



GERMAN SHEPHERD DOG CLUB OF AMERICA-  
WORKING DOG ASSOCIATION, INC.

**APPRENTICE JUDGES PROGRAM**

**BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR APPRENTICE APPLICANTS**

1. The Applicant must be a current member in good standing of the German Shepherd Dog Club of America (GSDCA) and have been so for a minimum of one year.
2. The Applicant must be a current member in good standing of the German Shepherd Dog Club of America-Working Dog Association (GSDCA-WDA) and have been so for a minimum of three consecutive years immediately prior to applying.
3. The Applicant must be a current member in good standing of a GSDCA-WDA member club.
4. The Applicant must be at least 30 years of age at the time of application into the Apprentice Trial Judge Program.
5. The Applicant must submit a completed GSDCA-WDA Apprentice Trial Judge Application signed by his/her club president and training director, or one or two other officers if the applicant is one or both of the required officers.
6. The Applicant must submit a thorough and detailed resume of his/her dog experience with particular emphasis on his/her Schutzhund/VPG, IPO, DPO/WPO background.
7. The Applicant must have trained, handled, and titled at least one German Shepherd Dog from BH to SchH/IPO/VPG 3, at least one dog to FH 1, and at least one dog to the following: SchH/VPG1, IPO1 or higher. GSDCA-WDA/DPO (Police Dog) Judge Applicants should additionally have titled at least one dog to the title of DPO 2.
8. GSDCA-WDA/DPO (Police Dog) Apprentices must not only fulfill the aforementioned requirements, but must also be certified law enforcement officers or retired in good standing, and have had a minimum of five years cumulative experience as patrol dog handlers at the time of application to the program.
9. The Applicant shall sign a Conflict of Interest statement, provided by the GSDCA-WDA that must be included with the Apprentice Judge Application form.
10. The Applicant must have attended a GSDCA-WDA or SV Apprentice Judge's Seminar.

**APPRENTICE WORKING DOG JUDGES PROGRAM**

1. Applicants to become an Apprentice must take a written examination consisting of questions based on SV/WUSV and/or IDM rules. The Director of Trials and Trial Judges will administer this exam and determine if the applicant is successful.
2. If the Applicant passes the examination(s) the Director of Trials and Trial Judges, GSDCA-WDA President, and National Training Director will review all applications and recommend, by majority, acceptance or denial to the GSDCA-WDA Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will review the application and vote on acceptance.
3. Within 14 days of the vote by the Board of Directors, the GSDCA-WDA Secretary will send a letter informing the Applicant of the Board's determination. A rejection letter will explain the cause for rejection and/or when applicable, give instructions for full remedy of the cause of rejection.
4. Accepted Applicants shall then become Apprentice Judge Candidates.

The Apprentice Trial Judge Candidate's name will be published in the GSDCA-WDA magazine, The Complete German Shepherd, the German Shepherd Dog Review, and posted on the GSDCA-WDA and GSDCA websites for at least one month. Feedback on an Apprentice Judge Candidate must be received within 60 days of publication. All input will be reviewed by the Director of Trials and Trial Judges and presented to the Board with a recommendation. The Board will assess the facts presented and the recommendation, and vote whether or not to approve the Candidate.

5. The Director of Trials and Trial Judges will provide an introductory Apprentice Judges Manual to each applicant who has been approved by the Board of Directors and shall then approve the apprenticeships as outlined below:

- a) Apprentice Judges will perform 6 successful apprenticeships at trials approved by the Director of Trials and Trial Judges, subject to the conditions stated in item 9 below. (Additional apprentice trials may be necessary if the minimum number of dogs evaluated does not meet the condition outline in item 8. Approval of each event will come only after the Apprentice has received permission from both the host club and the trial judge, and has made his information available to the Director of Trials and Trial Judges. After each apprenticeship, the Apprentice Judge will submit a written report and full critique to the trial judge within 45 days of completion of the trial. The report shall consist of a general description of the weather, the condition of the grounds and organization of the trial, a completed GSDCA-WDA Apprentice Judge Evaluation form for each dog evaluated, and a completed Bewertungsliste form for all dogs evaluated. If the apprenticeship is under an SV Judge, that judge may request the written report in German. The Trial Judge will forward that report with comments and a grade of “very good”, “satisfactory”, or “fail” to the Director of Trials and Trial Judges. A grade of “satisfactory” or better is needed to pass an apprenticeship.
  - b) The Director of Trials and Trial Judges will review the reports, critiques, comments, and assessment and shall notify the Apprentice Judge of successful or unsuccessful completion of the apprenticeship within 14 days of receiving the information from the evaluating judge. If the apprentice has passed, the Director of Trials and Trial Judges will approve the next apprenticeship trial.
6. If an Apprentice fails one apprenticeship, the Director of Trials and Judges shall report this to the Board of Directors. Upon written application, the Apprentice will be allowed to apprentice again and must receive a “very good” rating by the officiating judge in order to continue in the program. If an Apprentice fails a second time, participation in the Apprentice Judge Program will be terminated. The Applicant must wait two years to re-apply.
7.
  - a) GSDCA-WDA Schutzhund Judge Apprentices must work under SV Schutzhund or GSDCA-WDA Schutzhund judges at GSDCA-WDA trials or under SV Judges in Germany. Only judges who have been licensed for at least 5 years may act in the capacity of teacher/evaluator for Apprentices.
  - b) GSDCA-WDA DPO (Police Dog) Judge Apprentices must work under SV DPO or GSDCA-WDA DPO judges at GSDCA-WDA trials or under SV DPO Judges in Germany. Only judges who have been licensed for at least five years may act in the capacity of teacher/evaluator for Apprentices.
8. The Apprentice Judge will be required to judge a minimum of 40 dogs, including an FH1 or FH2.
9. The last apprenticeship will be under the Director of Trials and Trial Judges or his/her designee.
10. The Director of Trials and Trial Judges will submit the Apprentice Judge’s name and qualifications to the GSDCA-WDA Board of Directors for approval as a GSDCA-WDA Performance Dog Judge within 30 days of the successful completion of the apprentice trials. The final decision rests with the Board of Directors.
11. The initial license will be provisional for a period of two years. At the end of this period, the Provisional Judge and his/her work will be reviewed for recommendation of a license of duration to be determined by the Board of Directors. No Provisional Judge will be given any Regional or National assignments until after his/her probation is complete, except in extraordinary situations that will be determined by the Board of Directors.
12. Permanently licensed GSDCA-WDA Judges who are members of the SV, may also petition the GSDCA-WDA Board of Directors for a recommendation for entry into an SV Judges program. If the GSDCA-WDA Board of Directors approves the application, the Secretary shall forward it to the GSDCA Board of Directors for their approval and recommendation.