

# **Working Dog Advanced Certification Requirements**

## **1. Purpose**

- 1.1. The purpose of the Working Dog Advanced (WDA) program shall be to recognize those dogs that show advanced working capabilities. These accomplishments shall reflect endurance, attitude and training above and beyond that of the average working dog, without undermining the high level of dedication it takes to achieve an Excellent title.
- 1.2. The certification committee has the right to reject any application that does not reflect the spirit of the program.
- 1.3. To provide Certificates for those Alaskan Malamutes proven in these pursuits.
- 1.4. To thus encourage the breeding of a better Alaskan Malamute.

## **2. Administration**

- 2.1. The Working Dog Advanced (WDA) program shall be a continuation of the Alaskan Malamute Club of America's Working Dog Certification rules, and unless otherwise stated, those rules and definitions apply.
- 2.2. The WDA Committee shall be made up of three AMCA members from different geographical regions. Recommendation for the chairperson of the WDA committee will be made to the Board of Directors by the Chairperson of the Working Dog Committees. The WDA chairperson shall then appoint two committee members of his or her choice from different geographical areas. It is recommended that all committee members shall have worked a dog to the WDA level and that the committee represents all aspects of the program.
- 2.3. Rule changes. The WDA rules may be modified, amended, corrected, changed, or discontinued upon recommendation of a majority of the WDA committee and upon approval of the Board. Clarifications or corrections that do not reflect a change in the rules may be made by the title committee and must be published in the WD committee report following the change.

## **3. Eligibility**

- 3.1. The Alaskan Malamute shall be registered or registerable with a recognized kennel club (AKC, CKC, etc.). An IPL or PAL registration number is also permitted.
- 3.2. Deceased Alaskan Malamutes meeting registration requirements and having fulfilled all legs of certification after January 1, 2005 are eligible for Working Dog Certification. All necessary paperwork must be completed and submitted by the applicant for review to the Working Dog Committee.
- 3.3. Any Alaskan Malamute holding a basic title in the field for which is being applied.

#### 4. **Fields of Certification**

Dogs may earn certification in the following fields:

- 4.1. Working Weight Pull Dog Advanced (WWPDA)
- 4.2. Working Pack Dog Advanced (WPDA)
- 4.3. Working Team Dog Advanced (WTDA)
- 4.4. Working Lead Dog Advanced (WLDA)

### **Certification Requirements**

#### 5. **General Rules**

- 5.1. **Competitive Events** must be open events. Open events are those that are not restricted to certain breeds or club and are sufficiently advertised so that the public has the opportunity to participate. Exceptions to this will be events sponsored in conjunction with an AMCA or AKC event and therefore limited to a given breed(s) or dog(s).
- 5.2. **Excursion Events** may be club sponsored, group or individual outings. Excursions must be conducted with a destination in mind or a purpose of travel. Purpose of travel must not be solely for mileage accumulation.
- 5.3. **Witnesses**
  - 5.3.1. Witnesses for competitive events of club-organized excursions shall be an event official or organizer.
  - 5.3.2. Witnesses for non-competitive sledding and pack excursions shall be impartial, which excludes family members, residents of the applicant's household, the dog's breeder, any vested parties, etc.
- 5.4. **Documentation** – Documentation for back country packing and sledding trips may be difficult to obtain in some situations, but the applicant must provide sufficient evidence that the trip has taken place as stated. All documents must be submitted in an organized manner with items appropriately labeled and clearly identifiable.
  - 5.4.1. Maps such as USGS topographic maps or Forest Service maps with the route designated on it must be included with the application.
  - 5.4.2. The signature(s) of an impartial witness(es) encountered on the trail and a statement verifying that the applicant was at the stated location on a given date must be included. A GPS printout may be submitted as documentation if an impartial witness is not

available. If applying an elevation credit, please include an elevation profile or topographic map.

