

Changes to CFA Distinguished Merit Requirements

Mary Kolencik

At their October meeting, the CFA board passed a proposal from the June annual to change the male DM requirements from 15 qualifying offspring to 10 with a stipulation that the male has produced at least one grand since January 1st, 2016. Central Office is searching records to identify males that meet the new requirement. Once ready, the list will be posted in a newsletter or CFA news announcement so that people can check for their cats. CO will not automatically send certificates to the retroactive DMs because the addresses of owners may have changed. However, the owner may request a certificate. Further instructions will accompany the announcement when CO completes the search.

There is some confusion over this change, so let me start out with the actual proposal that was passed and some examples, then further explanation. Passed at the 2021 annual pertaining to the Rules of Registration, only the underlined phrase is new:

DM: Distinguished Merit, the title given to a cat which has produced the required number of Grand Champions, Grand Premiers or Distinguished Merit Cats (5 for females, 15 for males, and 10 for males that have produced a Grand Champion or Grand Premier after January 1st, 2016).

Examples:

1. You have a male that has 12 grands. One or more of the offspring granded after January 1st, 2016. Your cat is now a DM.
2. You have a male that has 12 grands, but the last offspring to grand did so in 2014. This cat does not yet qualify for the DM title. If he sires another grand, then he will qualify.
3. You have a male that has 12 grands and they are all prior to January 1st, 2016. But you have a non-grand offspring that becomes a DM this season. That does not make the sire a DM. The male must have at least one GC or GP after January 1st, 2016 to use the 10 requirement. A DM does not satisfy the cutoff requirement, and I will explain why this was written as it is below.
4. You have a male that has 9 grands, all of them after January 1st, 2016. A 10th offspring becomes a DM this season. Your cat is now a DM. In this case, since the cat has at least one grand after January 2016, the DM is a qualifying offspring.
5. You are a line-chaser and you find a male with 15 qualifying offspring all prior to January 1st 2016. This cat still qualifies as a DM because the title only requires recent grand offspring to use the requirement for 10. Historic “found” cats can still achieve the DM with 15 qualifying offspring.

Since there may be some confusion about the cutoff period, let me explain that cutoff in a little more detail. My goal when I wrote this proposal was to craft a measure such that it would apply only to currently or recently producing males. I asked for input from others on Facebook and that was a shared sentiment among many. In fact some contributors insisted this change apply going forward and not retroactively or their clubs would not support it. If we allowed all males of all time (potentially numbering in the thousands) to retroactively qualify with 10 qualifying offspring, that truly would diminish and devalue the male DM. The proposal had to include a cutoff to prevent infinite retroactivity.

One question that I’ve had is why only use the GC/GP to determine that the cat is a current/recent breeding male. If a non-grand offspring of a sire obtains a DM in the last five years, does that mean the sire was recently breeding? Not necessarily. Sires can breed into their teens, so the offspring itself could

be many years old, and the sire of that offspring could be long past his own breeding career. The test to prove that a male is currently or recently breeding is the GC/GP. The DM title will still be a qualifying offspring title, but only if the male proves recent activity with a grand.