

USJA PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

What Do I Need?

Information you need to know for your next Promotion

The National Office is responsible for the approval of all Kyu and Dan Ranks of 1st, 2nd and 3rd Dan. At times, the National Office is unable to process Requests for Promotion (“RFP”) because of simple mistakes or missing documentation.

The Promotion Board consists of high-ranking USJA members who serve the Board of Directors and President. They are selected for their knowledge, leadership ability, and integrity. Essentially, they are the gatekeepers who maintain the quality of our membership, the production of future leaders, and the continuance of superior Judo in the United States.

Candidates Seeking Promotion 4th Dan and up

The USJA Promotion Board hereby referred as “PB” evaluates those candidates seeking the rank of fourth Dan and above. The candidate’s applications are sent to the Technical Evaluator (“TE”) and member of the PB will verify the documentation and requirements to be sure it is acceptable for review by the USJA’s PB. In the past, the USJA PB discovered over 60% of the RFP had incomplete data and/or inefficient documentation in their paperwork or failed to meet the required Time-In-Grade (“TIG”) or promotion points. Incomplete RFP resulted in immediate rejection. Ranks of 6th Dan and above require approval on the quarterly PB conference calls held each new quarter. RFP must be submitted at least 30 Days prior to the call. If the candidate is denied, this could result in not being considered for three (3) more months. By USJA Policy, the PB can only evaluate the RFP and other supplemental documents submitted and not “word of mouth” from the candidate. If the submission is incomplete, it is an automatic denial.

All candidates should provide all contact information on the RFP such as cell, work, and home telephone numbers as well as an email address. The TE, (Technical Evaluator), hereby plays a major role in this promotion process. The TE is assigned and authorized to work with the candidates and/or coach so when the RFP is finally submitted to the PB, the success rate would dramatically increase by reducing the number of clerical errors and absence of required documentation.

Synopsis of the Process

The RFP form for promotion:

- The form requires two or more signatures: one signature by the candidate; and the second signature from the head coach. ***Electronic signatures are not allowed.***
- Depending on the rank of the coach, additional signatures by a USJA Certified Rank Examiners (“CRE”) may be required to examine the technical ability of the candidate and to ensure that the activities claimed for points meet or exceed the standards outlined in this Manual and are verifiable.
- It must be noted that when a coach and/or CRE “signs off” on the RFP form, this is stating that they have examined, witnessed, and/or reviewed the candidate’s skill testing or documentation. It is not permitted for a coach and/or CRE to sign off an RFP form without evaluating the person nor is it acceptable for the candidate to have someone sign off on the form if they did nothing to verify his/her points for promotion. **THIS IS AN ETHIC VIOLATION.**
- The coach(s) signing off an RFP form must have the required Judo rank above the candidate. Additionally, the candidate and coach(s) **MUST** be an active USJA member and assigned to a Chartered USJA club with valid Background check, Heads Up Concussion & Safe Sport Certifications.

- All black belt (Dan) candidates and coaches signing the RFP form must have on file at the USJA National Office, a current background screening (“BGS”), Safe Sport, & CDC Heads-Up Concussion certificates. This requirement also applies to those coaches’ submitting letters of recommendations on behalf of the candidate.
- It is only logical that the coach may have trained the candidate and has firsthand knowledge of the candidate’s ability to fulfill the minimum requirements. For this reason, the coach may check off techniques he/she feels the candidate has successfully performed if other requirements such as TIG and points are met.
- The RFP form must be filled out completely with no missing blanks including the listing of total number of points and TIG. Provision of the date when this candidate and/or coach completed the form must be provided. Other items are listed below:
 - A list of the candidate’s daily activities or log of events must be included and verified on the Activity Log.
 - A brief Judo history biography must be included listing key achievements. (Yodan – Hachidan)
 - The Activity Log/Point Summary Form (Excel spreadsheet) does not eliminate the need for additional documentation. For example, if the candidates want credit for clinics, he or she is required to 1) list the date of the clinic, 2) location of the clinic, and, 3) name of clinic host. As a coach, and wanting credit for coaching competitors, he or she is required to 1) list of the event and date, 2) the names of the athletes he or she coached, 3) number of wins and results of their division. Please note, these athletes MUST be USJA members. Competition Points require 1) list event and date, 2) Name of competitors, 3) Division results.
 - It should be noted that just plugging numbers on the RFP form does not constitute proper documentation and will result in points being disallowed.
 - Points for USJA certifications are allowed ONLY if that candidate is an active member of the USJA and certification is current. Points cannot be used if the candidate did not have an active membership with USJA in any given time that he or she was claiming points. All certifications must be current for claiming points for that activity.
 - If the coach certification expires, he or she will lose point credit for coaching athletes during the time the coach certification expired. This policy applies to certified referee with the same situation of expired certification and membership.
- The PB is not looking to block promotions but to establish consistency throughout the evaluation for all members. All promotions must meet a uniform minimum standard. To do less than minimal would mean the creditability of a USJA Promotion declines.
- As mentioned previously, to receive USJA promotion points, you must be an active USJA member during the full TIG period claimed, meaning a USJA annual member or a life member with current sustaining life membership (“SLM”). All USJA high ranking candidates are expected to be Life Members.
- The candidate must be a member of a USJA chartered club. Please note that in the past, the PB would receive RFP forms from candidate who were active USJA members six years ago when they were last promoted and then their membership expired. Then, after six more years, this candidate becomes a member and wants to be considered for USJA promotion to the next rank. This is not only unreasonable, but also not fair to those coaches that support the USJA organization and been active in Judo activities and USJA member’s year after year.
- Promotions are not automatic, and several factors are considered so when submitting, the more verifiable the data and documentation, the more consideration the candidate will receive.

