

Preferred Breeder Program FAQs ("Frequently Asked Questions")

Is PennHIP acceptable in lieu of OFA hip certification?

We recognize that there are protocol differences between OFA and the PennHIP type of evaluation. Some breeders have a preference for PennHIP, and some breeders go so far as to have both evaluations performed. There are also some dog breeders (not just breeders of Boykin spaniels) who resort to obtaining PennHIP evaluations after the dog's hips were judged to be Borderline or worse by the OFA veterinary panel. We looked to the Boykin Spaniel Foundation's program with regards to hips, and also considered that the greatest number of our members rely on the OFA as their preferred hip validation procedure. In the end, we settled on limiting the hip classification requirements to OFA, Fair or better; we feel it "levels the playing field" for all.

Is there any way I might be able to get into this program without meeting the full 100% of the minimum requirements?

Yes, there is that possibility, but it is extremely small. Your application would have to include a convincing written appeal for a waiver, and you'll have to accept that the review by the committee and the Board will delay the approval process. In some cases, particularly those related to health/inherited disease screenings, the Boykin Spaniel Foundation Board of Directors might be asked to consult as well.

I've bred Boykin spaniels in the past, but I wasn't doing all of the things listed as requirements. Does this disqualify or limit me?

The short answer is no it does not, not at this time, except for the breeding history requirement for Gold Level. Obviously it's to your advantage when you can give evidence to prospective puppy buyers that you have been complying before the Preferred Breeder Program came along. However, if you have not been, the approval process is highly unlikely to disqualify you for that reason alone.

Does being a listed Preferred Breeder Program member mean that the Society certifies, recommends or endorses the individual?

No, it does not. We are the official Registry of the Boykin spaniel and will not recommend breeders or maintain an approved breeder list. "Preferred" does not mean "approved". We expect all parties involved in the purchase and sale of puppies to act responsibly, and we assume no liability or responsibility for any disputes that may arise between purchaser and seller.

Can I apply for this program if I have not yet been a Boykin spaniel breeder?

Yes, so long as you realize that you might be contacted by potential buyers of purebred Boykin spaniel puppies and they are likely to have questions about your history as a breeder. You should be prepared to explain to them why you enrolled in the program.

If I am approved to be in this program, how much of my personal information will be published?

We will publish your name, telephone number, city or town, and state of residence.

What is meant by "earned a title in a field trial ... of a performance program recognized by the Society"? Does a completion qualify?

Only a placement of first, second, third or fourth would qualify as a field trial title.

Does a first, second, third or fourth place finish in the Puppy stake of the Boykin Spaniel Retriever National Field Trial qualify as a "title"?

Two of the objectives stated in our constitution are (1) "to advance the interest of the breed by encouraging sportsmanlike competition", and (2) "to do all possible to perpetuate natural hunting ability." In the member Code of Ethics, we find "It is the paramount responsibility of all BSS members to perfect through selection, breeding and training the type of dog most suitable in all respects for work as a companionable gundog". When considering the requirements and level of competition in the Puppy stake these days, and what participation alone means with respect to sportsmanlike competition, then yes, we believe that a placement in the Puppy stake meets the general intention of this Gold Level clause.

What about hunt test titles, would that same philosophy about Puppy stake in field trials apply for the beginner level of the popular hunt test events?

Yes, the philosophy is the same. If the title is earned in a retriever test program, regardless of the sponsoring organization, the dog is expected to exhibit desire, trainability, marking ability, and retrieving. The fundamental expectations of a dog you'd take dove hunting. They have to swim and retrieve, too. If the title is earned in a flushing dog series, they have to do those things plus hunt birds in the field. Should all Boykin spaniels be able to do those things, yes; can all Boykin spaniels do them, no.

What are the hunting "performance programs recognized by the Society"?

In addition to the Society's field trials and hunt tests, the approval groups will recognize the popular Hunting Retriever Club (HRC) programs, American Kennel Club hunt test programs, and the North American Hunting Retriever Association hunt test programs. Other programs will be given due consideration, provided the committee is provided with sufficient evaluation information with the application.

My Boykin spaniel breeding and puppy sales are done under my business (kennel) name, that's what I'm known by and identified with. Will the Preferred Breeder Program publicity use my kennel name, my own name, or both?

If you are approved, you will be contacted by a member of the Registry Committee and they will ask you whether you want your kennel name listed in addition to your name; they'll also confirm the telephone number you wish to have published.

My question is about the DNA testing. I understand the underlying principles and I also understand that with each of those three diseases you've listed – EIC, CEA and DM – that a dog would need to inherit a bad gene from the sire and the same bad gene from the dam. If one of the two dogs is Clear (no bad genes found in his or her DNA), why would I have to test the other dog's DNA, since the worst case for an offspring is that it would be an unaffected Carrier?

