



LA Pup 2025

Contest Rules & Judges Handbook

(Updated 10/10/2024)

Intro

Thank you for joining us on this incredible experience we call LA Pup. It's going to be a great contest year, and we are more than happy to have you all a part of it. Here's some helpful information. It will help guide you and give you a little bit more info to ease you into your important role.

History

LA Pup was not the first puppy contest in Los Angeles. Before we came along there was a puppy handler contest, the SoCal Pups and Handlers Contest created by Pup Pug and a few other puppy predecessors. We created this contest for the modern pup scene and it's part new and part homage to what they created. It isn't the same contest, but we are happy to carry on the legacy of providing a space for our community to grow, have fun, and sometimes produce more community leaders, as the community often needs guidance. Our contest is a weekend of events, usually ranging from two to four events plus some kind of classes every November.

Event Outline

Our events are tailored specifically to be unique spaces for self expression, exploring new kinks and finding new friends. We are thrilled how many packs and groups have formed out of these events. Everything we do is to help our local pup pet and handler community thrive. Each LA Pup Pride event is carefully planned and designed by our dedicated team of producers, and made possible by our extraordinary volunteers, our local bars/clubs, and our amazing donors. We must not forget that it takes a village so its the village we reward and celebrate. We are happy to provide a new adventure for our pup community every year!

Theme

This year theme is "Fine Art" as an homage to all our incredible pup artists. If you have art you would like displayed during the contest or have friends that might, please email info@losangelespuppride.com

LA Pup Pride 2024 Scheduling

Sat, Nov 2

11am-1pm **Woofs and Warhols, LA Pup Trip to the Broad Museum**

The Broad Museum
221 S. Grand Avenue Los Angeles, CA

1:30pm-3pm **Saturday in the Park with Orion, A Pup Paint Project**

Grand Park
200 N Grand Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90012

1:30pm-3pm **Interviews**

Grand Park
200 N Grand Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90012

9pm-1am **Dog Pound: Meet & Greet**

The Bullet Bar
10522 Burbank Blvd. NoHo, 91601

Sun, Nov 3

4pm-8pm **Howl**

The Precinct DTLA
357 S Broadway, Los Angeles, CA 90013

4pm-8pm **LA Pup Contest**

The Precinct DTLA
357 S Broadway, Los Angeles, CA 90013

SATURDAY, NOV 2

11am-1pm — **Woofs and Warhols, LA Pup Trip to the Broad Museum**

@ the Broad Museum/Meet up spot TBD

(Free Event)

A trip to the Broad Museum for anyone who wants to attend. General admissions tickets are free and available on-line at ticketing.thebroad.org/events. It is recommended to get book in advance to bypass the standby line on the day of.

Please, respect the rules of the Broad and respect the art, keep it safe and keep your paws off.

- There is NO smoking anywhere inside or on the property, including the outdoor plaza.
- Keep mobile phones and other devices on silent. Please limit talking on mobile phones to non-gallery
- For attire, this is a public place so dress decently and avoid anything they would consider

inappropriate or that could detract from the experience of other visitors.

- **Pup hoods** might not be allowed, and show tails especially since they might knock over something.
- If you bring a **backpack** they must be worn on the front of your body to keep the artwork safe. Bag check at The Broad is available but limited
- No food or beverages permitted inside the museum.

1:30pm-3pm —Saturday in the Park with Orion

@ Grand Park, DTLA/Meet up spot TBD

(Free event, Donations accepted)

A Pup Paint Project with LA Pup 2020-21 Pup Star Orion where he teaches pups how to paint on canvas using their paws and sniffer.

1:30pm-3pm —Contestant Interviews [Category 2-Interviews]

@ Grand Park, DTLA/Meet up spot TBD

Contestant will be Interviewed by the judges, determining the scores for this category

9pm-1am —Dog Pound: Meet & Greet [Category 1-Meet & Greet]

@ the Bullet Bar, NoHo

(\$7 Cover)

Contestants will meet the public and sell raffle tickets and be introduced in order on stage. Contestants will have personal one-on-one time with each of the judges, and will be scored on their interactions

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 3RD, 2024:

4pm-8pm —LA Pup Contest at Precinct DTLA [Category 3, 4, 5]

(\$10 Cover)

Contestants will show us what they got and a new LA Pup will be sashed. Judges will score contestants on their Fantasy Scene,

OTHER EVENTS

(Time/Date/Location TBD) —Bone: The LA Pup Victory Party & Award Ceremony

Pup Pride Tickets

Tickets for Los Angeles Pup Pride events will be available on our website soon, alongside the official roll out of marketing! You can choose between a weekend pass or individual tickets. Visit www.losangelespuppride.com for more details.

