



DOCOF

**Dog Obedience Clubs
of Florida**

DOG OBEDIENCE CLUBS OF FLORIDA ANNUAL COMPETITION/TOURNAMENT RULES & REGULATIONS

PURPOSE:

The purpose(s) of the Dog Obedience Clubs of Florida (DOCOF) Annual Competition is to provide the opportunity for handlers and dogs to represent their organization in competition as a team. These rules and Regulations constitute the basis of the Competition. However, the success of the event relies on the integrity and good sportsmanship of the competing member organizations.

At the discretion of the DOCOF Board, DOCOF may also offer a Special Event Trial, which follows American Kennel Club (AKC) Rules and Regulations. The purpose of The Special Event Trial is to allow exhibitors participating in the DOCOF Team competition, to also have their scores in the DOCOF classes, count toward AKC titles. The DOCOF Special Event Trial, hereafter referred to as the S.E.T., will allow dogs that have earned qualifying scores in the regular and alternate titling classes to count toward AKC titles at the Novice, Preferred Novice, Open, Preferred Open, Utility and Preferred Utility levels. Each exhibitor's scores will count as a DOCOF Team score and an Individual score for AKC.

GENERAL:

The DOCOF competition will be held Labor Day Weekend in conjunction with the DOCOF Annual Meeting.

The S.E.T. must be hosted by an AKC approved Member or Licensed Club in coordination with DOCOF. The DOCOF Board will determine which AKC Club will act as the "Host".

RULES AND REGULATIONS:

Article 1 - OBEDIENCE REGULATIONS:

The current American Kennel Club Obedience Regulations govern any rules not stated herein.

- 1.1 S.E.T Rules and Regulations:
- 1.2 Classes offered for the S.E.T will be for the "B" classes for Novice, Preferred Novice, Open, Preferred Open, Utility and Preferred Utility. Exhibitors will be allowed to enter the Open B & Utility B classes so they may earn UDX legs and/or titles. If an exhibitor is entered in both Open & Utility classes, only one (1) score will count toward the DOCOF Team score. Exhibitors opting to enter the Preferred class will also be allowed to enter the Preferred Open & Preferred Utility classes, only one (1) score will count toward the DOCOF Team score. Each DOCOF Team must decide which class they want the scores from dogs on the team to count towards the team score at the time of entry.

1.3 Group Stays.

Revised 9/17/2023. This issue of the rules and regulations was prepared on September 17, 2023, incorporating changes voted upon at the Membership meeting on 8/30/2020 as well as proposals voted upon at the Annual Membership meeting on 9/4/2021, 3/1/2022, 9/4/2022, 9/2/2023, 8/31/2024, 8/30/2025, 9/14/2025.

The Novice group stays will be done at the end of the Class. If a dog NQ's an individual exercise, it will be "Released" from Group Stays. Their total score will be entered in the Judge's Book as an NQ. The dogs that have qualified in Novice will perform their Group Stays in the Novice ring at the end of the Novice Class. Any Novice dog that NQ's an individual exercise and is "Released" from groups, shall be allowed to participate in a separate "Group Stay" exercise for their DCOF Team score. These dogs will do their Stays either in a separate ring under a different Judge, or in the same ring after all the other dogs have completed their Group Stays. This will allow dogs to still earn points for their DCOF Team score but will not count toward individual scores for AKC titles.

Article 2 – ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- 2.1 Any recognized Member Organization of DCOF in good standing may enter.
- 2.2 No individual exhibitor entries will be accepted except for S.E.T competition.
- 2.3 Only exhibitors that are entered on a DCOF team may enter and compete in the S.E.T. event.

