

I. 4-H Obedience Regulations

GENERAL REGULATIONS

- 1. State Approved Dog Shows** – Each district may hold one or more state shows per year. The two fall shows, Oklahoma City State Fair and Tulsa State Fair, are considered extra. A total of six (6) shows are possible per year. State shows will have all of the following classes available.

| SHOWMANSHIP | OBEDIENCE |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Class 1 Open Sr. (14-19 yrs)* | Open |
| Class 2 Open Jr. (9-13 yrs) | Graduate Novice |
| Class 3 Novice Sr. (14-19 yrs)* | Novice |
| Class 4 Novice Jr. (9-13 yrs) | Sub-Novice Beginner B Beginner A ** |

* Refer to Showmanship Classes and Divisions for further explanation.

**This class is limited to 4-H members who have never shown a dog in any obedience show.

Applications are to be submitted to and approved by the State Dog Council. Applications from a county wishing to host a state show must be submitted to the State Dog Council by January 15th for a spring show and July 1st for a fall show of the same year.

- 2. Eligibility of Exhibitors** – Exhibitors must be a 4-H member for 30 days prior to the 4-H Dog Show and enrolled in the Dog Project. Exhibitors should review the rules for specific shows for any additional requirements.
- 3. Eligibility of Dogs** – All dogs which have shown proof of immunization against rabies, distemper, hepatitis, leptospirosis, and parvo virus within the last twelve months are eligible. The State 4-H Dog Council requires rabies be given by a licensed veterinarian. Ancestry of the dog shall not be a factor in the judging of the dog's ability to perform the required obedience exercises. Dogs which have received an AKC degree are disqualified from entering the class which the degree was awarded or any lower class. Dogs

must be at least six months old. Dogs must be entered in the correct class. Each dog must be owned or co-owned by, and living with the 4-H Junior Exhibitor or by the Junior Exhibitor's father, mother, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, grandfather, or grandmother, including the corresponding step- and half-relations. No dog belonging wholly or in part to a judge or members of his immediate family may be entered in a show at which the judge is officiating. The same dog may not compete in more than one obedience class nor be handled by more than one person.

- 4. Disqualification and Ineligibility** – Any dog that attempts to attack any person in the ring shall be automatically disqualified and excused from the ring. No bitch in heat will be allowed to compete in any state dog classes or allowed on the show premises. A dog that is excused from one class will be excused for the rest of the show. Three strikes and the dog is out and will not be allowed to participate at 4-H sanctioned shows. A dog that is deaf or lame may compete but must be accompanied by an explanation and a certificate from a licensed veterinarian. Dogs shall not have anything attached to them, whether for medical or corrective purposes, for protection, for adornment or for any other reason except for those breeds normally shown with their hair tied back from their eyes in the breed ring. No tags or other items shall be attached to the training collar. Only the training collar shall be permitted around the dog's neck during performance of the obedience exercises. Approved show collars are flat or slip – no pinch. The judge shall have final determination as to the qualification of all dogs.
- 5. Misconduct** – Any allegation of misconduct or disputes in matters other than those within the judge's jurisdiction must be reported to the Superintendent, Assistant State Coordinator, or State Coordinator in that order. The Obedience Show Superintendent shall investigate any disputes or misconduct on the premises of a sanctioned 4-H Show. Any 4-H member who conducts himself in such a manner after receiving a warning during or following the show shall be reported to the Show Committee for a decision. The Show Superintendent must make a full, written report to the Oklahoma 4-H Dog Advisory Council of each disqualification within

seven calendar days following the sanctioned show date. A copy of such a report must also be sent to the disqualified exhibitor.

6. **Awards** – Qualifying medals will be based on the following scores.

| | |
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| 190 – 200 | gold medal |
| 180 – 189 | silver medal |
| 170 – 179 | bronze medal |

RING PROCEDURE

1. **Misbehavior** – Any disciplining by the exhibitor in the ring, any display of fear or nervousness by the dog, or any uncontrolled behavior of the dog such as snapping, barking, relieving itself in the ring, or running away from its exhibitor, whether it occurs during an exercise, or before or after judging, must be penalized according to the seriousness of the misbehavior; and the judge may expel or excuse the dog from further competition in that class. If such behavior occurs during an exercise, the penalty must first be applied to the score for that exercise. If such behavior occurs before, between, or after judging the exercise, the penalty shall be deducted from the total score.
2. **Commands and Signals** – Whenever a command or signal is mentioned in these regulations, a single command or signal only may be given by the exhibitor unless specifically stated that two commands/signals may be given. Whenever the regulations specify “command and/or signals” the exhibitor may give either one or the other, or both command and signal simultaneously. When a signal is permitted and given, it must be a single gesture with one arm and hand only. Delay in following a judge’s order to give a command or signal shall be penalized. Any pause in holding the arm upright followed by a down swung of the arm will be considered an additional signal in the downing of the dog. Signals must be inaudible, and the exhibitor must not touch the dog. Any unusual noise or motion may be considered to be a signal. Whistling or the use of a whistle is prohibited. The dog’s name may be used once immediately before any verbal command or before a verbal command and signal. A dog that responds to its name without waiting for the verbal command shall be scored as having anticipated the command. Loud commands by exhibitors to their dogs create a poor impression

of obedience and should be avoided. Commands which, in the judge’s opinion, are excessively loud will be penalized.

