



AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUB®

From the Office of
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Director,
Judging Operations

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The Board of Directors of the American Kennel Club approved the following policy changes in regards to; **Rules, Policies and Guidelines for Conformation Dog Show Judges** at their April meeting which are effective immediately. Should you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact the Judging Operations Department or discuss with members of the Executive Field Staff.

BEFORE ENTERING THE RING

(P) Judges may use electronic devices including cell phones to review written breed standards while at their judges' table. Such electronic devices when not in use must remain on the judge's table or in its vicinity in a bag or briefcase. Judge should not walk away from the table with an electronic device in hand while judging. Neither the judge, ring steward nor an exhibitor may initiate or receive any phone calls and/or text messages while in the ring and judging is in progress. (Page 7)

As a result of this policy change, the judging community will now be able to utilize the latest technology available to access current breed standards. It is imperative that those who choose to make use of this technology while judging are cognizant of the perception of the exhibitor and adhere to the guidelines for its use.

JUDGING THE DOGS

*[R] **You Are in Charge** As the judge, you have full authority over all persons in the ring. See Chapter 7, Sections 15 and 16, of the **Rules** for a review of the judge's authority.*

*(P) With this authority comes the responsibility to be thoughtful and considerate as you judge each dog entered according to all AKC Rules, Policies and Guidelines. Be as systematic in your ring procedure from dog to dog and class to class **as conditions permit**, but do take the time to encourage apparent novices. (Page 8)*

***Individual Examination of Dogs (P)** Judges are expected to examine and gait every dog in the same objective, breed-specific manner even if a poor specimen may clearly be out of the ribbons. This includes breeds that according to their breed standard traditionally have been cropped and/or docked and dogs entered which may have deviations from the breed standard. Approach dogs calmly. Examine each with a gentle but sure touch and no sudden, surprising moves. (Page 12)*

The AKC does have a procedural and a substantive role in ensuring that AKC Judges follow proper protocol to examine and gait every dog in the same objective, breed-specific manner even if a poor specimen may clearly be out of the ribbons. Exhibitors entering dogs in breeds that are not cropped and/or docked in traditionally cropped and/or docked breeds have an expectation their dogs will be examined and gaited. This expectation for all entries to be examined and gaited in the same objective, breed specific manner helps to insure the reputation of AKC dog shows as fair and well judged.