competition under this policy, the status will remain for three years from the first group assignment. Exceptions that would result in the removal of the group approval would be the removal of any breeds or failing to pass the breed exam and submit the required \$35 processing fee for any new breeds added to the group during the three year period.

20. Can I use my group assignments as experiences when I apply for the balance of the breeds to complete the group?

Yes. Group assignments where the breed is present and judged may be included as an educational experience when applying for that breed.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Judging Operations Department at (919) 816-3593 or via email judgingops@akc.org with any questions pertaining to judges or judging at AKC events.