

# German Shepherd Schutzhund Club of Canada



## **HELPER PROGRAM**

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## **SECTION 1: PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Helper Program is to educate and increase the number of Trial Helpers that can properly and safely execute the protection exercises in a uniform manner at German Shepherd Schutzhund Club of Canada (GSSCC) events. As of 2009, all Helpers testing dogs at any trial must be GSSCC certified.

## **SECTION 2: OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the Helper Program are to:

- A. Provide standardized education and Trial Helper training.
- B. Increase the number of Trial Helpers in the GSSCC.
- C. Promote membership involvement and participation through ongoing Helper education.
- D. Facilitate GSSCC objectives to protect and improve the German Shepherd Dog breed as outlined in GSSCC Bylaws.

## **SECTION 3: HELPER COMMITTEE**

The Helper Committee is appointed by the GSSCC executive yearly. The Helper Committee shall consist of four (4) members as follows: A GSSCC director, GSSCC Judge, GSSCC Teaching Helper and a GSSCC member. The GSSCC executive will select one of the four (4) members to be Helper Program Coordinator. The Helper Program Coordinator will report directly to the Head Judge/President.

## **SECTION 4: HELPER COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. The Helper Committee is responsible to assist in the development, implementation and management of the Helper Program.
- B. The Helper Committee shall act in an advisory role and provide support and assistance to Helpers that have been selected to perform Helper work at a national event.
- C. The Helper Committee must present an annual report to the GSSCC Head Judge and GSSCC executive including a list of all GSSCC certified Helpers and the expiry date of the certification.

- D. The Helper Committee will receive the applications and may recommend new Teaching Helpers for approval by the GSSCC Board of Directors as required to maintain the Helper Program.

### **SECTION 5: ROLE OF REGIONAL TRIAL DIRECTORS**

The regional trial director duties are an integral part of the educational process at the region and club level.

The regional trial director will receive direction from the Helper Committee regarding the required educational Helper Program and shall:

- A. Solicit regional clubs and the region's members to determine the needs of regionally sponsored Helper training.
- B. Assist the Helper Committee in organizing and hosting the National Helper seminars.

### **SECTION 6: HELPER PROGRAM CURRICULUM**

The Helper Program curriculum includes exercises to develop a Helper's skills. Included are knowledge of rules, ability to take direction, body positioning, equipment positioning, balance, timing, awareness, presence, and trial attitude, all designed to enable him/her to properly and safely execute the protection exercises described in the VDH Trial Regulations and those required for GSSCC Breed Surveys and the Canadian Sieger Show protection portion.

The Helper Program curriculum does not include exercises to develop a Helper's knowledge as a Training Helper, since the philosophies of how to train dogs in protection vary drastically, and thus are not "standard".

The Helper Program curriculum will be taught by GSSCC Teaching Helpers at club, regional or national Helper seminars, which are sanctioned by the GSSCC Helper Committee. Deviations from the curriculum are not permitted. Some of the theory in the curriculum is presented in moderate detail in this document.

Each Teaching Helper will be issued a teaching guide module to follow so the training will be standardized throughout the GSSCC. The module will include general theory, theory for the execution of all exercises, practical training exercises, certification exercises and written exams for Helpers.

## **SECTION 7: LEVELS OF HELPERS**

All levels expire after three years, except for National level, which expires after two years.

There will be six (6) different categories of Helpers. They are:

- A. **Entry Level**- The entry level classification is for Helpers that have been issued a GSSCC Helper book and do not meet the requirements for the remaining classifications. Entry level Helpers shall attain club or club front half trial classification before being permitted to participate as a Trial Helper in an event. This level is not available at the National Helper Seminars but can be awarded at club or regional level seminars.
- B. **Club Front Half Trial Helper** - A Club Front Half Trial Helper has the responsibility of working in the front half in all three levels of protection work during a local club trial. The Helper must be capable of working both club dogs as well as those from outside the club in a fair, correct, and safe fashion. To receive this level the Helper must have attended at least one GSSCC Helper seminar and received certification from a GSSCC Teaching Helper. The front half consists of all the exercises except for the Attack on the Dog out of Motion.
- C. **Club Trial Helper** - A Club Trial Helper has the responsibility of working in both the front and the back half of all three levels of protection work during a local club trial. The Helper must be capable of working both club dogs as well as those from outside the club in a fair, correct, and safe fashion. To receive this level the Helper must have attended at least one GSSCC Helper seminar and received certification from a GSSCC Teaching Helper.
- D. **Regional Trial Helper** - A Regional Trial Helper has the responsibility of working at all three levels of protection work during a club or regional competition. The Helper must be capable of working powerful, quick dogs that they have not worked before; in a fair, demanding, correct and safe fashion. To receive this level the Helper must have attended at least one GSSCC Helper seminar, received certification from two or more GSSCC Teaching Helpers at the same seminar, and previously worked a minimum of 30 dogs in club and/or regional level trials.

