

How to Become a Gymnastics Judge



*A Handbook provided
by the NAWVGJ*

2008-2009 Edition

*Special thanks to the Alabama NAWVGJ for providing
the content and format of this booklet.*

NAWGJ MISSION STATEMENT

**IT IS THE MISSION OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF WOMEN GYMNASTIC JUDGES TO PROVIDE
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR ITS MEMBERS
AND TO SUPPORT AND PROMOTE WOMEN'S
GYMNASTICS IN THE UNITED STATES.**

THIS MISSION WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED BY:

*Providing the membership with education,
communication and representation.*

*Contracting judges to various organizations with
gymnastic programs upon request.*

Providing other services to the gymnastic community.

BECOMING A GYMNASTICS JUDGE

The National Association of Women's Gymnastic Judges (NAWGJ) works at the state, regional, and national levels to service the gymnastic community and its judges.

The Louisiana NAWGJ serves as the assigning agent for all meets in Louisiana, provides education opportunities for its judges, and serves as liaison with the LA USAG Board.

In order to officiate women's gymnastics under USA Gymnastics (USAG) Jr. Olympic program rules, judges must have knowledge of the rules and regulations included in the following publications:

- Code of Points and Women's Technical Handbook for Coaches and Judges (optional judging)
- Women's Compulsory Handbook
- USAG Women's Rules and Policies Book
- Updates from the USA Gymnastics web site (www.usa-gymnastics.org)

Each Judge is required to be a Professional Member of the USAG Women's Program, hold a current Safety Certification, and be a member of the National Association of Women Gymnastics Judges (NAWGJ) if they wish to be contracted through this organization. The Professional Membership and Safety Certification are required by USAG. The NAWGJ membership is required by the Louisiana NAWGJ.

USAG membership can be obtained after completion of the Safety Certification. Both the Safety Course and the membership may be obtained on the web site at www.usa-gymnastics.org or contact USA GYMNASTICS 1-800-345-4719 for further information.

A NAWGJ membership registration card is available on the NAWGJ web site (www.NAWGJ.org). The card must be filled out and mail with a check to the national office.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judges attend available educational opportunities. Each year

the LA USAG Board sponsors a state clinic, the Gym Jam and LA NAWGJ sponsors a Judges Getaway with a nationally rated judge. There will be a Region 8 Congress and a National Congress available to help with your development.

All judges are responsible for fulfilling yearly Continuing Educational requirements and submitting their Annual CPE Record Form to the state CPE Coordinator, Kristi Aguilar. The Annual CPE Form and individual CPE forms may be found on the USAG web site. The Annual CPE Report is due June 30 each year. When submitting your CPE Record, two copies should be made, keep one copy for your records and send the AS and a copy to

Kristi Aguilar
CPE Coordinator
2624 Cypress Lawn Drive
Marrero, LA 70072

ESTABLISHING YOUR JUDGING RATING

An individual interested in becoming a judge has two entry levels; 5/6 (compulsory level) and 7/8(optional level).

TAKING YOUR JUDGING TEST

The 5/6 exam is a written exam with 50 multiple choice questions. There will be ten questions on each event and 10 questions on general information. Since this is a two level test, each event will have questions from level 5 and level 6. All the test information is located in the ***Junior Olympic Compulsory Program Book***. A copy can be obtained by ordering from USAG at www.usa-gymnastics.org or calling 1-800-345-4719.

When testing level 7/8 (optional entry level) you will be required to take a written exam and judge a video (practical). The written exam is 50 multiple choice questions with 10 for each event and 10 general questions. The Practical exam is one practice routine and 5 routines to be judged per event. During the Practical exam a testee can use all materials available to help with testing. Both tests are timed.

All information for Optional testing is located in the **Junior Olympic Code of Points**. A copy can be obtained by ordering from USAG at www.usa-gymnastics.org or calling 1-800-345-4719.

Testing for all the optional levels involves two tests; written and practical. Required scores for each level are:

Level 5/6 Written Test	70%
Level 7/8 Written and Practical	70%
Level 9 Written	76%
Level 9 Practical	75%
Level 10 Written and Practical	80%

TESTING:

- The certification year is August 1 through July 31.
- You may take each part of the exam up to four times in a certification year.
- You can register for the test on-line at USAG at least a week before the test. No walk-ins allowed.
- You may register for a test by mail or fax but you must register two weeks prior to the exam if you register in this manner.
- Test dates and sites are available on the USAG web site under the Women's Program
- Each test part cost \$20.00

There is a one year waiting period before testing to a higher optional level.