- Approving a promotion RFP takes a lot of time in terms of verifying all the requirements. To this end we urge the candidate to please be patient while waiting for the PB to reply.
- All Rank Validations and promotions of rank 6th Dan and above are acted on at the quarterly conference calls of the PB. For this reason, the RFP must be submitted for review by the TE 30 days prior to the call. For these ranks a brief biography of the candidate should also be attached.
- Upon review by the TE and if it is determined that the RFP requires additional documentation or clarification, the candidate will be contacted. However, the candidate is still required to meet the 30-day deadline. If not, the RFP will be held until the next PB quarterly conference call, so respond accordingly.
- The date that the PB approves the candidate's RFP is the date that the candidate's rank is dated. This is important to note because delaying your response back to the TE or National office, will permanently affect the date of your next promotion and future TIG.
- The candidate will be contacted if there is an issue with the submitted RFP. At that time, the candidate has 30 days to respond. Each candidate can request, in writing an additional 30 days for a total of 60 days. If a candidate fails to respond to the National office or TE, the RFP is considered withdrawn and the candidate must resubmit all the required paperwork and pay the additional processing fee.
- If a candidate replies within the required 60 days but fails to return what is requested and subsequently is returned to the candidate a second time, the candidate will be automatically charged an additional processing fee. The USJA cannot be piecing together the candidate's paperwork. So please, when resubmitting, include all the paperwork as if the candidate were submitting for the promotion the first time.
- The PB holds a closed conference call to decide on pending promotions each new quarter. RFP's correctly submitted 30 days prior to the call will be considered at that time.

CHECK LIST

- ___ RFP form complete make sure you have the most recent form
- ___ Sign off by applicant, Head Coach, examiners having required rank, active membership and BGS, SafeSport, & CDC Heads-Up Concussion Certificates as required. Include Judo rank, examiner level. ***Electronic signatures are not allowed.***
- ___ Include Judo History Biography (Yodan – Hachidan)
- ___ Include any additional documentation required
- ___ Meets or exceeds TIG or points
- ___ Meets age requirement
- ___ All claimed USJA Certifications up to date and current
- ___ Attach documentation verifying points (Activity Log/Point Summary)
- ___ Active USJA membership, annual or SLM
- ___ Member of chartered USJA club
- ___ Select option of certified Black Belt Rank card, highly recommended
- ___ Processing fee as required
- ___ Photo Passport type .jpg format submitted electronically
- ___ Copy of all certifications such as coaching, referee etc. that are not USJA certification

Once all requirements have been met, forward the Activity Log/Point Summary, RFP with all signatures, and other required documentation (photo, bio, CDC Heads-Up, Safe Sport, Background screen, etc.) to the USJA National Office, support@usja.net. If you have additional questions concerning the required paperwork and documentation, contact a Certified Rank Examiner. You can find a list of names and contact information on the USJA.net website, *CRE Committee*.

SIGNATURE REQUIREMENTS FOR DAN RANKS

The USJA National Rank System is designed to ensure that promotions awarded reflect the technical expertise, character development, and overall contribution of the individual. Inherent in this process is the direct evaluation of all candidates. (Refer to pages 81 – 89 for specific Dan requirements.)