3. **Hands** – In all OFF LEASH exercises in which the dog is required to come to or return to the exhibitor and sit in front, the exhibitor’s arms and hands shall hang naturally at his/her sides while the dog is coming in and until the dog has sat in front of him. A substantial deduction shall be made if an exhibitor’s arms and hands are not hanging naturally at his/her sides.
4. **Training and Disciplining in the Ring** – Treats and toys are not allowed in the obedience ring during judging. An exhibitor who disciplines his/her dog in the ring before or after he/she is judged must be severely penalized. Any abuse of a dog in the ring shall be cause for immediate suspension from the show, and the exhibitor may not re-enter any 4-H sanctioned match or show unless he/she receives written authorization from the Oklahoma 4-H Dog Advisory Council.
5. **Numerical Order** – Armbands shall be worn by the exhibitors as assigned. Dogs shall be judged in numerical order to the extent that is practical to do so without holding up the judging of the entire class. Judges are not required to wait for dogs for either the individual exercises or the group exercises. It is the responsibility of each exhibitor to be ready with his dog at ringside when required, without waiting to be called. A judge should not hesitate to mark absent and refuse to judge any dog and exhibitor that are not at ringside ready to be judged, provided no previous late arrival notice has been given to either judge or the show chairman.

REGULATIONS FOR JUDGING

1. **Judging Program** – Judging shall not start prior to the time listed in advanced notice premium. Classes will be judged in the order on the entry form. It shall be the exhibitor’s responsibility to be at ringside when it is his/her turn to be judged. Delays or excuses for tardiness are to be the exception and must be approved by the show superintendent and the presiding judge as unusual circumstances; otherwise the exhibitor shall forfeit his turn and entry fee. The decisions of the judge shall be final in all matters affecting the scoring and the working of the dogs and their exhibitors. Judges may explain their decisions.

2. **Standardized Judging** – Standardized judging is of paramount importance. Judges are not permitted to inject their own variations into the exercises, but must see that each exhibitor and dog executes the various exercises exactly as described in these regulations. An exhibitor who is familiar with these regulations should be able to enter the ring under the judge without having to inquire how the particular judge wishes to have any exercise performed and without being confronted with some unexpected requirement.
3. **Exhibitors With Special Needs** – Judges may modify the specific requirements of these regulations for exhibitors to the extent necessary to permit special needs exhibitors to compete, provided such exhibitor can move about the ring without physical assistance or guidance from another person, except for guidance from the judge or from the exhibitor of a competing dog in the ring for the group exercises. Dogs handled by such exhibitors shall be required to perform all parts of all exercises as described by these regulations and shall be penalized for failure to perform any part of any exercise.
4. **Judge's Score Sheets** – An exhibitor may have a copy of his/her score sheet after the show is over. Scores for the group exercises and total scores must be ascertained after each group of dogs has been judged. No score may be changed except for an arithmetic error or if a score has been entered in the wrong column. All scores must be totaled prior to awarding of prizes.
5. **Judge's Directions** – Before starting each exercise, the judge shall ask the exhibitor "Are you ready?" At the end of each exercise, the judge shall say "Exercise finished." No judge shall require any dog or exhibitor to do anything or penalize a dog or exhibitor for failing to do anything that is not required by these regulations.
6. **Additional Commands or Signals** – If an exhibitor gives an additional command or signal not permitted by these regulations, the dog shall be scored as though it had failed completely to perform that particular part of the exercise. Some non-permitted additional major/minor commands consist of 1) using a command or signal when no command or signal is permitted; 2) using an extra command or signal simultaneously; 3) following a permitted command or signal; 4) if the exhibitor used the dog's name with a permitted signal but without permitted command. (This will give you examples of when the dog should be scored as an additional command or signal.)
7. **Exhibitors** – A person may handle more than one dog in each class, but each dog must have a separate handler for the Long Sit and Long Down exercises when judged in the same group.
8. **Qualifying Performance** – A qualifying score shall not be awarded to a dog that shows fear, resentment, fouls the ring, whose exhibitor disciplines or abuses the dog in the ring or carries or offers food in the obedience ring.
9. **Progressing** – If the exhibitor's score, in any degree, is more than 170 points at two qualified State 4-H Dog Shows, he/she must proceed to the next degree. However, it is not required to obtain two qualifying scores for advancing to a higher class. Once an exhibitor has been judged at a qualified State 4-H Dog Show in an obedience class, he/she may go higher, but may not revert to a lower class with the same dog. Graduate Novice Class is an exception. Any dog may remain in this class as long as the dog has not received the Companion Dog Excellence in AKC. At that time, the dog would be required to advance to Open Class.
10. **Announcement of Scores** – The judge or any person authorized to assist the judge shall not disclose any score or partial score to exhibitors or spectators until the complete judging of the entire class has been accomplished. All dogs shall be brought back into the ring. Scores for all qualifying individuals shall be announced publicly; the remaining exhibitor's shall be individually informed of his/her score.