

**FSS OPEN SHOW REGULATIONS**  
**APPROVED BY AKC BOARD OF DIRECTORS MAY 2023**  
**EFFECTIVE MAY 5, 2023**

**CHAPTER 1, GENERAL EXPLANATIONS**

**Section 1, FSS Open Shows**

An FSS Open Show is an informal American Kennel Club sanctioned conformation event at which Championship points are not earned but rather Certificate of Merit (CM) points are awarded to this introductory AKC conformation suffix title. The FSS Open Shows are events at which dog clubs, judges, stewards, and exhibitors and their dogs gain experience needed for licensed events.

**Section 2, Rules Applying to Dog Shows**

All of the *Rules Applying to Dog Shows* will apply to sanctioned FSS Open Shows, except where otherwise stated in these Regulations which are subject to amendment by the AKC Board of Directors.

**Section 3, Eligibility of Clubs to Hold FSS Open Shows**

The Board of Directors of The American Kennel Club may, at its discretion, grant permission to All-Breed and FSS breed clubs to hold sanctioned FSS Open Shows which shall be governed by these Regulations. Any FSS breed club approved as the breed parent club and not yet approved to hold licensed shows is eligible to hold an AKC Sanctioned FSS Open Show. Any inquiries regarding a club's eligibility should be directed to The American Kennel Club, Attention: Club Relations.

**Section 4, Conflict Distance**

FSS Open Shows will not be approved within 100 miles of a previously approved FSS Open Show on the same date with breed overlaps. Sanctioned FSS Open Shows will not be considered to be in distance conflict with championship shows but clubs are urged to consider the impact of shows in their area when scheduling these events.

**Section 5, Making Application**

An eligible club may hold an FSS Open Show by making application, along with the appropriate application fee, the judging panel and the disaster & emergency plan to The American Kennel Club on a form supplied by AKC. Applications for an FSS Open Show must be submitted to the AKC at least 90 days prior to the date of the event.

**CHAPTER 2, GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Section 1, FSS Open Show Entry Requirements**

Clubs may restrict their competition to the breed they were formed to serve or offer classes for all FSS breeds.

- Dogs must be at least 4 months of age on the date of the event.

**Section 2, Classes**

The following breed classes will be offered at all FSS Open Shows:

- 4-6 Month Puppy Class
- 6-9 Month Puppy Class
- 9-12 Month Puppy Class
- Bred-By-Exhibitor Class
- Open Class

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Clubs may elect to divide or combine classes by sex. Division of sexes will be uniformly applied to all breeds and shall be published in the premium list.

- Miscellaneous breeds will be considered equivalent to a Group.
- The Miscellaneous Class winner will compete with the Group winners for Best in Show.
- FSS breeds will be considered equivalent to a Group.
- The Best FSS winner will compete with the Group winners for Best in Show.

*Clubs may offer Junior Showmanship classes for exhibition only but must notify AKC.*

**Section 3, Closing of Entries**

Entries may close at any time prior to the show or on the day of the show and shall be published in the premium list and FSS Open Show invitations or announcements. Under no circumstances may entries be accepted after the specified closing date and time.