- 1) All black belt candidates must meet certain minimum requirements to become eligible for promotion. For all Dan grades, there is a Minimum Age, Points, & Time in Grade (TIG): all promotions require that specific points must be earned since the last promotion; See TIG/points chart (page 79) and list of points (page 28) for activities.
- 2) All black belt candidates must then be recommended for promotion by their coach/instructor and/or a Certified Rank Examiner. All grades up to and including 5th Dan must pass an exam and be recommended for promotion by their coach/instructor. All senior ranks must be recommended by a specific number of high grades. In addition, all Dan ranks up to and including 8th Dan require a specific number of points, with increasing higher level of activity (Local, Regional, National, International). See TIG/points chart (page 79) and list of points for activities (page 28). The head of the club must sign the promotion form.
- 3) All recommendations for promotions must be submitted to the USJA National Office on the proper forms for approval. Current recommendation and examination forms must be completed; including but not limited to: USJA membership number and expiration date, signed by candidate, and recommendation by coach/instructor. Any section not completed will consider the form incomplete and it will be returned.
- 4) The proper rank and number required to “sign off” are: (check the current RFP/RVP for CRE levels)

Rank sought by candidate	Required rank and number of examiners with current CRE
Kyu grades	(1) Club Instructor, Shodan or above
1st Dan	(1) 2 nd Dan or above, or CRE, RCRE, NCRE, or MCRE
2nd Dan	(1) 3 rd Dan or above, or CRE, RCRE, NCRE, or MCRE
3rd Dan	(1) 4 th Dan or above or RCRE, NCRE, or MCRE
4th Dan	(1) 5 th Dan or above or NCRE or MCRE
5th Dan	(1) 6 th Dan or MCRE or above
6th Dan	(2) 7 th Dan MCREs or above
7th Dan	(2) 8 th Dan MCREs or above
8th Dan	USJA Promotion Board evaluation (refer to 8 th Dan promotion requirement, page 88)
9th & 10th Dan	USJA Promotion Board recommendation and Board of Directors approval

- 5) For all Black Belt Dan promotions, a passport photograph must be submitted by the candidate. The photograph must be in the form of an electronic file (.jpg format).
- 6) All promotions are governed by this manual, the current RFP, changes shown on the USJA website and the promotion procedure in effect. Please make sure you have the latest documents.
- 7) *Electronic signatures are not admissible.*

- 8) All candidates for promotion must be an Active or Sustaining Life Member of a USJA Chartered Club with the proper time in grade in the previous rank.
- 9) A completed and cleared current background check is required for all Dans (black belt ranks) per the USJA's Background Screening Policy. These can also be completed online at <http://ssci.usja.net>. In addition, Safe Sport & CDC Heads-Up Concussion Certificates are also required either through the USJA, USA Judo or USJF. If you are:
 - A Black Belt (Dan) or Black Belt (Dan) Candidate.
 - A Chairperson or member of a USJA Committee.
 - A member of the USJA Board of Directors or a Corporate Officer.
 - An applicant for USJA Instructor Certification (*new or renewing*).
 - An applicant for USJA Coach Certification (*new or renewing*).
 - An applicant for USJA Referee Certification (*new or renewing*).
 - An applicant for USJA Kata Certification (*new or renewing*).
 - An applicant for USJA promotion to any rank of first Dan or higher.
 - A USJA member claiming promotion points for coaching activities.
 - A CRE of any level.

NOTE:

- a) For all Dan ranks a non-refundable processing fee of \$35.00 must accompany all Dan black belt promotion recommendations. The promotion fee must be remitted on notification of successfully passing the rank applied for.
- b) If an application form is returned a second time or more because of illegibility or incomplete information, there will be an additional processing fee for each transaction.
- c) All Examiners (CRE), Life Members included, must be a current annual member or a sustained life member with the USJA and be a member of a USJA Chartered Club.
- d) Anyone that signs a recommendation must be a USJA Judo Black Belt with the BB registered at the USJA National office, member of a USJA Chartered Club, active BGS, Safe Sport and Concussion Training.
- e) If a candidate is a Life Member, they must show continuous membership by sustaining his/her life membership (SLM) paid every year for the TIG of the promotion under consideration. No points are given for any year(s) the candidate is not an active member. As a life member, he/she must show continuous SLM membership (by back payments if necessary). However, they will only receive credit for the TIG.
- f) If a candidate is not an active life member, they must show continuous membership (by back payments if necessary). However, they will only receive credit for the TIG. No points are given for any year(s) that are considered inactive.
- g) If prior ranks are from organizations other than the USJA, they must be recognized by the IJF and a copy of all pertinent information including the official promotion certificate or Notarized True Copy of original must be attached. This information must be clearly visible as copies that are not readable cannot be considered.

Promotions are done in accordance with USJA's National Promotion Board. Ranks below 4th Dan are processed by the office. Ranks of 4th & 5th Dan are reviewed by a sub-committee of the PB. Ranks of 6th Dan and above are decided on during the PB's conference call held each new quarter. RFPs correctly submitted 30 days prior to the call will be considered at that time.