

# Regulations for AKC Scent Work

March 1, 2018



AMERICAN  
KENNEL CLUB®

## AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB'S MISSION STATEMENT

The American Kennel Club® is dedicated to upholding the integrity of its Registry, promoting the sport of purebred dogs and breeding for type and function. Founded in 1884, the AKC® and its affiliated organizations advocate for the purebred dog as a family companion, advance canine health and well-being, work to protect the rights of all dog owners and promote responsible dog ownership.

# REGULATIONS FOR AKC SCENT WORK

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## CHAPTER 1 – PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

**Section 1. Purpose.** AKC Scent Work is a sport that mimics the task of working detection dogs to locate a scent and communicate to the handler that the scent has been found. Detection is done in a variety of environments and often during changing conditions. Scent Work is a positive, challenging activity that allows dogs the opportunity to use their strongest natural sense in a way that is fun, engaging, and that builds and strengthens a foundation of trust between the handler and dog. In order for a team to qualify, both the dog and handler must be working together and able to read each other's reactions. Communication and praise of the dog during the search are encouraged. AKC Scent Work events provide a fun and safe team activity that is open to all dogs and their owners.

**Section 2. Overview.** In the sport of Scent Work, dogs are trained to recognize specific odors, and to alert their handlers when the odors are detected. Dogs may paw, bark, point with their nose or body, sit, lie down, or use any other behavior to communicate the location of the odor. In AKC Scent Work trials, dogs are taken through a search area with their human team member (“handler”). The dog is the star of the Scent Work trial—the handler guides the dog’s search only when necessary and lets the judge know when the dog has found the scent.

Dogs complete these searches in a variety of environments, known as “elements.” In the “Odor Search Division,” the elements are 1) Container, 2) Interior, 3) Exterior, and 4) Buried. In the Container element the target odor is concealed within a container (such as a cardboard box or briefcase), and the dog must indicate in which container the scent is hidden. In the Interior element, the target odor is concealed on or in an object in an indoor search area. In the Exterior element, the target odor is concealed on or in an object in an outdoor search area (this requires the dog to locate the scent despite changing airflow patterns, weather conditions, and natural distractions). In the Buried element, the target odor is concealed within a small container and then buried underneath the ground.

Each element has four classes, corresponding to four difficulty levels—1) Novice, 2) Advanced, 3) Excellent, and 4) Master. Dogs will begin with the Novice level classes and move up as they earn titles, and may progress through the elements at different speeds (i.e., a dog may compete in the Novice Interior class and the Advanced Container class). Factors such as the size of the search area, the number of hides, whether the number of hides is known or unknown to the handler, and the maximum height of the hides will change with the difficulty level.

Three qualifying searches are required in order for the dog to earn a title in any of these classes. Any search in which all of the hides are found and called within the allotted time, and no non-qualifying faults or behaviors requiring excusals are committed, is considered a qualifying search.

AKC Scent Work also includes the “Handler Discrimination Division,” in which the target scent is that of the handler themselves. Handlers will come to the trial with one or more scented articles (such as a cotton glove, cotton ball, or cotton swab) which will then be hidden on the course. The dog will need to locate the handler’s scent, discriminating it from all other scents, and indicate this find to the handler. The Handler Discrimination Division includes four classes: Novice, Advanced, Excellent, and Master. The Novice class is a Container search, Advanced class is an Interior search, and the Excellent class is an Exterior search, each increasing in difficulty. The Master class presents an integrated search in which dogs may encounter hides within any search environment. Three qualifying scores are required to earn titles in each of these classes.

There is also a “Detective Class” for very accomplished dogs. In the Detective Class dogs may encounter any element during one large search. The Detective Class contains multiple areas and many hides, all of which must be found to earn a qualifying score. The hides will be one or more of the target odors from the Odor Search Division. Ten qualifying scores are required to earn the Scent Work Detective title.



## CHAPTER 2 – OWNERS/HANDLERS AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES

**Section 1. Eligibility for AKC Scent Work.** AKC Scent Work classes are open to all dogs that are at least six months of age that are individually registered with the AKC, recorded in the FSS program, dogs with PAL/ILP numbers or dogs enrolled in the AKC Canine Partners program. A dog that is individually registered with an acceptable foreign registry who is not yet registered with the AKC may compete for 30 days under the foreign registration number. After the 30 days, if no AKC number has been obtained and no extension has been granted, any qualifying legs earned subsequently under the foreign number will be cancelled.

### **Section 2. Class Eligibility.**

- Novice A Classes are open to dogs who have not completed any title for that particular element, who have not completed a comparable title with another organization, and whose handlers are neither Scent Work judges, nor have ever worked as professional detection dog handlers.
- Novice B Classes are open to all dogs.
- Advanced Classes are open to dogs who have achieved the Novice title for that particular element.
- Excellent Classes are open to dogs who have achieved the Advanced title for that particular element.
- Master Classes are open to dogs who have achieved the Excellent title for that particular element.
- The Detective Class is open to dogs who have achieved any Master title within the Odor Search Division.

Dogs that have previously earned the same or higher level AKC Scent Work titles may enter lower level classes.

Dogs are able to enter up to two (2) difficulty levels in each element, in each trial. Dogs may only enter classes for which they are eligible, according to the above guidelines. Dogs may only enter a class once in each event. A class is defined as a particular difficulty level within a particular element. For example, a dog may run in both Novice and Advanced Interior in the same trial, but may not run in Novice Interior twice in the same trial.

**Section 3. Condition of the Dog.** Dogs with physical challenges (including amputees) are eligible to participate provided that, in the opinion of the judge, they display no signs of physical discomfort and can safely complete the search. Dogs with bandages, sutures, or visible

wounds are not eligible. Deaf dogs and blind dogs are allowed to enter. Dogs that are both deaf and blind are able to participate so long as the handler is in control of the dog at all times, the dog can complete the requirements of the class, and the dog does not appear to be under undue stress in the opinion of the judge.

**Section 4. Bitches in Season.** Females in season may not participate. Please see Chapter 3, Section 14 for refund requirements for bitches who come into season.

**Section 5. Physically Challenged Handlers.** Judges may modify specific requirements of these Regulations so that physically challenged handlers may compete. Such handlers must be able to move around the search area without physical assistance or guidance. Modifications may be allowed as long as they do not aid the team's performance.

**Section 6. Collars, Leashes, and Harnesses.** Please see Chapter 5, Section 9 for requirements and prohibitions regarding collars, leashes, and harnesses.

**Section 7. Rewards and Reinforcers.** Please see Chapter 5, Section 15 for requirements and prohibitions regarding rewards and reinforcers.

**Section 8. Scented Article.** The scented article(s) for the Handler Discrimination division will be provided by the handler and will consist of the number and type of articles required by the class level (see Chapter 8, Section 2 for the specific class requirements). If the steward has questions about the article, the judge shall review and either approve or reject the article.

**Section 9. Alerts.** Handlers must confirm the dog's alert verbally with the word "Alert" when the dog indicates a find. If a verbal confirmation is not possible due to environmental factors or a handler's disability, the handler may inform the judge of an alternate confirmation, such as an obvious hand signal.

**Section 10. Handling More Than One Dog.** Handlers may not handle more than one dog in each class (with the exception of Handler Discrimination classes). Multiple dogs from the same owner may be entered in the same class, provided they are run by different handlers.

**Section 11. Sections A and B of Novice Classes.** Novice A and Novice B are different sections of the same class. The hide location does not move between Novice A and Novice B. Teams are judged under the exact same criteria in Novice A and Novice B.

**Section 12. Maintaining the Integrity of the Search.** Handlers may not divulge any information about the search, the location of the hide, or their performance (aside from a thumbs up or thumbs

down) until all teams have run for the particular class. Even innocent discussion can inadvertently cue handlers as to the circumstances of the search in a way that may bias their performance. If anyone is found to be discussing a search before the class has ended, both parties in the discussion (speaker and listener) will be penalized with a “Not Qualified” score (NQ) for the class. Additionally, at the discretion of the Event Committee, persons discussing a search may be excused from the trial and asked to leave the trial grounds.

Handlers are responsible for ensuring that any person at the trial with them is aware of the prohibition against discussing searches. If a person not entered in the trial is found to be discussing a search before the class has ended, the handler who brought the person to the trial may be held responsible and punished in accordance with this section, at the judge’s discretion.

**Section 13. Entering Under a Judge.** No dog owned or co-owned by the judge or his/her immediate household may be entered in the class where the individual is acting in their official capacity.

Stewards and timers may compete in the trial if it does not conflict with the completion of their assignments. A person may not be the timer for a class in which they are directly competing.

**Section 14. Exhibitor Clothing.** An exhibitor’s clothing must not be in poor taste or contain profanity. If there is a question, this determination is made by the judge. Club clothing or AKC event clothing may be worn by an exhibitor. Clothing may display a person’s name, the dog’s call name and/or the dog’s picture.

**Section 15. Surfaces.** Search areas should provide a firm and safe footing for dogs and handlers, however, searches are frequently done across natural, uneven surfaces and handlers should be aware of and prepared for this possibility.

**Section 16. Weather.** Many searches are conducted outdoors, therefore handlers should be prepared for all potential weather conditions. Handlers should understand that searches will be conducted rain or shine, unless dangerous conditions are present (such as lightning or flooding). Comfortable footwear and water-resistant clothing are recommended.

**Section 17. Risk.** Owners or handlers entering dogs in a trial do so at their own risk and agree to assume responsibility for damage caused by them, or by their dogs. They also agree to abide by the Rules of the American Kennel Club and these Regulations.

**Section 18. Liability.** Owners are responsible for any damage that their dog may inflict to objects or premises during the search.

## CHAPTER 3 – CLUBS AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES

**Section 1. Clubs Eligible to Hold AKC Scent Work Trials.** Any club or association that meets the requirements of the American Kennel Club may be licensed to hold AKC Scent Work trials. Scent Work trials must be open to all breeds and to mixed breeds registered with Canine Partners, except that Specialty clubs and Group clubs may choose to limit entries to the breed or group applicable to their club, and clubs may exclude up to five (5) specific breeds to alleviate conflicts. Specialty clubs holding a limited Scent Work trial for all AKC recognized breeds may accept entries of dogs of their own breed first, then accept entries from all breeds and dogs listed with AKC Canine Partners until the entry limit specified in the premium list is reached.

**Section 2. Event Applications.** Clubs wishing to hold an AKC Scent Work trial or match must make application to the American Kennel Club on the official application form for permission to hold the trial. An application fee must accompany each application. Clubs must apply for trials a minimum of eighteen (18) weeks prior to the event closing date; clubs must apply for matches a minimum of four (4) weeks prior to the date of the event. AKC Scent Work may be offered as stand-alone events or in conjunction with another event. In all cases, the official AKC Scent Work application with a separate application fee is required. Late applications may be subject to a fine.

**Section 3. Distance Conflicts.** Scent Work trials hosted by two different clubs may not be held closer than 100 miles in distance on the same day except that a club or association may be approved to hold a Scent Work trial within 100 miles of another club or association which has established its licensed trial on the same date only if, in each instance, it obtains the written permission of the club or association with the established date and submits the written permission along with its application.

**Section 4. Junior Showcase.** A Junior Showcase is a special event in which the host club limits participation to junior handlers only. The purpose of the Junior Showcase is to provide a low-stress, mentoring environment, with camaraderie in a relaxed atmosphere to assist junior handlers to achieve their goals. A junior handler is defined as a handler who is under 18 years of age on the day of the trial.

Junior Showcases must be open to all breeds including dogs listed with AKC Canine Partners, except at events limited to one breed or group, or when one or more breeds must be excluded to alleviate a conflict. All dogs must be eligible for the classes in which they are entered. The Junior Showcase must be run exactly as a normal trial; the club may not deviate from the Regulations in any way other than eligibility of entrants. Qualifying scores earned at Junior Showcase events will count toward Scent Work titles.

To apply to hold a Junior Showcase a club must submit a paper application form no later than eighteen (18) weeks prior to the closing date of the trial and it must be reviewed and approved by the AKC. There is no event application fee required for the Junior Showcase events.

**Section 5. Classes to Hold.** A club may choose which classes to offer at their trials, taking into account demand, resources, site availability, and any other considerations.

**Section 6. Non-Regular Classes.** A club has the option to offer non-regular classes at AKC Scent Work events. This allows the club to create their own fun Scent Work games to enrich their events and draw additional participants. A full description of each desired non-regular class must be submitted with the event application. The description must specify the eligibility requirements, performance, and scoring. The AKC will then approve or deny the non-regular class request. AKC will not record results, and no recording fees are due for non-regular classes.

**Section 7. Order of Classes.** The order in which classes will be run at trial is at the club's discretion. Once an order of classes is published though, the classes may not be rearranged, unless all exhibitors are present and consent to the change.

It is suggested that if Handler Discrimination and Odor Search Division classes are offered on the same day in the same area, the Handler Discrimination classes should be run first so that dogs searching for handler scent do not need to work through lingering odor.

**Section 8. Number of AKC Scent Work Trials.** A club is limited to a maximum of 12 Scent Work trials per calendar year. A club may hold no more than two Scent Work trials per day. If a club holds two Scent Work trials in one day they have the option to run the trials consecutively or concurrently. In either case, one of the trials will be designated "Trial 1," and the other "Trial 2." In the case of trials run consecutively, Trial 1 must be run first. If run concurrently, the trials may be run such that each class is back-to-back (i.e.: Trial 1 Container Novice, Trial 2 Container Novice, Trial 1 Container Advanced, Trial 2 Container Advanced). Please see Chapter 3, Section 19 for information regarding move-up transfers for these types of trials.

**Section 9. Entry Fees.** A club holding an AKC Scent Work event shall not accept an entry fee other than that published in the premium list or in any way discriminate between entrants, except that a club, at its discretion, may allow for a reduced entry fee for dogs handled by juniors. A junior handler is someone less than 18 years of age on the day of the event.

