**A Stewards Guide to Handling Cats**

**1. Discuss Procedures with your Judge**

Before taking the cat out of the pen discuss with your judge their preference as to how they would like the cat presented to them. Some judges like to assess the cat in the pen first as it is often more relaxed so do not open the pen door until this has been done.

Some judges like the cat to be placed straight on the trolley while others may like you to hold the cat while they assess the bite and profile and they will also tell you how they would like the cat held as this can vary from breed to breed.

**2. Taking a Cat out of the Pen**

Cats should be taken out of the pen backwards taking great care to avoid any contact between the cats back and the upper edge of the pen door, unless the cat shows a willingness to walk out of its own accord.

Place the trolley near to the door of the pen which must be left open.

Always check that the cat’s claws are not caught in bedding or on the bars of the pen.

For large cats it may help to remove the litter tray and place on top of pen before removing to avoid knocking the tray and spilling the contents.

Once the cat is placed on the trolley close to but facing away from its own pen door as some cats will struggle to return to the safety of their own pen if they can see the way back.

Never place the trolley close to the door of the adjacent pen. Cats are often upset by close proximity to cats they don’t know and there is also risk of airborne infection.

While the cat is on the trolley be sure that you are holding it gently but firmly until the judge wants to pick it up to assess its weight and muscle tone.

Cats should never be scruffed unless you or the judge are in danger of being bitten or the cat is escaping, always treat them with care and respect as you would want your own cats treated

**3. Returning a Cat to the Pen**

Before returning a cat to its pen ensure that the bedding and tray are placed so that the cat is comfortable. Notify show manager if bedding, pen or tray are soiled or wet with spilled water or urine.

If a cat was found hiding under a blanket it may be kind to return the cat under the blanket.

When returning a cat to its pen try and put it front paws down first as some cats become playful or even show aggression at this point.

Always take the greatest care not to shut paws or tail in the pen door as serious injury can result.

Never forget to disinfect your hands and entire trolley surface thoroughly after handling