

Background

There has been a rapid increase in prospective judges. Modifications are being made to the mentorship program and trial judge procedures to meet the demands. The changes will allow trial judges to have access to official resources sooner and take control of their appointments using the most up to date guidelines and accurate trial judging standards.

Changes:

- Incoming trial judges will no longer be assigned a mentor.
- All trial judges will maintain their own paperwork.
- All trial judges will communicate directly to their sectional vice chairs (SVCs) about appointments.
- Regular office hours will be held to answer questions and provide ongoing support.
- There will be a mentorship directory with contacts from each section and discipline to provide one-on-one support.
- Trial judge paperwork will be sent to trial judges and their SVC whenever possible.

Please look over the Mentorship Changes FAQs below. This document will be updated as questions are received. The latest version will be available on [Judges](#) page on the U.S. Figure Skating Members Only site.

Send all questions to USFSRecruitment@gmail.com.

Mentorship FAQ

Q: Why are these changes being implemented?

A: The current mentorship system is not sustainable and cannot accommodate the needs of incoming prospective judges. Mentees often have unclear and unrealistic expectations of their mentor's responsibilities, while mentors are burdened with guideline changes and evolving standards for multiple mentees and disciplines. A group mentorship approach with a focus on self-guided materials will relieve the stress on the mentor system and allow the trial judge to have more control.

Q: When do these changes take effect?

A: Changes are effective immediately. New trial judges are not being assigned mentors.

Q: Can I keep my mentor if that is a working relationship?

A: Yes, we encourage you to keep in contact with your current mentor. You will have access to the mentor directory and office hours if you feel like you need additional help.

Q: I know a judge willing to be my mentor. Can I still be assigned to them?

A: Mentors will not be registered through U.S. Figure Skating, but you can still reach out to judges you trust and with whom you have relationships for advice and guidance.

Q: How can I help new trial judges?

A: Continue to welcome and guide new trial judges when you have the opportunity. Appointment guidelines and trial procedures continue to evolve. Please refer to the most recent guidelines and standards to ensure you are providing up-to-date information.

Q: If I have a mentor, will they still keep track of my papers?

A: Mentors will no longer be responsible for storing and maintaining paperwork for their mentees.

Q: What do I do with my test and competition trial papers?

A: You should never have the originals. You will get copies of your papers to manage on your own until you are ready for an appointment.

Test Papers: The test chair will fill out the panel scores and send you a copy of your paper electronically or in the mail.

Competition Papers: You will receive copies of your trial competition or test credit papers at the competition. Keep your competition trial papers and submit when you are recommended to apply for an appointment. You will hold onto the test credit papers until you are ready to submit for an appointment.

Q: What do I do when I think I am ready for an appointment or promotion?

A: When you think you are ready for an appointment or promotion, send your documents electronically to the sectional vice chair (SVC) to review. Advice from other officials can help guide a trial judge, but the decision for an appointment application is solely between the trial judge and the SVC. The SVC will provide feedback.

Test Appointments: You will get feedback from the judge-in-charge (JIC).

Pull trial judge activity reports from Members Only > Officials > Report: Test Activity > Identify the tests and time period you want to look at > Select "Yes" for Trial Sessions. This will help you keep track of your activity and accuracy with the panel.

Competition Appointments: You will receive Judges Education Trainer (JET) feedback from every competition that you trial. JET evaluations will go to the respective SVC.

Q: I have an appointment. Who is going to advocate for me?

A: New appointment lists will be sent out to local organizing committees (LOCs) annually, but YOU are your biggest advocate. Reach out to your local clubs and LOCs to introduce yourself and notify them of your appointment(s).

Q: I have a question or need help. Who can I reach out to for answers or support?

A: The [Trial Judge Mentor Directory](#) lists a group of designated officials willing and able to provide individual support. There will also be office hours providing opportunities to receive information and have questions answered. In between office hours, you can reach out to [your SVC](#) for appointment-related questions. And the Officials Recruitment Subcommittee vice chairs for test and competition judges can be reached via email at usfsjudgingrecruitment@gmail.com.

Q: Who are the [SVC\(s\)](#)?:

A: Contact information can be found in the Official's Directory:
Members Only > Leadership > Directory > Committee > Domestic Officials Recruitment and Management > Judges Management Subcommittee

Q: I am a mentor and have my mentee's paperwork. What do I do with it?

A: Return the paperwork to the mentee. If possible, please send the paperwork in an electronic format. Once sent, you may discard any paperwork.

Q: What if I don't have the ability to send my trial documents electronically?

A: Mailing documents can be used when the trial judge does not have the ability to send documents electronically. SVCs will dispose of the paper documents when they are done.

Q: Where can I find the Trial Judge Mentor Directory?

A: The [Trial Judge Mentor Directory](#) is posted on the Judges page on the Members Only site.

Q: How do I attend Office Hours?

A: The list of dates will be posted on the Officiate Page on the U.S. Figure Skating website. You will receive a Zoom link upon your registration to the session. These sessions will **not** be recorded.

Q: Who can attend Office Hours?

A: Any judge or trial judge needing advice or support. We encourage all officials to join.

Q: Who will lead Office Hours?

A: Members of the DORM Officials Recruitment and Judges Management Subcommittees will lead each session.

Q: How do I update my trial judge track?

A: Contact your SVC and officialsmanagement@usfigureskating.org, and begin using your updated track in applications.