5.4.3. Verifiable photographs of the applicants' team or pack dog at a specified location (for example at a trail sign) and a detailed narrative about the trip must be included.

5.4.4. A completed title/leg tracking sheet must accompany each application.

**5.5. Variations** – Anyone planning a trip or race they are not sure will qualify under the WDA rules may inquire of the committee at least four weeks prior to the event. Communication with the committee in advance of a leg/title is not pre-approval nor is it a guarantee the committee will approve the application.

5.5.1. **Appeal**— Applicants will be given every opportunity during the review process to provide any additional information or documentation the committee may need in evaluation of an application. Anyone wishing to appeal the outcome of an application may do so to the title committee chair by contacting the chair within 5 days of the sent date of electronic notification of an unaccepted application. Applicants must include any additional documentation to support their application at this time. The title chair will notify the Working Dog Committee chair(s) of the appeal. The title chair may elect to resubmit the application to the committee for review with any additional information the applicant has provided. Upon decision by the title chair or title committee, the title application will be considered closed and ineligible for resubmission,

5.6. **Sportsmanship** – Common courtesy and good sportsmanship shall prevail during all events and trips. Any applicant who is abusive to his dogs or other people shall not be eligible for a WDA award for his dogs. Dogs must present a good example of the breed, being manageable non-aggressive workers and not posing a threat to other dogs or people.

5.7. **Application** – Mileage/pulls used toward one title may not be applied toward another.

5.8. **Lapping** – Out and back travel is acceptable. But during the course of a day, a trail, or a section of trail, is not to be repeatedly passed over with the sole intent of mileage accumulation. Sections of trail may be repeatedly passed over in order to access other areas, trails systems, or for some other reasonable purpose which should be documented.

5.9. **Excursion Addenda** – Any terrain or area that doesn't meet the description of an acceptable trail can be crossed or accessed; however, this terrain or area cannot exceed 5% of the total mileage required nor can be applied toward the required mileage needed and must be documented.

## 6. Working Weight Pull Dog Advanced

6.1. All dogs pulling must have attained one full year of age.

6.2. All dogs must be weighed at each event. All dogs must be pulling in the weight class appropriate for the individual dog. All weights are rounded down to the nearest whole

number. They may not move down or up a weight class. In the case of a multiple day event, dogs need not be re-weighed each day unless they are within two pounds of the class limit.

6.3. Dogs must qualify in 5 competitions by:

6.3.1. Pulling 14 times his body weight on snow with a sled.

6.3.2. Pulling 16 times his weight on any other natural surface with a wheeled cart.

6.3.3. Pulling the following weights by weight class, on a man-made surface:

6.3.3.1. 60# and Under Class - 23 times the dog's weight

6.3.3.2. 61-80# and Under Class - 23 times the dog's weight

6.3.3.3. 81-100# Class - 21 times the dog's weight

6.3.3.4. 101-120# Class - 19 times the dog's weight

6.3.3.5. 121# and Over Class – 19 times the dog's weight

6.4. ISDRA, AMCA, IWPA or other previously approved rules shall be used.

6.5. In addition to requirements 1, 2, or 3, if at a competition, over 75% of the total number of dogs entered in the entire competition (encompassing all classes except Novice) pull the required weight, that pull will be disallowed.

7. [Working Pack Dog Advanced](#)

7.1. Dogs must exceed 12 months of age at the time of the trip to qualify.

7.2. The dog's weight and the weight of his pack must be verified by an impartial witness or trip official prior to the start of the trip. The dog shall carry an initial load of at least 30% of his body weight. The weight carried shall not decrease except by normal consumption of items such as food or water. At no time should the pack weight be less than 10% of the dog's weight.

7.3. Pack trips must be on natural terrain such as wilderness hiking trails or cross-country, in remote areas. At least one overnight campout is required. Refer to working title glossary for clarification of Back Country or Remote Area.