LA Pup Alumni

PREVIOUS TITLEHOLDERS:

1. Pup Zero, LA Pup 2016 (ran Internationally)
2. Pup Dazzle, LA Pup 2017 (sung national anthem at many events)
3. Pup Rush, LA Pup 2018 (ran Internationally)
4. Pup Tony Bark, LA Pup 2019 (created Puppypalooza),
5. Pup Star Orion, LA Pup 2020-21 (teaches classes on pup play and other fetishes)
6. Pup Kieran Hound, LA Pup 2022 (ran internationally)
7. Pup Rozco, LA Pup 2023 (attended many events and represented LA Pup abroad)
8. Pup Bubblez, LA Pup 2024 (created monthly event, Body Pawsativity)

LA PUP TRIVIA

1. Pup Zero was briefly the beta of Tim Hamilton, International Puppy 2002
2. Pup Dazzle can really sing and has performed the national anthem at numerous Leather Competitions.
3. Pup Rush created the Pup Pawsitive Fund for LA Pup Contestants that can't afford the contestant entrance fees and traveled the most out of our alumni.
4. Tony Bark worked for Marvel Comics ironically during his title year.
5. Pup Star Orion kept the title an extra year because of the pandemic and works teaching with Obsidian LA.
6. Pup Kieran the first queer female LA Pup did the most community work we've ever seen with the title. A true hero.

7. Pup Rozco had had quite a year with fundraising and bolstering the community with his scandalous on stage performances at Bark Nite.
8. Pup bubbles created the event 'Body Pawsativity' which became a monthly, and also bolstered the community in Riverside by creating a monthly event for their part of the community.

Current 2025 Contestants

1. Pup Fang Artemis (a contestant in 2023, is now running for the second time)
2. Pup Drift (New Contestant)
3. Pup Spro (a contestant in 2018, he has to quit the day of the contest family emergency.)
4. Pup Kale: (New Contestant)

LA Pup Contest Outline and Regulations

The Los Angeles Pup Contest is the main event of the festival dubbed Los Angeles Pup Pride.

COMMUNICATION

If you are a collared pup or have an owner, by entering the contest you claim that you have been given permission to do so from your Owner/Handler/Trainer or Alpha also allowing you to directly communicate with the producers individually as needed and not as a third party. This is to prevent any kind of confusion or delay in communication between parties. We respect all packs and their rules of course.

ABOUT GEAR

Understand that the producers of LA Pup contest do not require you to own your own gear, but please note International contests will only allow you to wear gear that you own.

PHOTOGRAPHIC RELEASE

Contestants must agree to permit onstage photographs to be taken of him/her for the use on any promotion for Los Angeles Pup. This includes Social Media, and any websites or related publications, and related activates. A Photographic & Image Release waiver form is included with this application must be signed and turned in at the photo shoot as well.

BAR LEGAL DRESS & NUDITY

Must agree to appear onstage wearing appropriate gear and participate in all judging categories while conforming to all State and local regulations pertaining to nudity and obscenity laws. For the purpose of this contest, genital area must be covered at all times while in public and a one inch (1") strip of material must cover the anus at all times while in public, and on female pups nipples must also be covered while in public unless in areas where nudity is permitted.

EVENT TIMES AND LOCATIONS

All event times and locations may be subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances

GENDER FLUIDITY

The winning title is "LA Pup", plus the year of which the title is mostly held. (Note: The title is gender-non specific so there is no "Mr." or "Ms" in the title, which is common formality in leather title circuits.) The contest will be judged by leaders in our communities from all over the world and some from our LA Community. The contestants must be human pup role players, or pup play fetishists..

CONTESTANT EQUALITY

All contestants who apply are assured an equal opportunity and fair chance at winning, whether you are male, female, or gender identifying, gender questioning, etc to enter. No racism or sexist comments will be tolerated. The minimum age requirement is 21 years old by first day of the contest, and you must hold residence within 150 miles of the borders of Los Angeles County. Must be on time at all required Pup Pride events.

