



## IACP EVALUATOR POLICY

Effective Date  
April 25, 2021

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a standardized process for the International Association of Canine Professionals (IACP) within the IACP multiple dog certification programs ensuring that the grading process is in alignment with the IACP mission.

### Who this order affects

This order applies to the Certification Committee (CC) for the CDT, CDTA, PDTI, and DTFC exams; the Service Dog Committee (SDC) for the CSdT and PAT exam; and Therapy Dog Committee (TDC) for the CTD, each committee's Director Oversight (DO) or his/her designee, each committee Chairpersons (C) or his/her designee, and IACP Evaluators also known as "raters".

### This Order Cancels

This Order does not cancel or supersede any other orders.

### Policy

The certification process for IACP certification exams is a two-fold process. The first part is the submission of an applicant's completed exam. The second part is grading the exam. The IACP exams are graded by IACP selected Evaluators. As an official representative of the IACP certification process, evaluators must maintain a professional image that preserves IACP's relationship to its members and the public.

IACP Evaluators are the unsung heroes of the IACP certification process. The IACP Evaluator is a non-paid volunteer activity. Because grades are used as evaluation of the applicant's work, it is important that grades accurately reflect the quality of the applicants work and that the work is graded fairly. Grading with accuracy and fairness can take a lot of time when there are more exams to grade than evaluators.

Eligible persons wishing to become an IACP Evaluator must submit an "***IACP Evaluator Application***" (***Attachment-1***) along with the "***IACP Volunteer Application and the IACP Volunteer Acknowledgement***" and "***Confidentiality Agreement***".

## **Evaluator Eligibility Criteria**

All persons considering becoming an IACP Evaluator must have earned the same titled certification that they will grade as an IACP Evaluator. This determination is made to ensure that any person considering taking the exam in the future does not have an advantage over the grading process. The minimum experience requirements preferred are that the potential evaluator has earned and maintained the same titled certification for at least two years.

The two (2) year certification timeframe may waive the if the potential evaluator can demonstrate they meet the eligibility criteria by having more years of professional dog training experience than the certification being evaluated or is a subject matter expert (SME). The list for all IACP certifications is listed in *“IACP Evaluator Eligibility Criteria” Attachment-5*.

## **IACP Evaluator Duties**

IACP Evaluators must be willing to grade a minimum of four exams on a yearly basis. There is no maximum limit as to how many exams evaluators may grade. Exam submissions fluctuate throughout the year therefore evaluators may be asked to volunteer more than four times a year. Grading assignments are rotational depending on exam volume and demand.

The IACP Evaluator position is voluntary that does not include or guarantee any salary, money, or wages. IACP reserves the right to provide recognition or other types of awards on a limited basis as warranted to enhance the IACP mission.

IACP Evaluators must maintain confidentiality to their role as an active evaluator, divulge any information from an exam being evaluated, applicant's personal information should it be known to the evaluator, or grades.

## **Exam Anonymity**

This section applies to the IACP Certification and IACP Therapy Dog certification exams. Due to the nature of the CSDT and the population of trainers, evaluator anonymity isn't possible. Exam's requiring anonymity that are submitted for grading will have the applicant's name visibly redacted from documents and replaced with a unique alphanumeric sequence. Any other personally identifying information on a document will be visibly redacted with a black line or shape. The exam will not identify the applicant's gender.

These IACP exams using video content, present a unique challenge as an evaluator will be able to see the applicant divulging gender at a minimum. The applicants were instructed to be mindful not to wear clothing, mention their name or business name, or display any logos that would reveal additional personal information, however an IACP Evaluator must recuse themselves if they recognize the applicants identity.

IACP Evaluators are also issued a unique alphanumeric sequence identifier in lieu of the evaluator's actual name.

In the event an IACP Evaluator notices that part of the exam inadvertently exposed the applicant's personal information such as the applicant's name, the business name, telephone number, or email address must stop grading the exam and immediately notify the IACP Exam Intake Officer (EIO), or committee chairperson governing the IACP Exam. The EIO will in turn notify the chairperson who will provide instructions moving forward. The Committee Chairperson or DO governing the IACP exam will make the final determination as to whether to assign the exam to another IACP Evaluator or allow the same evaluator to resume grading the exam.

