

Part V
Section 1: Officials

PERIOD OF CERTIFICATION

- A. The USA Gymnastics Rhythmic Judges 12th cycle certification period is from January 1, 2009 through December 31st, 2012.
- B. A certification rating obtained during the 12th cycle will be valid throughout the 11th cycle provided the rated official meets all certification maintenance requirements.
- C. A judge may advance in the rating structure during a cycle provided all rating advancement requirements are met.

II. RHYTHMIC JUDGES CERTIFICATION POLICIES

- A. USA Gymnastics, through the Rhythmic Administrative Committee, establishes the judging certification standards, policies and procedures for all judges in the USA Gymnastics Rhythmic Gymnastics Program.
- B. In order to judge a USA Gymnastics sanctioned rhythmic event, a judge must be a USA Gymnastics Rhythmic Professional member.
- C. Judging certification means that the judge has obtained an appropriate judges rating by successfully completing a judging course and passing a test at each certification level.
- D. If a provisional judge completes the certification procedures during the competition season, he/she will carry the provisional rating until the new official list is published.
- E. All certified judges are required to judge one meet per year and attend a minimum of one two hour judges training sessions per year in order to maintain their certification.
- F. If judges do not meet above requirements, their names will be added to the inactive list until requirements are met.
- G. It is the responsibility of all certified judges to complete and send the current Judge's Record Log to their Rhythmic Technical Representative on the RAC by December 1st of each year.
- H. Men are accepted as judges up to and including the National level.

III. JUDGES RATING POLICIES

- A. A judge's rating is determined by:
 - 1. a minimum score requirement on a written exam
 - 2. practical judging evaluation
 - 3. number and level of meets previously judged
 - 4. years of judging experience
- B. A prospective judge must be at least 16 years of age.
- D. Judges must progress from level to level as rated officials.
 - 1. All new prospective judges must begin at Level 3/4.
 - 2. Artistic judges with a current Level 5 and up rating may begin at Level 5/6.
 - 3. A rhythmic coach who has coached a gymnast to the J.O. Championships (Individual) may begin at Level 7/8.
 - 4. Rhythmic athletes who are 16 years of age and have qualified to compete in National Qualifier Competitions may begin at Level 5/6.
 - 5. A US National Team member may begin at the National level.

6. Level 8 athletes recommended by their coaches that are age 16 may participate in a course to become certified as a Level 3/4 judge. These judges must obtain an instructor membership with USAG and Safety Certification.
7. All judges under the age of 18 must obtain a junior professional membership with USAG and safety certification. At Championships these judges will be allowed to judge when averaging their score with a professional judge to gain experience and fulfill their move-up requirements. These judges, after fulfilling move-up requirements, may take a course and test to advance to Level 7/8.

D. Provisional rating

1. Once a judge has taken a course and successfully completed the written exam, a Provisional Rating will be given.
 2. A judge with a provisional rating may be assigned to judge an event at the provisional rating level only if a fully certified judge is not available.

IV. JUDGE RATING LIST

In November of each year a rhythmic judge-rating list will be completed and distributed based upon results of the previous year. The rating assigned in December will carry through the next year.

V. JUDGES TESTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- A. All judges are required to take an official judges training course at the level they seek certification before they are allowed to take the written test.
- B. Official Rhythmic Judges Courses and test administration will only be offered by approved clinicians during the National Congress or Regionally during the **Fall** of each year.
 1. Level 3/4, 5/6, 7/8 courses and tests may be offered at the Regional Level
 2. The National courses (Level 9/10) will be offered every two years at the annual USA Gymnastics Congress (2009, 2011, etc.)
 - a. In order to gain admission to the National Course to be certified, a potential candidate must:
 1. Be 18 yrs of age and have been a member of the USA National Team.
 2. Have been a coach of an athlete who has competed at the Rhythmic National Qualifier, Nationals or Challenge, within the past five (5) years.
 3. Have gone through the judging progression as outlined in the Rules & Policies.
 4. Have been a former US National Team member.
- C. To maintain a rating, a judge must take a 12th cycle course at the desired level, pass a written exam, successfully complete a practical experience, judge a minimum of one (1) meet each year, and attend one two-hour training course each year which must be recorded in Judges Record Log.
- D. To upgrade a rating a judge must judge the minimum number of years and judge the minimum number of meets (see advancement chart) before they are eligible to take a course and test at the next level. They must then successfully complete the course and test.
- E. To take a judges course and written test, a prospective judge need not be a USA Gymnastics professional member; however, if a rating is obtained, the name will not be added to the list of current certified judges until he/she obtains a USA Gymnastics professional membership.
- F. To judge at the Junior Olympic Level, all National or Brevet judges must complete a Junior Olympic Certification course.
- G. Written exam -- Examinee will be notified of the results of the 3-8 test by the Zone Technical Chair or the RPC Judges' Representative.
 1. Once the examinee has obtained a new rating because of a written test score, her name will be added to the list of "Current Certified Rhythmic Judges" as a Provisional Judge.