THE EXPERIENCE

We wanted to give the pups in Los Angeles, something fun to do. You can take any title to the next level if you want to. You can create a stronger bond between the human pup community of Los Angeles, and are given the chance at representing the community at many local events, possibly judge other contests and travel to regional conferences and cons. You can also choose to run in the International contests after one year of holding your title of Los Angeles Pup. You will make dozens of friends and have the chance to raise money for charity, and throw events and fundraisers. This is a huge opportunity to make new lifelong puppy pack brothers from a class of amazing contestants. Ultimately It's made for you to have fun and feel the love of the community. You'll feel how good it feels to put yourself out there, and try for something big. Everyone who does this contest is a hero in our eyes, because it takes courage to stand up and show the world what and who you are. The pup community will lookup to you for stepping up.

To keep things fair you will not be able to enter the contest the following year after running. You can come back the year after that. This is so that everyone gets a chance.

CODE OF CONDUCT

As a contestant you are a representative of LA Pup. Contestants are expected to display professionalism, integrity, and respect throughout the competition. Contestants must treat fellow competitors, judges, and staff with kindness and courtesy, refraining from any form of bullying, harassment, or discrimination. Sportsmanship is essential, and all contestants are expected to compete fairly, without engaging in unethical behavior. Failure to comply with these expectations may result in disqualification or other penalties.

FEES AND DOCUMENTATION

Contestants must provide a current Government photo ID or Passport at orientation. There is a \$25 application fee to cover printing costs and paperwork. The fee can be supplied if the pup is financially burdened through the #puppositive fund. All of these items, the ID and entry fee are due on the day of the first photo shoot.

BACKSTAGE ASSISTANTS

During the weekend of the contest there will be an appointed Contestant Wrangler/Dog Watcher in contact with all contestants. This Wrangler keeps you on time to your part in the contest and helps contestants backstage with wardrobe. It is the contestants responsibility to ensure the Wrangler is aware of every outfit they will be wearing or anything else they might need. Based on the number of pups entering the Contestant Wrangler may have an assistant that is appointed by the producers. Because space is limited, no one else will be permitted backstage without a pass, including Handlers, etc.

LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE

If you are deaf, hard of hearing, or do not speak or understand English you may be allowed to bring an interpreter to be with you at all times, including backstage. you will need to bring your interpreter to registration during the Meet & Greet to receive a Backstage Pass.

SILENT AUCTION BASKET

Contestants are asked to create a basket for the Silent Auction at LA Pup Pride. Judges are not required to, but can if they choose to. There are no requirements for the basket, an ideal basket would contain multiple items with a combined value of \$100 or more total. It is recommended that contestants approach a store, shop, or company they regularly support and asking for sponsorship to run in the Los Angeles Pup Contest for a community title, and request a basket of donated products or items for a basket. Many companies are usually willing to help if you just ask. Funds from these baskets will go to the LA Pup Pride General Fund, and used to help maintain Los Angeles Pup and create more opportunities for pup events and to help bolster advertisements.



FOR THE WIN...

1. PRIZES

All contestants will receive a gift bag containing LA Pup merchandise and items for our sponsors, runner-ups will win some sponsor items as well. We will award three pups a medallion this year. Every pup will get special hand picked items from our sponsors. The winner will also get a custom leather vest with the year's title patch of the LA Pup logo, personalized pup logo design, photo shoot and much more.

2. WINNERS OBLIGATIONS

A lunch or dinner meeting with the producers will be scheduled immediately for the following week to discuss plans to be fitted for the vest, hosting and attending upcoming events and fundraisers, the international contests, etc.

3. COMMUNICATION

As the newly crowned title holder of LA Pup you will maintain contact with contest producers, and must be able to do so directly as an individual means to communicate via phone, text, email, FB massager, etc.. Should you be asked something that requires your Owner/Handler/Trainer's input, please say so and return with your response as soon as possible.

4. FUNDRAISERS

The LA Pup title holder will be responsible to produce and host 1 or more fundraisers for a 50/50 split between a cause/charity of their choice and their travel fund. The producers will help you and show you how to throw an event.

5. FUNDRAISING & TRAVEL FUND

All funds raised by the The LA Pup titleholder through hosting an event/fundraiser or by any other means will go directly into a Travel Fund for the title holder themselves to cover the expense of airfare, room, and board to compete in an international contest or take a trip to a large leather or pup event. You choose.

Any money made under the name of LA Pup and it's title or stating any affiliation as promotion in any way must report the total amounts made to the producers and treasurer. The titleholder must keep the producers informed of their fundraising.

6. INTERNATIONAL & OTHER EVENTS

The titleholder is encouraged to attend local titleholder events or as much as possible, there is allowed the opportunity to fund-raise (usually by making and selling Jell-o shots).

