



AMERICAN  
KENNEL CLUB®

September 13, 2012

AKC Parent Breed Club,

The American Kennel Club has approved Ringside Observations to replace In-Ring Observations as a verifiable experience for additional breed judges. The following are the Criteria:

1. Observer must have achieved regular status in at least one breed.
2. Observer may observe with a parent club approved mentor or mentors with a minimum of 12 years' experience breeding, exhibiting or judging the breed in conformation. Observations with mentors not meeting the criteria will not be accepted.
3. There must be adequate entries for the breeds observed. Smaller entries may require more observations.
4. Observer and mentor must properly complete an Observation Form which must be submitted with the application for that breed.
5. Judges may observe at shows they are judging.

To assist the American Kennel Club we are asking that each Parent Club provide us with a list of their approved mentors. Please include the individuals name, city, state, phone and email. The complete mailing address is optional. This will assist the Judging Operations Department with requests for individual mentors.

Please send your approved Mentor List to:

American Kennel Club  
Judging Operations  
PO Box 900062  
Raleigh, NC  
27675-9062

For any additional question or information contact Judging Operations.

Regards,

Katie Rudolph  
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[kxr@akc.org](mailto:kxr@akc.org)  
919-816-3593  
[www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org)



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## **Ringside Observations Criterion**

Ringside mentoring has been going on since the implementation of the January 2000 Approval Policy. It has been highly successful and controversy free. Ringside mentoring is the most frequently used aspect of mentoring as it encourages dialogue with multiple breed experts.

A mentor is an individual with whom a prospective judge has established a long term, ongoing relationship. He or she may or may not mentor ringside.

A ringside observation may be experienced with an applicant's long term mentor or a designated ringside mentor. The ringside mentor may become a long term mentor or not.

Host clubs are not obliged to provide space or resources.

- ❖ **Observer must be approved to judge at least one breed; this experience is only a consideration on Additional Breed applications.** (New Breed Provisional Judges may observe ringside, however)
- ❖ **Formal observations (Ringside Observation Form) will be allowed with parent club approved mentors at National or Regional Specialties where formal ringside mentoring is organized by the host club.** (Mentors will be permitted to participate on days they are exhibiting up to the class in which they have an entry. They will be allowed to participate thereafter as this has always been at National or Regional Specialties where formal ringside mentoring is organized by the host club. Mentors will be asked to document their own experience on the Observation Form when they sign it.)
- ❖ Individuals engaged in Parent Club mentoring **may not** exhibit to the judge/applicant for a period of **four months** after and the mentor **may not** show to the judge following approval of the breeds for **four months** after.
- ❖ **Observer experience permitted (Mentor/Tutor form) at specialties with parent club approved mentors or individuals meeting the current AKC mentor guidelines.** (Individuals who are not parent club approved mentors must have a minimum of 12 years experience exhibiting or 12 years experience judging in that breed in regular status to meet AKC's mentor guidelines.)
- ❖ **There must be adequate entries for the breeds observed. Smaller entries may require more observations.** (Two entries of 50 plus dogs observed may satisfy this requirement; whereas three observations of seven or eight dogs meet the requirement but do not accomplish the greater objective.)
- ❖ **Observer and mentor must properly complete an Observation Form which must be submitted with the application for that breed.** NOTE: Forms will **not be accepted** without comments. Comments are **MANDATORY**.
- ❖ **Judges may observe at shows where they are judging. Judges should not observe at shows in which they are judging Best in Show.**
- ❖ **Judges may mentor at shows where they are judging at the completion of their assignment.** (Keep in mind that walking out of the ring and discussing the breed(s) they have judged should be conducted in a manner that would not be offensive to an exhibitor.
- ❖ **Ringside mentoring experience is defined as observing and discussing entries and classes at the time of judging with the mentor.**



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[www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org)

### ***RINGSIDE OBSERVATION FORM***

To be completed for formal ringside observations at Parent Club National or Regional Specialties with Parent Club approved mentors. Form must be completed by observer, mentor and submitted with application. Complete a separate form for each observation. Keep a copy for your records. Forms available at:

[www.akc.org/judges/conformation/index.cfm](http://www.akc.org/judges/conformation/index.cfm)

Please print in black or blue ink.

Observer: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Show Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Show Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Breed & Classes Observed: \_\_\_\_\_ Observed #: \_\_\_\_\_

Observer Notes: Overall quality of entry ☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Average ☐ Poor

Breed Specific comments are MANDATORY

If no comments are written, observation will not count.

Briefly describe experience:

If no comments are written, observation will not count.

**To be completed by Mentor (Mandatory):**

Parent Club Approved Mentor ☐ yes ☐ no

Exhibited at this show ☐ yes ☐ no

Length of observation: \_\_\_\_\_

In your opinion does the observer have a good understanding of this breed, provide details:

I, \_\_\_\_\_ verify that the above judge has completed an AKC approved  
(print name)

observation as indicated above. My signature on this form does not necessarily indicate my endorsement or recommendation of the observing judge.

Mentor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



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## Mentoring/Tutoring Form

This form should be utilized to verify a Mentoring or Tutoring experience (see definition below). It may also be utilized to verify an observation at a specialty where formal ringside mentoring organized by the host club was not offered as per the Judging Approval Process (page 5).

**Type of Experience:**                      **Mentor - defined as a long term relationship having numerous experiences in ongoing education in the applicable breed.**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_                      **Tutor – defined as a casual in depth discussion with a breeder/judge or knowledgeable experienced handler in the applicable breed.**

**Location:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Length of Session:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Tutoring/Observation Experiences only

**To be completed by Mentor (Mandatory):**

Parent Club Approved Mentor	€yes   €no	If NO, number of years exhibiting this breed _____
AKC Approved Breed Judge	€yes   €no	If YES, number of years judging this breed _____ (regular status)

**Briefly describe mentoring experience:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Mentor/Tutor:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Breed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Please print full name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Mentor /Tutor Date

**Name of Mentee:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Judges#:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Please print full name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Mentee Date

This form must be completed and signed by Mentor and Mentee and submitted with the applicable additional breed application to verify experience. Description of experience may be completed by the Mentor or the Mentee prior to signing. A separate form should be completed and submitted for each Mentor/Tutor experience.

September 19, 2012