

US Sailing Judge Certification Requirements

Last Updated June 2025

To be considered for initial or renewal certification, a candidate must meet all the requirements for that level as well as those listed in section 12 of the Judges Manual. For initial certification a Club Judge Seminar for Club Judge or Advanced Judge Seminar for Regional or National is required.

For certification, the following defined terms apply to all levels:

- a) References** -- A statement from another individual as required commenting on your competency, ability, and character for the requested certification. References shall be submitted electronically.
- 1) References submitted by a Judge (all levels) or Instructor shall be done via the reference form found here: <https://www.ussailing.org/competition/rules-officiating/resources/certification-forms/>
Applicants are advised to review the recommendation form so that they know the evaluation criteria.
 - 2) References MAY be submitted by the RAJ from your area, but NOT for National Judge.
 - 3) References must be submitted by the Chief Judge or their designee at the event, including a Protest day. The applicant must request a reference with the person referring before the *event*. It is encouraged that the reference is turned in within 30 days of the event.
- b) Event** – One or more races treated together by a Notice of Race and Sailing Instructions.
- c) Hearing** – a convened panel of one or more judges under part 5 of the RRS following the submission of a form described in RRS 60.3, 61.1, 61.2, or 62.1. Also, a convened panel acting under RRS 60.4(c) or 69.2. To count as a hearing, the request for a hearing must be found valid, facts shall be found, a decision shall be rendered, and both shall be communicated to the parties.
- d) Protest Committees** – attendance at an event as a Club, Regional, or National Judge or working towards initial certification.
- e) Retaking Tests** – If a test is failed three times, approval of the JC is required before further testing. Approval may be conditional on completion of an improvement plan.
- f) Veteran NJ no-test policy** - After serving as a National Judge for three full four-year terms, the requirement to take a test is waived. All other renewal requirements, including renewal application and approval by the Judges' Committee, are still in effect.

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Last 4 years unless stated otherwise, CJ = Club Judge, RJ= US Regional Judge, NJ = US National Judge or Canadian NJ, IJ = World Sailing International Judge	Club Judge Initial Certification	Club Judge Renewal	Regional Judge Initial Certification	Regional Judge Renewal	National Judge Initial Certification	National Judge Renewal
Complete the Club Judge or Advanced Judge Seminar	Club Judge		Advanced Judge		Advanced Judge	
References. The applicant must request a reference with the referrer before event. References must be submitted by Chief Judge or their designee. Reference should be turned in within 30 days of the event.	2 from RJ or higher, 1 may be from Protest Day.		3, 1 from NJ or IJ, remainder RJ or higher, 1 may be from Protest Day.		3, all from NJ or IJ, 1 may be from Protest Day.	
SafeSport Certification and Background Check	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Judge Continuing Education Units for Renewal		80		160		160
Test Score Required.	80% on CJ or Adv test in last 4 years	Test during current quad and within last 18 months	84% on advanced test in last 4 years	Test during current quad and within last 18 months	84% on advanced test in last 4 years	Test during current quad and within last 18 months. Test not required for renewal after 12 years as NJ. See item f on first page
Be knowledgeable and experienced in the running of races: have performed a major role with race management committees on the water in at least four events in the U.S. during the last four years.			Yes		Yes, unless done for RJ	
Be certified as US Sailing RJ					Preferable	
Required Hearings Minimum , see Discretion (3)	3, only 1 may come from Protest Day.	4, only 1 may come from Protest Day.	6, 3 regional or higher, 2 may come from Protest day. Chair 3, only 1 may come from Protest Day.	8, 3 regional or higher, 2 may come from Protest day. Chair 3, only 1 may come from Protest Day.	8 regional or higher, 2 may come from Protest day. Chair 3 regional or higher, only 1 may come from Protest Day.	8 regional or higher, 2 may come from Protest Day. Chair 3 regional or higher, only 1 may come from Protest Day.
Be an active member at events at least the last:			2 years	2 years	4 years	4 years
Required Events Minimum, see Discretion (1)	4	4	8, 3 regional or higher, at least 6 fleet	8, 3 regional or higher, at least 6 fleet	8 regional or higher, at least 6 fleet	Same as NJ initial certification except a certified umpire may count 3 events meeting Criteria (1)
Min number of events, National or higher					4	4
National, Continental, International > 180 miles from candidates' home. See Discretions (2), (3)					2	2, a certified umpire may count 1 event meeting Criteria (1)
Number of events as Chief Judge					4	4, a certified umpire may count 2 events meeting Criteria (1)
Shall be qualified to be a Chief Judge of a national championship event anywhere in the U.S.					Yes	Yes
Criteria (1): A certified umpire may count the specified number of events or hearings towards this requirement. The event or hearing shall be detailed in the comments section of the event in SOARS and be one of the following types: Redress hearing at a Team or Match race, or Damage hearing at a Team or Match race, or Black Flag hearing at a Team race, or Red Flag hearing at a Match race.						
Discretion(1): Consideration may be given by the JC for service on an association appeals committee to meet the requirements for serving on protest committees.						
Discretion(2): The JC may make an exception for a candidate who has served on six or more International Juries or, Protest Committees not appointed by the Race Committee, of which fewer than two events meet the distance requirement.						
Discretion(3): One virtual hearing allowed						