7.4. A total of 80 miles shall be completed in 1 to 4 trips.

7.5. Each trip shall be a minimum of 20 miles. When conducting an overnight campout an average of at least 10 miles per day traveled on consecutive days is required. If not conducting an overnight campout, trip mileage must be accumulated within one day. Day trips from a base camp must adhere to the 30% starting weight requirements.

7.5.1. Applicants must include evidence of pack weight for day trips from a base camp be it via a photo of the pack weighed with a hand scale or a log of what was replaced in the pack.

7.5.2. The 30% starting pack weight requirement does not apply to the last day when camp is broken and there is a return to the trail head.

7.6. Because some trips will take place in mountainous terrain, each 1,000 feet of elevation gain may be substituted for a mile of the total mileage requirement. Elevation gain will be figured as the difference between the highest and lowest points of the trip each day.

7.7. Photographic evidence and the signature of an impartial witness on the form must be sent to the Committee verifying proof of distances and dog competing or a GPS printout with sufficient photographic evidence. See 5.4 for complete documentation requirements.

## **8. Working Team Dog Advanced**

8.1. Race rules shall be ISDRA, other nationally recognized rules, or rules previously approved or agreed upon by the WD title committees.

8.2. Dogs may run on any size team and need not run on the same team for each event. The team does not need to be an all-malamute team.

8.3. Sledding may be Alaskan style, Nordic style (single file team pulling a pulk), or dryland. The vehicle may be a snow sled, 3-or 4-wheeled vehicle, i.e. traditional training rig(see glossary or definition), or an ATV without motor assistance.

8.4. Because some trips will take place in mountainous terrain, each 1,000 feet of elevation gain may be substituted for a mile of the total mileage requirement. Elevation gain will be figured as the difference between the highest and lowest points of the trip each day.

8.5. Total mileage for all applicants shall be 110 miles.

8.5.1. Method 1 – Races must be a minimum of 25 continuous miles. Races need not be completed so long as the minimum 25 miles per race are met. Alternatively, races may consist of two or more heats of at least 15 miles each where the applicant has completed at least two consecutive heats.

8.5.2. Method 2 – Back country excursion trips shall be a minimum of 25 miles per day. The team must travel as a self-sufficient unit, hauling supplies necessary for the trip. Examples of suitable places are national forests, parks, or other areas where trails and roads are not maintained for winter use by vehicles, except snow machines, or maintained for ease of travel for vehicle traffic at other times of the year.

8.5.3. Method 3 – Back country camping excursions shall be a minimum of 15 miles per day, with a total minimum of 30 miles per trip. The team must travel as a self-sufficient unit, hauling supplies necessary for the trip. Examples of suitable places are national forests, parks, or other areas where trails and roads are not maintained for winter use by vehicles, except snow machines, or maintained for ease of travel for vehicle traffic at other times of the year.

8.5.4. Method 4 – A combination of Methods 1, 2, and 3.

8.6. Legs approved toward the WTDA may not be applied toward the WLDA, nor any other title.

## 9. **Working Lead Dog Advanced**

9.1. THE DOG MUST RUN SINGLE LEAD on a team consisting of 3 dogs minimum.

9.2. Lead Dog Advanced requirements are identical to those for the Working Team Dog Advanced with the exception that the dog must run lead for at least half of those requirements.

9.3. The dog does not have to lead the same team each time to qualify.

9.4. The dog must run on the LEADING team for approximately 50% of the time, if several teams are traveling together.

9.5. Legs approved toward the WLDA may not be applied toward the WTDA, or any other title.

*Effective January 1, 2008*

*Revised October 9, 2023*

# Weight Pull Glossary

## TITLES

See each section for the requirements for each title.

**WWPD** - Working Weight Pull Dog

**WWPDA** - Working Weight Pull Dog Advanced

**WWPDX** - Working Weight Pull Dog Excellent

**WWPDS** - Working Weight Pull Dog Superior

## Club Abbreviations

**AMCA** - Alaskan Malamute Club of America

**ISDRA** - International Sled Dog Racing Association

**IWPA** - International Weight Pull Association

**Cart** - A weight pull cart is usually a long platform that has four pneumatic or solid wheels attached at the four corners. It must be constructed to safely hold over 3,000 lbs.

