

THE INTERNATIONAL CAT ASSOCIATION MENTOR PROGRAM MANUAL



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The Preliminaries**INTRODUCTION**

The International Cat Association (TICA) is one of the best known and older feline associations. The TICA Mentor Program was established to promote TICA through qualified exhibitor & breeder mentors. Mentors are available to anyone interested in showing their cat(s) and/or breeding cats associated with TICA. It is hoped that new members will find the TICA family as a rewarding and fun organization of people from across the globe.

The Preliminaries

NEW TO SHOWING OR BREEDING?

Are you interested in learning more about how to show (exhibit) your cat at a TICA show?

If so, apply to be paired with an Exhibitor Mentor. As a protégé, you will have a mentor available to answer your questions & help you learn about TICA and the inner workings of showing cats.

What will an Exhibitor Mentor teach you?

- About TICA
- The essentials needed to show cat(s):
 - Show calendar
 - Entering cat(s) in a TICA Show
 - Exhibitor Responsibilities
 - Grooming
 - Show Supplies
 - Good Sportsmanship & Etiquette
 - Understanding the TICA standard for their cat(s)
 - Show Mechanics
 - Scoring for titles and Regional/International points
 - Show Rules
 - Junior Achievers
- Good feline ownership
- How to become a member of TICA, the applicable breed section, and region
- Regional cat club(s) open for membership
- Show how much FUN hobby showing can be

If this appeals to you, please consider submitting the application “Request for Exhibitor Mentor.”

Are you considering breeding cats?

Breeding cats is not a hobby to take without forethought. If you'd like to learn more about what is involved in breeding cats, please request a Breeding Mentor. You are not obligated to breed cats through applying for a mentor. As a protégé, you will have a mentor available to answer your questions & educate you on TICA and breeding cats. (Note: This program is not a source for finding breeding cats).

What will a Breeder Mentor teach you?

- About TICA
- How to connect with other breeders
- Good Cattery Practices
 - Nutrition
 - Veterinarian Care
 - Support by fellow breeders
 - Understanding of Hoarding
 - How to know when it's time to stop
 - Breeding to the TICA Standard
 - Sanitation
 - Minimum Standards for Housing Cats
 - Following TICA's Code of Ethics

- Feline Husbandry
 - Reproduction
 - Birthing & Raising Kittens
 - Vaccination Guidelines
 - Health issues within the breed & available testing
- Ethical Kitten Sales
 - Registering Litters
 - Contracts
 - Keeping kittens for 12+ weeks
 - At Shows
 - Advertising
 - Pet vs. Show Quality
 - Leasing & Selling Breeding Cats
- Resources
 - History of the breed
 - TICA Standard
 - Breed section
 - Other breeders
 - Online email lists
 - Breed-specific groups (ex: MCBFA)
 - Reference Books & Articles
- The Basics of Feline Genetics
 - Structure
 - Health
 - Coat Colors & Patterns
- Understanding Pedigrees
- And all of the same in regards to showing as in the Exhibitor Purpose & Goals if needed.

If this appeals to you, please consider submitting the application “Request for Breeder Mentor.”

The Preliminaries

POTENTIAL MENTORS: EXHIBITORS

Do you find yourself chatting to new exhibitors or spectators at cat shows about the details of showing mechanics? Do you enjoy this contact? As you know, TICA is one of the friendliest feline associations where new faces are always welcome. If you think you have the time to make the commitment to assist those with an interest in showing their cats (but not breeding), please consider applying to be an exhibitor mentor.

Criteria

Mentors will go through a screening process from a combination of, but not limited to, the guidelines outlined below. (This information is obtained on the application). Determination of qualification based on this information:

- A signed TICA Code of Ethics of file with the Executive Office
- Veterinarian letter of reference
- Time and ability to invest in mentoring
- Regional Director input
- Details of any protests or complaints filed against the applicant
- Letters from breeders, pet owners, and/or from fellow regional exhibitors
- Show Ring Achievements (RW, IW or SCG for example)
- Sportsmanship
- Open Door - will invite (allow) TICA Officials or into their home by appointment.
- Showing/Breeding for a minimum of five years (currently or previously)
- Can mentor a maximum of two protégé at a time
- No complaints on file with TICA