2. The list of "Current Certified Rhythmic Judges" is updated once a year in December. Therefore, unless a judge fulfills the practical experience prior to November 30, his/her rating will not be updated until December of the following year and her judging fee will be paid at the Provisional rate.
 3. If the examinee fails the exam or wishes to improve a score, he/she can repeat the exam. Examinees are limited to one retest in one certification year (Congress to Congress). Retesting exam for the National Level will be given during the National Congress each year.
 4. If an examinee scores lower on the second testing, the previous or higher score will be acknowledged for certification.
- H. Practical Testing
1. Before judges can become fully certified at Levels 3-8 they must successfully complete a practical experience (volunteer attendance). The judging course instructor, in conjunction with the Regional Judging Coordinator (RJC), will arrange for the practical scheduling.
 2. A Provisional Level 3-8 judge, in order to fulfill the practical experience, must contact the Regional Judging Coordinator. The RJC, in conjunction with the Judging Course Instructor, will arrange for the practical experience (expenses will not be reimbursed and no judging fee will be paid). The testing judge will judge a meet under the direction of an experienced judge assigned by the RJC. After completing the practical experience, The experienced Judge will fill out the Practical Judging Form and send it to the Zone Technical Chairperson of his/her region. The Zone Technical Chair will send written notification of the results of the practical to the testing judge. After successfully passing her/his practical judging, a provisional level judge should get paid as a fully certified judge.
 3. The RPC Judges' Representative will send written notification to the USA Gymnastics National Office when a Level 3-8 judge has successfully completed the practical judging experience.
 4. Before a judge can become fully certified at the National Level, a practical experience (expenses not reimbursed and no judging fee paid) must be obtained by judging at a major national level competition under the direction of the RPC Judges' Representative (JO Optional Championships, National Qualifier, National Championship, Rhythmic Challenge).
 5. A provisional National Judge, in order to fulfill the practice testing requirement must request a practical judging assignment from the RPC Judges' Representative. If accepted, the provisional judge will assume all travel and housing costs related to the competition and are under the direction of the Judges' Representative, who will send written notification to the USA Gymnastics National Office when a provisional National judge has successfully completed the practical judging experience.
- I. Years of Experience
1. Before judges can upgrade their judging level, they must have judged the specific number of year(s) (see advancement chart).
 2. Year(s) of experience are accumulative at each level after they have successfully completed the judging course and test at each level.
 3. Rhythmic athletes and coaches, and artistic judges who have been qualified to enter the Rhythmic Judging Program at Level 5/6 (see IIIC.2.3.4) will automatically receive 1 year of judging credit for Level 5/6.

VI. MAINTAINING A RATING

- A. To maintain an active judging status a judge must judge a minimum of one meet each year at their current certification level. All information must be recorded in Judges Record Log. All National and Brevet judges may be required to complete a minimum of 2 separate participation sessions per year in any gym with the consent and approval of the coach from that gym. This must be recorded in the Judges Record Log.
- B. It is the responsibility of the judge to submit the Judges Record Log to the Zone Technical Chair (RAC) of his/her region by December 1st of each year **in order to** maintain rating. Original judges' logs will be returned to the judges at large.
- C. If judges do not meet the above requirements, their name will be added to the inactive list until requirements are met.

- D. If a judge took an absence from judging for a year or more, a written exam and practical exam at the level, which judge took an absence, must be taken for the judge to be eligible to judge at that level again.

RATING	SCORE MINIMUM	PRACTICAL	MINIMUM # MEETS JUDGED	YEARS OF EXPERIENCE
LEVEL 3/4 Judge	80%	Yes	1 Meet	1
LEVEL 5/6 Judge	80%	Yes	1 Local Meet 1 State Meet	1
LEVEL 7/8 Judge	80%	Yes	1 Local Meet 1 State Meet 1 Regional Meet	1
NATIONAL	80%	Yes	2 National Meets with approval	1
BREVET 4	International Course			
BREVET 3	CRITERIA DETERMINED BY FIG AND JUDGES SELECTION COMMITTEE			

The above requirements (practical experience, years, and number of meets) must be attained after the judge has completed the course and passed the test for each level. The level of meets must be at the highest rating the judge has – i.e. a Level 5 meet would not fulfill the requirement for a Level 7/8 judge.