NOW YOU ARE A JUDGE!

What happens when you pass your first test? You will need to:

- Join USA Gymnastics as a Pro Member of the Women's Program. A one year membership cost \$87.00 if registered over the internet.
1-800-345-4719 www.usa-gymnastics.org
- If you are not already Safety Certified sign up for a Safety Certification Course with USAG. Cost is \$65.00 if you are a Pro Member and \$115.00 if you are not a pro member. Certification is good for 4 years and is renewable at no charge with an onsite course.
- Join National Association of Women Gymnastic Judges (NAWGJ). A new membership (first time you join) is \$45.00.

Renewal each year is \$55.00.

- Notify your State Judging Director, Brenda Eberhardt(BLEgym@aol.com) if you are interested in judging.
- Send a resume to the State CPE Coordinator, Kristi Aguilar.
A resume consists of:
 1. A copy of your rating card from USAG
 2. A copy of your USAG membership card
 3. A copy of your NAWGJ membership card
 4. A copy of your Safety Certification card
- Contact Brenda Eberhardt to set up your two practice judging dates. Each new judge is required to practice judge two meets before a contract is issued.
- A navy skirt, white blouse, and dark dress shoes for women; navy slacks, white dress shirt, dress tie and dark dress shoes for men will be the appropriate attire the first year you judge. After the first year, you will need to consider ordering a Judges Uniform. Uniform information can be found on the NAWGJ web site at www.NAWGJ.org.

What do I need to know when I receive a contract?

When you receive a contract there will be a deadline date at the top of the page that indicates the date the contract must be returned. Contracts not completed by deadline become invalid. Judges receive an email notice that a contract is waiting for completion. A judge will go to link issued in the email, complete the contract and click on submit. The notice will be automatically be sent to the Assigning Agent that you have either declined or accepted the contract. Once all contracts are completed they will be forwarded to the Meet Director.

You will receive event assignments, schedule and directions (if needed) by Monday of the week of the meet or as soon as the Meet Director furnishes the information. Less experienced judges are assigned as panel judges with a more experienced judge.

Judges are assigned to meets with the following procedures:

- Meet Directors Preference
- Location of meet
- Level of meet (Judges assigned must have appropriate rating)
- Years experience

Judges are given a reporting time. Usually the reporting time is 30 minutes before march-in for a regular meet and 1 hour before a state meet. Each judge needs to arrive before the reporting time. Reporting time is the last possible time to arrive.

There will be a short judges meeting prior to march-in to prepare the judges for any special procedures. Clarifications and questions can be answered at this meeting.

Each judge will be asked to sign the sanction form at this time.

Judges go on the clock at the time of march-in and off the clock when last score of the sessions is submitted. When you finish your event you are expected to remain at your seat until other events have concluded.

Judges from one general geographic area are requested to carpool together. The judges in a car pool will work out a time and place to meet. They will take turns driving to meets unless they choose to not drive.

Mileage is calculated by taking the total roundtrip mileage and deduct the first 30 miles if the judge is **not** riding in a carpool. Individuals traveling to the carpool are not required to deduct the 30 miles. The total mileage is multiplied by \$.58 (based on IRS guidelines with changes made January 1 of any given year). If a judge chooses to drive separate from the carpool for any reason, mileage will not be paid to that judge unless prearrangements are made and approved by the SJD.

Per diem will be paid to the judge when food is not furnished at the meet facility. Meals will be paid for travel the day before the meet or the day after the meet.

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. **When are judging tests given?** Most regional and national clinics will offer an opportunity to take the judging test. Also, the SJD will set test times during the year depending on demand.
2. **How do I study for the test?** Every judge has his/her own way of preparing for a test. However, www.NAWGJ.org, has

some great tips and organizational ideas. Many judges prepare flash cards and simply memorize the information on them for the compulsory test. For the optional test it is helpful to study with a partner and practice judges with DVDs.