- E. **National Trial Helper** - A National Trial Helper has the responsibility of working in all three levels of protection work during a club, regional or national competition. The Helper must be capable of working powerful, quick dogs in a fair, demanding, correct, and safe fashion. To receive this level the candidate must attend and participate at a GSSCC National Helper seminar and receive certification from at least two GSSCC Teaching Helpers at that seminar and must have previously worked a minimum of 40 dogs at Club and Regional trials.

To maintain their national level status, Helpers will be required to attend a national level seminar every 2 years. A Helper that does not attend a national seminar after 2 years will drop to regional level for the third year and will then need to attend a national seminar to re-attain national level status. A national level Helper who wishes to be considered for the current year's Canadian German Shepherd Dog Championship must attend any one of the National Helper Seminars in that year.

- F. **Teaching Helper** - Teaching Helpers have the responsibility for teaching and certifying Helpers for club, regional and national levels. A Teaching Helper should have extensive experience as a Trial Helper, have knowledge about dog behaviour and training principles, and must demonstrate the ability to conduct seminars and disseminate knowledge to diverse groups of Helpers.

The **mandatory minimum** qualifications for Teaching Helpers are:

1. Be a Canadian resident.
2. Be a member in good standing of the GSSCC.
3. Have a minimum of five (5) years' experience as a Trial Helper.
4. Have trained/titled at least two (2) dogs to a minimum SchH/IPG/IPO 1 level.
5. Have handled a dog in a breed survey or performed as a Helper for a breed survey.
6. Have performed as a Trial Helper for at least eight (8) club trials.
7. Have performed as a Trial Helper for at least one (1) regional trial.

The applicants must submit two letters of reference. One from their Regional executive and one from either their own club executive or from

another club's executive in their region, or a GSSCC Judge, or a member of the GSSCC Board of Directors from the same region.

Anyone interested in becoming a GSSCC Teaching Helper must complete an application and submit it along with the letters to the GSSCC Helper Program coordinator.

If the Helper Committee approves the application, then:

- A. The applicant shall apply to assist an experienced Teaching Helper who has been approved by the Helper Committee, during a club, regional or National seminar. During the seminar, the Teaching Helper applicant would:
  - i Assist in parts of the theoretical presentation.
  - ii Handle a group of seminar participants during the practice of some exercises.
  - iii Participate in the evaluation of each participant at the end of the seminar to determine which Helper level each participant will receive.
- B. The supervising Teaching Helper will write and submit a report on the applicant's performance and send it to the Helper Program coordinator.
- C. Once step B is completed, the Teaching Helper applicant will conduct a club level seminar with a current Teaching Helper or Helper Committee member as an observer. At the conclusion of the seminar, the observer will write a report on the Teaching Helper applicant's performance and send same to the Helper Program coordinator. The Helper Committee will then decide on the Teaching Helper applicant's status and make the recommendation to the GSSCC Board of Directors.

The certification expires every five years, and can be renewed by applying to the Helper Committee with a list of activities they've been involved with over the past two years. Additionally, inactivity by a Teaching Helper can be reviewed by the Helper Committee.

## **SECTION 8 : HELPER SEMINARS AND CERTIFICATION**

ALL Helpers must be members in good standing with the GSSCC and present valid membership cards when requested. Certification at club and regional levels is valid

for three years or until a new level is achieved. National level Helpers must renew every two years. It is the Helper's responsibility to renew on time by attending an appropriate level seminar.

All Helpers wanting to receive certification must initially attend a GSSCC sanctioned Helper seminar. At the start of the seminar all Helpers will be given a GSSCC Helper book. The certification may take place at the end of the seminar or the next day.

No additions to the number of dogs credited may be added at any seminar, other than at one of the National Seminars, where a maximum of two dogs may be awarded to a National level candidate.

The Helper will keep the Helper book and must present it whenever the Helper performs at a trial, Breed Survey, Körung or GSSCC Helper seminar for certification. The presiding Judge or Teaching Helper will complete the evaluation in their book.

If a Helper's certification expires, the Helper must attend a GSSCC Helper seminar before they can be re-certified.

The Helper's name will remain in the database for 3 months, with their status listed as 'EXPIRED'. It will be removed after three months if no re-certification information is received.

If a Helper's GSSCC membership expires, they will have 2 months to renew their GSSCC membership. If they fail to renew their GSSCC membership within 2 months, their status as a Helper is terminated. When they become a GSSCC member again they will need to re-certify at a seminar as described above.

The Helper may keep the amount of dogs worked and use their previous Helper books when they re-certify, upon approval from the Helper Committee. They may send their book to the program coordinator or photocopy the relevant pages and send them electronically.