**Section 10. Opening and Closing Dates.** For all trials, clubs shall set a date and time that entries will be first accepted. Entries received prior to the opening date shall be considered invalid and shall be promptly returned. Clubs shall set a date and time that entries will close. The opening and closing date shall be clearly stated in the event premium. Entries must be received by the Trial Secretary prior to the closing date to be valid. If the closing date falls on a postal holiday, entries received in the first mail only on the following day may be accepted.

The club may, at its discretion, accept day-of-trial entries. If the club chooses to accept day-of-trial entries, the published closing date and time shall be the date of the event, no sooner than one hour prior to the trial start time, and this must be specified in the premium list. A club that chooses to offer day-of-trial entries may offer a discounted entry fee for early entries, and must specify the date that the early-entry discount will end.

**Section 11. Trial Secretary and Trial Chairperson.** A club holding a trial must name a Trial Secretary and a Trial Chairperson, which cannot be the same person. The Chairperson must be a member of the club. The premium list for all trials shall designate the Trial Secretary as receiving entries. Trial Secretaries and Chairpersons shall be ineligible to judge at the event in which they are acting in these official capacities. Trial Secretaries and Chairpersons may participate in Scent Work trials where they perform these duties, though this participation should not interfere with their official duties.

**Section 12. Event Committee.** A club that has been granted AKC permission to hold a trial or match must appoint an Event Committee, which will have complete responsibility for planning and conducting the event. The Committee shall be composed of at least five (5) club members (including the Chairperson), and shall ensure the safe, efficient, and orderly conduct of the event. Individuals who are judging at the event may not serve on the Event Committee. The Committee must have on hand, on the day of the trial, sufficient assistance and equipment, and must ensure that the area is free of dangerous materials or conditions.

The Committee is responsible for compliance with all of these Regulations, except those coming under the sole jurisdiction of the judges, and has the authority to decide all matters not under the jurisdiction of the judges. A minimum of five (5) Committee members must be present on the grounds during a licensed or member trial. In the event of absence of Committee members, the Chairperson or an officiating officer shall appoint sufficient members to ensure compliance with this section.

The Committee must also be familiar with Chapter 5 of the AKC *Rules Applying to Registration and Discipline* and *Dealing with Misconduct* booklet.

### **Section 13. Equipment/Event Officials Supplied by Club.**

- a) Recording supplies. Pens, pencils, clipboards needed by the judge and stewards.
- b) Containers. Clubs must provide one container per target odor for the Odor Search Division and one container per handler for the Handler Discrimination Division. Additional containers to hold distractors and to act as empty containers are required. Containers with glass may not be used.
- c) Warm-Up Scent Containers. Clubs must provide one container per odor used in the trial to be placed in the warm-up area.
- d) Boundary markers and check in table. Traditional conformation ring gating is not required. Clubs may use any boundary markers or gating material they desire provided it is safe for participants and spectators.
- e) Distraction items. Clubs must provide the distraction items for classes in which they are required.
- f) Timing. Clubs must provide an official timer and the timing device, which must be capable of measuring time to the hundredth of a second. A backup timing device is recommended.
- g) Extra scenting articles for Handler Discrimination classes.
- h) Hide Stewards and Stewards. The club shall arrange for a hide steward to place the scent vessels and containers, plus one or more stewards to organize and call in the exhibitors and assist the judge.
- i) Photographer/Videographer. While not required, it is recommended that the club have a photographer/videographer to chronicle the searches.
- j) Scent Aids and Scent Vessels. Clubs must ensure that the scented cotton balls or cotton swabs (scent aids) and the scent vessels that are to be used for the Odor Search Division are at the trial site and prepared for use. The Club may designate the duty of supplying these to the judge, but this must be stated in the judging contract. No object containing glass may be used as a scent vessel.

**Section 14. Premium List.** A premium list must be published for all trials, and shall include the following information:

- Name of club holding the event
- The exact location (name of facility—if any, address, city, state, and zip code)
- Date of the event
- Name, address, email, and telephone number of the Trial Chair
- Names of the Event Committee members (minimum of five including Trial Chair)

- Event number
- Trial hours
- Entry fees
- AKC recording fee shall be stated
- Classes offered
- Names and cities of residence of judges including their assignments
- Name, address, email, and telephone number of the Trial Secretary
- Date and time for opening and closing of entries
- Entry limits or a statement that entry is unlimited
- A list of the officers of the event-giving club with the address of the Secretary
- An official AKC entry form.

It is recommended that any known breed specific regulation(s) for the city/county/state in which the trial is being held are listed.

The premium list must also include the statement: “It is not appropriate to visit the trial location prior to the trial date. Many search locations are real-life environments and such visits may risk the host losing the opportunity to use the location in the future.”

Clubs must specify in their premium list an exact amount and description of the procedure for refunds. Withdrawals after the event’s closing date due to females in season must be fully refunded if withdrawn no later than one half hour prior to the start of the first class of the day of the trial, though the club may retain a processing fee (no fee is paid to the American Kennel Club for females in season who are withdrawn). Clubs may determine the documentation, if any, that is required to confirm the female is in season, and must publish this policy in their premium list.

The premium list must be submitted via e-mail to [ScentWork@akc.org](mailto:ScentWork@akc.org) prior to publication. The premium list must be made available by paper and/or electronically to prospective entrants a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to the opening date for acceptance of entries for the event.

**Section 15. Entries.** To be acceptable an entry must:

- (a) Be submitted with the required entry fee
- (b) Be on an official AKC entry form
- (c) Be signed by the owner or their duly authorized agent

Include all of the following information:

- (a) Name of trial-giving club
- (b) Date of trial
- (c) Breed of dog
- (d) Variety, if any
- (e) Sex
- (f) Name of class(es) entered



- (g) Full registered name of dog
- (h) Name of owner/co-owner(s)
- (i) Address of owner

Include one of the following:

- (a) AKC number
- (b) PAL/ILP number
- (c) AKC Canine Partners listing number
- (d) Foreign registration number and country of registration for an unregistered imported dog
- (e) Identification number issued by AKC

The following should also be included, if known:

- (a) Date of dog's birth
- (b) Name of breeder(s)
- (c) Name of sire
- (d) Name of dam

Note: A dog listed with AKC Canine Partners should mark their breed as "All American Dog."

**Section 16. Entry Limits.** If a club elects, it may place limits on a judge and/or a club may place limits on a single class or set of classes in the premium list. If a limit is placed on a single class or set of classes, no entries may be accepted beyond this established limit. If a limit is placed on a judge, the club must continue to accept entries, and any additional dogs beyond the judge's limit shall be assigned to another judge. At no time may a limited trial exceed its overall event limit. The premium list must state the overall event limit. If any other limits are established for the judge(s) or class(es), those limits must also be stated in the premium list.

**Section 17. Declining Entries.** The Event Committee may decline any entries or may remove any dog from its event for cause, but in each such instance shall file in a timely manner, good and sufficient reason for doing so with the AKC Performance Events Department.

**Section 18. Waiting List.** Clubs that limit the number of entries may, at their option, establish a waiting list in order that entries that scratch prior to the event can be replaced. The waiting list shall utilize a "first in – first out" approach.

The club must establish a maximum number of entries that may be placed on the wait list. Whether a club is offering a wait list, how many entries are being accepted on the wait list, and the closing date/time of the wait list must be published in the premium list. On the day of the trial, the club may assign entries for absent individuals to those on the wait list who are present at the trial site. If multiple waitlisted

individuals are present at the event site, the runs must be assigned in wait-list order. A full refund is to be reimbursed to any entrant whose entry is replaced by a wait-listed entry.

**Section 19. Class Transfers.** A move-up transfer may be requested if, according to the owner's records, the handler and dog are eligible and the dog has completed the requirements for the title after the closing date of the trial in which the advanced entry is to be made. A move-down transfer may be requested if the owner mistakenly entered the dog in a higher-level class for which it is not eligible. A lateral transfer (from section A to section B) may be requested if the owner mistakenly entered the dog in section A, and it is not eligible. The request for a class transfer must be in writing and presented to the trial secretary at least 30 minutes prior to the start of each trial. Transfers may be approved provided the class is available and has not reached its limit. At their option, clubs may choose to accept move-up transfers for concurrently held trials (such that if an exhibitor earns their final leg in Trial 1, they may be allowed to move up for Trial 2), and this must be stated in the premium list. In this case, the 30-minute requirement is waived. In no case may an exhibitor be allowed to move up for Trial 1 if the final leg is earned in Trial 2.

Transfers are always a change from one entry into another. If a dog completes a title after the closing date and therefore becomes eligible for an additional class, these transfer provisions do not allow the acceptance of an entry into the new class while maintaining the entry in the original class. Such a situation is not a transfer, but is an additional entry, which may under no circumstances be accepted after close of entries.

**Section 20. Judging Limits.** At no time may a club exceed the judging limits as specified in Chapter 4, Section 3 of these regulations, except that the club may assign an overage of up to 15 dogs per judge, with the explicit written permission of the affected judges. After the entries have closed, if any judge exceeds the limit established in these regulations, the club will immediately secure the approval of the AKC for an additional judge, or for reassignment of its advertised judges, so that no judge will be required to exceed the limit.

**Section 21. One Judge Per Class.** Each class has only one assigned judge; classes cannot be split between judges, with the exception of the Novice class. Clubs are able to assign one judge to the Novice A section and a different judge to the Novice B section if that is required for balancing of judging limits.

**Section 22. Judge Assignment Changes.** After distribution of the premium list, if a judge assignment changes, exhibitors have the right to request a full refund of their entry fee for any classes affected.

Exhibitors must submit requests in writing to the Trial Secretary a minimum of 30 minutes preceding the start of the event on the first day in which the exhibitor is entered.

After entries close, when the judging schedule is being prepared, clubs may elect to change the class assignments of the individual judges in order to facilitate the smooth running of the event. Such adjustments can be done for any reason including overloads, low entries, equipment problems, etc. When such judging changes are proposed the club must first receive approval in writing from each judge affected and the club must receive final approval from the American Kennel Club prior to the distribution of the judging schedule.

The judging schedule must clearly state which classes have been changed and must also state that exhibitors are entitled to a full refund for entries affected by the change.

**Section 23. Emergency Judge Assignment Changes.** If the club is notified by a scheduled judge within seven (7) days of the trial that he or she is unable to judge, clubs must take the following steps: 1) Secure an AKC approved Scent Work judge for the classes vacated by the original judge. 2) Notify AKC of the proposed judging change. Once approved by the AKC, the club must 3) Send out a mass communication to trial entrants notifying them of the judge change. This communication must include the refund policy for entries affected by the change.

If the club is notified by a scheduled judge within forty-eight (48) hours of the trial that he or she is unable to judge, clubs must:

1) Secure an AKC-approved Scent Work judge for the classes vacated by the original judge. If the club is unable to find an AKC Scent Work judge who does not have an event conflict, the club may assign an AKC Scent Work judge who does have a conflict. 2) The club shall obtain approval of the change from the American Kennel Club if time allows. 3) Send out a mass communication to trial entrants notifying them of the judge change, if feasible. This communication must include the refund policy for entries affected by the change.

If on the day of the trial a judge becomes unable to complete his or her judging duties, any person in good standing with the AKC may be allowed to judge the trial.

In the case of an emergency change of a judge (changes after the distribution of the judging schedule), it may not be possible to notify exhibitors of the change prior to the start of the trial weekend. The change must be posted at the event and exhibitors are entitled to a full refund of entry fees provided the request for a refund is submitted in writing to the Trial Secretary prior to the start of judging of the affected class in which the dog is entered.

**Section 24. Entry Acceptance Methods.** A club may choose either of the following methods for accepting entries to a limited entry trial. If trials are likely to exceed the entry limit within the first 24 hours after the opening date and time, the AKC strongly recommends using the Random Draw method.

**First Received Entries** – Entries accepted in order of receipt. Trial Secretaries shall use all information to fairly and equitably determine which entries are received first.

**Random Draw** – Entries treated equally without regard to date/time received.

*Draw Period:* The time during which entries are accepted for the Random Draw. The start time and date of the Draw Period shall be the same as the Opening Date. The Draw Period must be at least seven (7) days in length and must have a defined finish date and time.

*Guaranteed Entries for Show Workers:* The club may guarantee entry spots for show workers who have agreed to work at the trial. Alternatively, clubs may choose to grant vouchers to workers for entries into future trials. Entry spots for show workers are part of the total entry limit stated in the premium list.

*Conducting the Random Draw:* If the stated entry limit is exceeded during the Draw Period, the club shall conduct a Random Drawing of all entries received. The Random Drawing shall be held within 48 hours of the finish date and time of the Draw Period. The date, hour, and location of the draw must be stated in the premium list. The drawing shall be held in a place accessible to the public. The results of the draw shall be made available to the people present at the draw. In conducting the drawing for entries the Trial Secretary shall avoid any method that raises questions as to its randomness and impartiality. The drawing may be manual or computerized. If the last envelope selected contains entries that would exceed the stated entry limit, there shall be a random draw of the individual entries contained in the envelope. The total entries drawn may not exceed the limit(s) stated in the premium list. When the advertised limit of entries has been drawn, all remaining entries shall be drawn for a position on the Wait List.

*Accepting Entries After the Draw Period:* Clubs may continue to accept paper and online entries after the finish date and time of the Draw Period, though all entries must be received prior to the closing date. If the trial did not exceed the limit during the Draw Period, all of the entries received during the Draw Period shall be accepted into the trial and entries received after the Draw Period shall be accepted under the First Received method. If the trial did

exceed the limit and a Random Draw was conducted, clubs may elect to add entries received after the Draw Period to the end of the wait list(s) in order of receipt.