3. **Do I need to know shorthand?** No, but with shorthand you record the routine the gymnast performs. Try to use a new symbol each time you judge. You will eventually pick it up. The important thing is to get all the deductions and to be able to read what you have deducted. If a conference is held when a score is out of range, you will need to be able to recall what you deducted.
4. **What happens if my score is not in range with my chief judge?** You will conference and decide how the two scores can be brought into range. Don't be apprehensive, your chief judge will be very helpful. All judges have to conference at one time or another.
5. **What are inquires?** Sometimes coaches will not understand why their gymnast received the score they did. They will inquire on a form that will be given to the MR and brought to the CJ at the end of the rotation. You will need to be able to find the judging notes for the gymnast by number and number and know what major deductions you have taken. The score may or may not be adjusted either higher or lower than the original score.
6. **What are affiliated judges?** Some judges have an affiliation with a gym. For example, a judge may work at the gym or have a child that takes classes at that gym or be a grandparent of a competing athlete or the parent of a coach. Two judges who are affiliated with the same gym may not serve on the same panel. The Chief Judge may not be affiliated with a gym participating in the meet.
7. **What do judges do between sessions?** Frequently there will be 1-2 hours of break time between sessions. Sometimes, there is time to run an errand or shop, but usually most judges prefer to stay in the judges room and read or socialize.
8. **Is judging hard?** Yes, the first few times are

somewhat intimidating. However, with a good Chief Judge to help, we all make it through and learn more each time you judge a meet. Practice judging helps prepare you as a judge. Ask questions. We have all been brand new judges.

9. **Is it appropriate to visit with friends in between Sessions?** It is not appropriate to visit with coaches or gymnast at any time while assigned to judge a meet. Over the years a judge may develop close friendships but at meets is not the appropriate time to converse with these friends.
10. **What if I sign a contract and discover I can not judge or become sick. What do I do?** Immediately contact the State Judging Director or the Meet Assignor. Never contact the Meet Director or another judge.
11. **What if I am late for a meet?** You should be responsible enough to contact the Meet Referee (call the gym) and let them know what the problem is and communicate the problem and probable arrival time. You could be replaced or the other event judge may judge compulsories alone. You could be fined or removed from the remaining sessions.
12. **Can I leave my seat during the meets when waiting for another rotation?** You should remain in your seat during the meet. Bring something to occupy your time such as a magazine or book. Of course, you may go to the restroom when needed after notifying your Chief Judge.
13. **How many meets will I judge when I pass my test?** Once you have passed your test you will be required to practice judge at two meets. These practice judging sessions are vital to your judging development. Then your name will be added to the judging list of available judges. When you are assigned to judge it will be for the levels of your certification only. The demand for judges may be so that you will be contracted to judge several meets the first year. Do not be discouraged if you are not contracted to judge many meets the first year. You are the new judge and will be worked into meets.

HOW CAN I BE BETTER JUDGE?

- By learning from my mistakes
- By being open-minded to the ideas of others
- By realizing the impact I have on an athlete's life

EFFECTIVE JUDGES HAVE THESE PERSONALITY QUALITIES:

- Respectful
- Stays calm under fire
- Polite
- Positive attitude
- Unbiased
- Willing to accept unexpected changes
- Cooperative; willing to compromise
- On time to meet site
- Confident without being boastful
- Remains in seat during short breaks or until finished

UNPROFESSIONAL JUDGES EXHIBIT THESE BEHAVIORS:

- Condescending attitude
- Impatience with judging partner
- Acting bored or tired
- Showing bias toward certain gymnast and teams
- Reporting to the meet site in less than optimal condition (tired or hung over)
- Unflattering remarks about a gymnast in front of others
- Too chatty on the field of play
- Doesn't acknowledge gymnast at end of routine
- Refuses to compromise in a conference/argumentative
- Socializes with coaches during meet
- Complaining/whining/demanding
- Constantly looks down at paper while judging routine

YOUR BEST SOURCE OF INFORMATION:

Becoming a new judge can be very overwhelming if you feel as if you're "out of the loop." Your best source of information in your home state is the State Judging Director (SJD) and the more experienced higher rated judges. Every judge has been in that "new" position and is qualified to answer any questions you may have.

Having a judging mentor allows you to ask questions without feeling embarrassed. It is always helpful for a more experienced judge to identify a similar situation they have had.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

MEMBERSHIPS:

National Association of Women's Gymnastic Judges (NAWGJ)
Betty Sroufe, National Treasurer
2096 Rolling Hills Blvd
Fairfield, Ohio 45015
(513) 829-5671
www.nawgj.org

USA Gymnastics (USAG)
201 South Capital, Suite 300
Indianapolis, Indiana 46225
(800) 345-4719
usa-gymnastics.org

STATE JUDGING DIRECTOR:

Brenda Eberhardt
4008 Ellen Drive
Marrero, LA 70072-6222
(504) 347-2444 (Home)
(504) 347-2449 (Cell)
BLEgym@aol.com

NEW JUDGE COORDINATOR:

Susie Moyal
10139 Island Road
Ventress, LA 70783
(225) 638-7162 (Home)
(225) 268-7162 (Cell)
SuMoyal@aol.com

