

Changes to Competitive Obedience Regulations for 2026

The Royal Kennel Club has approved the following changes to the regulations for Competitive Obedience.

The following amendment to the regulations increases the time frame between requesting a show licence to 6 months before the date of the show.

Amendment to regulations G6 & G8

Regulation G6. Societies are required to apply for permission to hold Special Events.

TO:

Applications should be submitted to The Royal Kennel Club by email at least six ~~weeks~~ **months** before the start of any qualifying heats for the event.

(Insertions in bold. Deletions struck through)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

Regulation G8. Application.

TO:

The application for a licence to hold an Obedience Show must be made to the Secretary of The Royal Kennel Club at least six ~~weeks~~ **months** before the proposed date of the show together with the appropriate licence fee.

(Insertions in bold. Deletions struck through)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

The below amendment to the regulations aims to make Championship Obedience judging requirements more attainable.

Amendment to Regulation G32.d

Regulation G32.d

TO:

A judge's first three appointments for shows must be restricted to Novice.

The next three appointments must be up to and including Class A. Before accepting an Open Class C appointment, a Judge must have completed at least ~~a further nine~~ **twelve** appointments **in total**. These must include a minimum of **three Novice**, three Class A and three Class B appointments. It is the individual's responsibility to retain proof of their judging appointments.

(Insertions in bold. Deletions struck through.)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

The following amendment to the regulations clarifies the use of food and toys in Introductory and Pre-Beginner classes.

Amendment to Regulation G(A)9.a, G(A)9.e.i & G(A)10.a

Regulation G(A)9.a. Introductory.

TO:

In this class, ~~only incentives in the form of a toy or rewards are allowed to be carried by the handler in the competitive ring and~~ may be given to the dog **before the exercise**, at the end of an exercise or in between exercises **within the reward area of the ring. The reward area must be distinct from the working area.** Rewards include food which must be carried in a small closed container during the exercises, **either in the handler's pocket or left on the reward table, and only verbal and physical cues may be used to keep the dog engaged.** The judge will designate ~~the reward an~~ area in the competitive ring where food **or a toy** may be given to the dog by the handler.

(Insertions in bold. Deletions struck through.)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

Regulation G(A)9.e.i. Introductory.

TO:

e. The detailed test will be:

(1) Engagement - this will be marked throughout the test - the use of motivators and rewards before and between exercises which may include food, silent toys, tricks, and verbal and physical praise within the reward area of the ring. Toys and food in a ~~sealed~~ **closed** container, must either be left on the reward table, or be concealed in the handler's pocket during tests, where only verbal motivation may be used to keep the dog engaged. 10 points

(Insertions in bold. Deletions struck through)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

Regulation G(A)10.a Pre-Beginners.

TO:

In this class, ~~only incentives in the form of a toy or rewards are allowed to be carried by the handler in the competitive ring and~~ may be given to the dog **before the exercise**, at the end of an exercise or in between exercises **within**

the reward area of the ring. The reward area must be distinct from the working area. Rewards include food which must be carried in a small closed container during the exercises, **either in the handler's pocket or left on the reward table, and only verbal and physical cues may be used to keep the dog engaged.** The judge will designate **the reward** an area in the competitive ring where food **or a toy** may be given to the dog by the handler.

(Insertions in bold. Deletions struck through.)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

The below amendment to the regulations relates to the eligibility for Introductory and Pre-Beginner classes.

Amendment to Regulation G(A)9.b

Regulation G(A)9.b

TO:

To compete in the Introductory Class a handler or dog must not have gained a 1st place in any competitive obedience class, **placed 1st to 3rd in Novice** and have not elected to progress on points from Introductory

(Insertions in bold)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

The following amendment to the regulations allows Championship Obedience Shows to be able to cap classes.

Amendment to Regulation G(A)17

Regulation G(A)17

TO:

- a. Organisers of open **or Championship** obedience shows may set **an optional** capping level on the entries to be accepted in any standard or special class, and may decline entries received after the capping level has been reached.
- b. Wins and places in standard classes capped in accordance with this Regulation will count towards progression at open **and Championship** shows and for Obedience Warrant points.
- c. **Where a capping level is set it** must be set at a minimum of 35 entries received **in respect of Open Shows and 90 entries received in respect of Championship Shows.** There is no maximum level at which a cap may be set. Capped classes may be split into two or more divisions in accordance with Regulation G30.b.

(Insertions in bold. Deletions struck through.)

(Effective 1 January 2026)