**Section 25. Judging Programs and Catalogs.** Clubs are not required to have a catalog available at the event, however for the exhibitors to understand the sequence of dogs, a judging program shall be published. Judging programs should be sent to all entrants, and must be available at the trial. Included in the judging program will be the order of the classes and the quantity of dogs in each class. In judging programs sent to exhibitors prior to the trial, the Trial Secretary should include a warning that the schedule may change due to move-up entries not yet received. For clubs accepting day-of-event entries, the most up-to-date judging program shall be posted for the benefit of the exhibitors.

**Section 26. Armband Numbers.** An armband number shall be assigned to each dog in a trial and is used to determine the running order of dogs as well as to help judges and trial officials identify dogs in their records. The running order may be modified for the smooth running of the trial. For example, clubs can choose to run volunteers first, regardless of their armband number. The armband number need not be physically displayed on the dog or handler.

**Section 27. Staging Area.** The club shall establish a “staging area” out of view of the search area(s). The staging area will include all parking, crating, warm-up, and waiting areas, as well as the secretary’s table for check-ins, and posting of running order and results. All trial operations aside from the actual search and judging activities will take place in the staging area. The staging area and search area(s) shall be separated by geographical features, walls, and/or artificial barriers. Clubs must post signs so that no person inadvertently wanders in view of the search area. Clubs should take care that exhibitors will not be in view of the search area when arriving or leaving the site, or when visiting the toilet facilities.

**Section 28. Spectator Area.** Spectators are encouraged. The club should establish a dedicated spectator area for each class, where people can convene to watch the search, whenever feasible. The club is encouraged to use tape or flags to delineate the boundaries of the spectator area so that no spectators inadvertently enter the search area. No dogs are permitted in the spectator area(s).

**Section 29. Demo Dog.** After the hide(s) have been set, an accomplished search dog that is not entered in the class will run the course. This is to evaluate the real-world difficulty of the search, as designed. If the demo dog encounters unexpected difficulty, the judge should consider adjusting the hide location(s). An accomplished

dog is defined as one who has earned the AKC Scent Work title (or a comparable title with another organization) for that element and difficulty level. It is understood that there may be situations where clubs are unable to procure a demo dog. In such a situation, the first dog in the running order will complete the search, after which the judge will determine whether the search, as designed, is acceptable. If the first dog to run encounters unforeseen difficulties such that the judge decides to adjust the hide location(s), that dog will be re-run at the end of the class, with no penalty.

**Section 30. Handler’s Briefing.** Judges shall conduct a short handler’s briefing prior to the start of each class. The handler’s briefing shall take place in view of the search area after hide(s) is/ are set and the demo dog has run. In the handler’s briefing the judge shall explain if there is an off-leash option, how many hides there are (if the number of hides is known), the maximum height of the hides, how many different search areas there are (for interior searches only), and communicate the maximum time for the course. Judges may also remind exhibitors of the basic rules, if desired. Exhibitors will be able to ask any questions about the search area at this time. No dogs may be present during the handler’s briefing.

**Section 31. Posting of Preliminary Results.** The results from each class shall be posted at the trial location, as soon as is feasible after the conclusion of the class. The information required to be posted for each dog is: 1) Armband number, 2) Dog number, 3) Name of dog (Registered name or call name is permissible), 4) Name of handler, 5) Official time, 6) Number of faults, 7) Result (Qualifying, Not Qualifying, Excused, Absent, Disqualified). Placements 1-4 must also be designated for each class.

These are preliminary results only, and may change upon review by the judge. If upon the judge’s review any errors are corrected, neither the secretary nor judge have any obligation to find and inform the affected exhibitor(s).

**Section 32. Recording of Results.** The following information shall be recorded in the official catalog submitted to the AKC. In the header for each class, the following information must appear:

- Number of entries (number of entries at closing less the number of entries withdrawn)
- Number competing in the class
- Number of qualifying scores
- Number of withdrawals
- Name of the person who judged the class

For each dog entered in the class, the marked catalog must display the 1) Armband number, 2) Dog's AKC number, 3) Registered name of the dog, 4) Call name of the dog, 5) Name of the owner, 6) Address of the owner, 7) Name of the handler (if different from the owner), 8) Official time, 9) Number of faults, 10) Result. At the club's discretion, the address of the owner may be omitted from the class pages, if presented in an index at the back of the catalog. Recorded adjacent to each entry of each dog must be one of the following: Qualified (Q), Did not qualify (NQ), Absent (ABS), Excused (EXC), Disqualified for attack (DQ), Withdrawn- in season (AIS), or Withdrawn due to Judge Change (AJC). If marked "EXC" or "DQ," a brief description must also appear in the catalog. If a dog earned a placement (1 through 4) for the class, that must also be denoted adjacent to the dog's entry.

**Section 33. Submittal of Results.** An official marked catalog bearing the above required information, and with each page initialed by the individual who judged each class, must be sent to the American Kennel Club so as to reach its office within seven (7) days after the event. Included in this packet must be the judge's certification pages and Trial Secretary certification, the Trial Secretary's report, and payment of recording fees. Clubs may incur fines for catalogs received after this deadline.

The club shall provide the judge(s) with a marked catalog, and shall retain a marked catalog for their records, as well as maintain all entry forms and transfer forms for a period of at least one (1) year. The judge must be provided their copy of the marked catalog prior to leaving the show site.

**Section 34. Certification Page.** The Judge's Certification and Trial Secretary's Certification must be included with the official marked catalog and must appear as follows:

#### **Judge's Certification**

I certify that:

- \_\_\_ dogs received qualifying scores in the Container element
- \_\_\_ dogs received qualifying scores in the Interior element
- \_\_\_ dogs received qualifying scores in the Exterior element
- \_\_\_ dogs received qualifying scores in the Buried element
- \_\_\_ dogs received qualifying scores in Handler Discrimination
- \_\_\_ dogs received qualifying scores in the Detective Class

Total number of dogs qualifying in the trial: \_\_\_\_\_

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Judge's Signature

### Scent Work Trial Secretary's Certification

I certify that the Judge(s) has verified the above information and signed this page. Total number of entries in the trial \_\_\_\_, total number of runs (starters/participants) in the trial \_\_\_\_, total number of entries withdrawn from the trial \_\_\_\_, total number of qualifying scores \_\_\_\_.

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Trial Secretary's Signature

**Section 35. Recording Fees.** At every trial a recording fee of \$3.50 shall be required for each entry. When fees are calculated, withdrawn entries are not included.



## CHAPTER 4 – JUDGES AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES

**Section 1. Judge Eligibility.** Any licensed AKC Scent Work judge without an event conflict may be approved to judge Scent Work. To become licensed, a person must satisfy the requirements laid down by the AKC.

**Section 2. Geographical Limits.** A judge will not be approved to judge the same Scent Work class at all-breed events within 30 days and 100 straight-line miles of each other, with the following exceptions:

- A judge may accept assignments to judge the same classes for two Scent Work trials that fall on the same day at the same site.
- A judge may accept assignments to judge the same classes at four (4) Scent Work trials over the course of a cluster of no more than five (5) consecutive days at the same site or within a local geographical area as determined by the AKC.
- A judge may accept an assignment within 30 days and 100 straight-line miles of another assignment only on an emergency basis. See Chapter 3, Section 23 for details regarding emergency judge changes.

There are no such restrictions on non-regular classes. Assignments to judge the same class or classes at two different breed specialty or group Scent Work trials are not considered to be in conflict unless the two specialties or group trials are for the same breed or group. Breed specialty Scent Work assignments or group shows are not in conflict with an assignment to judge the same class(es) at an all-breed Scent Work trial.

**Section 3. Judging Limits.** The limit for each Scent Work judge is 125 entries per day. With the express written consent of the judge, the club may assign a judge an average of up to 15 entries per day.

**Section 4. Designing the Searches.** Judges are responsible for designing each of the searches at an AKC Scent Work trial. The clubs must submit specific dimensions and layouts to the judge no later than sixty (60) days prior to the event date to aid in search design. Additionally, information on furniture and structural obstacles must be communicated to the judge. Ideally, photographs will be submitted with the layouts so that the judge has a clear understanding of the search area prior to designing the course. It is understood that course layouts may change when the judge reaches the site and experiences the conditions firsthand.

**Section 5. Selecting the Hide Locations.** Judges are responsible for selecting the hide locations, taking care to create a challenging course for each level, but one that is not unreasonably difficult. The physical placement of the hides and any adjustment to the hides should be done by the hide steward however, to minimize the possibility of any contamination. See Chapter 5, Section 25 for more information on the hide steward.

**Section 6. Accessible and Inaccessible Hides.** A hide is considered accessible if it is in a location where the dog can reach it with his nose. If the dog is unable to place his nose on the hide, it is considered inaccessible. Since the reach of a dog varies with its height, a hide that is accessible for tall dogs may be inaccessible for shorter dogs.

**Section 7. Setting the Course Time Limits.** For many classes, judges are responsible for setting the actual course time limits within the pre-set minimum and maximum allowable times. Because each search area may vary so much in size and layout, the judge is in the best position to determine the reasonable time limit, using either their own judgment or a preliminary search with a demo dog.

**Section 8. Confirmation of the Alert.** When the handler calls Alert the judge is responsible for confirming whether the alert is correct or incorrect. If the dog is clearly indicating the source of the scent, the judge should respond in the affirmative when the handler calls Alert. If the source is unclear, please follow the procedures outlined in Chapter 4, Section 9 for accessible hides and Chapter 4, Section 10 for inaccessible hides.

**Section 9. Alert Confirmation for Accessible Hides.** If the dog is near the source of the scent, but it is not clear to the judge that the dog has communicated the exact location to the handler, the judge should ask “where?” The handler must then indicate the source of the scent by pointing or gesturing. If the area that the handler indicates includes the hide location or the location where the odor would have settled in the judge’s expert opinion, the alert should be considered correct and the judge should respond in the affirmative.

**Section 10. Alert Confirmation for Inaccessible Hides.** For inaccessible hides, the dog will not be able to pinpoint the exact location of the hide, so the judge will be looking for the dog to get as close as possible to the inaccessible hide location. If the dog is clearly indicating this area, the judge does not need to ask “where?” If the dog has not indicated clearly or seems to be indicating in multiple differing locations, the judge should ask “where?” If, in the judge’s expert opinion, the area that the handler indicates includes one or more of the locations where the dog would have encountered the escaping odor

from the inaccessible hide, the alert should be considered correct and the judge should respond in the affirmative.

**Section 11. Judge's Decision is Final.** The judge's decision regarding whether the alert is correct is always final. Argument from a competitor as to whether the location indicated is sufficient will not be allowed.

**Section 12. Assessing Faults.** It is the judge's responsibility to assess faults for handling errors and mild rule infractions during the search. Faults are to be assessed as specified in Chapter 6, Section 3.

**Section 13. Control of the Search Area.** The judge shall have complete control and final say over matters in the search area.

**Section 14. Repeating an Exercise.** The judge may allow a dog-handler team to repeat an exercise if, in the opinion of the judge, the team encountered extraordinary circumstances that were out of the control of the handler.

**Section 15. Approval of Results.** Upon conclusion of the trial the judge must examine and initial each page of the catalog to certify that the information matches their records. Additionally, the judge is required to sign a certification page that states the number of qualifying dogs in each element, and total for the trial. Details on the judge's certification can be found in Chapter 3, Section 34.

**Section 16. Retention of Results.** Judges are required to retain score sheets and a copy of the marked catalog in their records for a period of one (1) year after the conclusion of the trial. These documents can be retained in hard-copy or electronic format.

## CHAPTER 5 – REQUIREMENTS APPLYING TO ALL CLASSES

**Section 1. Search Area Size.** Search areas may be any shape. The size of the search area is determined by the element and class level. Search areas do not need to be gated. The search area should be marked with flags, cones, colored adhesive tape, caution tape, plastic fencing, gating, or any other material that clearly delineates the boundaries. Dogs and handlers may cross search boundaries without penalty during the search, as long as they remain working. It is understood that many search areas, being of unconventional shapes, may not be amenable to an easy calculation of area size. The required search area sizes specified in the class descriptions should be approximated to the best of the course designer’s ability, but is not expected to be exact in all situations.

**Section 2. Preparation and Storage of Odors.** The “scent aid” must be cotton balls or cotton swabs. If swabs are used, only those with paper stems (not plastic) may be used. The swabs should be cut in half, and the stems may be trimmed shorter, if preferred. To prepare the odors for trial, two (2) drops of the oil should be applied directly to the cotton ball or cotton swab. The scent aids should then be placed inside a clean glass jar and left to stand for at least twenty-four hours prior to the trial.

Glass must always be used for scent preparation and storage because the essential oils are corrosive and will break down plastic containers, changing the chemical composition and affecting the scent. Plastic may be used for scent vessels, but the scent aid must be removed from the plastic container for storage.

**Section 3. Placement of Odors.** The scent aid must always be placed inside a scent vessel, which is then hidden in the search area. Only one (1) scent aid may be used per scent vessel, and only one (1) scent vessel may be used per hide. The scent vessel may be any small object that prevents the scent aid from coming into direct contact with any object or surface in the search area, and that allows scent to escape. Some examples of a scent vessel include a plastic straw, empty lip balm tube, or a metal tin with holes. Due to safety concerns, scent vessels may never contain glass. The scent vessel may be affixed to an object or surface with tape, adhesive putty (such as QuakeHold) or by any other method, so long as it does not harm the object or surface.

**Section 4. Hides on Boundary Markers.** The hide may never be placed on or inside an object that is put in the search area to denote the boundary (such as a cone or flag). However, the hide may be placed on a wall or structure that is natural to the search area and is used as the outer limit of the search area. For example, the side of a building may

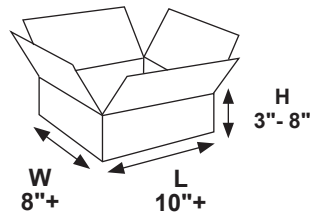
be used as the edge of a search area, and the side of the building may be in play.