The titleholder is also encouraged and may be asked to be present at other events or judge during the title year which are relate-able, including DTLA Proud in Los Angeles or Long Beach Pride.

7. REPRESENTATION

By entering this contest the winner agrees to represent the Los Angeles Pup Title throughout their title year and afterwards are encouraged to compete in International Puppy Contest (IPC) International Pup & Trainer Contest (IPTC)

7. ALPH-BETA (*1ST RUNNER UP*)

Awarded to the LA Pup Contestant with the highest scores next to the winner, the Alpha-Beta is intended to assist and work with the title winner throughout the title year serving the pup community through fundraising, representation, community service, etc. If the runner up chooses to run internationally they will choose between the two remaining International contests not chosen by the current LA Pup.

Should the title winner at all, in his year, be unable to uphold his obligations or responsibilities, step down, quit, or stripped of the title it shall be given to the Alpha-Beta. It is the final decision of the producers.

8. FINAL OBLIGATIONS

At the end of your year as LA Pup at the next LA Pup Contest, you must give a step down speech, have option of participating in a roast, and will hand off the patch and medallion to the next LA Pup. The following year you may be asked to judge LA Pup.

ASHTRAYS THOUGHTS:

The winners obligations as LA Pup are not terribly cumbersome at sight of the list we have written here, but after experiencing it second hand last year, it is much more than the contestants realize. This is a huge undertaking that will definitely test your abilities and strength, but also reward you with love, compassion and loads of new experiences. LA PUP is the only regional (human pup contest) for the entire city and county of Los Angeles and its surrounding counties. That means that LA Pup serves as a beacon for anything pup related from here until San Diego, all the way up to Santa Cruz. The winner will often be asked to help the community and tends to be seen as a guide for the entire pup community around them. It is no easy task but you will have constant support from many people, and I promise to hold your hand (or paw) through all of it, if you will let me. I've had close relationships with titleholders, and I'll help how I can, but its your title.

LA Pup represents LA Puppy Pride and the freedom that comes with the pup way of life. So its important to do good for the community, help new and old pups stay socialized, and be kind and caring, causing change while holding the traditions high. And remember, you don't need to win a contest to be an LA Pup, you already are.

It takes the courage of an LA Pup to be a contestant. The final moments of the contest will be a test of character. During the contest if you are 100% sure you are going to win it is most likely you will not. It's best to enter the contest with the intent of knowing that afterwards you will have the satisfaction that you were the best "you" on stage, shy or outgoing, and having done your best at getting through it. It's an experience that can change you for the better and educate you more about what the "self" is if you let it. You and all the other contestants go through this whole challenge together, each one excited and scared as the next. Remember to let this experience be fun and have a blast, and in the end after it's all over with, take that class photo of you all with pride. Be loyal to yourselves and loyal to each other. Who ever does win it doesn't matter, just be there and support them anyway and just be a pup. An LA Pup.

Judges Handbook

The next several sections in this handbook are helpful information, suggestions and 'how tos' for judges and contestants.

The judging criteria should be well defined and communicated clearly to ensure fairness and transparency in the evaluation process. We stress that factors like knowledge, attitude, intelligence, approachability, personality, and sense of self be valued over anything else. We hope this creates a more inclusive and ethical approach to finding an exemplary titleholder.

IMPORTANT NOTE TO THE JUDGES

You will be given ONE score sheet PER-Category PER-Contestant. It is important that you verify that each score sheet contain 3 things before handing them in:

1. Your name as JUDGE
2. The correct name of the CONTESTANT being scored
3. The total SCORE for that category

Scoring and the score sheet structure

The point totals beside each category correspond to the highest amount of points achievable. A zero score is not acceptable. You must assign a numeric value above zero for all categories.

CATEGORIES

There are 5 categories on which the contestants will be judged. These include several different aspects per category to factor in the score, such as their personality, attitude, and how they present themselves.

Category 1: Meet and Greet

Category 2: Interview

Category 3: Fantasy Scene

Category 4: Silly Question

Category 5: Serious Question

Based on scheduling or flow of the contest the categories may not be presented in a linear order. However Category 1 and 2 generally happen prior to the contest, while 3,4 and 5 may be staggered

per each contestant during the contest itself.

SCORING

In the LA Pup Contest scoring is focused on many attributes we have covered in the last few pages, such as personality, community involvement, public speaking, and representation of the title, and broken down into the following segmented structure.

Contestants are judged based on specific categories.