The revelation of a person's name or business name does not automatically entail that the Evaluator recognizes or has identified who the test taker is as an individual (potential bias one way or the other). It will be the Chairperson and/or Designated Official of that committee to make the determination as to whether an evaluator knowing the test taker's name or business name compromises fair grading on a case-by-case basis. There may also be the rare occasion that the test taker may be a national or internationally well known (famous) personality, or simply known to all the evaluators, in which anonymity cannot be guaranteed. However, IACP Evaluators grade exams using established IACP grading policies, test key, rubric, or video ensure that all exams are objectively graded, thus providing physical evidence of a fair grade.

### **Grading Instructions**

IACP Evaluators should review the exam at least once, without commenting. Respond-as-you-go is a tough habit to break, but it can interrupt the flow of reading, creating frustration and comprehension problems. Problem papers (parts of the exam that are not clear) might disrupt the first reading. An option may be to set the problem papers aside and go back to them later. Taking breaks is also recommended so that an entire exam in one setting doesn't overwhelm the evaluator.

IACP Evaluators may choose their preferred method of how to "rate" the exam that best suits their reading and comprehension style.

The IACP Evaluator will grade each exam in accordance with the instructions and guidelines provided in the corresponding IACP Grading Policy for each exam. Grading policies include a scoresheet guide known as a "**rubric**". An exam rubric is a chart used in grading the exams including the narrative or video portions of the exams, such as journal entries in the CDT or video demonstrations in the CDTA. The rubric lists each of the grading criteria separately and defines the different performance levels within those criteria. IACP Evaluators must review the grading criteria before grading an exam. IACP Evaluators must know exactly what will be expected from the exam and how each grade will be differentiated from each other.

Any item that fails to explain in detail (as per exam instructions) resulting in a less than perfect score should have an associated statement question that points out what part of the detailed response that is missing from the grading criteria. The statement should be neutral, fact specific, or infer a different method be used. If the applicant's use of tools, equipment, methods, or techniques, does not conform to dog training standards, then thought-provoking questions may be added to encourage the applicant's self-improvement. This is especially beneficial to applicants who receive low grades or fail the exam on their first try.

IE: **Applicant** “I showed the owner how to correctly place the pinch collar on the dog.”

**Evaluator Comment** “You stated that you showed the owner how to correctly place the pinch collar on the dog, but you did not provide the details of how that collar was placed and sized.

**Additional Question** “How did you size and place the collar on the dog?”

## Evaluator Notes

Inclusive to the rubric score, the notes section of the grade-sheet allows for evaluators to provide comments for the applicant. Evaluators must ensure that the comments are constructive, fair, and unbiased. IACP Evaluators should not reflect personal philosophy, should not be lenient, or harsh. IACP Evaluators should ensure that their commentaries can be defended (aligned with rubric criteria or dog training standards) if challenged.

IACP Evaluators are reminded that all notes, comments, commendations, and criticism must be done so with tact and diplomacy. The exam scoresheets, along with comments, are given back to the applicant with the intent of peer-to-peer constructive criticism. Comments will be addressed to the applicant, not to IACP officials. Address the applicant with a gender-neutral salutation, refrain from addressing the applicant as either he/she or him/her.

Suggestions on how to give positive criticism

1. Have clear objectives that are measurable
  - a. Establish what the best possible outcome of this critique should reflect.
  - b. Ensure that the critique has purposeful intention that does not leave the applicant feeling attacked or demeaned.
  - c. Employ tactfulness whereas the critique is told in a way that considers the applicant’s feelings and reactions as a peer.
2. Create a neutral tone
  - a. Critiques should be statements of facts that do not have a condescending, insulting, sarcastic, jokingly, or opinionated tone.
  - b. The criticism should not be judgmental or confrontational.
  - c. Above all, the critique should reflect the criticism coming from a person who demonstrates the utmost respect and professionalism.
3. Use fewer words with more meaning.
  - a. Keep the critique brief and to the point.
  - b. Plan how to write the critique in a manner that the applicant can walk away with a clear direction on how to improve.