**Section 5. Consistent Location of the Scent.** For classes in the Odor Search Division the scent must remain in the same location for each team in the class, unless the hide location is contaminated or circumstances otherwise require relocating the hide. Scent should be relocated between classes, but must be left to stand for 10 minutes before the first dog in the new class begins. These requirements do not apply to the Handler Discrimination Division—the scented article may be placed in a different location for each team, even within the same class, and there is no minimum time required for the handler scent to be left to stand before the team searches.

**Section 6. Relocating a Hide.** If a hide must be relocated in the middle of a class, it should be moved to a location that presents the same challenges as at the original location. The location of the original hide should be wiped with undiluted distilled white vinegar and the scent must be left to stand in the new hide location for 10 minutes before the next dog is run.

**Section 7. Judging Schedule.** Dogs within a class shall be run in the judging program order except that the steward has the discretion to allow a dog to be judged out of sequence at the request of the handler if, in the opinion of the steward, a valid conflict exists.

**Section 8. Containers.** Containers are used to conceal the scent vessel for container searches in the Odor Search division or the handler-scented item in the Novice class of the Handler Discrimination division. Containers can include cardboard boxes, paper bags, upside down flower pots, briefcases, luggage, backpacks, storage bins, or other similar odor-permeable container,



as specified by difficulty level. Containers utilizing glass may never be used. Containers in Novice searches must be cardboard boxes and must all be identical. Whenever cardboard boxes are used, they must be of uniform size and shall be at least 10-inches long by 8-inches wide; they must be no less than 3-inches and no more than 8-inches tall. Surplus containers for replacement must be available should any of the containers become damaged or contaminated. Whenever cardboard boxes are used, the bottoms of the boxes must be taped shut.

**Section 9. Collars, Leashes, and Harnesses.** Dogs must wear a properly fitted collar or harness approved by the judge. The harness will be constructed of plain, pliable material and will be designed so

that there is minimal restriction of the dog's movement. No special training tools, such as electronic collars, prong collars, head halters, or no-pull harnesses will be permitted during the search. Martingale collars are permitted. No odor-emitting collars (such as no-bark collars that spray citronella, or DAP calming collars) may be worn or present in the search area. A wearable camera such as a Go Pro may be mounted to the dog's harness, if desired.

Dogs must enter and exit the search area with the leash attached to the collar or harness, including when waiting in the search area before and after their search. The leash should be made of plain, pliable material. Any length of leash and/or retractable leashes are permitted for use during the search. The leash can be used to gently guide the dog away from the boundaries of the search area, but cannot be used as a correction device.

Most searches will be conducted entirely on leash, but an off-leash option may be offered at the discretion of the judge, only if the area is completely enclosed.

**Section 10. Accessories.** Dogs may be outfitted with accessories such as paw covers or booties, jackets, sweaters, and hair ties or bows as the handler deems necessary for the dog to safely navigate the search area. Handlers are permitted to wear treat pouches or fanny packs to carry food rewards. The final word on whether or not an accessory is allowed shall rest with the judge.

**Section 11. Start Line.** For each search area there shall be a start line that the dog and handler must cross. The start line may be a maximum of five (5) feet long. If the dog or handler fail to cross the start line, the judge will record a fault for handler error.

**Section 12. "Alert" Calls.** Handlers must confirm the dog's indication with the word "Alert" when the dog indicates a find. If a verbal confirmation is not possible due to environmental factors or a handler's disability, the handler may inform the judge of an alternate confirmation, such as an obvious hand signal. If it is not immediately obvious where the dog is indicating when alert is called, the judge may ask the handler to point to the source location. Please see Chapter 4, Sections 9 and 10 for criteria to determine whether the area indicated by the handler is acceptable. The handler is not allowed to re-cue the dog to search or indicate after the alert is called, and doing so will result in an NQ.

**Section 13. "Finish" Calls.** The "Finish" call is used in classes that contain multiple hides (all Advanced, Excellent, and Master searches). The handler is required to call "Finish" when all hides have been located for the search area (or, for classes with an unknown number of

hides, when the handler *believes* that all hides have been located). The “Finish” call is required to stop the time for the search. If the handler fails to correctly call “Finish” prior to the expiration of the search time, the team will NQ.

**Section 14. Incorrect Calls.** If the handler makes an incorrect “alert” or “finish” call, the search is over. Teams do not proceed to the remaining search areas after an incorrect call.

**Section 15. Rewards and Reinforcers.** Food or toy rewards may be used by the handler at any time during the search (for example, to calm and focus a nervous dog). However, these items may not be used to bait the dog toward a specific location to search. When a dog correctly finds the scent, the handler may reward the dog with a food or toy reinforcer, which may be delivered at or away from source. The handler must take care not to contaminate the search area with food particles or saliva. Toys may be thrown, but if the toy or the dog causes disruption to the search area, the team may incur a fault. Toys that make noise are not allowed.

**Section 16. Contamination of the Search Area.** Dropping food while rewarding a dog is considered a contamination of the search area, regardless of whether the food is dropped on, near, or away from the hide. Contamination of the search area is punishable by a fault or an NQ, depending on the judge’s assessment of the severity of the contamination.

**Section 17. Cleaning Contamination in the Search Area.** If a search area is contaminated, every effort must be made to return the area to pristine condition before the running of the next dog. If a dog eliminates in an indoor search area, all surfaces or objects in the affected area must be thoroughly cleaned with an enzymatic cleaner. If a dog eliminates in an outdoor search area, any small affected objects such as rocks or sticks should be removed, and the ground should be sprayed with an enzymatic cleaner. If an area or object is contaminated by food residue or saliva, the food residue should be removed and the area or object should be wiped down with water. Any container that is contaminated by significant food residue or significant saliva should be replaced.

**Section 18. Residual and Lingering Odor.** If search areas are reused during the course of the trial, the judge must inform teams during the handler’s briefing (and may remind them on the start line) of the prior hide locations, to warn of possible residual or lingering odor. These areas may also be marked with stickers or tape.

**Section 19. Distraction Items.** Certain searches, as determined by element and difficulty level, will include distraction items. Distraction items may be of the following type:

- **Non-Food Distraction:** A non-food distraction may be any item, other than food, that might be enticing to a dog. A used tennis ball is a prime example. The non-food distraction may not contain any artificial scent (such as another essential oil, a perfume, or a scented lotion), but it may contain the scent of another animal (such as a cat toy).
- **Food Distraction:** A food distraction may be any kind of human or dog food. The following items are prohibited for use as a food distraction because they are known to be harmful to dogs: chocolate, grapes, avocados, onions, cherries, and any food with xylitol. Whenever a food distraction is used it must be enclosed within a container such that a searching dog would be unable to consume the food, and such containers should be large enough that they cannot be swallowed whole.
- **Visual Distraction:** A visual distraction is a mild light in the search area, such as the backlight of a cell phone, a flashlight trained on the ground, an LED keychain, etc. The light may be continuous during the search, or may turn on and off (though it may not flash). If the light turns on and off, it should either do so on a pattern (i.e., every 3 seconds it turns on, every 3 seconds it turns off), or it should do so when the dog reaches a certain place in the search area. The light may be automatic or controlled. If controlled, the person controlling the light must be outside the search area and should take care that the use of the light distraction is uniform for all dogs in the class. The room lights, or any light used for functional illumination in the area may not be used as the visual distraction.
- **Auditory Distraction:** An auditory distraction is any unusual sound in the search area. The sound may be continuous during the search or may be spontaneous. If spontaneous, the sound should be triggered when the dog reaches a certain place in the search area. The sound may be automatic or controlled. If controlled, the person controlling the sound must be outside the search area and should take care that the use of the auditory distraction is uniform for all dogs in the class. Examples of an auditory distraction would be a toy that makes a noise when touched or approached, clapping, or a cell phone ringtone. Excessive or startling sounds should not be used—banging of pans, dropping of heavy objects, or slamming of doors is not permissible. The sound is not intended to frighten



the dog, merely to vie for the dog's attention such that it is a challenge to remain focused on the search.

- **Mimic Distraction:** A mimic distraction is an object (such as a stuffed animal or statue) that looks like a realistic animal. If a mimic distraction is used, the club should have a backup in case a dog contaminates the object.
- **Human Distraction:** A human distraction is a person, other than the judge, who is present inside the search area. The human distraction may be standing or sitting, and may look at the dog, but may not maintain eye contact if the dog's attention should turn to them. The human distraction may not speak to or intentionally touch the dog.

For Container classes and Buried Advanced classes, the distraction may be in a container or loose in the search area. If in a container, it may NOT be in the same container as the odor.

**Section 20. Handler Looking for the Odor Source.** The handler should not be actively looking for the scent vessel while the dog searches. It is the job of the dog to find the source of the scent. It is the handler's job only to read their dog and communicate to the judge when the dog has found the source. Any handler who is actively looking for the odor source may be faulted or excused by the judge.

**Section 21. Barking/Vocalization.** Within reason as determined by the judge, a dog may bark or vocalize while participating in Scent Work classes. However, if the judge determines that the dog is barking out of frustration or is becoming overly disruptive in a way that threatens future use of the venue, the judge shall give the handler a warning. If the handler is unable to get the dog to stop the disruptive behavior within 10 seconds after the warning, the dog shall be excused from the search. The dog may still be permitted to participate in other classes in which the dog is entered that day, at the discretion of the judge.

**Section 22. Touching the Dog.** Handlers are allowed to touch the dog at any time during the search for direction or praise.

**Section 23. Disruption of the Search Area.** Handlers are not allowed to touch objects in the search area without express permission from the judge.

**Section 24. The Stewards.** The stewards are in charge of bringing each team to the start line, carrying out orders from the judge (such as repositioning items in the search area), and any other duties as required by the club or the judge. The club may appoint as many stewards as they need to complete the required tasks.

**Section 25. The Hide Steward.** For each search, one individual, the hide steward, is in charge of placing the scent in the hide location designated by the judge. Having only one individual in contact with the scent will minimize the chance of contamination. The hide steward should wear latex, nitrile, or vinyl gloves when setting the hides, and should not handle or move any other items.

**Section 26. Official Timer.** Each class must have an official timer. The time for the run will be recorded to the hundredth of a second. The search time shall be determined as follows:

- For novice classes: The official time shall start when the dog's nose crosses the start line, or when any part of the handler's body crosses the start line, whichever is first. The official time shall stop when the handler calls "Alert."
- For classes with multiple hides in a single search area: The official time shall start when the dog's nose crosses the start line, or when any part of the handler's body crosses the start line, whichever is first. The official time shall stop when the handler calls "Finish."
- For classes with multiple search areas: The official time for the first search area shall start when the dog's nose crosses the start line for that search area, or when any part of the handler's body crosses the start line, whichever is first. The official time shall stop when the handler calls "Finish." The official time for the first search area will then be recorded on the score sheet while the team is led to the next search area. The timer will then be reset, and the timing will follow the same procedure for each additional search area. The official time for each search area will be recorded independently and then combined for a total time.
- For the Detective Class: The official time shall start when the dog's nose crosses the start line, or when any part of the handler's body crosses the start line, whichever is first. The official time will stop when the handler calls "Finish."

See Chapter 9, Section 5 for additional details on the search time.

**Section 27. Self-Timing.** Handlers are permitted to wear watches or other timing devices in the search area in order to be aware of the time remaining in their search. However, in no case may a handler use their own timing device to dispute the conclusion of the official timer. The official time will be determined solely by the official timer's device.

**Section 28. Timer Malfunction.** In the case of a timer malfunction on a qualifying search, the team will have two options: 1) the maximum search time may be recorded as their official time for that class, or 2) the team may re-run the search at the end of the class. If the team chooses to re-run the search, the hide location(s) must be relocated and left to stand for 10 minutes prior to their search. If the handler chooses to re-run the search for time and fails to complete a qualifying performance on the re-run, the team will NQ.

**Section 29. Warm-Up Area.** The club shall designate a warm-up area. One labelled container per target odor being used in the trial on that day will be placed in the warm-up area. This will allow handler-dog teams to prepare themselves for the search prior to their run. Each team should limit their warm-up to two minutes or less so that others may be able to use the warm-up area as well. Clubs may also place blank containers in the warm up area if they choose.

**Section 30. Possession of Odors and Training.** No person other than those engaged in the administration of the trial shall be in possession of any of the target odors when on the trial grounds. There shall be no training on the grounds of the AKC Scent Work trial, other than in the designated warm-up area.

**Section 31. Spectators and Double Handling.** Spectators are encouraged, however, no one outside the search area may assist the handler or disclose the location of the hide. Spectators should take care to remain neutral in order to not provide clues to the handler. Judges may excuse or re-run exhibitors whose dogs they reasonably believe have benefited from double handling. Spectators who intentionally or unintentionally give aid to a team may be asked to leave the spectator area by the judge. Handlers may not watch other exhibitors from their class prior to their turn, except in the case of Handler Discrimination classes.

**Section 32. Spectator Area.** See Chapter 3, Section 28 for details on the spectator area. Any person not handling a dog in the current class, or any person who has already completed their run in that class, may choose to watch searches from the spectator area. Spectators are absolutely forbidden from discussing details of the search with handlers who have yet to run. Even seemingly innocuous details can inadvertently aid a team's performance. The basic rule is this: *If you would not know the information but for being in the spectator area, you cannot discuss the information.*

**Section 33. Photography and Recording Devices.** Spectators are encouraged to photo and video dogs and handlers while they search, however under no circumstances may they share this with any handler competing in the same class who has not yet run. Handlers are not allowed to take video while handling a dog, except that wearable cameras such as the “Go Pro” are permitted to be worn by dogs or handlers. These videos are for the enjoyment of those who cannot be present to watch the team search, and for the handler to have a keepsake of their experience.