VII. JUDGING ASSIGNMENTS

- A. USA Gymnastics Judging Contracts must be used for all sanctioned events.
 - B. Judges may only be assigned to a competition level for which they hold the appropriate rating. Judges must be proficient in the English language.
 - C. Provisional rated officials may be assigned to judge competitions for levels at which they hold a provisional rating provided no fully certified judges are available, but are paid according to the fully certified rate that they hold.
 - D. A Level 7/8-rated judge may judge execution at Level 9/10 provided no fully certified judge is available.
 - E. A Level 5/6-rated judge may judge execution at Level 7/8 provided no fully certified judges are available and provided the competition in question is not a qualifying event.
 - F. At any qualifying events, a judge who is affiliated with a club will not be allowed to judge meets in which club affiliated gymnasts are participating. An exception may be made if no other judge is available. Affiliation is defined as a gym owner, employee or parent of a club gymnast.
 - G. Local and Invitational Events: the meet director may request judges of choice through the Regional Judging Chairman provided they have the appropriate rating for the level of competition.
 - H. USA Gymnastics State and Regional Competitions: The Regional Judging Coordinator of the respective region is responsible for making all judging assignments.
1. Regional Judging assignments will be made by the Regional Board in conjunction with the Regional Meet Referee, who is assigned by the National Judges' Selection Committee, and will consider locality of competition, years of experience, meets needed to maintain or update rating, etc.

- I. USA Gymnastics National Competitions: The National Judges' Selection Committee is responsible for making all assignments for J.O. Compulsory and Optional Championships, National Qualifying, National Championships, and Challenge. Any (U.S.) National or Brevet rated judge can be assigned.
- N. B. Judges may assist with routine evaluations throughout the season. No judge is allowed to evaluate routines in any format during the 14 days prior to the Visa Championships.
- J. International Assignments: The International Elite Coaches' Committee (IEC) is responsible for making international assignments.

VIII. CRITERIA FOR NATIONAL JUDGES SELECTION

- A. Experience (years in sport as athlete, coach, judge)
- B. Results of judging analyzed by USA Gymnastics computer program
- D. Geographical location of judge in relation to meet
- E. Finances
- F. Teaming of inexperienced judge with a Brevet
- G. National Team coach recommendations

IX. JUDGING DUTIES

A. Meet Referee

1. Conducts the judge's education meeting prior to the event,
2. Makes the panel assignments or conducts a draw,
3. Has ultimate control over technical decisions,
4. Judges every routine within human possibility,
5. Can question a panel score, even if the judges are in range, if she feels it is not appropriate,
6. Can call a conference of either judging panel, can make the decision to go to base score,
7. Keeps track (with the help of an assigned volunteer secretary) of all scores and rankings,
8. Determines the number of sessions in association with the meet director,
9. Makes sure the timers and line judges are knowledgeable about the rules and their function,
10. Serves as the spokesperson for the judging panels to the organizing host and the participants,
11. Makes sure the Head Judges review the official score sheets before signing them,
12. Mediates all professional disagreements, and has the final response,
13. Is responsible for any media involvement concerning the judges,
14. Respond to any written inquires before a session has ended,

Note: No score may be changed without approval of all judges involved.

B. Event Head Judge, if assigned:

1. Attends pre-competition education session,
2. Makes sure judges scores are within the proper range,
3. Requests the MR to call a conference if there is a disagreement,
4. Keeps track of rank order for assigned events,

5. Checks and signs the official score sheets at the end of the competition.
- C. Acting Panel Judge:
1. Attends pre-competition education session,
 2. Judges each routine assigned with undivided attention.

X. THE EVALUATION OF JUDGES

- A. All judges are expected to follow the Professional Member Code of Conduct.
 - B. If a question or complaint is raised about the behavior of a judge, a letter describing the specific misbehavior, the date of the event, etc. **must be submitted to the RPC Judges' Representative and the Rhythmic Program Director, who will investigate the complaint.**
1. If warranted a letter of reprimand will be sent to the judge.
Procedures for misconduct:
 - 1st offense - written warning
 - 2nd offense - probation
 - 3rd offense - suspended certification
 2. If warranted a letter will be sent to the person making the complaint.
- D. Written judges evaluations by National Team Coaches and peers of all National and Brevet judges will be conducted every year and will serve to help make judging assignments.
 - E. All written communication will remain confidential.