**Section 4, FSS Open Show Entry Restrictions**

- Dogs less than 4 months of age are ineligible to be on the grounds of licensed or member shows during AKC events.
- Dogs are required to be vaccinated in accordance with their veterinarian's protocol (including rabies vaccination) in order to avoid inadvertent transmission of illness by/to puppies not yet fully immunized.
- Professional handlers or agents are only permitted to exhibit in FSS Open Shows if they are listed as an owner of record of the dog being exhibited. *Professional handlers are defined as any person who belongs or has belonged to a professional handlers' organization, distributed rate cards, or otherwise advertised or represented themselves as handling dogs for pay.*
- Any person acting in the capacity of Show Secretary at an FSS Open Show, or any member of his immediate household or immediate family (as defined in Chapter 11, Section 13 of the Rules Applying to Dog Shows), shall not exhibit, act as agent or handler at the event, and dogs owned wholly or in part by the show secretary or by any member of their immediate household or immediate family shall be ineligible to be entered at that show.
- No judge or any person residing in the same household with a judge shall exhibit or act as agent or handler at an FSS Open Show at which they are officiating as judge and dogs owned wholly or in part by such judge or any member of their household shall be ineligible to be entered at the show. Subject to the foregoing, members of a judge's immediate family who no longer reside in the same household may enter or handle a dog at a show if the judge is not officiating over any competition, including a group class or best in show, for which the dog is entered or may become eligible.
- No dog is to be judged if it is brought into the ring bandaged, taped, glued or stitched anywhere including ears or tail. These dogs must be excused from judging but, at the judge's discretion, may return to be judged after the tape or bandage is removed.

**Section 5, Show Chair & Event Administration**

- The show chair is required to be a member of the show-giving club.
- A premium list flier must be published and submitted to AKC Event Operations at least 30 days prior to the event. (Electronic submission is acceptable).

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- The show results and event service fee of \$2.00 per entry must be submitted to AKC Event Operations within seven (7) days of the event. (Electronic results submission is preferable)
- *Dealing with Misconduct* will be applicable to any person and dog entered in this competition.
- The club must have coordinated veterinarian service to be available throughout the show hours. The services may be provided by an emergency veterinary clinic and written instructions to the veterinary facility must be readily available to exhibitors.

**Section 6, Judges**

- FSS Open shows must be judged by judges that have an AKC judges number. (Individuals that have successfully completed the FSS Open show application process including the anatomy exam, procedural exam, wicket and scales test will be issued a judges number.)  
*Visiting judges are not eligible to judge FSS Open Shows.*
- AKC approved judges need not be approved for the breeds they are to judge at the FSS Open Show. FSS Open Show judging assignments may qualify as educational or enriching components for additional breed or initial judging approval.
- Judges will be credited with an enriching component for breeds judged in the FSS Open Show.
- Judges will not be approved to judge the same FSS breed at events within 30 days and 100 straight-line miles of each other.
- Judges are expected to comply with *Rules Applying to Dog Shows and Rules, Policies, and Guidelines for Conformation Dog Show Judges* except as follows:
  - Breed standard disqualifications (i.e. color, height, full dentition, etc.) need not be considered in the 4-to-6 Month Puppy classes and male puppies without 2 fully descended testicles need not be disqualified or excused in the 4-to-6 Month Puppy class but the judge's book must describe the condition.
  - In all other classes, male puppies without 2 fully descended testicles need not be disqualified but should be excused and the judge's book must describe the condition and Certificate of Merit points withheld.
  - The speed of judging expectation is reduced to 20 dogs per hour in order to accommodate puppies and inexperienced exhibitors. Judges should interact and encourage exhibitors in order to make their exhibiting a positive experience.
  - Judges may ask exhibitors if they prefer to open their dog's mouth for examination. However, judges have the authority to personally open the dog's mouth.
  - No protests against dogs for height, weight or any other breed specific disqualification may be entertained at FSS Open Shows.
  - A dog with a disqualifying condition or behavior shall not be disqualified but shall simply be excused for the day. The judge may only disqualify dogs for attacking in the ring.

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**CHAPTER 3, AWARDS**

**Section 1, Ribbons and Trophies**

Each ribbon or rosette shall be at least 2 inches wide, and approximately 8 inches long and bear on its face a facsimile of the seal of The American Kennel Club, the placement, and the name of the show-giving club.

