



United States Equestrian Trainers Association

August 24, 2026

United States Equestrian Federation
Licensed Officials Department
4001 Wing Commander Way
Lexington, KY 40511

United States Equestrian Federation:

As a unified group of Licensed Officials, we respectfully request a policy change regarding the evaluation forms used for Apprentice Judges (herein “Apprentice” or Applicant”). We also respectfully request some changes to the evaluation form, itself.

Previously, a Licensed Official received the evaluation form from the Apprentice and either submitted the completed form to the Federation or handed the form back to the Apprentice in a sealed envelope for them to send in. That evaluation would be included in the Applicant’s file but would not be available for the Applicant to view. Currently, the evaluation form is uploaded to the Applicant’s file and is available for the Applicant to review in full. On the bottom of the current evaluation form, the official is directed to complete and sign the form and provide a copy to the Apprentice. The Apprentice is then responsible for uploading the form. We request that the policy regarding Apprentice evaluations return to the previous policy of confidentiality.

We understand that Apprentice judges need feedback to improve their judging skills and identify their strengths and weaknesses. We feel there are other methods that could give an Apprentice the necessary feedback without viewing each individual evaluation. It is also the responsibility of the licensed official to teach the Apprentice and provide feedback throughout the apprenticing experience.

One method for providing the Applicant feedback from the evaluation form(s) would be for the Licensed Officials Department to give an Apprentice a summary of feedback once a certain number of evaluations are received (3 or 4, for example). The current evaluation has 10 questions for the official to give the Apprentice a score from 1-5. An updated evaluation form could provide more detailed questions listed in categories. For example, the official could provide a more detailed assessment of the Apprentice with 20 questions (a possibility of 100 points). Then a summary of the scores (listed within the categories) could be provided to the Apprentice once a certain number of evaluations are

received by USEF. Also, USEF can provide the Apprentice with a list of comments that are given on the evaluation forms. This feedback would allow the Apprentice to understand where they need to improve and where they are already succeeding.

We also request that a third option be available when evaluating an Apprentice judge. Currently, the two options available to us are Approve or Disapprove of the Apprentice becoming a licensed official. It is often the case that an Apprentice is on the right track, but not yet ready for a licensed official to feel comfortable with checking the Approve box. By checking Approve, the licensed judge is saying the Apprentice is ready to judge at a rated show right away. We request that a third option (e.g., “Not Yet Ready” or “Needs More Training”) be added that would allow for the official to say that the Apprentice is on the right track but needs to spend some more time learning and sitting with other licensed officials before they are ready to judge on their own.

Enclosed is a sample of an updated evaluation form that could be used to fulfill the changes listed above.

We understand the possibility that the Applicant would need to sign a waiver acknowledging that the evaluations submitted during the learner judge process would be confidential and would not be available for them to view. This language and signature could easily be included at the start of the Applicant process. Alternatively, this waiver language could be included on each evaluation. Many institutions use confidential evaluations and use language that can be duplicated for the purpose of our Apprentice evaluations.

As a group of unified Licensed Officials who are tasked with and responsible for training Apprentice judges in the field, and all that entails, we respectfully request these changes regarding the evaluation form for Apprentice judges. Thank you for your attention and for your consideration of these requests.

Sincerely,

Carleton Brooks

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Daniel Geitner

Chris Wynne

United States Equestrian Trainers Association Board