## CHAPTER 6 – QUALIFYING PERFORMANCES AND AWARDS

**Section 1. A Qualifying Performance.** The dog’s performance is judged on a qualify/non-qualify basis. A qualifying performance is achieved when the handler successfully locates all hides in a search area within the time allowed for the class without committing any non-qualifying faults.

**Section 2. Alerts.** No specific or formal alert behavior is required from the dog, but there must be a change in behavior from the dog such that the judge can tell that the dog has found the scent. The change in behavior may be extremely subtle, for example, a turn of the head or twitch of the ears.

**Section 3. Faults.** Teams that commit errors during the search will be assessed faults. The faults are: 1) handler error (pulling the dog off scent, excessive interference with a dog that is working, handler actively looking for the scent vessel), 2) safety concern (taking the dog off-leash in an on-leash only search area, allowing the dog to be put in an unsafe situation), 3) mildly compromising the search area (handler moving an object in the search area without the judge’s permission, messy reward delivery). Each fault can be given multiple times in the same search, if warranted. Faults affect placements only; there is no maximum number of faults per run. Any team who finds and calls all of the hides within the search time with no NQ faults will qualify. Faults will not be called out by the judge during the search. The judge should briefly explain any faults assessed to the handler at the completion of the search, if time allows.

**Section 4. Non-Qualifying Faults.** The following behaviors will result in a non-qualifying performance.

- (a) The handler calls “Alert” on the incorrect location.
- (b) The handler calls “Finish” before all hides in the area have been located.
- (c) The maximum time for the class is exceeded.
- (d) The handler is not able to point to the location of the find when asked by the judge (see Chapter 4, Sections 9 and 10 for requirements on pointing to the hide location).
- (e) Any harsh handling or harsh corrections by the handler.
- (f) The handler allows the dog to disrupt the search area unduly. This includes excessive food residue, or intentional biting, hard scratching, pouncing or other by the dog that causes damage to the container/object/area. Cases in which a dog’s nose or feet get caught on containers or other objects shall not be considered a disruption of the area.

**Section 5. Excusals.** Dogs should be excused from the search if, in the opinion of the judge, any of the criteria below are met. Dogs excused from a search may still be allowed to compete in other classes in which they are entered, at the discretion of the judge. A dog who is excused from a search must vacate the search area immediately.

- (a) The dog is not under the handler’s control.
- (b) The dog or handler stops working or performs disruptive behavior for 10 or more seconds after warning from the judge.
- (c) The dog eliminates (urinates, defecates, or vomits) in the search area.
- (d) The dog shows signs of extreme stress or fear.
- (e) The handler receives assistance from a spectator or another handler.
- (f) The handler requests to be excused, for any reason.
- (g) Other reasons, at the judge’s discretion.

**Section 6. Placements.** The top four (4) performing qualifying teams shall be awarded placements 1-4. Placements are based on fewest number of faults, and then on time (a team with no faults will place higher than a faster-finishing team with faults). If teams are tied on both number of faults and time, then a coin-flip will determine the placements.

**Section 7. Ribbons, Rosettes, and Awards.** A club holding an AKC Scent Work event shall offer a qualifying ribbon or rosette to each team with a qualifying performance. Each ribbon or rosette shall be at least two inches wide and approximately eight inches long and shall bear on its face a facsimile of the seal of the AKC and the words “Scent Work,” the word “Qualifying,” and the name of the trial-giving club. Ribbons or rosettes must also contain the name of the class, date, and location of the event, all of which may appear on the face or the back tab or label. The Qualifying ribbon or rosette shall be dark green in color, and rosettes shall have a white center streamer and white button.

Qualifying ribbons may be handed out immediately upon the completion of the dog’s qualifying performance. In addition, a club may, at its discretion, hand out prizes (small toys, etc.) to all dogs that qualify.

Placement ribbons or rosettes shall conform to the foregoing requirements except that they shall state First, Second, Third, or Fourth Place in place of “Qualifying Score,” and shall be the following colors:

- First Place..... Blue
- Second Place..... Red
- Third Place..... Yellow
- Fourth Place..... White

Special awards may be given out at the club's discretion. These may include special awards for dogs that earn a title or fun awards such as the smallest and largest dog to qualify, or an award to any junior handler whose dog earns a qualifying score. These awards shall be specified in the premium list. There shall be no awards for competition between difficulty levels. If AKC cancels a dog's qualifying score, the dog's owner must return all prizes other than ribbons to the trial-giving club within 10 days of receiving the AKC's cancellation notice.

If qualifying or placement ribbons or rosettes are awarded at sanctioned matches, they must conform to the requirements specified above, but shall be the following colors:

- First Place ..... Rose
- Second Place..... Brown
- Third Place..... Light Green
- Fourth Place..... Gray
- Qualifying..... Green with pink edges

**Section 8. High in Trial.** If a club offers more than one element of a particular difficulty level, they are eligible to confer High in Trial awards. Only teams who participate in the same difficulty level in all elements offered, and qualify in each, are eligible to win High in Trial. The High in Trial is determined by adding a team's faults across the elements. The team with the fewest faults will be declared High in Trial. If there is a tie based on faults, then the teams' times across the elements will be summed, and the faster-finishing team will win. If there is a tie after considering both faults and time, a coin-flip will determine the High in Trial. There shall be one High in Trial winner for each difficulty level offered.

Example: If a club offers all elements of the Novice classes at a single trial, any dog who participates and qualifies in every element offered is eligible for high in trial. If a club offers two elements of Novice and two elements of Advanced, there shall be a Novice High in Trial and an Advanced High in Trial.

The High in Trial award is not recorded by the AKC.

## CHAPTER 7 – ODOR SEARCH DIVISION

**Section 1. The Odor Search Division.** Classes in which the target scent is one or more essential oils are deemed to be part of the Odor Search Division. The classes within the Odor Search Division include four difficulty levels and four different elements (search environments).

**Difficulty Levels.** Classes within the Odor Search Division are offered in one of four difficulty levels, each with its own specific set of requirements: Novice, Advanced, Excellent, and Master.

**Elements.** Classes within the Odor Search Division are conducted in one of four Elements (search environments). These are Container, Interior, Exterior, and Buried.

**Section 2. Odors.** The target odors shall be Birch (*Betula lenta*), Anise (*Pimpinella anisum*), Clove (*Eugenia caryophyllata*), and Cypress (*Cupressus sempervirens*). Novice classes shall utilize Birch only. Advanced classes may utilize Birch and/or Anise. Excellent classes may utilize Birch and/or Anise and/or Clove. Master Classes may utilize Birch and/or Anise and/or Clove and/or Cypress.

**Section 3. Container Searches.** The Container search element mimics the work of detection dogs to search packages for contraband. In the Container classes the dog must locate the target odor(s), which is/are hidden in one or more containers within a search area, and communicate the find to their handler. A container can be a cardboard box, a back pack, a briefcase, a storage bin, a piece of luggage, etc., as required by difficulty level. Container searches may be conducted either inside or outside.

**Container Novice Class:** Ten identical cardboard box containers (see Chapter 5, Section 8 above for size requirements) are laid out on the floor of the search area. The boxes are arranged in two rows of five containers. Each box must be at least 12" apart, and each row must be at least 36" apart. The search area must be at least 250 and no more than 400 square feet. One of the containers holds the target odor of Birch. The dog has two minutes to locate the container with the target scent and communicate the find to its handler. The handler must call "Alert" when the dog indicates the find. The Container Novice Class is open to all dogs.

**Container Advanced Class:** Fifteen containers of various size and type are laid out on the floor of the search area. The containers may be arranged in three rows of five containers, in a circle, or in a "U" formation. Each container must be at least 12" apart, and if rows are used, each row must be at least 36" apart. The search area must be



at least 400 and no more than 600 square feet. Two of the containers hold the target odor, which may be Birch or Anise (each scent vessel may contain the same odor, or one may contain Birch and the other may contain Anise). One of the containers shall hold a non-food distraction (may NOT be the same container that holds odor). The dog has two minutes to locate the containers with the target scents and communicate the finds to its handler. The handler must call “Alert” when the dog indicates each find. After the second “Alert” call, the handler must call “Finish” to indicate that all hides have been found and to stop the time. The Container Advanced Class is open to dogs who have acquired the Container Novice (SCN) title.

**Container Excellent Class:** Twenty containers of various size and type are laid out on the floor of the search area. The containers may be arranged in four rows of five containers, in a circle, or in a “U” formation. Each container must be at least 12" apart, and if rows are used, each row must be at least 36" apart. The search area must be at least 600 and no more than 800 square feet. The target odors will be hidden in three of the containers. There will be two distractions at this level, and may be non-food, food, auditory, or visual. The target odors at this level will be Birch and/or Anise and/or Clove. The dog has three minutes to locate the containers with the target scent and communicate the finds to its handler. The handler must call “Alert” when the dog indicates each find. After the third “Alert” call, the handler must call “Finish” to indicate that all hides have been found and to stop the time. The Container Excellent Class is open to dogs who have acquired the Container Advanced (SCA) title.

**Container Master Class:** Twenty containers of various size and type are laid out on the floor of the search area. The containers may be arranged in four rows of five containers, in a circle, or in a “U” formation. Each container must be at least 12" apart, and if rows are used, each row must be at least 36" apart. The search area must be at least 600 and no more than 800 square feet. The target odor(s) will be hidden in one, two, or three of the containers. The handler will not know the exact number of hides at this level. There will be three distractions at this level, and these may be non-food, food, auditory, visual, mimic, or human. The target odor(s) at this level will be Birch and/or Anise and/or Clove and/or Cypress. The dog has four minutes to locate the container(s) with the target scent and communicate the find(s) to its handler. The handler must call “Alert” when the dog indicates each find. When the handler believes all hides have been located he/she must call “Finish.” The Container Master Class is open to dogs who have acquired the Container Excellent (SCE) title.

## The Container Element

	Novice	Advanced	Excellent	Master
<b>Scent</b>	Birch	Birch and/or Anise	Birch and/or Anise and/or Clove	Birch and/or Anise and/or Clove and/or Cypress
<b># of Containers</b>	10	15	20	20
<b>Type of Containers</b>	Identical cardboard boxes	Various size and type	Various size and type	Various size and type
<b>Arrangement</b>	2 rows of 5 containers	3 rows of 5 containers, circle, or "U" formation	4 rows of 5 containers, circle, or "U" formation	4 rows of 5 containers, circle, or "U" formation
<b>Minimum Distance b/w Containers</b>	12" in all directions 36" between rows	12" in all directions If rows are used, 36" between rows	12" in all directions If rows are used, 36" between rows	12" in all directions If rows are used, 36" between rows
<b># of Hides</b>	1 (Known)	2 (Known)	3 (Known)	1-3 (Unknown)
<b>Time Limit</b>	2 minutes	2 minutes	3 minutes	4 minutes
<b>Distractions</b>	None	1 non-food distraction	2- non-food, food, auditory, or visual	3- non-food, food, auditory, visual, human, or "mimic"
<b>Required calls</b>	Alert only	2 Alert calls and Finish	3 Alert calls and Finish	Alert(s) and Finish
<b>Size of Search Area</b>	250-400 sq ft	400-600 sq ft	600-800 sq ft	600-800 sq ft

**Section 4. Interior Searches.** The interior search element tests the dog's ability to locate the target odor in an indoor search environment. The search will take place inside a room or rooms in a building (such as an office, classroom, kitchen, bathroom, warehouse, etc.). The entire room need not be utilized for the search area, but if part of the room is excluded from the search area then the boundaries should be clearly delineated with colored adhesive tape, caution tape, plastic fencing, or by some other method. The minimum and maximum times are specified, but the actual time limit in each of these classes will be determined by the judge.

**Interior Novice Class:** The target odor is hidden in a room or part of a room with an area of not less than 100 and not more than 200 square feet. The target odor of Birch is hidden on, under, or in an object within the room. There is one hide at this level, which must be accessible and may not be located higher than 24 inches (2 feet) off the

floor. There will be no intentional distractions. The dog must find the target scent and communicate the find to its handler. The handler must call “Alert” when the dog indicates the find. The time limit is set by the judge and must be between 1 and 3 minutes. The Interior Novice Class is open to all dogs.

**Interior Advanced Class:** The target odors are hidden in a room or part of a room with an area of not less than 200 and not more than 400 square feet. The target odors of Birch and/or Anise are hidden within the search area. There are two hides at this level, which must be accessible and may not be located higher than 36 inches (3 feet) off the floor. There will be one non-food distraction. The dog must find the target scents and communicate the finds to its handler. The handler must call “Alert” when the dog indicates each find. After the second “Alert” call, the handler must call “Finish” to indicate that all hides have been found and to stop the time. The time limit is set by the judge and must be between 1 and 3 minutes. The Interior Advanced Class is open to dogs who have acquired the Interior Novice (SIN) title.

**Interior Excellent Class:** The target odors of Birch and/or Clove and/or Anise are hidden in two distinct search areas in one or more rooms, or part of a room. The total space of the two search areas must not be less than 400 and not more than 800 square feet. Each search area will be worked independently, with a separate time limit. There are three hides at this level, 2 of which must be accessible and none of which may be located higher than 48 inches (4 feet) off the floor. There are two distractions, which may be non-food, food, auditory, or visual. The dog must find the target scents and communicate the finds to its handler. The handler must call “Alert” when the dog indicates each find. When the handler believes that all hides have been found in the search area, then he/she must call “Finish” to stop the time for that search area. The process will be repeated for the second search area, with the “Alert” call(s) and the “Finish” call to stop the time. The time limit is set by the judge and must be between 1 and 3 minutes per search area. The Interior Excellent Class is open to dogs who have acquired the Interior Advanced (SIA) title.

