

FEDERATION CYNOLOGIQUE INTERNATIONALE (AISBL)

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FCI PARA DOG DANCING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP REGULATIONS



1. General

These regulations describe how to organise, participate and judge para dog dancing world championships. All things stated in the Regulations for FCI International Dog Dancing Competitions also apply to Para Dog Dancing events unless specifically stated otherwise in these regulations.

2. Eligibility to enter the Para Dog Dancing World Championship

All para-athletes enter in two classes: HTM or freestyle. Para classes are only meant for handlers with disabilities severely/significantly affecting their performance in regular classes. Disabled dogs do not qualify for para dog dancing competitions, the same requirements stand regarding dogs' health as in other international dog dancing competitions. **In Para Dog Dancing World Championships only dogs with an official registration issued by the relevant FCI-NCO** are allowed to enter. Each country may enter one para-athlete to HTM and one to Freestyle and name a reserve for both of them.

To qualify, the handler has to obtain a written statement from a doctor. The statement should include at least the following information:

- statement of disability
- information about aids needed (wheelchair, walking aids, cane (for visually impaired), personal assistant (see more in paragraph 5).
- mobility restrictions: walking restrictions, running/jumping restrictions, balance restrictions etc.

The NCO is primarily responsible for evaluating the participant's eligibility to enter para dog dancing classes. The NCO should only enter para-athletes whose disability makes it impossible to compete in the regular classes to a reasonably similar standard. The organisers may refuse an entry if the team can't show a doctor's statement regarding their eligibility. A handler may only enter in dog dancing world championships or para dog dancing world championships during a specific year, not both. A handler is allowed to move back to regular classes in later years after competing in para dog dancing championships.

The competitor should always carry their documentation (i.e. written doctor's statement) with them during the event. These can be verified by the organisers during the event and as the participant enters, they agree to showing their documentation to the organiser/head judge if necessary. They also agree upon entering that the information about aids needed and mobility restrictions (but not the diagnoses), can be conveyed to all judges to be taken into consideration in their evaluation. The participants' diagnosis will never be documented by the organiser. The organiser does not collect any documentation with diagnoses to guarantee the data protection of health information and avoid creating any kind of registry including such data.

3. Organisation

The organisers will provide a venue accessible with a wheelchair or with other mobility restrictions. This includes accessible entries, team zones, toilet facilities etc. While considering the surface of the ring the organisers will work on finding an ideal balance between the dogs' and the para-athletes' requirements and will share information of the surface well in advance (it is recommended to provide the information at least 6 months in advance) so that the participants have a chance to prepare or adjust both their equipment and routines accordingly. The handler is responsible for making such adaptations.

The organiser provides prizes to para dog dancing classes the same way as any other classes. Preferably, the para dog dancing world championships should be arranged together with the other classes of the dog dancing world championships and not as a separate event. A separate event may nevertheless be considered when both championships are not possible to arrange together (usually due to venue restrictions).

4. Team Leader

Usually the para-athletes will share a team leader with the other World Championship participants but they may also have their own team leader. The team leader for para-athletes has the regular team leader responsibilities, but must also make sure the para-athletes have arranged themselves enough assistance throughout the event.

5. Aids Allowed

All aids used must be based on medical needs and approved in the doctor's written statement.

Mechanical aids like different kinds of mobility aids (wheelchairs, walking aids, crutches...), hearing aids, artificial limbs, canes for visually impaired etc. are allowed. The handler is responsible for bringing their own equipment and taking care of it throughout the event (and insuring it if necessary).

If a handler needs a personal assistant they can bring a person with them. The assistant is allowed to help them around the venue and during the training time in the ring. For the performance, the assistant may set up and remove the props (or the handler may have another helper for this). The personal assistant may also escort the handler into and out of the ring but must be outside the ring during the whole routine (i.e. when the music plays). The dog enters the ring in the regular manner: the dog can not be controlled by anybody but the handler and must not be on a leash.

6. Scoring

Points are awarded in the same categories mentioned in the FCI Dog Dancing regulations. There are some subcategories where we wish judges to adjust their scoring for the para-athletes. See the breakdown of each category below.

6.1 Presentation

- **Partnership and cooperation.** Scored as usual.
- **Flow.** Small discontinuations due to lack of balance/mobility allowed.
- **Responsiveness.** Scored as usual.
- **Commands and signalling.** Scored as usual.

- **Presentation on the day.** The dog should perform the routine fluently without struggling or obvious mistakes from beginning to end. Less emphasis on the handler's performance as usual.
- **Correct execution of moves.** Scored as usual. In HTM the handler is responsible for choosing movement directions and movement speeds suitable for the team.

6.2 Content

- **Focus on the dog.** Scored as usual.
- **Evenly balanced use of the ring.** The dog uses most of the ring space and moves in different shapes and patterns. Different areas of the ring are used evenly throughout the routine. The handler may be more stationary than in other classes (especially in freestyle).
- **Comprehensive use of the ring.** The dog should always cover as much of the ring as possible considering the size and speed of the dog. Even if a dog is covering a slightly smaller area of the ring, the ring use should be well and evenly balanced. The handler may be more stationary than in other classes.
- **Balanced amount of moves so the routine is interesting but not too packed.** Scored as usual.
- **Variety of moves.** In HTM less positions/position-direction combinations allowed for teams requiring it due to movement restrictions of the handler.
- **Difficulty of individual moves.** Scored as usual.
- **Transitions and links between moves/not a series of disjointed moves.** Scored as usual.

Please notice that any aid required can be also used by the dog but must not be used solely as a prop but also function as the aid intended for the handler.

6.3 Artistic Interpretation

General: the handler's movement is less emphasized as usual and there is more emphasis on the dog's movement suiting the music.

- **Visualization of concept.** Scored as usual.
- **Structure of the routine.** Scored as usual.
- **The routine must be well planned and have a clear structure.** Scored as usual.
- **The music suits the dog's pace and movement pattern.** Scored as usual.
- **Punctuation (notation in the music).** The dog performs the moves timed well together with the music. If the music has specific accents, these will be punctuated with movement. The handler may also participate in punctuating the music whenever possible.
- **Appropriate handler movement. The handler's movement should enhance the dogs' performance.** The handler's movement provides a good background for the dog's movement. This element is significantly less emphasized than in other classes.
- **The routine reflects the emotions of the music.** The atmosphere of the music is portrayed through the dog's and handler's movement and the overall theme of the routine. The handler's movement is less emphasized when evaluating this element and the total emphasis on it is less significant than usually.
- **Proper usage of music.** Scored as usual.

6.4 Partnership and Well-being

- **The routine emphasizes the qualities of the dog.** Scored as usual.
- **Health and safety of the dog.** Scored as usual.
- **Partnership.** Scored as usual.

These regulations were approved by the FCI General Committee in Rome, February 2026. They become effective on the day of their publication.