**Competitions** - At a weight pull dogs are organized into weight classes that can vary among each organization's rules. All dogs only compete against dogs in their same weight class, i.e., 61-80lbs or 81-100lbs are the most common for Alaskan Malamutes. After all weight classes have competed, the dogs are awarded 1st through 4th place in each class. At some competitions, ribbons and/or other prizes for Most Weight Pulled and High Percentage are awarded from all the dogs competing.

Competitive events must be open events. Open events are those that are not restricted to certain breeds or clubs and are sufficiently advertised so that the public has the opportunity to participate. Exceptions to this will be events sponsored in conjunction with an AMCA or AKC event and therefore limited to a given breed(s) or dog(s).

**Event** - An event is a scheduled day of weight pulling organized by individual dog clubs or organizations. Each club may hold one or more weight pulls in one day. Each separate weight pull event may count as one leg towards a title if the leg requirements are met.

**Harness** - A weight pull harness is best described as a freighting harness. It fits closely to the breastbone and withers around the dog's neck and follows along the sides of the dog's body. It has been fitted with a bar that is long enough to come across the rear quarters of the dog to help distribute the weight being pulled and has a ring that slides along a strap at the back.

**High Percentage** – High Percentage may be awarded to the dog which pulled the highest times its weight in a competition. It is more accurately referred to as High Times Body Weight and is an achievement that can be awarded but is not required. An example of this calculation would be a dog weighing 85lbs pulled 2000lbs.  $2000/85 = 23.52$ .

**Most Weight Pulled** – This is the highest amount of weight pulled by any dog in the competition excluding the Novice class. This achievement can be awarded but is not required,

**Novice** - A novice puller is any dog that has little experience at weight pull. The Novice Class or Division encompasses any dog beginning at 12 months old or older. The Novice competition can

either be held as a separate event or can be worked into the regular pull. The weight for the Novice class shall not exceed 1000lb except in a graduated weight increment, i.e., 1008lb.

**Officials** - For a weight pull the officials needed are found below. Any of the officials listed will conduct the weigh-in to determine the class or division of each dog.

**Chief Judge** - the main judge who will determine that each pull is completed. The Chief Judge calls 'Good' or some other identifying word at the end of each pull and calls out the time used to complete the pull in the event there is no Timekeeper available. The Chief Judge may be relieved by another appointed judge for that event.

**Timekeeper** - or often called Timer. This person uses a stopwatch to keep the time needed to complete the pull. The Chief Judge or the Scorekeeper will be the back-up Timekeeper in case of equipment failure.

**Scorekeeper** - This person records each dog's pull or pass for each weight increment. This can be done by computer, on paper, or on a displayed board or a combination.

**Weight Marshall** - The Weight Marshall makes sure that the correct amount of weight is added to the cart for each weight increment. He/she also makes sure that the cart or sled is placed correctly at the starting line.

**Cart-Help** - The cart-help assists the Weight Marshall in adding weight to the cart and helps make sure that the cart or sled is placed correctly at the starting line.

**Sled** - A weight pull sled is a platform generally constructed with sides that have sled-like runners on the bottom that allow it to slide across a snow track. They must be constructed to safely hold 2,700lbs.

**Sportsmanship** - Common courtesy and good sportsmanship shall prevail during all events. Any applicant who is abusive to his dogs or other people shall not be eligible for a WWPD or higher award for his dogs. Dogs must present a good example for the breed. Any dog ruled to be vicious or overly aggressive by the Chief Judge may be dismissed from the competition.