Mentoring Goals

Mentors are expected to work towards these goals while being a mentor:

- Promote TICA
- Increase the number of new & retained exhibitors in TICA
- Provide new exhibitors with the knowledge needed to show their cat(s)
 - TICA standard for their cat(s)
 - Show calendar
 - Entering cat(s) in a TICA Show
 - Exhibitor Responsibilities
 - Grooming
 - Show Supplies
 - Good Sportsmanship

- Show Mechanics
- Scoring for titles and Regional/International points
- Show Rules
- Junior Achievers
- Increase awareness of good feline ownership
- Increase the number of breed section exhibitor members
- Increase the number of active, regional members
- Educate on the workings of managing/running cat shows
- Direct to a local cat club they can apply to join & participate in
- Show how much FUN hobby showing can be
- Increase the mentor network (Do a great job mentoring so that the participants volunteer to be mentors themselves!)

If this appeals to you, please consider submitting the “Exhibitor Mentor Application.”

The Preliminaries

POTENTIAL MENTORS: BREEDERS

Do you have the time, knowledge & interest in teaching others good cattery management, feline husbandry, breed education, etc.? Responsible breeders are at a premium and we need your help to increase the awareness of what it takes to be a good breeder. Please consider applying to be a breeder mentor after you read through the following criteria & goals.

Criteria

Mentors will go through a screening process from a combination of, but not limited to, the guidelines outlined below. (This information is obtained on the application). Determination of qualification based on this information:

- A TICA registered cattery name
- A signed TICA Code of Ethics of file with the Executive Office
- Veterinarian letter of reference
- Outstanding Cattery
- Good animal husbandry practices
- Time and ability to invest in mentoring
- Regional Director input
- Details of any protests or complaints filed against the applicant
- Letters from other breeders, pet owners, and/or from fellow regional exhibitors
- Show Ring Achievements (RW, IW or SCG for example)
- Sportsmanship
- Open Door - will invite (allow) TICA Officials or Potential Pet Buyers into their home by appointment.
- Showing/Breeding for a minimum of five years (currently or previously)
- Can mentor a maximum of two protégé at a time
- No complaints on file with TICA

Mentoring Goals

Mentors are expected to work towards the following objectives with their protégé:

- Promote TICA
- Increase the number of members, breed section members and litter registrations within TICA
- Be known as a registry that promotes good breeding/show practices through this program
- Networking with other breeders
- Advocate Good Cattery Practices
 - Nutrition

- Veterinarian Care
- Support by fellow breeders
- Understanding of Hoarding
- How to know when it's time to stop
- Breeding to the TICA Standard
- Sanitation
- Minimum Standards for Housing Cats
- Following TICA's Code of Ethics
- Educate on Feline Husbandry
 - Reproduction
 - Birthing & Raising Kittens
 - Vaccination Guidelines
 - Health issues within the breed & available testing
- Ethical Kitten Sales
 - Registering Litters
 - Contracts
 - Keeping kittens for 12+ weeks
 - At Shows
 - Advertising
 - Pet vs. Show Quality
 - Leasing & Selling Breeding Cats
- Provide Resources for New Breeders
 - History of the breed
 - TICA Standard
 - Breed section
 - Other breeders
 - Online email lists
 - Breed-specific groups (ex: MCBFA)
 - Reference Books & Articles
- The Basics of Feline Genetics
 - Structure
 - Health
 - Coat Colors & Patterns
- Understanding Pedigrees
- And all of the same in regards to showing as in the Exhibitor Purpose & Goals

If this appeals to you, please consider submitting the “Breeder Mentor Application.”

The Preliminaries
RECRUITMENT & APPLICATIONS

In order to establish a working group of mentors throughout the TICA family, requests for mentors will be made through the following channels: Yahoogroups! email lists, breed committee chairs, regional directors, cat shows, word-of-mouth, clubs, show catalogs, etc.

Applications for the mentor program are located online & by request.

All applications should be submitted to the committee chair.

Applications are reviewed on a monthly basis with follow-up letters sent after a decision is made by the committee. Once approved, the information will be forwarded to their Regional Contact and the mentor will be asked to write a brief biography for distribution to their paired protégé by the Regional Contact.

A Master list, subsequently broken down by region, of those approved to be mentors (both exhibitor and breeder) will be kept by the committee chair.