## **SECTION 9 : HELPER CERTIFICATION CRITERIA**

Helper certifications will be based on the Helper's performance of the protection exercises for IGP 1, 2 or 3, which will be performed under simulated trial



conditions, including but not limited to: field setup, distances/directions for the escape, re-attacks with drives, long attack and direction by the presiding Judge or Teaching Helper. The evaluation will consider numerous aspects of the Helper's performance of the front half and back half exercises; including, but not limited to the following:

1. Is the Helper under control at all times?
2. Does the Helper's performance reflect the safety of the dog, Judge, and him/herself as their first priority?
3. Does the Helper know the protection exercises of the FCI trial regulations for all levels, IPG 1, 2 & 3?
4. Does the Helper take/follow direction from the protection Judge/ Teaching Helper?
5. Does the Helper know the attack-on-handler exercise, which is to be performed as part of GSSCC Breed Surveys and the Sieger Show at the Canadian German Shepherd Dog Championships?
6. Is the Helper physically fit enough to work multiple dogs in a trial?

The areas in which a Helper will be evaluated are shown in all GSSCC Trial Helper books.

## **SECTION 10 - TYPES OF SEMINARS**

### **A. Club Level Helper Seminar**

Who can host? - Any member club of the GSSCC can make application to host a club Helper seminar by completing a request for event form and sending to the regional trial director who will forward to the Helper Program Coordinator. There may be no fees charged for any Helper seminars, either to the sponsoring club or to the Helpers who attend.

Who can attend? - Any GSSCC member in good standing.

What can be obtained? - All Helper levels up to and including Regional level. In order for a Regional level to be granted, there must be at least two Teaching Helpers in attendance who must both agree on awarding the regional level status.

## **B. Regional Level Seminar**

These seminars are sponsored by each of the five regions: West (BC), the Prairies, Ontario, Quebec, and East (the Atlantic Provinces). Each Regional Board will select a host club or clubs.

Who can host? - Any region within the GSSCC can make application to host a regional Helper seminar by completing a request for event form, sending it to the regional trial director who will forward to the Helper Program Coordinator for approval. A region may host more than one regional level seminar in a year.

Who can attend? - Any GSSCC member in good standing.

What can be obtained? - All Helper levels up to and including Regional level. In order for a Regional level to be granted, there must be at least two Teaching Helpers in attendance who must both agree on awarding the regional level status.

## **C. National Level Seminar**

Who can host? - the GSSCC with support from the region or regions where the seminar is taking place.

Who can attend? - ONLY GSSCC Helpers that are club front half level, club level, regional level, or who have national level status. Members who are interested in becoming future Helpers are welcome to attend as auditors.

What can be obtained? - Re-certification of club level and up, to national level. Only Helpers that have attended and participated in a national seminar that year, can be selected for the Canadian Championship. A maximum credit of two dogs may be awarded to any deserving candidate attending a National level seminar.

At the conclusion of all seminars, the Teaching Helper MUST complete a Helper certification report on the outcome of the seminar and send it to the Helper Committee coordinator. See the teaching module for the certification report form.

## **SECTION 11 – FUNDING FOR TRIALS AND SEMINARS**

Helpers requested and/or selected to perform helper work at Club, Regional or National level trials or shows shall have reasonable expenses reimbursed at the same rates as any GSSCC Judge as outlined in Section 12 (d) and Section 59

(a),(b),(c) and (d) of the GSSCC Policy Manual unless an agreement between the Helper(s) and the hosting entity is previously reached that minimizes the expense to the hosting entity.

This shall apply to each level in the following manner:

1. Club Trials - reimbursement shall only apply to Helpers that are requested from outside the club with prior approval of expected expenses. All reimbursements shall be at the host clubs' expense and in accordance with section 12 of the GSSCC policy.
2. Regional Championships - reimbursement shall only apply to Helpers that are selected from outside the host club with prior approval of expected expenses from both the Regional board and host committee. If an agreement cannot be reached, the final decision will be made by the GSSCC Board of Directors. All reimbursements shall be shared equally between the Region and the host club and in accordance with section 12 of the GSSCC policy.
3. Canadian Championships - reimbursement shall only apply to Helpers that have been selected for the Canadian German Shepherd Dog Championships and Sieger Show and in accordance with Section 12 of the GSSCC policy. All Helpers selected shall receive:
  - a. Travel costs (GSSCC with prior approval. If airfare is lower than km rate, then the airfare amount will be paid).
  - b. A per diem for any day they perform Helper work, shared evenly between the host club, host region and the GSSCC.
  - c. Hotel expenses (GSSCC), reserved by Helper Committee.
  - d. One banquet ticket (host club).
  - e. Car rental shared by all Helpers (GSSCC) reserved by Helper Committee.
4. Teaching Helpers shall be provided a per diem and reimbursement of expenses for ALL Helper seminars and Helper certification events they conduct. The host region and/or club shall pay the per diem. The per diem will be the same as those outlined in the Judges program for Judges. Funding for Teaching Helpers who attend National level seminars will be supplied by the GSSCC upon approval of the Helper Program Coordinator to allow funding within the approved budget. It will include a per diem as well

as travel expenses. If airfare is lower than km rate, then the airfare amount will be paid.

