

# JUDGING GUIDELINES

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY



Finding judges in our COVID-19 setting may be a challenge. Contacting judges early is always a good idea. Those entities that will still have a face-to-face event will likely employ the same process and methods they have used in the past. In person or virtual, you should contact your judge as soon as possible.

## Virtual Fair Judges

### *Still Exhibits*

In most cases such as Photography, Educational Displays, Textile Arts (Sewing, Needle), Foods and Nutrition, Expressive Arts, Videography, STEM, Computer Technology, Environmental Stewardship, and Social Science, a photo of the project will be provided to the judge. In the case of Videography, a short video, computer technology, and a PDF of the program must be provided. The specifics for each project should be included in the Virtual Showcase exhibitor guide. All items, including a judging rubric (if necessary) will be electronically provided to the judge for judging.

## Judge Arrangements & Conditions

Judging these items electronically requires a judge to be comfortable with spending time on their computer, laptop, or tablet. This process also expects a judge to have sufficient internet capability to handle the broadband transmission necessary to handle the load. Other options for the judge may be to use one of the many hotspots throughout the state.

The quality and qualification of the judges may vary and could be different from years past. While we may desire a judge to be certified in a specific project area, it may not be practical in a virtual presentation. We are responsible to vet the judge to ensure our youth receive quality feedback and provide age appropriate youth development feedback. In these stressful times, it is essential that our youth are mentally protected. We expect the judge to be familiar with the Danish system.

## Virtual Fair Judges

### *Animals (Non-Equine)*

Selection of judges for animals to include Dogs, Cats, Cavies, Rabbits, Poultry, Sheep, Goats, Llamas, Swine, Beef, and Dairy requires additional considerations from still exhibit areas. It may be difficult for these judges to judge from a photo. Tools for animal exhibits could include Zoom, YouTube, Facebook, Skype, Google Classroom, Vimeo and others may provide additional flexibility in judging. Each event will migrate towards one or a limited number of these platforms depending on the specific makeup of the

presentation. For example, Showmanship may be judged using Zoom and social distancing at one event while individual videos for each participant may only apply in other situations.

## Arrangement for Judges

Animal judges for a virtual environment have many of the same requirements as still exhibits. Their location and technological skills may vary significantly. In some cases they may be transmitted a 30 second video. In other cases they may be sent a 30 second recording from a cell phone. The key factor is that the judge must have the technical experience and expertise to handle the various formats available in today's electronic media. Additionally, internet capacity and bandwidth is even more important. Judges must be vetted for their ability to judge the project area and have demonstrated that they can provide project expertise and are willing to do a virtual show. Depending on the class, showmanship, agility, or performance for various species will require multiple formats for the judge.

## Fees for Judges

Fees will vary depending on the specific arrangements of each judge. Many judges will judge from home and will not incur travel and lodging expenses. This may encourage them to complete their task at a reduced rate. Keep in mind, the process may take longer due to the unique submittal for each entry. Some events may be constructed with a per project fee while others may require an hourly range. This year may be an opportunity to try out those who have recently graduated out of 4-H and are very knowledgeable with the species they spent years learning about.

## Volunteer Judges

Not all counties have access to funds to pay judging fees. Consider using 4-H alums or other volunteers from the community with a background necessary for judging the content area and is familiar with youth development.

## Conclusion

More than likely, judges will be acutely aware of the impact that COVID-19 is having on our youth in the statewide 4-H program. This may create cohesiveness within our judging community for the benefit of our youth. It is important that we emphasize to the judges that our virtual showcases represent a mechanism where our youth can showcase what they have learned throughout the year within their project area. We are in a learning environment and will need to remain adaptable as we move through this challenge.



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY  
EXTENSION