Article 3 – ENTRY REQUIREMENTS:

- 3.1 Each DCOF Member Organization may enter a maximum of three (3) teams.
 - a. A full team consists of a maximum of nine (9) dogs and shall consist of at least two (2), but not more than three (3) Novice or Preferred Novice dogs, at least two (2), but not more than three (3) Open or Preferred Open dogs, at least two (2), but not more than three (3) Utility or Preferred Utility dogs.
 - b. Partial teams of fewer than two (2) dogs per class or less than three (3) classes or both may be entered.
- 3.2 A second or third team may be entered only if the following requirements are met.
 - a. When sending a second team, the Member Organization's first team must consist of three (3) Novice or Preferred Novice dogs, three (3) Open or Preferred Open dogs and at least two (2) Utility or Preferred Utility dogs.
 - b. When sending a third team, both of the Member Organization's first and second team must consist of (3) Novice or Preferred Novice dogs, three (3) Open or Preferred Open dogs and at least two (2) Utility or Preferred Utility dogs.
 - c. The second or third team may then be a partial team as defined in 3.1.b above.
- 3.3 The method utilized in selecting individual exhibitors and dogs to represent a Member Organization is not a part of these Rules and Regulations; however, the requirements of Article 4 below must be adhered to.
- 3.4 Each club, or individual organization will have the option of designating one (1) dog and handler for each level (one (1) Novice or Preferred Novice, one (1) Open or Preferred Open and/or one (1) Utility or Preferred Utility regardless of the number of teams being sent) as an emergency substitute, to be used only in the event that two dogs showing at the same level on the same team are unable to compete. The substitute will take the place of one (1) of the absentee entries, and the information in the exhibitor list will not be changed. An entry fee will not be charged for listing the emergency substitutes, whether or not any are used to substitute for a team member at the Tournament. If a substitute is used, it is the Team Captain's responsibility to notify the Tournament Secretary as soon as possible. If the substitution occurs on the day of the Tournament, the Team Captain will also report the change to both the scheduled ring and the group ring for that entry. If the Club, organization, or individual chooses to take advantage of this option, emergency substitutes must be listed on a separate sheet of paper and sent in with the official entry form. All of the information required for regular entries must be provided for the substitutes, including jump height. All rules related to eligibility (both dog and handler) also apply to substitutes.
- 3.5 **Team Unification:** If two (2) Member Clubs and/or Organizations determine that they have inadequate resources to field a full first DCOF Team, they may field a united ADHOC team based upon the following.
 - a. Both Organizations are in good standing with DCOF.

Revised 9/17/2023. This issue of the rules and regulations was prepared on September 17, 2023, incorporating changes voted upon at the Membership meeting on 8/30/2020 as well as proposals voted upon at the Annual Membership meeting on 9/4/2021, 3/1/2022, 9/4/2022, 9/2/2023, 8/31/2024, 8/30/2025, 9/14/2025.

- b. All dogs and handlers proposed to be on the united team appear on the current membership roster submitted to DOCOF.
- c. All dogs meet all other requirements of DOCOF rules.

The Unified Team will exist for one (1) year only and must reapply and be approved by the Board of Trustees annually. A unification team may field up to two (2) teams.

Unification is solely for the purpose of fielding a team and does not otherwise impact the forming organization membership or responsibilities.

The unified team will pick a name that represents both organizations, such as ABC Dog Training Club/XYZ Obedience Team.

- 3.6** The S.E.T. will be limited to Exhibitors that currently belong to a Florida Club or Organization that are Members in good standing with DOCOF and are entered in the Team Competition for DOCOF. Only dogs that meet the requirements of Chapter 1; Section(s) 12, 13 and 14 of the AKC Obedience Regulations will be allowed to enter. An official AKC Obedience entry form must be completed to enter the S.E.T.

Article 4 – Exhibitors:

- 4.1 Exhibitors must be in good standing with whatever Registry they represent. No one shall be eligible to compete for a Member Club unless they have been a member of the Member Club for a minimum of three (3) months. No one shall be eligible to compete for any Member Organization (Not requiring membership) unless they have been training with the organization for a minimum period of three (3) months.
 - a. All Member Clubs will send the current membership roster to the Membership Chairperson by June 1st. of each year. Schools and other Member Organizations, which do not offer memberships, shall send a current roster of people training with the organization to the Membership Chairperson by June 1st. each year. No one shall be eligible to exhibit for the Club if they are not a member of a Member club for a period of three (3) months. No one shall be eligible to exhibit for any other Member Organization unless they have been training regularly (at least once per month) with that organization for DOCOF.
 - b. Attendance at a seminar given by a member of a Member Organization or attending a seminar hosted by a Member Organization does not establish a training relationship. A Seminar, or Workshop attendance alone, does not constitute eligibility, nor does it count as training with regard to the Member Organization for DOCOF.
 - c. In the event that an exhibitor's eligibility is brought into question, the required roster sent prior to June 1 of that year will be used to establish eligibility. If a roster has not been presented by June 1, the DOCOF Board of Trustees will have full authority to determine eligibility. The DOCOF Board of Trustees may request documentation as they deem necessary.
- 4.2 An exhibitor may only represent one (1) Member Organization
- 4.3 An exhibitor may not show more than two (2) different dogs. An exhibitor may show two (2) different dogs at the same level/class, or different levels/classes for the same Member Organization.
 - a. Exceptions may be made when substituting for another team member in cases of extreme hardship or serious illness. The DOCOF Board must approve all exceptions.
- 4.4 A dog must be shown by the same Exhibitor through all the exercises in each class entered.
- 4.5 A dog must be handled by its owner(s) or immediate family. Exceptions for cases of hardship may be granted upon the decision of the DOCOF Board.
- 4.6 There shall be no teams made up of exhibitors selected at large strictly to enter a competitive team at DOCOF.

Revised 9/17/2023. This issue of the rules and regulations was prepared on September 17, 2023, incorporating changes voted upon at the Membership meeting on 8/30/2020 as well as proposals voted upon at the Annual Membership meeting on 9/4/2021, 3/1/2022, 9/4/2022, 9/2/2023, 8/31/2024, 8/30/2025, 9/14/2025.

Article 5 – Dog Eligibility:

- 5.1 A dog is not required to have any title for the Class entered.
- 5.2 A dog must compete at a level equal to or higher than its highest title awarded by any registry. **Titles earned on or after the closing date are not considered.** Dogs with Alternative Titles must compete at the highest title awarded in that Alternative Titling process or the highest title achieved in Regular classes whichever is greatest. Example: a dog with a Preferred CDX or CDX, must show in Open or Utility in DOCOF competition.
- 5.3 A dog may be entered for one (1) Member Organization only.
- 5.4 A dog may be entered in one (1) class only.
- 5.5 Entries are not restricted as to breed or sex.
- 5.6 Entries of dogs from other registries or non-purebred dogs are allowed **for DOCOF.**
- 5.7 If DOCOF elects to hold a Special Event Trial (S.E.T.), only dogs that meet Chapter 1, Section 12, 13 and 14 of the AKC Obedience Regulations will be allowed to enter the S.E.T. An official AKC Obedience Entry Form must be completed to enter. Dogs not registered with the AKC are not allowed to enter the SET.

Article 6: - Entries:

- 6.1 The DOCOF Board reserves the right to limit entries based on the capacity of the hosting facility.
- 6.2 The entry fee will be determined each year by DOCOF at the annual meeting.
- 6.3 No entries will be accepted unless accompanied by the appropriate entry fee.
- 6.4 Entry fee checks shall be payable to DOCOF.
- 6.5 **Team** entries shall be submitted on the official DOCOF Team Entry Form. Entries must be signed by an officer or delegate of the Organization, signing under penalty of disqualification that the information on the entry is correct. **Teams must also complete an Official AKC Entry Form.** This provides necessary information to the Trial Secretary.
- 6.5 No entry will be accepted without at least one full day worker per team (or two half-day volunteer workers per team), one volunteer worker for set-up and one volunteer worker for tear-down.