XI. BREVET LEVELS

- A. In order to advance from a National Level to a Brevet 4th degree a judge must:
 1. participate in an international/continental course and pass the final examination.
- B. In order to advance from a Brevet 4th degree to a Brevet 3rd degree a judge must:
 1. hold a Brevet 4th degree license.
 2. have judged at least two international competitions and obtained a judging score higher than 8.00 points as an overall judging score for each competition as valued by the FIG.
 3. be registered by USA Gymnastics on the list of FIG International Judges. The Judges Selection Committee determines this list.
- C. A judge must hold a minimum of a Brevet level 4 license to be considered for an international judging assignment.
- D. According to FIG policy, only judges holding a Brevet Level 2 license maybe considered for judging assignments to the World Championships, Four Continents Championships, and the Olympic Games.
- E. A judge who received a Brevet or International rating from a country other than the USA, must submit proof of rating certification and all other documents required by the Judges Selection Committee. The Judges Selection Committee will determine status as an international judge for the USA.
- F. Invitations to the Brevet course in the U.S. are at the discretion of the Judges Selection Committee. However, the following classes of persons are eligible be invited:
 1. All current National Team Coaches as of the year of the test.
 2. U.S. National level judges.
 3. Judges having held a Brevet in either of the prior two cycles.

XII. FIG BREVET LICENSE

- A. Only names submitted by USA Gymnastics may be considered for an International license by the FIG.
- B. The USA Gymnastics International Elite Coaches Committee is responsible for making international judging assignments.

XIII. RHYTHMIC JUDGES FEES AND COMPETITION POLICIES

- A. Fee Structure – hourly rate
 - All Brevets \$25.00/hour
 - National \$20.00/hour
 - Level 7/8 \$17.00/hour
 - Level 5/6 \$14.00/hour
 - Level 3/4 \$12.00/hour

The above fee structure is for fully certified levels. If a judge is provisionally certified the scheduled payment would be paid at a rate \$1 less than the fee for a fully certified judge.

This fee includes: actual judging time, original judges orientation meeting, and a reasonably short post-session meeting when called by the meet referee.

Fee does not include: breaks between sessions (no longer than 30 min.) and meal breaks (max. 45 min.)

- B. If a meet director chooses to hold an “after meet” comprehensive review:
 - 1. This shall be considered an extra session and included in the judge’s contract.
 - 2. The pay scale for a review session will be the same as the per hour judging time.

C. CANCELLATION POLICIES

If the contract obligations are not fulfilled by either party because of extenuating circumstances, no mandatory penalties will be applied to either party. (Example: inclement weather which would prohibit traveling; or grave illness). Failure to comply with the contractual agreement will result in the following:

- 1. **On the Meet Director’s part: A minimum of 7 days notice required for amendments or cancellation of officials. If cancellation of officials occurs less than 7 days prior to the meet, the Meet Director is responsible for payment of 3 hours per judge and any non-refundable expenses incurred.**
- 2. **On the Judges part: If a judge fails to appear without notifying the Meet Director, a penalty of 3 hours and non-refundable expenses incurred by the Meet Director will be paid to the Meet Director by the judge.**

D. MODIFICATION POLICIES

If any conditions on the contract are altered, it is the responsibility of the Meet Director to contact the individual judge(s) and the contracting official and provide that information to both. Adding or eliminating days or sessions are considered “non-contractual” and could result in the judge voiding the contract.

XIV. ADDITIONAL JUDGING EXPENSES

A. Meals

- 1. Meal compensation should be paid to a judge at a rate of \$25 per day, if hotel or host does not provide meals.
- 2. Recommended meal breakdown:

breakfast.....\$5.00
 lunch.....\$5.00

dinner.....\$15.00

3. Compensation for meals should be paid to the judge if the length of the meet or the length of travel time necessitates the judge being away from home during the usual meal hours.
4. The host in lieu of the payment may provide meals if the timing of the meet does not allow for sufficient time for the judge to secure a meal outside.

B. Travel and Lodging

1. Round trip travel expenses of .36 cents per mile shall be paid to the driver. Bus, train, and plane expenses shall be paid in full. The total mileage cost should not exceed the cost of an airplane ticket to the same location.
2. If the judge needs to use the plane, train or bus--travel expenses to and from the airport, bus station or train station should either be provided by the Meet Director or paid for the most reasonable way of transportation (e.g., limousine or taxi) this includes tolls and payment for parking at the airport if it is necessary for a judge to leave the car there for the duration of the meet. It is the judge's responsibility to provide receipts for these additional expenses.
3. Judges should not be obligated to assume initial travel expenses.
4. It is strongly recommended that judges pool transportation as much as possible.
5. If a judge must stay overnight prior, during or following the meet, lodging must be provided and paid for by the Meet Director. The judge has a right to be provided with a hotel room in nearby quality hotels or motel, ideally two persons assigned to one room. Judges should never be assigned to private homes where they would be obligated to socialize instead of rest.