4. Align the criticism with the exam grade goals.
  - a. Criticism may include suggestions that may help the applicant achieve their desired objectives.
  - b. Criticism may point out specific quotes from the exam instructions that show the applicant where they failed to provide the information “as instructed in the guidelines”.
  - c. Criticize the issue, not the applicant.
  
5. Encourage self-critique.
  - a. Criticism may include a hypothetical scenario from an objective viewpoint that would require the applicant to draw their own conclusion different from the one they presented in the exam.
  - b. Criticism should be provided as a professional courtesy that gives the applicant an opportunity for self-improvement.

### **Evaluator Suspension, Removal, or Termination**

Learning to become an IACP Evaluator is a complex process. All IACP policies attempt to provide guidelines that will help expedite the learning curve. The CC is dedicated to helping all IACP Evaluators succeed in their endeavors. If an IACP Evaluator becomes unable to perform duties due to time constraints or life events, that evaluator is to inform their committee Chairperson in writing. If an IACP Evaluator has demonstrated their unwillingness to comply with the Evaluator Duties and Grading Criteria that Evaluator may be subject to suspension or termination as an IACP Evaluator.

In the event an IACP Evaluator falls in this category, they will receive a letter of “***IACP Evaluator Status Change Notification***” (*Attachment-4*).

### **IACP Evaluator Disputes**

Any IACP Evaluator applicant or IACP Evaluator with a status change notification who feels the need to dispute any parts of this policy or final grade are encouraged to initiate a formal dispute in accordance with the IACP Certification Dispute Policy. The Dispute Policy is posted on the IACP website or you may contact the IACP and request for an electronic copy at

**[certification@canineprofessionals.com](mailto:certification@canineprofessionals.com)**.



## IACP Evaluator Application Form

Applicant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

(IACP Member number, if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby submit this IACP Evaluator application for IACP review and approval which includes the following acknowledgement of the rules and conditions of being an IACP Evaluator by initialing each item,

I understand that this is a voluntary position that does not include salaries, monies, or wages

I agree to maintaining confidentiality of; (1) exam applicants personal information and grades, should it be inadvertently made known to me, and (2) my own anonymity as an evaluator.

I understand that I must be available to grade at least four (4) IACP Exams on a yearly basis

I understand that grading assignments are rotational depending on exam volume and demand

I have enclosed the signed documents attached to this application.

List all current IACP certification titles you hold: \_\_\_\_\_

List your areas of dog training expertise and years of professional dog training experience (in ranking order),

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Submit this application for processing to: [certification@canineprofesionals.com](mailto:certification@canineprofesionals.com)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date signed

**Attachments:** IACP Volunteer Application  
IACP Acknowledgement and Confidentiality Agreement

For Office Use Only	
Member validated: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Certifications validated: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Experience Validated: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Committee Chairperson, concurrence: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Applicant Approved: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Letter of Notification sent on: _____

(version 4/25/2021)

**Attachment-1**



DATE: (date)

FROM: (name & title)  
Chairperson, IACP Certification

TO: (applicant name and IACP member number if applicable)

SUBJECT: Welcome Letter

It is with great pleasure that IACP Education and Certification welcomes you as an IACP Evaluator for the following listed IACP certification exams,

- CDT Certified Dog Trainer
- CDTA Certified Dog Trainer Advanced
- PDTI Professional Dog Trainer Instructor
- TDC Therapy Dog Certification

Your assigned Exam Anonymity Number for use on IACP Exams is: \_\_\_\_\_

- CSTD Certified Service Dog Trainer
- PAT-Administrator

IACP is aimed at becoming the premier dog training certification organization by setting up a wide network of diverse evaluators such as you. We look forward to a long-term working relationship as a vital team member that helps IACP achieve its mission.

Please read and become familiar with the attached IACP policies that provide the description, instructions, and procedures for the IACP exams you are approved to rate and the IACP administration process for each exam.

