



UNITED STATES JUDO ASSOCIATION

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How to Register New Senior USJA Members Who Have a Rank

CERTIFICATION, VALIDATION AND PROMOTION

When coaches register new members with the USJA who hold a rank of 3rd class (Sankyu) and above awarded by another judo organization, it is important for them to understand that there are three ways in which rank is recognized by the USJA and entered into our computer records. These three methods of recognizing and recording rank are called: (1) certification, (2) validation and (3) promotion. Ranks of 4th class (Yonkyu) and below, and all junior ranks, are automatically issued to the new member upon the recommendation of the registering coach. Senior ranks of 3rd class and above must be verified by one of the three procedures listed above.

What is certification of rank? Certification of rank will be accomplished when the new member sends a valid membership card or rank certificate from an organization which is recognized by the world governing body, the International Judo Federation (IJF), to the USJA National Headquarters with their Annual or Life Membership application. The certificates of any member national federation of the IJF are therefore recognized, and ranks given by them will be “certified” immediately, and entered in the USJA records without fee upon the payment of Annual or Life Membership dues.

In the United States, the judo ranks are awarded by three organizations; the USJA, the USJI and the USJF. These organizations are recognized by the IJF, and therefore any rank cards or certificates issued by the USJI or USJF are also recognized by the USJA. These ranks are certified immediately and entered into our USJA records.

To register a new member with acceptable rank credentials, a coach simply fills out a USJA Annual or Life Membership application, attaches a copy of the new member’s recognized rank card or certificate, and mails this to the USJA National Headquarters for processing along with the Annual or Life Membership fee. There is no additional fee for certification. If a coach is in doubt as to whether a certain rank card or certificate is acceptable, he has only to send a photocopy of the card or certificate to the USJA for determination. The coach will always receive a prompt and courteous reply.

A new member, junior or senior, who has their rank certified, will receive a USJA membership card showing their current rank. The new member does not receive a USJA Rank Certificate. While the USJA recognizes the ranks awarded by all members of the IJF, USJA Rank Certificates are only issued to those members who satisfactorily complete all requirements and examinations of the USJA Senior Rank System. If the new member desires a USJA Rank Certificate, they will have to be examined and promoted in accordance with the USJA Junior or Senior Rank System.

What is Validation of Judo Rank? In many cases, martial artists of experience and skill may not be able to produce any certificate or card from a recognized organization. The reason why they do not have a recognized rank card or certificate is unimportant, but these ranks cannot be certified because no proper credentials exist, or cannot be produced by the new member. In this case, the new member may be validated. To be validated, the new member must be examined by a black belt member of the USJA. After the examination, the examining black belt fills out the USJA Request For Validation of Rank form and recommends the new member for any rank they believe the new member is qualified to “hold.” The examining black belt must be at least one rank higher than the rank they are recommending for validation.

When the validation form and fee are received by the USJA National Headquarters, the new member will be validated to the recommended rank provided that all of the requirements for validation have been met. If the validation is for 4th Dan (Yodan) or higher, the new member must be examined by two USJA Senior Rank Examiners and be approved by the USJA National Promotion Committee.

What is Promotion in Rank? Promotion is the awarding of the next higher grade to a member who already has their rank registered with the USJA. It can only be accomplished when the member fulfills all requirements for their next promotion in accordance with the USJA Junior or Senior Rank System.