



As part of the AKC's continuous effort to evaluate and improve the AKC National Owner-Handled Series (NOHS) based on feedback from exhibitors, clubs, superintendents, and AKC Executive Field Representatives, the AKC Board of Directors has approved a number of changes to the NOHS effective April 1, 2017. A significant change is the conversion of the current NOHS Best Practices & Policies to [NOHS Regulations](#). Regulations have an advantage of enforceability which will provide consistency and clarity in the execution of the competition.

Additional modifications to the program were made to provide more structure to the NOHS judging panel requirements.

The judging panel changes are:

- Require a different judge to be assigned to the same NOHS group for each day of a weekend/cluster/circuit.
- Require a different judge be assigned to the regular and NOHS group/BIS at the same event.
- Judges will not be approved to judge a breed and, at the same show, the NOHS Variety Group of which the breed is a part and NOHS Best in Show.
- Single individuals cannot judge all the NOHS groups at an event.
- A judge must be approved for at least one breed in the group to judge the NOHS Group unless they are approved for at least 1 full group, in which case they may judge any NOHS Group.

With the adoption of the above; fewer judging conflicts will occur at the Group level, and the issue of pre-judging dogs has been eliminated as an individual cannot judge the same regular & NOHS Group at the same event. It is our expectation that their execution will greatly reduce exhibitor frustration on the day of the event by minimizing judging conflicts between the regular and NOHS Groups.

Currently, it is recommended that NOHS Groups be scheduled to start at least 30 minutes prior to the regular to minimize any opportunity for conflicts. If that scheduling does not meet the needs of the club's event, an alternative recommendation that is available to clubs at their discretion is to schedule the NOHS Group/BIS judging to occur immediately following the completion of the regular Group/BIS judging [in the same order].

However, even with the best schedule, circumstances on the day can lead to conflicts for exhibitors that have been awarded both NOHS and regular Best of Breed/Variety. AKC Board Policy states "judging of a special attraction must not interfere with the orderly conduct of regular or group judging at the event. Best in Show judging may not be delayed more than 15 minutes for a Special Attraction judging." Accordingly, when exhibitor conflicts occur, clubs should delay the judging of NOHS Groups in order to alleviate a conflict for an exhibitor that needs to be in both the regular & NOHS Group. The remaining NOHS Groups can then follow the alternative recommendation listed above to complete the day.

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