- C. A contracted judge who is also coaching at an event should be paid according to judging sessions plus appropriate per diem. The meet director is not obligated to pay travel and housing, unless prior agreement has been made.

ALL OF THE ABOVE INFORMATION MUST BE CLEARLY DEFINED ON THE JUDGING CONTRACT OR A JUDGE HAS THE RIGHT TO REFUSE TO SIGN

D. Delays during the meet

1. If a meet is delayed due to equipment problems, faulty meet organization, failure of the Meet Director to notify the judges of a new time schedule or late arrival of competitors, a judge should be paid for the extra time according to the specified overtime procedure.
2. No overtime pay should be awarded to the judges if the delay occurred due to slow judging procedures, late arrival of one of the judges or overly frequent conferences. All judges should strive to get their scores in within 60 seconds following the completion of routine by the competitor. Unavoidable delays, like accidents or equipment breakage should be treated with consideration by judges and Meet Directors alike.
3. There will be a grace period of 15 minutes at the beginning and end of competition when no extra fees will be paid. If the meet is over one hour late in starting, a judge may leave and charge the Meet Director for mileage.

E. Miscellaneous

1. The Meet Referee may receive extra compensation especially if the meet organization requires her to put in extra time (e.g. being present for coaches meetings, for the draw, etc.) The Meet Director will determine this payment.
2. For all USA Gymnastics sanctioned meets a judge must be paid according to the fee structure.
3. Organizations other than USA Gymnastics can set their own fee schedules and negotiate with the judges. However, it is strongly advised that they adhere to the standards set by the USA Gymnastics

XV. UNIFORMS

The official uniform for all Sanctioned meets is:

Women: white blouse, navy blue or black blazer and skirt or pants

Men: white shirt, navy blue or black blazer and pants

NOTE: sport pants/warm-up pants are not acceptable

VIII. OFFICIALS

- A. For State and Regional competitions the Meet Director must contact the Regional Judging Coordinator in order to obtain properly rated officials for all sanctioned events. When all meet details have been provided the RJC will send the meet contracts to the assigned judges.
 1. For State and Regional Competitions the Regional Judging Coordinator will make the assignments on a rotating basis according to the certified judges in the respective State or Region.
 2. For Regional Championships, a USA Gymnastics approved Meet Referee must be contracted in addition to the panel of judges for all levels.
 3. For local and invitational competitions the Meet Director may use the services of the RJC.
- B. The USA Gymnastics Judges Selection Committee will make assignments for JO Compulsory/Optional Championships, National Qualifying Competition, and National Championships.
- C. Officials must have the appropriate certification for the level of competition being judged. Note: For State and Regional Level 9/10 competitions, judges assigned to judge execution may carry a Level 7/8 rating.
- D. Minimum number of Officials per panel when two alternating judging panels are used:
 1. Level 3 - One judge per gymnast.
 2. Level 4 – One or two judges per panel for local meets. Two judges per panel for state and regional meets. When two judges are used one will act as head judge and the scores will be averaged.
 3. Level 5&6 - One or two judges per panel for local meets. Two judges per panel for state and regional meets. When two judges are used one will act as head judge and the scores will be averaged.
 4. Level 7/8 - Three to six judges per panel for local meets. Two for Difficulty, Two for Artistry, Two for Execution, for State & Regional meets, with one judge acting as head judge for all sanctioned meets. Contact Rhythmic Zone Technical Chair for any exceptions.
 5. Group Competition
 - a. At all local and State meets, a minimum of two (2) judges (one per panel) must be used.
 - b. At the Regional Championships, a minimum of four (4) judges (two per panel) must be used.
 6. Level 9 and 10
 - a. For State and Regional competitions please contact your Regional Director or Regional Judges Coordinator for information about judging panels and scoring formulas.
- E. The Regional Judging Coordinator will assign the highest rated judge to serve as meet referee. (See Judges Section for Meet Referee responsibilities.) A Meet Referee is recommended at Regional Championships for all levels.
- F. It is possible to use only one panel of judges if the meet entry is small.
- G. Once an official or panel has begun to judge an event, there may be no substitutions of officials or panels until the entire event is completed.
- H. Petitions to use lower rated officials for State and Regional competitions must be approved by the Regional Judging Coordinator in consultation with the Rhythmic Technical Committee Chairman at least 1 month prior to the competition.
- I. Line judges are considered technical officials and must be at least 16 years of age. Line judges are not used for Levels 3 & 4.