Simply put, because knowing all you can about both dogs' health is being responsible and ethical, and preferred.

Is this going to mean that a Preferred Breeder Program member can only breed his/her dog(s) with the dog(s) of another Preferred Breeder Program member while enrolled in this program?

No, certainly not. There will be a lot of Society members who don't want to be in this program even though their registered dog(s) fulfill all of the requirements.

What if I get approved for this program but find myself with the opportunity to breed my dog with a dog who doesn't meet the strict program requirements for physical soundness (must have OFA Normal cardiac, eyes, and patellas, and OFA Fair or better hips)?

If that is a temptation that you're already thinking might be too great, then this program probably isn't for you: simply don't apply. If you were to find yourself faced with this choice after you've been enrolled in the Preferred Breeder Program and truly feel you need to do the breeding, contact the Society office with a written request to remove yourself. This is a voluntary program, meant for those members who breed or may breed and who feel the strict requirements have a high worth with regards to protecting and advancing the interest of the Boykin spaniel breed.

If you were to proceed with any kind of active participation in a breeding match that you pledged against doing, and you are enrolled in the program when that breeding happens, that is deliberately undermining the intention of the program and you will put the Board of Directors and its Registry Committee members in the unwanted position of reconsidering your enrollment in the program. Even if you do not own the dog(s), if you've had any kind of a say-so, the standards still apply to you.

If I am enrolled in this program and I've got the opportunity to breed my dog with one who is not Society-registered but otherwise meets 100% of the physical requirements, would doing that breeding be a problem?

Yes it would, because the litter produced would never be eligible for our registration. When you enrolled, you pledged that for every breeding in which your dog(s) is/are used, that all puppy ownership transfers would only be done with written contracts which state that the new owner must register the puppy with the BSS. Over in the Code of Ethics document, you'll find that misleading anyone about the registration status of any dog is not condoned. So if you are the litter owner (dam owner), you'd find yourself telling buyers they must do something you know will be impossible.

Does what you've just given as an answer mean that if I enroll in the Preferred Breeder Program, then my sire or dam cannot produce a litter that's registerable with another, different dog registry?

No, it means that 100% of the litters in which a dog owned by you participated in producing must be BSS registered; and, that you will advance (promote) our Registry as the principal and official registry of the Boykin spaniel by telling all puppy buyers that a condition of transfer (buying) is registering their puppy with the BSS. If they don't do what you've stipulated, and whether or not you're going to enforce the condition, is solely between you and them.

What if I have what I consider to be a very good breeding opportunity but for some very unique and special reason, I would put my good standing in jeopardy and I don't want to remove myself or be removed from the Preferred Breeder Program?

When this Program was implemented after many years of development, the Board of Directors tried to anticipate a lot of "what if" situations and addressed them as best as possible, but surely could not anticipate all of the possibilities. One real and valid example: a highly-desirable stud dog with a long lineage of exceptional offspring was never evaluated for patellar luxation during his lifetime. The owner collected and froze semen to potentially be used in future breedings but now the lack of OFA patellar certification is a problem.

The Board determined that in the event of such unique circumstances, the Program member should file a written consideration request so that the Board can evaluate each such request on a case-by-case basis, fairly weigh the merits of the appeal, and then provide a written waiver that may or may not include particular stipulations. When submitting, please be as proactive as you possibly can. In the example case, the Board determined that the Program member must clearly disclose the circumstances in writing and provide copies of that document to the puppy purchasers and dam owner (if they do not own the dam themselves).

If I voluntarily remove myself from the Preferred Breeder Program, but want to get back in later, how would I do that?

Your enrollment in the program begins on the day you are approved, and lapses exactly 104 weeks (two years) later. If you remove yourself during those 104 weeks, you can reapply at any time, but your readmission isn't automatic; if you are approved for re-enrollment, it will take effect on the originally-scheduled anniversary date. (Example: Your approval date is 1/1/18 and you voluntarily withdraw on 10/1/18; the soonest date for reinstatement is 1/1/20.)

If the Board revokes my enrollment in the Preferred Breeder Program, can I reapply for admission at a later time?

In the event that the Board of Directors finds that a removal from this program is warranted, it has the discretionary right to potentially reinstate members into the program in the future, upon their re-application for admission. This will be described in writing at the time of the member's removal from the program.

How do you intend to handle complaints or suspicions that I've violated my pledge and your trust, should those ever occur?

For the most part, these matters will be handled in the same manner as an Ethics code violation, and we refer you to that document for information. There is one possibly large difference: most usually, an Ethics code violation investigation isn't started until a written complaint by a first-hand aggrieved party is submitted to the Board, but in the case of a Preferred Breeder Program member violation, the most likely cause will be what's shown on a litter registration application.