Article 7: Closing Date, Judges and Catalog:

- 7.1 The closing date to receive entries, for DOCOF and the S.E.T, shall be **July 15.** The closing date to receive entries shall be set by the Tournament Secretary, with the approval of the DOCOF Board members. Entries cannot be accepted after the closing date. Changes to entries will be considered if requests are made in writing to the Tournament Secretary, with the approval of the DOCOF Board, prior to three (3) weeks before the Tournament date. Entries cannot be changed in any way after the three (3) week deadline. No telephone or fax entries will be accepted.
- 7.2 DOCOF shall have the sole jurisdiction of the selection of judges.
- 7.3 **If only a “DOCOF Team” event is offered,** a catalog will not be printed, but an exhibitor list will be published.
- 7.4 If an Obedience S.E.T is being offered in conjunction with the “DOCOF Team” event, a catalog will be printed listing all exhibitors entered in the S.E.T and listing exhibitors entered in the DOCOF Team competition as a “Non-regular” Novice, Open or Utility classes. These classes will be designated as “Wildcard Novice”, “Wildcard Preferred Novice”, “Wildcard Open”, “Wildcard Preferred Open” and “Wildcard Utility “or “Wildcard Preferred Utility”.

Article 8: Judging:

- 8.1 Entries will be assigned randomly between the Judges for each class.
- 8.2 All judging will be according to AKC Regulations except as noted in these Competition rules.
- 8.3 The Novice run-off Judge will be one of the Open or Utility Judges. The Open run-off Judge will be one of the Novice or Utility Judges, The Utility run-off Judge will be one of the Novice or Open Judges. The run-off procedure to determine the State Highest Scoring Obedience Novice, Open and Utility Class dogs shall be to judge each dog separately and according to AKC Regulations.
- 8.4 The team having the highest score, from a possible 1,200 points, will be declared the State Highest Scoring Team. In the case of a team consisting of three (3) members in a class, only the two (2) highest scores will be tabulated in the Team's total score.
- 8.5 In the event of a "Tie Score" for Highest Scoring Team, a run-off shall be conducted as follows: The teams which are tied shall select one Novice, one Open and one Utility dog to represent their teams in the run-off.
- 8.6 Group stays may be scheduled by the DOCOF Trial Secretary between the hours of 11:00 am and 12:00 noon in all rings, including the Utility rings. DOCOF will randomly assign participants to each group ring, utilizing an additional Judge, may be used to expedite judging of the Novice and Open classes in which case group stays may be done before or after individual performances. Clubs are asked to avoid large groups of team members in the same set of stays. **Please refer to Article 1. Section 1.3 for how Group Stays will be handled if a S.E.T is being offered during the DOCOF Competition.**
- 8.7 The score of the Directed Jumping exercise in Utility will be divided, each jump will be scored as a separate exercise. **For the S.E.T, the two (2) separate scores will be added together to provide a single score for Directed Jumping just as in a regular AKC Trial. This will be done by the Tournament Secretary.**
- 8.8 In the Open and Utility classes, the No. 1 order of exercises will be used.
- 8.9 Judges will standardize the Utility glove exercise to use the same glove position for each dog.
- 8.10 Entries will be arranged in jump height order and will alternate each year. In odd numbered years scheduling will be high to low and in even numbered years scheduling will be low to high.

Article 9: Dress

Club patches, shirts, or uniforms may be worn in the rings, if a team desires to do so. Dogs may wear decorative scarves and/or collars.

Article 10 AWARDS:

Only team members who actually participate will be eligible for awards. **The awards for the S.E.T will follow AKC Regulations.**

The following **DOCOF** awards will be presented: 1st through 4th place in each DOCOF class offered, Highest Scoring Dog, Highest Scoring Team, 2nd. Through 4th place Team and High Tri-Combined Team. The High Tri-Combined Team shall consist of the combined scores of each team's highest scoring Novice dog and handler, Open dog and handler and Utility dog and handler. These three scores are combined and compared to other team scores. The team with the highest total score is the High Tri-Combined Team.

Awards for the S.E.T. shall follow AKC Regulations for Novice, Open, Utility, High Combined and High in Trial, as well as similar awards for the Preferred classes if offered.

Article 11 No Score:

Any dog that fouls the ring, or dog or handler found guilty of conduct that would call for excusing the dog or handler under American Kennel Club rules, will receive no score.

Article 12 ABSENTEES:

Team Captains must report absentees of team members for both the individual exercises and group stays. If an exhibitor is missing when the armband number is called there will be no attempt to locate the exhibitor.

*Errata – Originally this was typed in error as 27. Corrected 9/18.