1. Meet & Greet (200 points): Contestants are evaluated by personal 1on1 interviews with the judges.

2. Interview (300 points): Contestants are interviewed by the judges to assess their knowledge, communication skills, and their passion for the LA Pup community.

3. Fantasy Scene (200 points): A scene created to focus on the contestants personal journey or reflections on pup play that showcase their unique abilities or skills.

4. Silly Question (150 points): Our host will have the contestant draw a silly or fun question, written by a judge or producer, out of a hat, the score comes from audience response, delivery, knowledge, and relatability.

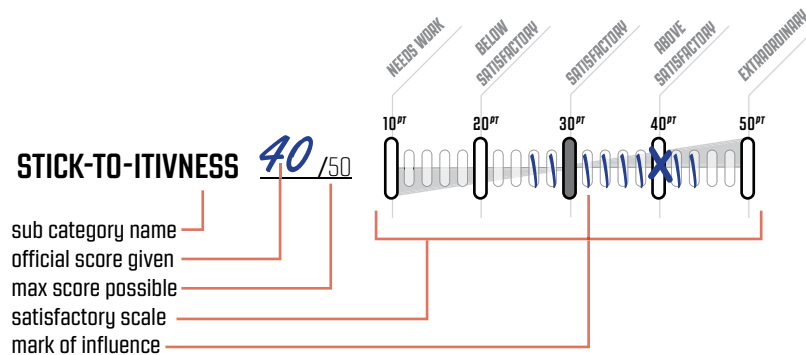
5. Serious Question (150 points): Our host will have the contestant draw a serious question written by a judge or producer, out of a hat, the score comes from audience response, delivery, knowledge, and relatability.

The scoring is on a point scale, with judges providing scores for each category. Scores are judges using Olympic scale. Olympic scoring helps to guide everyone in an even handed scoring without favoritism, a common issue in many contests. The contestant with the highest total score at the end is the winner. The goal is to select individuals who will be excellent representatives for the community, and their duties extend far beyond the contest itself. This job is a big job, and requires a confident and strong individual who you can sense is ready for a great and self defining year of trials and triumphs we have all come to experience as titleholders and community leaders.

HOW TO USE THE SCORE SHEET

Each category is broken down into sub-categories with a space to record your score and a satisfactory scale to use as reference.

A suggested use for the satisfactory scale, at the beginning of the scoring session imagine the scale resting in the center under "satisfactory". As the session progresses you would place a mark based on how the contestant is performing. If the contestant does something impressive that would be a mark towards extraordinary, or if quite the opposite then a mark in the other directions. In the end use the marks to average out the score of the sub-category, then adding all sub-category scores together to give the final score of the entire category.



MEET & GREET CONTESTANT EVALUATION

During a meet and greet event as part of a pup/pet play contest, you are not evaluating full performances because it is a social scenario, but you can still assess various aspects of the contestants to form an initial impression. Here's what judges should look for in the contestants during a meet and greet:

Demeanor and Confidence: Judges should observe how confident and comfortable each contestant is in their pup/pet persona. Confidence can be an indicator of how well they embody the pup within.

Social Skills: Interaction and sociability are key in a meet and greet setting. Judges should note how well contestants engage with others, including fellow contestants, organizers, and attendees.

Consistency with Pup/Pet Play: Contestants should demonstrate that they are consistent with their pup/pet play identity, including behaviors, body language, and attire.

Respect and Etiquette: Judges should assess how respectful and polite contestants are towards others. Respectful behavior is crucial in the pup/pet play community..

Inclusivity and Approachability's: Contestants should be inclusive and approachable, making others feel welcome and comfortable to interact with them. Watch for reactions from who they talk to and watch to make sure they are engaging the crowd and not hiding or shy. We need a titleholder who is personable, intellectual and outgoing

Knowledge of Community: You can gauge contestants' knowledge of the pup play community, its history, values, and issues, by asking about it in conversation.

Openness to Diversity: Contestants should be open and accepting of the diverse backgrounds, orientations, and expressions within the community. They should have a knowledge of appropriate wording and verbiage for all communities.

Enthusiasm and Passion: You can assess the enthusiasm and passion each contestant has for pup play and the community, as this is often an indicator of dedication and experience.

Engagement with the Community: Look for signs that contestants are actively engaged in the community, ask how often they attend events, workshops, or educational activities and what they think about them.

Listening Skills: Pay attention to how well contestants listen to and respond to others, as active listening can be a sign of empathy and understanding.

Appropriateness of Attire: While it's not a full performance, judges can assess the appropriateness and creativity of the attire or gear contestants choose to wear to the meet and greet.

