

What does it take to be a judge?

Scoring Judges: If you are interested in being a judge in the Music, Performance, or Singing categories – you should have a strong desire to help our choruses and quartets become better singers, musicians, and performers. You should have extensive experience and also be actively coaching and teaching barbershoppers. You must also be experienced with competing yourself in barbershop competitions, either as a director and/or as a singer. Your experience may likely include other areas outside of barbershop, such as arranging music, vocal production training, or work in theatre productions. The Society Contest & Judging Committee (SCJC) is looking for people who can quickly evaluate a performance, assess strengths and weaknesses, and provide instructive feedback within a short period of time.

Contest Administrators: If you have good organizational, project management, and communication skills, you may be interested in serving as a Contest Administrator (CA). The CA is responsible for the orderly management and operations of BHS competitions, resulting in a successful experience for the competitor and audience. You will be expected to have above average computer skills, along with the willingness to maintain and provide your own personal laptop and portable printer for use at assigned contest events. CA's do not get the limelight, but they do get the satisfaction of making sure BHS competitions run smoothly.

For all Judges: In addition, you must have a mature attitude and professional demeanor, as well as the ability to make the time commitment needed to serve in this rewarding role. You should be a person that people say right now, "You would make a great judge." The best motivation for being a judge is having a strong desire to give back to the Society. There is nothing more satisfying than giving a performer a tool, a technique, an experience, or a pearl of wisdom that helps them improve and they now "get it." If this sounds like you, then you've come to the right place. On the other hand, if you want to become a judge for the glamour and notoriety, you will be very disappointed!

What's the process?

- Every three years (2016, 2019, 2022, etc.) the application window opens from August through December. You should contact your District Representative of Contest & Judging (DRCJ) to let them know of your interest. They will give you the necessary form to fill out. You will also need two letters of recommendation from certified judges, plus provide the names of 5 references – (individuals who can attest to your abilities).
- The DRCJ is responsible for providing a cover letter with their comments and recommendation, and forwards the complete application packet to the respective Category Specialist. Once your application has been reviewed and accepted by the Category Specialist, you are then considered an Applicant. At this point you will be given a C&J General Knowledge Test, as well one or more category specific tests. Each category requires different tests to determine what you know and don't know. *(Your DRCJ can provide additional requirements and expectations information specific for each category prior to you submitting your application).* At the end of this period

(Jan-May), you are evaluated and vetted, and then the top applicants are invited to attend Candidate School.

- Candidate School usually takes place the weekend before Harmony University, from Thursday evening through Sunday morning. For Scoring Judges, you will learn how to calibrate your scoring to currently certified judges, as well as learn techniques for post-contest evaluations. For CA's, you will learn how to run a contest from start to finish. In addition, all attendees are further evaluated as to their suitability to be added to the C&J community as a candidate.
- Assuming you pass Candidate School, you are now officially a Candidate. At this point, you are expected to serve as a "practice judge" at BHS contests over the next two years in order to learn your craft better, and to provide the opportunity for us to be able to evaluate your abilities. The expectations include one contest each Fall, and two each Spring season (a total of 6 contest weekends), but your Category Specialist will provide more specific guidance for you (requiring less or more depending on your progress and/or your previous experience). There is no reimbursement for expenses incurred during this process – however many candidates often practice judge contests that are within driving distance and/or locations where they can share a room with others to mitigate their personal costs. In addition, each category will define additional tests and/or projects that will be required for your growth and to help us with further evaluation of your progress.
- At the end of this two year period, candidates who have successfully demonstrated they are ready to be certified are invited to Category School. Previously certified judges must also recertify every three year cycle. At the end of the school, you are then a certified judge and eligible to judge contests across the Barbershop Harmony Society.

Can everyone be a judge?

- No. Each category is normally limited to a maximum of 40 individuals (even fewer for the CA category). In addition, every certified judge must continue to meet the expectations and requirements that the SCJC sets for all judges. We want to recruit and keep the best and the brightest – so that we can serve our competitors well. However, every 3-year cycle we have judges who retire or need to step down, so we must always be prepared to replenish the ranks of every category to ensure we have the best possible judges to serve our BHS competitors.