Information on the list:

- Name
- Contact Information (email & phone)
- Location
- Breed(s)
- Details of Qualifications of Mentor (see Criteria for Mentors)
- Biography

The Preliminaries
REGIONAL COORDINATORS

Regional Coordinators (RC) are volunteers from each region of TICA who act as the liaison between the Mentor Program Committee and their own regional mentors. Approved applications (both of mentors and protégé) will be sent to the RC directly from the Committee Chair. This person is then responsible for:

- Maintaining a list of available mentors
- Matching persons needing to be mentored (protégé) with an appropriate mentor (ideally one within the same breed and, if possible, general location)
- Prepare & distribute “Welcome” packets to the accepted protégé
- Recruiting new mentors
- Continued communication with the Mentor Program Committee Chair

The Preliminaries
CRITERIA FOR MENTORS

Breeder and Exhibitor Mentors will go through a screening process from a combination of, but not limited to, the guidelines outlined below. (This information is obtained on the application).

Determination of qualification based on this information:

- A TICA registered cattery name
- A signed TICA Code of Ethics of file with the Executive Office
- Veterinarian letter of reference
- Outstanding Cattery
- Good animal husbandry practices
- Time and ability to invest in mentoring
- Regional Director input
- Details of any protests or complaints filed against the applicant
- Letters from other breeders, pet owners, and/or from fellow regional exhibitors
- Show Ring Achievements (RW, IW or SCG for example)
- Sportsmanship
- Open Door - will invite (allow) TICA Officials or Potential Pet Buyers into their home by appointment.
- Showing/Breeding for a minimum of five years (currently or previously)
- Can mentor a maximum of two protégé at a time
- No complaints on file with TICA

Ongoing criteria to remain a Mentor:

- Periodic evaluations, submitted to the Mentor Program Chair, by the protégé
- Periodic evaluations, submitted to the Mentor Program Chair, by the Regional Contact

Mentor Duties & Expectations

EXHIBITOR MENTORS

As an Exhibitor Mentor, you are expected to:

- Provide an Introduction to TICA
 - Joining TICA & applicable breed section
 - Educate new exhibitors of the essentials needed to show their cat(s):
 - Show calendar
 - Entering cat(s) in a TICA Show
 - Exhibitor Responsibilities
 - Grooming
 - Show Supplies
 - Good Sportsmanship
 - Understanding the TICA standard for their cat(s)
 - Show Mechanics
 - Scoring for titles and Regional/International points
 - Show Rules
 - Junior Achievers
 - Be available (at reasonable times) prior to their first show for assistance with the essential pre-show tasks:
 - Entering the show
 - What to bring to the show
 - Assistance in finding a benching partner or be that partner
 - Any other questions that may arise
 - Networking with other exhibitors
 - At shows
 - Online/Email
 - Educate on good feline ownership
-
- Assistance in becoming a member of their applicable breed section, and region
 - Details on the managing/running of cat shows
 - Direct to a local cat club they can apply to join & participate in
 - Show how much FUN hobby showing can be
 - Demonstrate good communication skills (be as prompt as possible in returning phone calls and/or emails) in a friendly demeanor
 - Encourage protégé to consider becoming a mentor themselves

Mentor Duties & Expectations

BREEDER MENTORS

As a Breeder Mentor, you are expected to:

- Be available (at reasonable times) to answer questions via phone calls and/or emails.
- If the protégé has little prior experience in the cat fancy, encourage them to start with an altered cat.
 - Those with experience, discuss how to select the first breeding cat.
- Details on the expenses associated with showing/breeding cats
- Provide an Introduction to TICA
- Registration & Membership
 - Registering a cattery name
 - Registering cats that are registered in another association
 - Registering a litter
 - Becoming a TICA member & breed section member
- Networking with other breeders
 - At shows
 - Online/Email
- Details on Good Cattery Practices
 - Nutrition
 - Veterinarian Care
- Support by fellow breeders
 - Understanding of Hoarding
 - How to know when it's time to quit
 - Breeding to the TICA Standard
 - Sanitation
 - Minimum Standards for Housing Cats
 - Following TICA's Code of Ethics
- Education on Feline Husbandry
 - Reproduction
 - Birthing & Raising Kittens
 - Vaccination Guidelines
 - Health issues within the breed & available testing
- Kitten Sales
 - Contracts
 - Keeping kittens for 12+ weeks
 - At Shows
 - Advertising
 - Pet vs. Show Quality
 - Leasing & Selling Breeding Cats
 - At pet shops, stores, second-hand sales, etc.
- Provide Resources & Information
 - History of the breed
 - TICA Standard
 - Breed section
 - Other breeders
 - Online email lists
 - Breed-specific groups (ex: MCBFA)
 - Reference Books & Articles
- The Basics of Feline Genetics
 - Structure
 - Health
 - Coat Colors & Patterns
- Understanding Pedigrees Provide, as needed, working examples of personal (both good and bad) experiences as a breeder.
- Encourage protégé to consider becoming a mentor themselves.