Safety and Consent: Judges should ensure that contestants respect safety and consent boundaries in their interactions with others during the meet and greet.

Note on Attire: In the pup pet play community, most pups see fashion, gear and attire as a form of expression of who they are and what they like, and it's not always for utility reasons. This is why in pup/pet titleholder contests gear and attire is what to consider in any 'appearance' marking as a part of the score. However, it's important to do so in a way that considers various aspects of appearance, such as how well a contestant's attire represents the pup/pet play culture or who they are as a pup. Does it tell the story of who they are. We ask that physical beauty not be included in any scoring. We believe it is not ethical and it will not be a part of the LA Pup legacy. Ever.

Remember that the meet and greet is an opportunity for judges to get a sense of the contestants' personalities, social skills, and their embodiment of the pup play persona in a more casual setting. It's not as rigorous as performance evaluation, but it can provide valuable insights into the contestants' suitability for the title.

THE INTERVIEW

With this contest being so specifically directed towards pup and pet play, judges will ask questions that assess the contestants' knowledge, experience, and commitment to the pup and pet lifestyle.

Contestants would be smart to study the following section by answering the numbered questions. Here are some common questions:

- 1. How did you first become interested in pup/pet play, and what motivated you to participate in this contest?**
- 2. Can you explain the key elements of pup/pet play and its connection to the BDSM community?**
- 3. What have you done to promote safe and consensual practices within the pup/pet play community?**
- 4. How have you used your platform or influence to educate others about pup/pet play and related topics?**
- 5. Describe some ways in which you will use your role as a human pup/pet titleholder to support and empower others in the community.**
- 6. What specific skills or talents do you bring to this contest that make you a worthy titleholder?**
- 7. How do you balance your pup/pet play lifestyle with other aspects of your life, such as work, family, and social relationships?**
- 8. What initiatives or projects do you have in mind to promote inclusivity and diversity within the pup/pet play community?**
- 9. How do you handle harsh stereotyping and judgment from people outside the community regarding pup/pet play?**
- 10. What is your vision for the future of pup/pet play, and how would you work to achieve that vision as a titleholder?**
- 11. Questions like these help assess contestants' knowledge, passion, and dedication to the LA pup community lifestyle and their**

potential as titleholders. It is extremely important to stress that we only allow a respectful and non-judgmental environment during LA Pup.

As a contestant It's normal to be nervous for the interview but rest assured, we ask that the judges be compassionate yet still focused on the task at hand.

MORE ON THE QUESTIONS:

Interview questions can be challenging, fun, thought provoking and complicated, but all contestants are treated equally in a judges questioning. Here are some challenging interview questions:

1. Ethical Dilemmas: Can you describe a situation where you faced an ethical dilemma with others in the community? How did you handle it?

2. Community Leadership: What initiatives have you led to promote inclusivity and support for underrepresented pups/pets within the community, and how have you dealt with any resistance or criticism from others?

3. Intersectionality: The pup and pet community intersects with many different identities and personalities. How do you ensure that your representation is inclusive and respectful of diverse backgrounds and orientations?

4. Controversial Issues: What's your stance on inclusion of furies in our community, and knowing their popular position on the subject, how would you engage them as LA Pup?

5. Community Safety: How do you actively promote and ensure safety and consent within your community events and interactions?

6. Education and Awareness: How do you engage in educational outreach to those outside the community to reduce stigma and misunderstandings about puppy/pet play?

7. Conflict Resolution: Can you share an example of a conflict that arose with others in the LA Pup community, and how did you work to resolve it or mediate it?

8. Media and Public Relations: How would you handle media inquiries and interviews to ensure a positive and accurate representation of the pup/pet play community?

9. Future Vision: What are your long-term goals and vision for the future of the pup/pet play community and how do you plan to work towards achieving them as a titleholder?

These questions challenge are meant to challenge our contestants to think critically, demonstrate

leadership, and showcase their commitment to responsible and inclusive representation within the community.

Giving a great interview as a contestant is as simple as being who and what you are, without shame. It requires a lot of effective communication, confidence, and a commitment to represent and care about the community at large. That's what we are looking for.

Contestant Tip: Try not to ramble to save time. Clear short and concise responses will also help the judges get through as many questions as they can, and the more you tell them, the greater understanding they will have of you.

Head Judge Tip: The head judge should state to every contestant after they come in that they can take a few seconds to think about their answer and should refrain from nervously answering right away. Believe it or not, A few seconds to think will actually save time in the long run.