**Interior Master Class:** The target odor(s) of Birch and/or Clove and/or Anise and/or Cypress are hidden in two or three distinct search areas in one or more rooms, or part of a room. The total space of all search areas must be not less than 600 and not more than 1000 square feet. Each search area will be worked independently, with a separate time limit. There are an unknown number of total hides, either one, two, or three. Any or all hides may be inaccessible, but none may be located higher than 60 inches (5 feet) off the floor. One of the search areas may be “blank” (with no hide). There are three distractions, which may be non-food, food, auditory, visual, human, or mimic. The

dog must find the target scent(s) and communicate the find(s) to its handler. The handler must call “Alert” when the dog indicates each find. When the handler believes that all hides have been found in the search area, then he/she must call “Finish” to stop the time for that search area. The process will be repeated for each additional search area, with the “Alert” call(s) and “Finish” call to stop the time. The time limit is set by the judge and must be between 1 and 3 minutes per search area. The Interior Master Class is open to dogs who have acquired the Interior Excellent (SIE) title.

**The Interior Element**

	<b>Novice</b>	<b>Advanced</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Master</b>
<b>Scents</b>	Birch	Birch and/or Anise	Birch, Anise, and/or Clove	Birch and/or Anise and/or Clove and/or Cypress
<b># of Hides</b>	1 (Known)	2 (Known)	3 (Known)	1-3 (Unknown)
<b>Blank area</b>	None	None	None	Maximum 1
<b>Time Limit</b>	Set by judge; 1-3 minutes	Set by judge; 1-3 minutes	Set by judge; 1-3 minutes per search area	Set by judge; 1-3 minutes per search area
<b>Distractions</b>	None	1 non-food	2- non-food, food, auditory, or visual	3- non-food, food, auditory, visual, human, or “mimic”
<b>Required Calls</b>	Alert only	2 Alert calls and Finish	3 Alert calls, and Finish call	Alert call(s), and Finish call
<b>Max. Height of Hides</b>	24" (2 feet)	36" (3 feet)	48" (4 feet)	60" (5 feet)
<b>Accessibility</b>	Accessible only	Accessible only	1 hide may be inaccessible	All hides may be inaccessible
<b>Size of Search area(s)</b>	100-200 sq ft	200-400 sq ft	2 areas; 400-800 sq ft total	2-3 areas; 600-1000 sq ft total

**Section 5. Exterior Searches.** The exterior search element tests the dog’s ability to locate the target scent in an area with natural airflow, and in spite of everyday distractions such as the sounds and smells of nature. The search may be in a covered area but should have no more than two walls. The search area boundaries will be clearly delineated by colored adhesive tape, caution tape, flags, plastic fencing, ring gates, or by some other method. The minimum and maximum time are specified, but the actual time limit in each of these classes will be determined by the judge.

**Exterior Novice Class:** The target odor of Birch is hidden in an outdoor area at least 200 but not more than 400 square feet. There is one hide at this level, which must be accessible and may not be

located higher than 24 inches (2 feet) above the ground. There will be no intentional distractions. The dog must find the target scent and communicate the find to its handler. The handler must call “Alert” when the dog indicates the find. The time limit is set by the judge and must be between 2 and 4 minutes. The Exterior Novice Class is open to all dogs.

**Exterior Advanced Class:** The target odors of Birch and/or Anise are hidden in an outdoor area at least 400 but not more than 800 square feet. There are two hides at this level, which must be accessible and may not be located higher than 36 inches (3 feet) above the ground. There will be one non-food distraction. The dog must find the target scents and communicate the finds to its handler. The handler must call “Alert” when the dog indicates the finds. After the second “Alert” call, the handler must call “Finish” to indicate that all hides have been found and to stop the time. The time limit is set by the judge and must be between 2 and 4 minutes. The Exterior Advanced Class is open to dogs who have acquired the Exterior Novice (SEN) title.

**Exterior Excellent Class:** The target odors of Birch and/or Anise and/or Clove are hidden in an outdoor area not less than 800 but not more than 1500 square feet. There are three hides at this level, one of which may be inaccessible, and none of which may be located higher than 48 inches (4 feet) above the ground. There are two distractions, which may be non-food, food, auditory, or visual. The dog must find the target scents and communicate the finds to its handler. The handler must call “Alert” when the dog indicates the finds. After the third “Alert” call, the handler must call “Finish” to indicate that all hides have been found and to stop the time. The time limit is set by the judge and must be between 3 and 5 minutes. The Exterior Excellent Class is open to dogs who have acquired the Exterior Advanced (SEA) title.

**Exterior Master Class:** The target odor(s) of Birch and/or Anise and/or Clove and/or Cypress are hidden in an outdoor area not less than 1500 but not more than 2000 square feet. There are one, two, or three hides at this level, all of which may be inaccessible, none of which may be located higher than 60 inches (5 feet) above the ground. The exact number of hides is not known to the handler. There are three distractions, which may be non-food, food, auditory, visual, human, or “mimic.” When the handler believes that all hides have been located he/she must call “Finish” to stop the time. The time limit is set by the judge and must be between 3 and 5 minutes. The Exterior Master Class is open to dogs who have acquired the Exterior Excellent (SEE) title.

## The Exterior Element

	Novice	Advanced	Excellent	Master
<b>Scents</b>	Birch	Birch and/or Anise	Birch, Anise, and/or Clove	Birch and/or Anise and/or Clove and/or Cypress
<b># of Hides</b>	1 (Known)	2 (Known)	3 (Known)	1-3 (Unknown)
<b>Time Limit</b>	Set by judge, 2-4 minutes	Set by judge; 2-4 minutes	Set by judge; 3-5 minutes	Set by judge; 3-5 minutes
<b>Distractions</b>	None	1 non-food	2- non-food, food, auditory, or visual	3- non-food, food, auditory, visual, human, or "mimic"
<b>Required Calls</b>	Alert	2 Alert calls, Finish call	3 Alert calls, Finish call	Alert call(s), Finish call
<b>Max. Height of Hides</b>	24" (2 feet)	36" (3 feet)	48" (4 feet)	60" (5 feet)
<b>Accessibility</b>	Accessible only	Accessible only	1 hide may be inaccessible	All hides may be inaccessible
<b>Size of Search area(s)</b>	200-400 sq ft	400-800 sq ft	800-1500 sq ft	1500-2000 sq ft

**Section 6. Buried Searches.** The Buried search element simulates the task of Human Remains Dogs to search for scents that have been buried under the ground. The Novice and Advanced classes use containers filled with store-bought soil (see Chapter 5, Section 8 above for size requirements), and may be conducted indoors or outdoors. The Excellent and Master classes are outside, in an area where scent vessels can be buried beneath sand or soil. Empty scent vessels will also be buried so that the handler or dog are not cued to the hide location by upturned dirt. The search area boundaries will be clearly delineated by colored adhesive tape, caution tape, flags, plastic fencing, ring gates, or by some other method. It is expected that dogs may dig when they locate the scent, but handlers should minimize this as much as possible. Handlers can be assessed a fault if they do not attempt to control a digging dog, however, digging should *not* be considered a disruption of the search area requiring an NQ.

**Special Considerations: Containers.** Clubs may choose to utilize a screen over top of the buried containers to prevent disruption of the soil if the dog attempts to dig. The screen may be made of any material but glass. The screen may be raised above the top of the container, but the total dimensions of the container with the screen cannot exceed the dimensions specified in Chapter 5, Section 8.

**Special Considerations: Soil conditions.** Store-bought soil that is used for the Novice and Advanced Buried classes should be free from fertilizers and any chemical additives. Clubs should take care to ensure that the location chosen for Excellent and Master Buried classes was not recently treated with insecticide (either chemical or “natural”).

**Special Considerations: Soil-borne illnesses.** Clubs may choose to take special precautions to prevent transmission of soil-borne illnesses if this is a concern. Some possible precautions include: using a “core sampler” rather than digging to reduce airborne transmission of vectors, and filling pre-dug holes with store-bought dirt. If such precautions are planned, they should be mentioned in the premium list. This provision does not allow for the modification of any class requirements.

**Buried Novice Class:** Six lidless containers (such as plastic bins) will be placed in the search area, in two rows of three, at least 36 inches apart. The search area must be at least 150 but not more than 200 square feet. Each of the containers will hold at least three inches of sand or soil, and one of those will have the scent vessel containing Birch, buried two inches down. The dog has two minutes to locate the target scent and communicate the find to its handler. The handler must call “Alert” when the dog indicates the find. The Buried Novice Class is open to all dogs.

**Buried Advanced Class:** Eight lidless containers (such as plastic bins) will be placed in the search area, in any arrangement, at least 36 inches apart. The search area must be at least 150 but not more than 200 square feet. Each of the containers will hold at least five inches of sand or soil, and two of those will have the scent vessel containing Birch and/or Anise, buried four inches down. There is one non-food distraction, which can be inside a container or loose in the search area, but if it is in a container it may NOT be in the same container as the odor. The distraction is not buried. The dog has three minutes to locate the target scent and communicate the find to its handler. The handler must call “Alert” when the dog indicates the find. After the second “Alert” call, the handler must call “Finish” to indicate that all hides have been found and to stop the time. The Buried Advanced Class is open to dogs who have acquired the Buried Novice (SBN) title.

**Buried Excellent Class:** The search area must be at least 200 but not more than 300 square feet in an outdoor area. The area need not be open and can include plants, trees, or structures between the burial locations (playgrounds with sand are ideal for this search). Three scent vessels that contain the target odor of Birch and/or Anise and/or Clove will be buried in the search area. The scent vessels will be buried so as to be covered with six inches of sand or soil. There will be five “false

burials,” where an empty scent vessel is buried. False burials must be at least 3 inches deep. Vessels can be buried in any arrangement, but must be at least 36 inches apart. There are two distractions, which may be non-food, food, auditory, or visual. Distractions are not buried. The dog has four minutes to locate the target scents and communicate the finds to its handler. The handler must call “Alert” when the dog indicates each find. After the third “Alert” call, the handler must call “Finish” to indicate that all hides have been found and to stop the time. The Buried Excellent Class is open to dogs who have acquired the Buried Advanced (SBA) title.

**Buried Master Class:** The search area must be at least 300 but not more than 400 square feet. The area need not be open and can include plants, trees, or structures between the burial locations. One, two, or three scent vessels that contain the target odor of Birch and/or Anise and/or Clove and/or Cypress will be buried in the search area. The exact number of hides will not be known to the handler. The scent vessels will be buried so as to be covered with eight inches of sand or soil. There will be at least five “false burials,” where an empty scent vessel is buried. Vessels can be buried in any arrangement, but must be at least 36 inches apart. There are three distractions, which may be non-food, food, auditory, visual, human, or “mimic.” Distractions are not buried. The dog has five minutes to locate the target scent(s) and communicate the find(s) to its handler. The handler must call “Alert” when the dog indicates the find. When the handler believes that all hides have been located he/she must call “Finish” to stop the time. The Buried Master Class is open to dogs who have acquired the Buried Excellent (SBE) title.



## The Buried Element

	<b>Novice</b>	<b>Advanced</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Master</b>
<b>Scents</b>	Birch	Birch and/or Anise	Birch, Anise, and/or Clove	Birch and/or Anise and/or Clove and/or Cypress
<b># of Hides</b>	1 (Known)	2 (Known)	3 (Known)	1-3 (Unknown)
<b># of Containers</b>	6	8	n/a	n/a
<b># False burials</b>	n/a	n/a	5	At least 5
<b>Arrangement</b>	2 rows of 3	Any	Any	Any
<b>Search Time</b>	2 minutes	3 minutes	4 minutes	5 minutes
<b>Depth</b>	2 inches	4 inches	6 inches	8 inches
<b>Distance b/w vessels or containers</b>	36 inches	36 inches	36 inches	36 inches
<b>Vegetation / Structures</b>	Search area must be open	Search area must be open	Area can include plants, trees, or structures	Area can include plants, trees, or structures
<b>Distractions</b>	None	1 non-food	2- non-food, food, auditory, or visual	3- non-food, food, auditory, visual, human, or "mimic"
<b>Required Calls</b>	Alert	2 Alert calls and Finish call	3 Alert calls and Finish call	Alert call(s) and Finish call
<b>Search Area</b>	150-200 sq ft	150-200 sq ft	200-300 sq ft	300-400 sq ft

## CHAPTER 8 – HANDLER DISCRIMINATION DIVISION

**Section 1. The Handler Discrimination Division.** Classes in which the target scent is the handler's scent, rather than the odor of an essential oil, are deemed to be part of the Handler Discrimination Division.

**Section 2. Scented Article.** The handler is required to provide the scented article for Handler Discrimination Classes. For the Novice class, the required scented article is a cotton glove or cotton sock. For the Advanced, Excellent, and Master classes, the required scented articles may be cotton balls or cotton swabs. The article(s) should be thoroughly scented by the handler and sealed in a plastic bag to be hidden on the course.

**Section 3. Scenting the Article.** Handlers may utilize any method that they wish to scent the article. Suggestions include rubbing the article on the handler's body or storing the article in dirty laundry.

**Section 4. Handlers as Spectators.** Handlers may watch other search teams, even for the classes in which they are competing and have not yet run.

**Section 5. Search Area.** The boundaries of the search area will be clearly delineated by colored adhesive tape, caution tape, flags, plastic fencing, ring gates, or by some other method. The search area for the Novice (container) search may be either indoors or outdoors. Dogs and handlers may cross search boundaries without penalty during the search, as long as they remain working.

**Section 6. Difficulty Levels.** Classes within the Handler Discrimination Division are offered in four difficulty levels, each with its own specific set of requirements: Novice, Advanced, Excellent, and Master.

**Section 7. Hiding the Scented Article.** The hide steward will be responsible for hiding the handler-scented article and will wear latex or nitrile gloves while doing so. The hide steward will collect the plastic bag containing the scented article(s) from the handler when he or she is called to the search area for their run. The handler will then retreat to a location blocked by a wall or partition while the scented article is placed on the course. The hide steward will proceed to the location determined by the judge for the hide, remove the handler-scented article from the plastic bag, and affix the article to the object or surface. The scented article may be affixed to an object or surface with tape, adhesive putty (such as QuakeHold) or by any other method, so long as it does not harm the object or surface. The handler-scented

article does not need to be enclosed in a scent vessel. The steward will then call the handler to the start line with their dog.

