



AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUB™

Performance Events Department

July 2023

To: **All Clubs Licensed to Host Retriever Hunting Tests**

Subject: **Talking to Your Dog in the Junior Test Level**

This is to inform your club of a change to the *Regulations & Guidelines for AKC Hunting Tests for Retrievers*. This change is effective August 1, 2023.

This change allows handlers in the junior test level to speak quietly to their dog and pet their dog for reassurance anytime during the junior test level. This is intended to be encouraging to new handlers and new dogs and to help them gain confidence at this beginner level. This will only be allowed at the junior level.

The exact wording of this change is underlined and in bold and will appear in the next printing of the regulations as follows:

Chapter 4. Standards for Junior, Senior and Master Hunting Tests, Section 6.

(3rd paragraph)

The handler of the working dog shall remain silent from the time handler signals for the first bird to be thrown until the Judges release the dog. **Except handlers in the junior test level at anytime may speak quietly to their dog and be allowed to touch their dog for reassurance or positioning.**

This regulation update has been posted to the [Retriever Hunting Tests News And Updates](#) webpage. Please send any comments or questions to: retrievers@akc.org If you send a request to update your email address, please provide your name, city and state.