



[USJA National Dan \(Black Belt\) Promotion System](#)

Our system is designed to ensure that ranks awarded reflect the technical expertise, character development, and overall contribution of the individual. The process requires the direct evaluation of all candidates by a Certified Rank Examiner (CRE).

1. Candidates must meet certain minimum requirements to become eligible for promotion. They must then pass an exam and be recommended for promotion by their instructor for all Dans (Black Belts) ranks or validations, meet the time in grade requirements, and provide the proper USJA documentation. [USJA Activity Points](#) are no longer required but still serve as an excellent promotion guide (see [Update 11-2025](#)).
2. All candidates for promotion or validation must be an [Active Annual or Sustaining Life Member](#) of Current Chartered USJA Club with the proper time in grade in the previous rank.
3. A \$40.00 non-refundable processing fee must accompany all Dan (Black Belt) ranks RFPs or RVPs. The remainder of the fee must be remitted upon notification of successfully being promoted or validated - ([USJA provides one free validation](#)).
4. A current clear \$30 background check is required for Dan ranks via the USOC's [Online Screening Site](#).
5. [Heads-Up](#) - current online certification required for Dan ranks ([NFHS Concussion](#) is available as an alternative).
6. [SafeSport](#) - current online certification also required for Dan ranks, ([NFHS Coaching](#) is available as an alternative).
7. Promotions and validations are done in accordance with USJA's National Promotion Board.
 - Ranks below 4th Dan are processed by the office.
 - Ranks of 4th Dan and above must include a brief biography with a passport photo or jpg.
 - Ranks of 4th and 5th Dan are reviewed by a sub-committee of the Promotion Board.
 - Ranks of 6th to 8th Dan are reviewed by the entire promotion board.
 - Ranks 9th and 10th Dan require the additional approval of the USJA's Board of Directors.

Note – These requirements for USJA Promotions are also required for USJA Coaching Certifications - [USJA Coaches Guide](#).