5. Regional and National level Helpers who wish to attend for certifications may also request financial support, and this will be provided based on the Helper Committee's budget.
6. The Helper Program Coordinator's (or designate) and Head Judge's (or designate) expenses for the National Helper seminars will only be reimbursed with prior approval from the GSSCC Board of Directors.

## **SECTION 12: CHAMPIONSHIP HELPER SELECTIONS**

### **A. REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS**

GSSCC Helpers that are Regional level or higher will be selected to perform the Helper work. If there are not enough Helpers at that level in attendance, then club level Helpers will be allowed to try out and will be selected by the trial judge with advice from any of the Teaching Helpers from the region or any GSSCC Judges present, who have experience with the Helpers in question. No advice shall be offered by any parties that are themselves entered in the Championship.

### **B. CANADIAN GERMAN SHEPHERD DOG CHAMPIONSHIPS**

1. One (1) or more National Helper Seminars will take place in each of three regions, preceding the Canadian German Shepherd Dog Championships. It is suggested that there will be a minimum of three seminars, one in the Western area for BC, AB, SK and MN, one for Ontario, and a third in the East area, for Quebec and the Atlantic provinces.
2. These seminars should be completed at least one month prior to the Canadian German Shepherd Dog Championships.
3. The Helper Program Coordinator or their designate will attend and lead the seminar.
4. The Helper Program Coordinator will assign other Teaching Helper(s) to assist. It is suggested that all teaching Helpers that are available, attend, assist and provide feedback on the Helper Program.
5. The Head Judge or their designate will attend.

6. All Helpers with club front half status or higher, from all regions, are welcome to attend.
7. At the conclusion of each national seminar, the Head Judge (or their designate), along with the Helper Program coordinator (or their designate) plus the teaching Helpers who are present, will decide which Helpers attending the seminar may try out for the Canadian German Shepherd Dog Championship selection. The Helper's performances will be video recorded by the organizing committee from at least two locations as described in the Teaching Helper Module.
8. The video recordings will be viewed by the Head Judge, the Judges Committee, and the Helper Program Coordinator with the Helper Committee. They will select a minimum of three Helpers for the Canadian German Shepherd Dog Championships for that year. They will also decide which Helper does the front part, back part and which will be an alternate.
9. The video recordings will be available for viewing by the membership prior to the Canadian German Shepherd Dog Championships.
10. At the beginning of the Canadian German Shepherd Dog Championships, each Helper selected will conduct an IGP 3 routine as a demonstration.

### **SECTION 13: HELPER CONDUCT**

Any GSSCC certified Helper who is observed to fail to perform at any trial in an equitable, safe, and sportsmanlike manner and is not excused from a trial by the judge shall be reported in writing to the Helper Program Coordinator by a GSSCC member within 20 calendar days for review.

Any certified Helper who fails to perform at any trial in an equitable, safe, and sportsmanlike manner shall be excused from a trial by the Judge who may recommend censure or other disciplinary action to the Helper Program Committee.

Improper behaviour on the part of any GSSCC certified Teaching Helper shall be reported in writing to the Helper Program Coordinator within 20 calendar days for disciplinary action.

## **SECTION 14: COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

Upon receipt of a written complaint the Helper Program Coordinator must advise the Regional Trial Director, Head Judge, Helper Committee, GSSCC Executive and Helper in question, within 20 calendar days that a complaint has been received. The Helper Program Coordinator with the approval of the Helper Committee must appoint a GSSCC Teaching Helper to investigate the complaint. That GSSCC Teaching Helper must gather all facts and submit a written report to the Helper Program Coordinator, Head Judge and GSSCC Executive within 20 calendar days. The written report must be reviewed by the Helper Committee, and they must decide a suggested disciplinary action.

The suggested disciplinary action must be presented to the Head Judge and GSSCC Executive for review and approval. If any suggested disciplinary action cannot be agreed upon, the Head Judge along with the Judges Committee will decide on a disciplinary action.

## **SECTION 15: TYPES OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

Any Helper whose conduct was reviewed as outlined in section 13 can have the following disciplinary actions imposed by the Helper Committee with approval from the GSSCC Executive:

- A. No action
- B. Verbal warning
- C. Written warning
- D. Education given
- E. Helper status on probation for a year
- F. Helper level changed
- G. Helper removed from the Helper Program
- H. Any combination of the above.