Ribbons for classes, Groups and Best in Show will be as follows:

- First Prize – Rose
- Second Prize – Brown
- Third Prize – Light Green
- Fourth Prize – Gray
- Best of Breed – Orange
- Best of Opposite Sex to Best of Breed – Lavender
- Best in Show – Pink & Green

All trophies or prizes offered must be awarded for outright award to the owner of the dog.  
*It is recommended that all participants receive a token of participation in this event.*

**Section 2, Certificate of Merit**

The Certificate of Merit (CM) title is an introductory title to AKC conformation events. Entrants in each breed shall compete for Best of Breed and Best of Opposite Sex to Best of Breed. Winners of the Best of Breed in each of the individual breeds will be awarded points toward the CM title based on the number of dogs competing in their breed. Best of Opposite Sex to Best of Breed in each of the individual breeds will be awarded points towards the Certificate of Merit (CM) title based on the total number of dogs competing in their sex. Group winners will be eligible for the points based on the total number of dogs that competed in the Group. Best in Show will be eligible for the points based on the total number of dogs that competed in the show.

The Certificate of Merit requires 15 points awarded in accordance with the following points structure.

Dogs Competing	Points
• 2	1
• 4	2
• 8	3
• 12	4
• 16	5

Certificate of Merit points may also be earned in the FSS class, Miscellaneous Class or the 4-to-6 Month class held in conjunction with Championship dog shows.

**CHAPTER 4, EMERGENCY PREPERATION**

**Section 1, FSS Open Show Checklist**

There are many small details that go into the conduct of a well-run show. In planning such an event, it is easy to overlook some of these details. Depending on the club's circumstances, particular details, such as grounds or building rental/use, local ordinances, permits, will vary from club to club and it is not possible to list them all here. There are, however, certain things in common to all AKC events. In an attempt to assist clubs with their preparation, this checklist has been prepared. It lists some of the more common, overlooked items. Reviewing the checklist

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before the day of the club's Show should help prevent overlooking some of the details that are so important for holding a well-organized, well-run event.

**PERSONNEL**

Traffic directors  
Set-up and clean-up personnel  
Entry takers to accept entries and to prepare  
Judges Books  
Stewards

**RING EQUIPMENT**

\_\_\_ Ring Dividers  
\_\_\_ Placement Markers  
\_\_\_ Mats, if necessary  
\_\_\_ Judging Tables  
\_\_\_ Chairs  
\_\_\_ Armbands, include extra blanks and a felt tip marker.  
\_\_\_ Rubber Bands  
\_\_\_ Poster boards marking ring assignments  
\_\_\_ Cash box and change  
\_\_\_ Tape Measure  
\_\_\_ Placement Ribbons  
\_\_\_ Judges Books

**MISCELLANEOUS EQUIPMENT**

\_\_\_ Potable Water  
\_\_\_ Sanitation Facilities (Animal and Human)  
\_\_\_ Designated Exercise pens  
\_\_\_ Clean-up Equipment  
\_\_\_ Tables and Chairs for entry takers  
\_\_\_ Trash Receptacles  
\_\_\_ Identification Badges for Event/Club Officials  
\_\_\_ Food Concession (if duration is more than a few hours)

**PUBLICATIONS**

*(Part Numbers for ordering are in parentheses)*

\_\_\_ [AKC Show Manual](#)  
\_\_\_ [Rules Applying to Dog Shows](#) (RREGS3)  
\_\_\_ FSS Open Show Regulations  
\_\_\_ AKC Breed Standards  
\_\_\_ FSS Breed Standards  
\_\_\_ [Dealing with Misconduct](#) (RDMSC4)

*All of the above publications may be ordered from the AKC's Website at [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org) or you may contact Customer Service at (919) 233-9767.*

**EMERGENCY PREPARATION**

\_\_\_ Closest available veterinarian or 24-hour veterinary clinic

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- \_\_\_\_\_ Closest hospital and telephone numbers for ambulance service, police and fire departments
- \_\_\_\_\_ First-Aid Kits for animals and humans

For weekend AKC assistance contact the Weekend Club Hotline (800) 252-7894 and leave a message for the appropriate department.