**Section 8. Returning the Scented Article to the Handler.** At the conclusion of the search the hide steward will remove the article from the hide location and return it to the plastic bag. The sealed plastic bag will then be returned to the handler before he or she leaves the search area.

**Section 9. Re-Use of Containers for the Novice Search.** The hide location may be different for each dog in a class. The club shall provide one container per handler, and no container used for a handler's scent can be subsequently re-used. When setting the course, the container with the handler's scent will replace an empty container. When returning the scented article to the handler, the empty container will be returned to the space so that there are always 10 containers in the search area.

**Section 10. Handler Discrimination Novice.** Container Search. Ten identical cardboard box containers (see Chapter 5, Section 8 above for size requirements) are laid out on the floor of the search area in two rows of five. Each box must be at least 12" apart, and each row must be at least 36" apart. The search area must be at least 250 and no more than 400 square feet, and no items other than the containers may be present in the search area. One of the containers holds the article scented by the handler, one holds an article scented by the judge, and eight of the containers are empty. The scented article must be a cotton glove or cotton sock. There are no intentional distractions. The dog has two minutes to locate the container with the handler-scented article and communicate the find to its handler. The handler must call "Alert" when the dog indicates the find. The Handler Discrimination Novice Class is open to all dogs.

**Section 11. Handler Discrimination Advanced.** Interior Search. The handler-scented article—which must be a cotton ball or cotton swab—is hidden in a room or part of a room with an area of not less than 150 and not more than 400 square feet. There is one hide at this level, which must be accessible and may not be located higher than 24 inches off the floor. Also hidden on the course is one scent aid scented by the judge. There are no intentional distractions. The dog must locate the handler scent and communicate the find to its handler. The handler must call "Alert" when the dog indicates the find. The time limit is set by the judge and must be between 2 and 5 minutes. The Handler Discrimination Advanced Class is open to dogs who have earned the Handler Discrimination Novice (SHDN) title.

**Section 12. Handler Discrimination Excellent.** Outdoor search. The handler-scented article—which must be a cotton ball or cotton swab—is hidden in outdoor area at least 400 but not more than 600 square feet. There is one hide at this level, which must be accessible and may not be located higher than 24 inches above the ground. Also hidden on the course is one scent aid scented by the judge. There is one non-food distraction. The dog must locate the handler scent and communicate the find to its handler. The handler must call “Alert” when the dog indicates the find. The time limit is set by the judge and must be between 3 and 6 minutes. The Handler Discrimination Excellent Class is open to dogs who have earned the Handler Discrimination Advanced (SHDA) title.

**Section 13. Handler Discrimination Master.** Combined search. At this level the search area presents the team with two or more elements (container, interior, or exterior) within one search. For example, the search area may span indoors and outdoors, may be an indoor search that includes containers, or any other combination. The handler scent may not be buried. Three handler-scented articles are hidden in two or three distinct search areas. The total space of all search areas must be not less than 300 and not more than 800 square feet. Each search area will be worked independently, with a separate time limit. None of the search areas may be blank. None of the hides may be inaccessible, and none may be located higher than 24 inches above the ground. Also hidden on the course are two additional scent aids, one scented by the judge, and one scented by a steward. There are one or two distractions at this level, which may be non-food, food, visual, auditory, human, or “mimic.” The dog must find the handler scents and communicate the finds to its handler. The handler must call “Alert” when the dog indicates each find. In each search area, the handler must call “Finish” to indicate that all hides have been found and to stop the time. The time limit is set by the judge and must be between 2 and 3 minutes for each search area. The Handler Discrimination Master Class is open to dogs who have earned the Handler Discrimination Excellent (SHDE) title.

## Handler Discrimination

	Novice	Advanced	Excellent	Master
Search Environment	Container	Interior	Exterior	At least 2 different
# of Hides	1	1	1	3
Article	Cotton glove/ cotton sock	Cotton balls/ swabs	Cotton balls/ swabs	Cotton balls/swabs
Number of Scents	1 handler 1 judge	1 handler 1 judge	1 handler 1 judge	3 handler 1 judge 1 steward
Max Height	On ground	24" (2 feet)	24" (2 feet)	24" (2 feet)
Distractions	None	None	1 non-food	1 or 2, non-food, food, visual, auditory, human, or "mimic"
Time	2 minutes	Set by judge; 2-5 minutes	Set by judge; 3-6 minutes	Set by judge; 2-3 minutes per search area
Search Area Size	250-400 sq ft	150-400 sq ft	400-600 sq ft	2-3 areas; 300-800 sq ft total

## CHAPTER 9 – THE DETECTIVE CLASS

**Section 1. The Detective Class.** The Detective Class offers an integrated search environment with an unknown number of hides in a variety of elements. The intent of the Detective Class is to emulate as closely as possible the work of a true detection dog.

**Section 2. Eligibility.** The Detective Class is open to dogs who have acquired at least one Master title within the Odor Search Division (SCM, SIM, SEM, or SBM).

**Section 3. Search Area.** The course must span both the interior and exterior of a building or structure. The total search area must be at least 2000 but not more than 5000 square feet. Any excluded areas will be clearly defined, but there will be no separate and distinct search areas. Teams may wander in and out of included rooms, and go back and forth between interior and exterior areas when seeking hides.

**Section 4. Number and Placement of Hides.** There should be a total of five to ten hides per course. Hides can be on, under, or in any object or container, at any height. Hides can also be buried in house plants or in the exterior grounds. Anywhere in the search area is fair game, except that hides cannot be in the search boundary markers or on the persons of judges, stewards, or human distractions.

**Section 5. Search Time.** The total search time will be determined by the judge and must be between 7 and 15 minutes, and the official timer will make their best effort to give a 30 second warning prior to the expiration of the time.

**Section 6. Target Scent.** The target scent may be Birch and/or Anise and/or Clove and/or Cypress. All odors need not be present, and each odor can be used multiple times.

**Section 7. Distractions.** Four to six intentional distractions (of any type discussed in these rules) will be used on the course.

**Section 8. “Alert” Call.** The dog must find the target scents and communicate the finds to its handler. The handler must call “Alert” when the dog indicates each find.

**Section 9. “Finish” Call.** The handler should call “Finish” when he or she believes all hides have been located for the entire course.

**Section 10. Course Map.** After the “Finish” call or at the expiration of the allotted time the handler will be told whether they qualified and be presented with a course map showing the location of each hide on the course.

**Section 11. Spectators.** The trial-giving Club should make every effort to allow spectators to observe at least part of the course. Whenever possible, spectator area(s) should be created to allow guests and other handlers to observe these elite and accomplished search teams. Handlers participating in the Detective Class may not observe others until after the completion of their run.

**The Detective Class**

<b>Target Odor</b>	Birch and/or Anise and/or Clove and/or Cypress
<b># of Hides</b>	5-10 per course
<b>Search Area Size</b>	2000-5000 square feet total
<b>Known or Unknown Hides</b>	Unknown number of hides
<b>Distractions</b>	4-6; any type
<b>Max Height of Hides</b>	No maximum
<b>Time Limit</b>	Set by judge; 7-15 minutes
<b>Required Calls</b>	Alerts and finish
<b>Accessibility</b>	All hides may be inaccessible

## CHAPTER 10 – TITLES

**Section 1. AKC Scent Work Titles, In General.** AKC Scent Work titles may be added after the name of each dog that has been certified to have received the necessary number of qualifying performances at each class and level. Higher-level titles will supersede all lower-level titles, but Elite titles may only be superseded by higher-level Elite titles.

**Section 2. Number of Judges.** AKC Scent Work titles are earned by acquiring the required number of legs, under any number of judges. It is permissible for all legs to be earned under the same judge.

**Section 3. Odor Search Division Basic Element Titles.** The titles below will be granted when **three** qualifying scores are earned during Odor Search Division classes.

- Scent Work Container Novice (SCN)
- Scent Work Container Advanced (SCA)
- Scent Work Container Excellent (SCE)
- Scent Work Container Master (SCM)
  
- Scent Work Interior Novice (SIN)
- Scent Work Interior Advanced (SIA)
- Scent Work Interior Excellent (SIE)
- Scent Work Interior Master (SIM)
  
- Scent Work Exterior Novice (SEN)
- Scent Work Exterior Advanced (SEA)
- Scent Work Exterior Excellent (SEE)
- Scent Work Exterior Master (SEM)
  
- Scent Work Buried Novice (SBN)
- Scent Work Buried Advanced (SBA)
- Scent Work Buried Excellent (SBE)
- Scent Work Buried Master (SBM)

**Section 4. Odor Search Division Basic Level Titles.** When a dog earns every element basic title in the same difficulty level, they will be granted the Level title. A level title supersedes all basic element titles of that level.

- Container Novice
  - Interior Novice
  - Exterior Novice
  - Buried Novice
  
  - Container Advanced
  - Interior Advanced
  - Exterior Advanced
  - Buried Advanced
- > Scent Work Novice (SWN)
- > Scent Work Advanced (SWA)



Container Excellent	→	Scent Work Excellent (SWE)
Interior Excellent		
Exterior Excellent		
Buried Excellent		
Container Master	→	Scent Work Master (SWM)
Interior Master		
Exterior Master		
Buried Master		

**Section 5. Odor Search Division Elite Element Titles.** The titles below will be granted when **ten** qualifying scores are earned during Odor Search Division classes.

- Scent Work Container Novice Elite (SCNE)
- Scent Work Container Advanced Elite (SCAE)
- Scent Work Container Excellent Elite (SCEE)
- Scent Work Container Master Elite (SCME)
- Scent Work Interior Novice Elite (SINE)
- Scent Work Interior Advanced Elite (SIAE)
- Scent Work Interior Excellent Elite (SIEE)
- Scent Work Interior Master Elite (SIME)
- Scent Work Exterior Novice Elite (SENE)
- Scent Work Exterior Advanced Elite (SEAE)
- Scent Work Exterior Excellent Elite (SEEE)
- Scent Work Exterior Master Elite (SEME)
- Scent Work Buried Novice Elite (SBNE)
- Scent Work Buried Advanced Elite (SBAE)
- Scent Work Buried Excellent Elite (SBEE)
- Scent Work Buried Master Elite (SBME)

**Section 6. Odor Search Division Elite Level Titles.** When a dog earns every element Elite title in the same difficulty level, they will be granted the Elite level title. An Elite level title supersedes all Elite element titles of that level.

Container Novice Elite	→	Scent Work Novice Elite (SWNE)
Interior Novice Elite		
Exterior Novice Elite		
Buried Novice Elite		
Container Advanced Elite	→	Scent Work Advanced Elite (SWAE)
Interior Advanced Elite		
Exterior Advanced Elite		
Buried Advanced Elite		

Container Excellent Elite		
Interior Excellent Elite	→	Scent Work Excellent Elite (SWEE)
Exterior Excellent Elite		
Buried Excellent Elite		
Container Master Elite		
Interior Master Elite	→	Scent Work Master Elite (SWME)
Exterior Master Elite		
Buried Master Elite		

**Section 7. Handler Discrimination Division Basic Titles.** The titles below will be granted when **three** qualifying scores are earned during Handler Discrimination Division classes.

- Scent Work Handler Discrimination Novice (SHDN)
- Scent Work Handler Discrimination Advanced (SHDA)
- Scent Work Handler Discrimination Excellent (SHDE)
- Scent Work Handler Discrimination Master (SHDM)

**Section 8. Handler Discrimination Division Elite Titles.** The titles below will be granted when **ten** qualifying scores are earned during Handler Discrimination Division classes.

- Scent Work Handler Discrimination Novice Elite (SHDNE)
- Scent Work Handler Discrimination Advanced Elite (SHDAE)
- Scent Work Handler Discrimination Excellent Elite (SHDEE)
- Scent Work Handler Discrimination Master Elite (SHDME)

**Section 9. The Scent Work Detective Title.** The Scent Work Detective (SWD) title will be granted when **ten** qualifying scores are earned in the Scent Work Detective class.

## CHAPTER 11 – HANDLING DOG AGGRESSION

**Section 1. Event Committee Responsibility.** Any dog that, in the opinion of the Event Committee, attacks a person or a dog at an AKC event, resulting in an injury, and is believed by that Event Committee to present a hazard to persons or other dogs, shall be disqualified. When the dog is disqualified by the Event Committee pursuant to this section, a report shall be filed with the Executive Secretary of the American Kennel Club. The disqualified dog may not again compete at any AKC event nor be on the grounds of an AKC event unless and until, following application for reinstatement by the owner to the American Kennel Club, the owner receives official notification in writing from the AKC that the dog's eligibility has been reinstated. If the Event Committee becomes aware of any act of dog aggression that takes place in association with their event the Committee must look into the incident and complete the form (AEDSQ4). No exhibitor complaint is required.

### **Section 2. Judge's Responsibility.**

1. If the dog displays threatening or menacing behavior towards a person during the search, a dog at the start line, or a dog or person outside the search area, or the dog leaves the search area and displays these behaviors toward a dog or person outside the search area:
  - The judge must excuse the dog from the search and mark "excused" in the catalog, stating the reason. This information is to be included in the Judge's Report to the Director of Performance Events.
2. If a dog leaves the search area and attacks another dog, or runs into the search area and attacks another dog:
  - The judge must excuse the dog and seriously consider doing so for the remainder of the day or series of events, and must mark "excused" in the catalog, stating the reason.
  - The judge must fill out a current "Dog On Dog Attack Form" (AEDSQ3) and have the Event Committee/Secretary fax it to the AKC Companion Operations within 72 hours of the incident.
3. If a dog attacks any person in the search area:
  - The judge must disqualify the dog, and mark "disqualified" in the catalog, stating the reason.
  - The judge must fill out a current "Disqualification For Attacking Form" (AEDSQ1) and have the Event Committee/Secretary fax it to the AKC Companion Operations within 72 hours of the incident.

