



CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

This policy helps to establish the highest standards in the pet styling profession as stated in the GroomTeam USA Inc.® Code of Conduct and guidelines for point acceptance.

GroomTeam USA, Inc.® Board Members, Officers, and Team Coordinator are prohibited from competing in GroomTeam USA, Inc.® Sanctioned Classes or judging Open Division in GroomTeam USA, Inc.® Sanctioned classes.

1. Competitors will not be eligible to earn GroomTeam USA, Inc.® points under the following conditions:
 - a) Accepting judging or apprentice judging assignments for any GroomTeam USA, Inc.® Sanctioned classes. There will be a waiting period of one year from the last class judged or the next team cycle, whichever is greater.
 - b) Entry provided by your judge(s).
 - c) Entry prepared by any judge(s) throughout the duration of the show.
 - d) Familial relationship with any judge(s) assigned during the timeframe of that sanctioned class.
 - e) Personal Mentoring Relationship with judge(s) assigned during the timeframe of that sanctioned class. (Excluding post contest critiques).
 - Private or semi-private instruction (less than six attendees) within four months of competition.
 - Instructor/Student/Apprentice within the last six months.
 - f) Vested business relationship, defined as an involvement having the element of personal gain, within the last twelve months including but not limited to:
 - Employee/Employer/Subcontractor
 - Consulting
 - Professional Handling or Handling Assistant
 - Business Partnership or Venture
2. Show Organizers must adhere to the following conflict of interest policies pertaining to GroomTeam USA sanctioned classes to retain sanctioning status. Show management:
 - a) May not influence or advise contest placements.
 - b) May not utilize the services of judges who:

- Are employees/employer (free-lance authors/sub-contractors are exempt).
 - Are directly involved with the planning and production of the contest.
 - Are relatives of Show Management.
 - Have a business ownership/partnership with show management.
 - Use professional handler services for/with show management.
3. Although judge/competitor conflicts of interest are ultimately the competitor's responsibility, it is in the best interest of show management to hire judges that have retired from the competition ring.
 4. Show Management should prohibit judges from:
 - a) Judging their students, relatives, or employees/employers.
 - b) Judging contestants with whom they have a vested business relationship.
 - c) Providing contest dogs to contestants in a class that they are judging.
 - d) Personally assisting a competitor with dog preparation during the show duration.

A GroomTeam USA, Inc. ®, has the responsibility to quickly address issues directly related to the awarding of points as referenced in sections 1 and 2 above. To resolve issues, immediately submit a Grievance Form for the perceived infraction to the attention of the GroomTeam USA Board of Directors, Team Liaison, or Team Coordinator. A GroomTeam USA, Inc. ®, leaders is present at most shows. Contact information can be found on the GroomTeam USA Inc.®, website.

All other concerns should be brought to the attention of the Show Promoter/Contest Coordinator, utilizing the protocol established for the specific contest in question.