

**MID POINT/FINAL VET CHECK PROCEDURE:**

1. **Record “time in”** for all dogs as soon as team(s) arrive at vet check. (Steward, under direction of vet, may record.)
  2. Take and **record temperatures** of all dogs arriving, beginning with the dog/team with the earliest start time (trained steward may take and record under direction of the vet/vet tech.
  3. Assess and **record condition of dog(s)**.
  4. **Check horse(s)**.
  5. **Decide** how much additional time, if any (up to 30 minutes from the time the team(s) arrived), the team(s) should remain at the vet check. **Inform** exhibitor of decision.
  6. **Record “time out”** of team (steward may record).
- Dogs are to remain at the vet check for **no less than 5 minutes**, and **no more than 30 minutes**. THE VETERINARIAN (not the exhibitor) decides how long a dog or team of dogs stays at the vet check. *Dogs which must remain at rest for more than 30 minutes, due to injury or poor conditioning, will not be allowed to continue on the trail, and will not receive a “pass” rating or a qualifying score.*
  - The time spent “checking”, or assessing the dog and horse is considered part of the 5 – 30 minutes. **It is important that the “time in” to the “time out” does not add up to more than 30 minutes.**
  - It is the responsibility of the veterinarian to record the **“time in”** to the vet check **AS SOON AS A TEAM ARRIVES IN THE CHECK AREA**. A steward may record this time if the veterinarian so directs. EXHIBITORS MAY NOT ARRIVE AT THE VET CHECK AND ASK TO WAIT TO BE CHECKED. All teams are to be recorded as “time in” in immediately, and temped immediately.
  - It is the responsibility of the veterinarian to take the **temperature** of each dog **AS SOON AS A TEAM ARRIVES IN THE CHECK AREA**. A trained steward may also take the temperature of the dog(s). Dogs are temped first, then assessed, then horses. If more than one team arrives at the vet check area at the same time, the team with the earliest start time will be temped first (dogs), then the team with the later start time (dogs). Temperatures of all dogs are recorded before any other stats are taken. EXHIBITORS MAY NOT COOL THEIR DOGS AT THE VET CHECK AREA BEFORE THE DOGS HAVE BEEN TEMPED. Temperatures and stats on the horses are taken AFTER all dog checks are completed (except in the case of a veterinary emergency).
  - If **only one veterinarian** is employed (serving as the start/finish and mid-point vet), and a number of teams arrive at the same time, the priority protocol is as follows: Finishing dogs are temped first, according to start time (see above). Mid-point dogs are temped next. Dogs are then assessed according to the score sheets; finishing dogs first, then mid-point dogs. Horses are assessed last (same protocol).
  - **“Time out”** is recorded by the veterinarian (or the veterinarian may direct the steward to do so) as soon as the vet chooses to send the team back out on the trail. The vet may choose to require a standard rest time for all dogs (5-30 minutes), or

may choose to send each dog out whenever s/he deems suitable (5-30 minutes). Again, THE VETERINARIAN (not the exhibitor) decides how long a dog or team of dogs stays at the vet check.

- If a team consists of **both an RD dog and an RDX dog**, there is no “time in” recorded for the RDX dog at the RD mid-point (6 ¼ miles). In other words, when the team stops for a vet check at approximately 6 ¼ miles, only the RD dog is checked at this time. The clock is still “running” for the RDX dog, and the RDX dog will not be checked until 12 ½ miles.
- If a **horse**, due to injury or lack of conditioning, must be held longer than 30 minutes at the mid-point vet check, the exhibitor must be notified immediately of the possible non-qualifying delay. The exhibitor may be given a reasonable amount of time to find another mount to continue the course. THE EXHIBITOR MAY NOT CHOOSE JUST TO WAIT UNTIL THE DELAYED HORSE IS RESTED. Veterinarians and exhibitors should be aware that holding a horse longer than 30 minutes at the mid-point vet check may mean a non-qualifying score for the exhibitor.
- Because the dogs are not scored until after the final vet check, it is very important that all vets/vet techs record as much information as possible on the score sheet of each dog. **Recorded comments** may be very important to the final score. Please do not assess the dog’s *temperament*: i.e. if the dog is shy, or if the dog doesn’t like to be handled. Please DO assess the dog’s *attitude as it applies to the dog’s state of conditioning*: i.e. happy tail carriage when gaiting, a look of general fatigue, etc. Attitude/fatigue is best assessed by watching the dog on the ground rather than on the table.
- **Temperatures** of working dogs **vary** widely and are related both to environment and conditioning. Dogs have completed the course successfully with temps as high as 106 +. Please remember to assess the attitude of the working dog before choosing to NQ, or “pull” a dog.
- Some dogs will come to the starting vet check with an elevated temp because they are excited, or because the exhibitor has been trying to get the dog to “run off some energy”.
- If a **Best Conditioned Dog** award is being offered, remember to compare the RD dogs fairly to the RDX dogs. This means the *final vet check* score and comments on an RD dog should be compared to the *mid-point vet check* score and comments on an RDX dog. Both assessments will have been made at 12 ½ miles. The same applies for a **Best Conditioned Owner-Horse** award.