## Attachments

**IACP Evaluator Policy** *(insert date)*

**IACP Exam Administration Policy** *(insert date)*

**IACP Exams**, *check applicable exams*

- [ ] **Certified Dog Trainer (CDT) Exam v1.9** *(9/720)\_updated 9/25/20*  
**CDT Exam Grading Policy** *(12/1/20)*
- [ ] **Certified Dog Trainer Advanced (CDTA) Exam v1.2** *(insert date)*  
**CDTA Exam Grading Policy** *(insert date)*
- [ ] **Professional Dog Trainer Instructor (PDTI) Exam v1.2** *(insert date)*  
**PDTI Exam Grading Policy** *(insert date)*
- [ ] **Professional Dog Trainer Instructor (PDTI) Exam v1.2** *(insert date)*  
**PDTI Exam Grading Policy** *(insert date)*
- [ ] **Certified Service Dog Trainer (CSTD) Exam** *(insert date)*  
**CSTD Exam Grading Policy** *(insert date)*
- [ ] **Therapy Dog Certification (TDC) Exam** *(insert date)*  
**TDC Exam Grading Policy** *(insert date)*
- [ ] **PAT-Administrator**



DATE: (date)

FROM: (name & title)  
Chairperson, IACP Certification

TO: (applicant name and IACP member number if applicable)

SUBJECT: Non-Selection Letter

We regret to inform you that your IACP Evaluator application cannot be accepted at this time.

*(provide a detailed description of the reason why and if applicable, what the applicant needs to include for a re-submission at a future date)*

If you feel the need to dispute the non-acceptance/rejection, you may initiate a dispute a formal dispute in accordance with the IACP Education and Certification Dispute Policy within 10 business days from receipt of this letter.

### **Attachments**

**IACP Certification Dispute Policy** *(insert current policy date)*

*(version 4/25/2021)*

**Attachment – 3**



DATE: (date)

FROM: (name & title)  
Chairperson, IACP Certification

TO: (Evaluator name)

SUBJECT: Evaluator Status Change Notification

We regret to inform you that your IACP Evaluator status will be (insert action taken) effective (insert effective date).

*(Please provide detailed description (justification) of the reason why, including but not limited to: citing policy, dates of occurrence, supporting documentation, etc. If suspension: include effective dates. If terminated, must also include how the conduct "impedes" IACP mission or Code of Conduct).*

Please note that this letter does not affect your IACP membership, or membership standing within IACP. If the reason for this notification may inadvertently affect your IACP membership, the process was not initiated by the IACP Education and Certification Committee. The IACP Evaluator names and their services remain anonymous. Any request pertaining to this matter must follow IACP policies to request the information and legally eligible to receive the information.

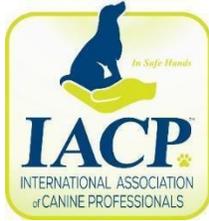
If you feel the need to dispute the change of IACP Evaluator status, you may initiate a dispute a formal dispute in accordance with the IACP Education and Certification Dispute Policy within 10 business days from receipt of this letter.

## **Attachments**

**IACP Certification Dispute Policy** (insert current policy date)

(version 4/25/2021)

**Attachment – 4**



## IACP Evaluator Eligibility Criteria

<b>Evaluator Level</b>	<b>Certification Title</b>	<b>Potential Waiver</b>
CDT Certified Dog Trainer	CDT, 2 years	5 + years experienced professional dog trainer
CDTA Certified Dog Trainer Advanced	CDT, current CDTA, 2 years	7 + years experienced professional dog trainer or 5 + years subject matter expert
PDTI Professional Dog Trainer Instructor	CDT, current CDTA, current PDTI, 2 years	9 + years experienced professional dog trainer or 7 + years subject matter expert
CSDT Certified Service Dog Trainer	CDT, current CSDT, 2 years	10 + years experienced professional dog trainer of which 5 + years dedicated professional service dog trainer
TDC Therapy Dog Certification	TDC, 2 years	3 + years experienced professional dog trainer