*Effective: February 9, 2022*



## Working Title Glossary

**Back Country, Remote or Wilderness Area (hiking):** An area not accessible by motor vehicle, and in most cases limited to foot, or livestock traffic. Any campsites are unimproved with no permanent man made structures. The trail has very limited improvements (see unimproved trail) and does not pass through improved areas. There are no amenities or provisions along the trail, all supplies must be carried in and out. The hiker is essentially “on their own” without opportunity to re-supply or prematurely abandon the trip without returning to the trail head or finishing through. Proximity to trailheads and other “out” access points cannot be of benefit to the hiker during the trip. Participants are expected to travel with all necessary supplies.

**Back Country, Remote or Wilderness Area (sledding):** An area typically not accessible by motor vehicle, save snow machines during the winter. Any campsites are unimproved with no permanent man made structures. A three-sided lean-to or rustic cabin without amenities or any resources (such as, but not limited to: electricity, gas, water, provided provisions, etc.) may be permitted. The trail has very limited improvements (see unimproved trail) and does not pass through or come near improved areas. There are no amenities or provisions along the trail, all supplies must be carried in and out. The team is essentially “on their own” without opportunity to re-supply or prematurely abandon the trip. The only way “out” is through or by returning to the trail head. Proximity to trailheads and other “out” access points cannot be of benefit to the hiker during the trip. Participants are expected to travel with all necessary supplies regardless if an acceptable structure is along the route.

**Impartial Witness:** Can include event organizers or officials, wildlife officers or other wilderness officials, or those without a vested interest. Impartial witness excludes family members, residents of the same household as the applicant, the dogs' breeder, any vested parties, and the like.

**Improved Campground:** Any campground accessible by vehicle and/or with modern amenities such as, but not limited to: toilets, running water, electricity, garbage service, etc.

**Improved Trail or Road:** Any trail or road that has been altered with imported materials (consisting of, but not limited to: concrete, asphalt, sand or aggregate base, gravel, regular grading, etc.) and/or is maintained for ease of travel (includes grading).

**Lap:** One time around or over a course .

**Lead Dog:** A dog who runs single lead on a team consisting of at least three dogs and who remains in lead, which means no other dog, team or person maybe be moving, walking, etc. ahead of the team. Any mileage where a person or other is ahead of the team must be subtracted from mileage applied toward leg requirements and must be documented.

**Native Surface:** Surfaces which include native dirt or soil and native gravel and rock, i.e. originally existing material absent of imported material or road base from somewhere else.

**Natural Surface:** Any naturally occurring native surface or improved surfaces consisting of dirt, soil, loose gravel, etc. Please see “non-natural surface” for exclusions.

**Non-Natural Surface:** Man made surfaces such as asphalt, concrete, cobblestone, brick, boardwalk, etc.

**Non-Pedal Vehicle:** A 2-4 wheeled vehicle that lacks pedals or other such propulsion mechanisms. Such vehicles include: a dog scooter, cart or traditional training rig, or kick bike. An ATV without motor assistance is allowable.

**Trip:** A single outing, be it a single or multi-day trip, separated by a return home or move to a completely new location.

**Unimproved or Primitive Campground or Site:** An undeveloped area designated as acceptable for camping. Such areas may be found trail side or off-trail. There may be evidence of use, such as a stone fire pit or wear to the ground from other users, but there will be no amenities or other development.

**Unimproved Road:** An unimproved road is any such road that is not maintained for ease of travel. It is a native surface that is not graded or maintained and will likely be weathered and/or difficult to pass. Examples of such roads could be some ATV or jeep trails, some Forest Service or logging roads.

**Unimproved, Primitive or Wilderness Trail:** A trail which largely consists of native surface and has improvements limited to erosion control and the removal of down trees. Man Made bridges are few and only provided when following the lay of the land could result in life threatening conditions (i.e. unsafe water crossings, or impassible crevices.) or serves as a protection against environmental damage. The trail surface is not improved, or groomed for easy walking conditions. When hiking a wilderness trail, a hiker should expect uneven terrain, small stream crossings, and changing trail surfaces.

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