### **Section 3. Excusal vs. Disqualification.**

In any of the above situations, if there is an EXCUSAL, this type of report becomes part of the dog's record and is applied toward the dog being barred from AKC Scent Work events. If two separate incidents are reported to the Performance Events Director the dog will be barred from all future AKC Scent Work events.

In any of the above situations, if there is a DISQUALIFICATION, this type of report signifies that the dog may not compete at any AKC event nor be on the grounds of any AKC event unless and until, following application for reinstatement by the owner to the AKC, the owner receives official notification in writing from the AKC that the dog's eligibility has been reinstated.

If a dog is DISQUALIFIED and the Event Committee determines the dog to be a possible danger, the dog must be removed from the show grounds. The Event Committee always has the option of asking that any dog be removed from the show grounds if they feel that the dog is a threat to other dogs or to people.

**Section 4. Submission of Reports to the AKC.** In all instances of aggression associated with an event:

- The judge must submit to the Director of Performance Events a written report of the incident along with the judge's trial report.
- The Trial Secretary must submit to the AKC a written report of the incident along with the trial catalog.

## CHAPTER 12—GLOSSARY AND INDEX

**Accessible Hide:** A hide that is reachable by a dog such that he is able to put his nose on it. Page 24.

**Alert:** A communication from the handler to the judge that the dog has indicated the location of the scent. Pages 8, 24, 28, 32.

**Alert Behavior:** see “Indication.”

**Armband Number:** A numerical designation given to each dog in a trial. The armband number need not be physically displayed by the dog or handler, but is used on score sheets and in judge’s books to help identify the particular dog. Page 19.

**Auditory Distraction:** Any unusual sound in the search area. May be continuous or spontaneous, automatic or controlled. Page 30.

**Blank Area:** A search area in which there are no hides. The dog must search and the handler must call “Finish” to proceed to the next search area. Pages 41, 50.

**Catalog:** A document that provides information on each class—entrant information including (but not limited to) armband number, dog’s registered name, dog’s breed, dog’s date of birth, owner’s name, owner’s address, and result; and data on the class itself, including number of entries, number of starters, number of withdrawn entries, number of qualifiers, and name of the judge. Catalogs submitted to the AKC must bear the judge’s initials on each page. Pages 19, 20-21, 25.

**Change of Behavior:** Behavior by the dog which makes it clear to the judge that the dog has found the scent. This could be subtle, such as movement of the ears, or overt such as sitting or pawing at the location. Page 35.

**Class:** A particular element and difficulty level (ex: Novice Container, Advanced Exterior, etc.) Pages 5-6, 7, 11, 16, 38, 48.

**Closing Date and Time:** The date and time beyond which no further entries for the trial will be accepted. Entries received after the closing date and time are invalid and should be returned as soon as possible. Pages 10, 12, 14, 16, 18.

**Contamination:** When a handler or dog violates the integrity of the search area or hide such that significant time, replacement objects, or a relocation of the hide are required to bring the course back to usable condition. Pages 29, 32.

**Disqualification:** A procedure, instituted by either the judge or the Event Committee, in which a dog is barred from future AKC events due to aggression. Page 57.

**Difficulty Level:** Novice, Advanced, Excellent, or Master. Pages 5-7, 38, 48.

**Division:** Odor Search or Handler Discrimination. Pages 5-6, 38, 48.

**Element:** A particular search environment. The elements are Container, Interior, Exterior, and Buried. Pages 5-6, 38.

**Event Committee:** A group of at least 5 persons who together have complete responsibility for planning and conducting the event, and who may delegate duties to other officials or volunteers as necessary. The Trial Chairperson and four other people comprise the Event Committee. Pages 12, 15, 57.

**Excusal:** When a team is asked to stop searching and leave the search area in response to specific conditions or behaviors on the part of the dog or handler. Pages 36, 58.

**Find:** A hide that has been located by the dog and called by the handler.

**Finish:** The handler is required to call “Finish” when he or she believes that all hides for a search area have been located and called. The “Finish” call stops the official search time. Pages 28-29, 32.

**Food Distraction:** A food distraction may be any dog or human food other than chocolate, grapes, avocados, onion, cherries or anything containing xylitol. The food distraction must be contained such that the dog that is searching cannot consume the food. Page 30.

**Handler:** The individual who takes the dog through the search. This person may or may not be the official Owner of the dog. Pages 5-6, 8.

**Handler Discrimination Division:** Classes in which the target scent is the handler’s scent, rather than the odor of an essential oil. Pages 6, 48.

**Hide:** A hide refers to an instance of the target odor within the search area. Depending on the difficulty level and element the class may have multiple hides. All hides must be located and called in order to achieve a qualifying score. Page 5.

**Hide Steward:** The individual at the trial who is in charge of placing the scented article or scent vessel in the location designated by the judge. To minimize contamination, the hide steward is the only person who may handle the odor, and the hide steward shall not handle any other objects in the search area. Pages 13, 24, 32, 48-49.

**Human Distraction:** A human, other than the judge or other officials, who is present in the search area to serve as a distraction. Page 31.

**Inaccessible Hide:** A hide that the dog is not able to place his or her nose on. A hide can either be “inaccessible to all dogs” (such as hidden inside a drawer or on the backside of a piece of furniture against a wall), or “inaccessible to some dogs” (such as a high hide that short dogs would not be able to reach). Pages 24-25.

**Indication:** An indication (or “Alert Behavior”) is a behavior on the part of the dog that is intended to communicate to the handler that the target odor has been found.

**Judge:** The official who evaluates the handler-dog team’s performance during the event. The judge is responsible for course design and selecting the hide location, issuing NQ faults and excusals when necessary, and making the final call on any and all matters dealing with a search performance. Page 23.

**Judging Program:** A publication that presents the schedule of classes and number of dogs in each class. The program may, but is not required to, include the order of dogs within each class. Specific start times need not be included in the judging program, but if included, classes may not start prior to the published start times. Pages 19, 27.

**Junior Handler:** Any person who is less than 18 years of age on the day of the trial who handles a dog in an AKC event. Junior Handlers need not have an AKC Junior Handler number to compete, but credit toward awards will not be earned unless the Junior had an AKC Junior Handler number prior to the date of the trial. Pages 10-11.

**Lateral Transfer:** A request on the part of an owner or handler to change the class of a dog from the Novice A class to the Novice B class. Page 16.

**Leg:** A qualifying performance is also sometimes referred to as a “leg.” Three legs are needed to earn most titles.

**Mimic Distraction:** An object (such as a statue or stuffed animal) that depicts a realistic-looking animal, placed in the search area to serve as a distraction. Page 31.

**Move-Up Transfer:** A request on the part of an owner or handler to change the class of a dog from that reflected on the original entry form to a more advanced class. Move-ups are proper if a dog satisfies the requirements for a title after the closing date. Page 16.

**Move-Down Transfer:** A request on the part of an owner or handler to change the class of a dog from that reflected on the original entry form to a less advanced class. Move-downs are proper if a handler

mistakenly entered the dog in a higher-level class for which it is not eligible. Page 16.

**Non-Food Distraction:** A non-food distraction may be any item, other than food, that might be enticing to a dog. A used tennis ball is a prime example. The non-food distraction may not contain any artificial scent (such as another essential oil, a perfume, or a scented lotion), but it may contain the scent of another animal (such as a cat toy, or hamster litter). Page 30.

**Non-Qualifying Performance (NQ):** A Non-Qualifying performance is a run in which the handler-dog team does not satisfy the requirements for the run to be recorded on the dog's record and to count toward titles. Page 35.

**Odor Search Division:** Classes in which the target scent is one or more of the specified essential oils. Page 38.

**Official Timer:** The person responsible for keeping the search time of each handler-dog team. This person shall monitor and record the actual time it takes the team to complete the search, ensure that the team does not exceed the maximum allowable time for the search, and provide a 30 second warning to the team when feasible. Pages 13, 32.

**Opening Date and Time:** The date and time at which entries will begin to be accepted for a trial. Entries received by the Trial Secretary prior to the opening date and time are invalid and are to be returned as soon as possible. Page 12.

**Premium List:** A publication of a specific form that advertises the trial and provides detailed information on that trial to prospective entrants. Premium lists must be made available at least two (2) weeks prior to the opening date of that trial. Premium lists are typically available via the club's website. Pages 13-14.

**Qualifying Performance (Q):** A Qualifying performance (or "Q") is a run in which the handler-dog team satisfies the requirements for the run to be recorded on the dog's record and to count toward titles. See also "Leg." Pages 5-6, 35-36.

**Reward/Reinforcer:** Any object or handler behavior (such as food or petting) that serves to mark and encourage a dog to repeat a desirable behavior. Page 29.

**Running Order:** The sequence in which the dogs entered in each class will be run. The running order may, but is not required to, be included in the judging program. The trial may deviate from the published running order if a conflict exists or if it facilitates the smooth running of the trial. Page 19.



**Scent Aid:** A cotton ball or cotton swab that is permeated with the target odor. The scent aid is placed inside a scent vessel and then hidden in the search area. Pages 13, 26.

**Scented Article:** Any object that has been intentionally permeated with handler scent for the purposes of the search. Scented articles can include a cotton glove or cotton sock. Pages 8, 27, 48-49.

**Search Area:** The area on the trial grounds where the actual searching and judging activities take place. Page 26.

**Spectator:** An individual who is not involved in the administration of the trial who observes a team's search performance. A spectator may be related or may be a stranger to the search team. Spectators are encouraged, when feasible, at AKC Scent Work trials. Pages 19, 33, 48, 53.

**Staging Area:** An area on the trial grounds out of view of the search area(s). The staging area will include all parking, crating, warm-up, and waiting areas, as well as the secretary's table for check-ins, and posting of running order and results. The staging area and search area(s) shall be separated by geographical features, walls, and/or artificial barriers. Page 19.

**Start Line:** A clearly marked boundary beyond which the search area lies. The dog must cross the start line in order to begin the search. Pages 28, 32.

**Steward:** An individual who assists in the orderly conduction of the trial. Some stewards will work in the search area and act as assistants to the judge, and others will work in the staging area and be responsible for ushering teams to the start line when it is their turn to search. Page 31.

**Target Odor:** The specific scent or scents for which the dog is searching in a particular class. The target odor can be essential oil(s) or handler scent, depending on the division. Page 38.

**Time Limit:** The maximum time for each course, beyond which any team who has not located and called all hides will NQ. Page 24.

**Title:** A specific achievement on the part of a dog or a Junior Handler. Any earned title appears as a designation behind the dog's registered name on all future American Kennel Club title certificates and pedigrees, unless and until they are superseded by a higher title. Pages 54-56.

**Training:** Any activity intended to strengthen or improve a dog's abilities, skills, or knowledge. Specifically for Scent Work, training consists of rewarding a dog for locating and alerting to one of the target odors, outside of the formal search. Page 33.

**Trial Chairperson:** The individual tasked with the planning and execution of a trial on behalf of the club. The Trial Chairperson must be a club member. Page 12.

**Trial Secretary:** The individual tasked with the operation of the trial. Their role includes accepting entries, maintaining the database of entrants and results, organizing and submitting the catalog, and/or any other duties as specified by the Event Committee. The Trial Secretary does not need to be a club member. Page 12.

**Visual Distraction:** A light within the search area. May be continuous or spontaneous, automatic or controlled. Page 30.

**Withdrawn Entry:** An entry, previously accepted by the Trial Secretary, for which the owner or handler communicates to the Trial Secretary in writing that the dog will decline to utilize. Entries may only be withdrawn for females in season or judge changes. Withdrawn entries are subject to refunds and do not count toward the total entry numbers of the trial. Pages 14, 20, 21.

## AKC Code of Sportsmanship

*PREFACE: The sport of purebred dog competitive events dates prior to 1884, the year of AKC's birth. Shared values of those involved in the sport include principles of sportsmanship. They are practiced in all sectors of our sport: conformation, performance and companion. Many believe that these principles of sportsmanship are the prime reason why our sport has thrived for over one hundred years. With the belief that it is useful to periodically articulate the fundamentals of our sport, this code is presented.*

- Sportsmen respect the history, traditions and integrity of the sport of purebred dogs.
- Sportsmen commit themselves to values of fair play, honesty, courtesy, and vigorous competition, as well as winning and losing with grace.
- Sportsmen refuse to compromise their commitment and obligation to the sport of purebred dogs by injecting personal advantage or consideration into their decisions or behavior.
- The sportsman judge judges only on the merits of the dogs and considers no other factors.
- The sportsman judge or exhibitor accepts constructive criticism.
- The sportsman exhibitor declines to enter or exhibit under a judge where it might reasonably appear that the judge's placements could be based on something other than the merits of the dogs.
- The sportsman exhibitor refuses to compromise the impartiality of a judge.
- The sportsman respects the AKC bylaws, rules, regulations and policies governing the sport of purebred dogs.
- Sportsmen find that vigorous competition and civility are not inconsistent and are able to appreciate the merit of their competition and the effort of competitors.
- Sportsmen welcome, encourage and support newcomers to the sport.
- Sportsmen will deal fairly with all those who trade with them.
- Sportsmen are willing to share honest and open appraisals of both the strengths and weaknesses of their breeding stock.
- Sportsmen spurn any opportunity to take personal advantage of positions offered or bestowed upon them.
- Sportsmen always consider as paramount the welfare of their dog.
- Sportsmen refuse to embarrass the sport, the American Kennel Club, or themselves while taking part in the sport.

Complete text of booklet available at:  
[www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org)

To order booklet(s), contact AKC at:  
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