ITS A TWO WAY STREET.

Intimidation is not the way of LA Pup. We prefer our judge to try not to glare at contestants with intimidating concentrated looks. If both sides come in relaxed it will go so much smoother. Try not to worry about the limited time you have with each other, but definitely cut off at 20 min for each pup. Relax and enjoy the conversation and you will get better more productive interviews. We are not here to intimidate but to evaluate.

HERE ARE SOME THINGS WE WANT TO LOOK FOR IN AN INTERVIEW:

- 1. Do They Know Their Community? Do they have a deep understanding of it, its history, values, and the issues we are facing? Being well-informed is key to representing us effectively.**
- 2. Are they Authentic? Can you see who they are during the interview? Authenticity is compelling and helps build trust within**

the community.

- 3. Are they prepared? Did they seem ready to answer your questions? Did they seem like they practiced in communicating their answering clearly and confidently?**
 - 4. Did they remain positive? Was their focus drawn to positive aspects of the community? Do they emphasize inclusivity, education, and consent?**
 - 5. Did they listen carefully? Did they pay attention to the interviewer's questions and respond directly. This shows respect and ensures their responses are relevant.**
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FOR JUDGES, MOSTLY

Here are ways you can help the contestants, especially if they are struggling.

Guide the Conversation: In case the the contestant veers off-topic, guide them back to the key messages concerning the community and your questioning.

Tell them to Use Personal Anecdotes: If a contestant seems at a loss, encourage them to incorporate personal stories in their answer, it makes their message relate-able.

Simplify Language: If their jargon is confusing or seems incorrect, ask that they clarify any community-specific terms or concepts to gain a better understanding.

Maintain Composure and Confidence: Remind them to stay composed and confident during the interview, emphasizing the importance of taking their time and not rushing their responses.

Remind them that as a titleholder, their role is to positively represent the community and address any misconceptions or stigmas, with effective communication being the key to achieving this.

All the contestants involved have had multiple mock interviews at this point, so this should help aid in the interviewing process.

Lunch will be included in the afternoon during the interviews. Any specific dietary concerns should be sent to info@losangelespuppride.com

PUP PLAY FANTASIES

These fantasy scenes are an onstage performance that each contestant performs to show the judges and the audience what they are all about.

During the pup play fantasy scenes, judges should assess various aspects to fairly evaluate the contestants' performances. Here are some key elements judges should consider:

Creativity and Originality: Judges should look for imaginative and original interpretations of each scene. Creativity can set a contestant apart and make their performance very memorable.

Commitment to Role: Contestants should fully embrace their roles as human pups/pets. Judges should observe the extent to which contestants immerse themselves in the fantasy, both in terms of behavior and demeanor. You can always tell when a pup is not fully committed in these scenes. Always do your best to be understanding as well. These pups are under a tremendous amount of stress.

Consistency: Being consistent in maintaining their personal pup persona is important. Judges should note if a contestant appears consistent in personality, appearance, and demeanor throughout all sections of the contest and throughout the scene. Pay close attention to their body language, vocalizations, and expressions. Again, be understanding as well.

Storytelling: Evaluate the storytelling aspect of the scene. Does the contestant convey a clear narrative or scenario that is engaging and well-communicated to the audience? Is it relative to who they have proven themselves to be within the contest? Are their inspirations and their limitations discussed in the scene and used to convey a positive or engaging message?

Interaction: If the scene involves interaction with other participants or props, judges should assess how effectively the contestant engages with these elements while remaining true to their pup character. Also, do the other characters seem real or are they more like props? Do you feel there's a real engagement happening between the characters of the scene? Does it seem rehearsed and does that help or detract from the style of the scene?

Enthusiasm and Energy: Consider the contestant's enthusiasm and energy levels. A dynamic and engaging performance can be more captivating. Does it have that magic we find every year within our LA Pup winners?

Audience Engagement: Judges may observe how well the contestant connects with and engages the audience. This includes eye contact, playfulness, and responsiveness to the crowd's reactions.

Inclusivity: Ensure that contestants are respectful of diversity and inclusivity. The performance should not rely on stereotypes or offensive elements. This is paramount. The winner needs to be

empathic about these things, given the short leash the public gives on these ideals. We also hope that the message is one relatable to the pup and pet lifestyle we have come to know within our community.

Safety and Consent: Judges should be vigilant about the safety and consent of all participants in the scene. Contestants must respect boundaries and consent throughout the performance. If the scene includes characters that do not know each other, is the subject of consent built into the scene? It should be.

