

WSDC Judges Certification Program – AJP

Community Update

The West Coast Swing community has been built through the dedication, knowledge, and service of countless judges who have volunteered their time, shared their expertise, and helped shape the competitive environment we enjoy today. As our community continues to grow around the world, so does the need to preserve that knowledge, support the development of future judges, and promote consistency across events.

To support this vision, the WSDC has established a goal of certifying a sufficient number of judges to meet the 25%* figure initially recommended—and ultimately required—by 2027.***

We recognize and deeply appreciate the contributions of judges who have dedicated years to serving the West Coast Swing community. The certification program is not intended to question or invalidate that experience. Rather, it provides a consistent framework for recognizing expertise, supporting professional development, and ensuring transparency for competitors and event organizers.

Experience remains one of the most valuable qualifications a judge can possess. Certification simply creates a common standard that helps communicate and preserve that expertise while strengthening confidence in the judging system for future generations.

Our goal is to honor the work that experienced judges have already done while creating a sustainable pathway for those who will follow.

First Phase of Community Engagement

As part of the program's rollout, the Judges Committee has compiled a list of existing judges who have contacted by completing the Judges Questionnaire on the WSDC website.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdRn9iwwXfdkPbXWodMQcE4n4xCQ_j8J7mQOZPijciMDasgjq/viewform

To help manage the transition in a fair and organized way, participating judges have been grouped according to their judging experience and recent event activity. This approach allows the committee to engage with the community in stages while recognizing the breadth of experience that already exists within our judging pool.

This process has enabled the creation of a streamlined pathway for Groups A, B, C, and D, as outlined below.

Group A (**)

Judges with:

- 16 or more years of judging experience; or
- 11–15 years of judging experience and 16 or more judged events within a 12-month period.

Group B

Judges with:

- 11–15 years of judging experience.

Group C

Judges with:

- 5–10 years of judging experience.

Group D

Judges with:

- Less than 5 years of judging experience.

It is important to note that these groups are intended solely to support the implementation and transition process. They do not represent rankings, endorsements, or measures of a judge's value to the community.

This list represents our first wave of engagement with the judging community and is an important step in the successful transition and integration of the certification program. We look forward to working alongside judges at every level of experience as we continue building a program that reflects the values, integrity, and collaborative spirit of West Coast Swing.

Thank you to everyone who has participated thus far and to those who continue to contribute to the growth and future of our community.

*As the West Coast Swing community continues to grow, the WSDC has established a requirement that a minimum of 25% of judges at all Registry Events be WSDC certified by 2027. The certification program is an important step toward ensuring that enough certified judges are available to support events worldwide while promoting consistency, education, and confidence in the judging process.

Group A***Exceptions: Individuals who exhibit outstanding skill, proven leadership, and expertise in essential judging abilities. Their accomplishments set them apart and merit this recognition*

*** *the official update to the community regarding WSDC requirements for 2027 will be available in WSDC draft rules 2027. The WSDC is expecting to have that available July 1, 2026.*

WSDC Judges Committee