- If needed, the following (from the *Exhibitor Mentor Duties & Responsibilities*):
- Educate new exhibitors of the essentials needed to show their cat(s):
 - Show calendar
 - Entering cat(s) in a TICA Show
 - Exhibitor Responsibilities
 - Grooming
 - Show Supplies
 - Good Sportsmanship
 - Understanding the TICA standard for their cat(s)
 - Show Mechanics
 - Scoring for titles and Regional/International points
 - Show Rules
 - Junior Achievers
- Be available (at reasonable times) prior to their first show for assistance with the essential pre-show tasks:
 - Entering the show
 - What to bring to the show
 - Assistance in finding a benching partner or be that partner
 - Any other questions that may arise
- Educate on good feline ownership
- Assistance in becoming a member of TICA, their applicable breed section, and region
- Details on the managing/running of cat shows
- Direct to a local cat club they can apply to join & participate in
- Show how much FUN hobby showing can be
- Demonstrate good communication skills (be as prompt as possible in returning phone calls and/or emails) in a friendly demeanor
- Encourage protégé to consider becoming a mentor themselves

Welcome Packets
NEW EXHIBITOR PACKET

Section I

- Meet Your Mentor (Biography)
- Mentor Information (name, address, phone & email)
- Regional Coordinator (name, address, phone & email)
- The Mentor Program Manual

Section II

Introduction to TICA

- Mission Statement
- History
- Board of Directors

List of Links to Frequently Used TICA Information (through the TICA website):

- Executive Office contact information
- By-Laws
- Show Rules
- Registration Rules
- Standing Rules
- The TICA Code of Ethics
- TICA Members' Website
 - Show Calendar
 - Show Reports
 - Estimated Standings

Regional Information

- Regional Website Address
- Regional Director (name & contact info)
- Regional email list information
- Regional list of states included in their region
- List of Regional clubs, presidents, contact information
- Current show season calendar of Regional shows

TICA Forms

- Membership with Breed Section Selection
- Individual Cat Registration
- Household Pet Registration
- Recognition of Wins
- Show entry

Section III

Resources & Breed Information

- Breed Standard
- History of the Breed
- Importance of Showing
- Appropriate e-mail lists
- Breed specific associations

Welcome Packets
NEW BREEDER PACKET

Section I

- Meet Your Mentor (Biography)
- Mentor Information (name, address, phone & email)
- Regional Coordinator (name, address, phone & email)
- The Mentor Program Manual

Section II

Introduction to TICA

- Mission Statement
- History
- Board of Directors

List of Links to Frequently Used TICA Information (through the TICA website):

- Executive Office contact information
- By-Laws
- Show Rules
- Registration Rules
- Standing Rules
- The TICA Code of Ethics
- TICA Members' Website
 - Show Calendar
 - Show Reports
 - Estimated Standings

Regional Information

- Regional Website Address
- Regional Director (name & contact info)
- Regional email list information
- Regional list of states included in their region
- List of Regional clubs, presidents, contact information
- Current show season calendar of Regional shows

TICA (Sample) Forms

- TICA Membership with Breed Section Selection
- Cattery Name Registration
- Litter Registration
- Individual Cat Registration
- Recognition of Wins
- Show entry blank

Section III

Resources & Breed Information

- Breed Standard
- History of the Breed
- Importance of Showing
- Appropriate e-mail lists
- Breed specific associations
- Royal Canin Program
- Royal Canin Breeder's Book