Audience Reaction: Take into account the audience's reactions and response to the performance. While the judges' opinions are paramount, the audience's engagement can offer valuable feedback. We love it when our pup/pet can really bring down the house.

Use of Props and Costumes: If contestants incorporate props or costumes, assess how effectively they enhance the scene and contribute to the overall fantasy. It is possible for any added element to distract from the scene as well. Was it necessary?

Technical Skill: In some cases, pup/pet play may involve specific technical skills or tricks. Judges can evaluate the execution of these skills within the context of the performance

It's important for judges to approach this section with open-mindedness and respect for the diversity of interpretations and styles within the pup/pet play community. Additionally, they should ensure a safe and supportive environment for contestants to express themselves in their chosen fantasy scenes.

LA PUP FRATERNIZATION POLICY

This policy is established to maintain the integrity, fairness, and professionalism within the Los Angeles Pup Contest and aims to provide a safe and respectful environment for all participants, staff, and volunteers. It sets clear guidelines regarding interactions and relationships between contestants, judges, and producers during the course of the competition.

This policy must be followed with an aim to promote:

1. Professional Conduct: Contestants are expected to conduct themselves with the utmost professionalism and respect throughout the duration of the contest. This includes interactions with fellow contestants, judges, event organizers, and the public.

2. No Favoritism/Sexual Solicitation: Contestants shall not seek or receive any preferential treatment from judges, organizers, or any other event personnel. Sexual solicitation is grounds for immediate dismissal/disqualification.

3. No Discrimination: Discrimination, harassment, or bullying of any kind based on race,

gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or any other characteristic will not be tolerated. All contestants are expected to treat each other with respect and dignity.

4. Disclosure of Pre-existing Relationships: Contestants who have a pre-existing personal or romantic relationship with another contestant should disclose this information to the event organizers. While it is not necessarily prohibited, transparency is essential to avoid any appearance of bias.

5. No Sharing of Contest-Related Information: Contestants should not share confidential information or details about the contest, including scoring, with other contestants or third parties during or after the event.

6. Physical/Sexual Contact: Contestants should avoid any behavior that may be perceived as inappropriate physical or sexual contact, and should always respect personal boundaries and consent.

7. Public Image: Contestants are representatives of the contest and should maintain a positive public image. Any actions or behavior that may harm the reputation of the contest are discouraged. This policy applies only during the contest weekend and applies for the new titleholder for their year run.

8. Conflict Resolution: In the event of disputes or conflicts between contestants, they should first attempt to resolve the issue amicably. If this is not possible it follows this chain of command; for contestants: Speak with Contestant Handler who will speak with head judge, who will speak with event producer. For Judges, speak to judges pup, who speaks to head judge, who will speak with event organizers. Event organizers and head judge will consult to decide if any disciplinary action or dismissal is necessary. Mediation will be available if necessary.

THE SERIOUS AND SILLY STAGE QUESTIONS

The stage questions were designed to give the contestants the opportunity to show off their stage presence, replacing the traditional "speech" segment in title contests. Judges are asked to write a silly entertaining question to bring out the contestants sense of humor, and a serious question to find the depths of the contestants character and what makes them tick.

* * CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATION: * *

Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to warnings, disqualification from the contest, or other appropriate measures as determined by the event organizers.

*** * REVIEW AND UPDATES: * ***

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Updates may be made as needed to address emerging issues or concerns.

By participating in the LA Pup Contest, all contestants, judges and producers agree to abide by this Fraternization Policy. Failure to comply with these guidelines may result in the consequences as outlined above.

This policy was amended on 10/10/2024. Created on 05/06/2016.

From Ashtray

My dear judges and contestants,

I just wanted to end this handbook with a big, heartfelt thank you for taking part in the 2025 LA Pup contest . Your dedication to this weekend doesn't go unnoticed, and we appreciate your "ruff" job of choosing or aiming to be the top dawg!

We know that your wisdom and discernment in selecting our titleholder is truly fetching, and our contestants willingness to get down on all fours (figuratively and in some ways literally) to make this event a success is something I believe should be celebrated.

I'm not "barking" up the wrong tree when I say that you are all the true leaders of this pack. Your support means the world to all of us, and I hope to continue working together with you in the future.

Thanks again for being those true friends, leaders, and caring individuals in our community, and remember: you're always welcome in our "pawsitive" and loving circle.

Warmest tail wags and belly

Pup Ashtray Kain