

RISEING SUN MARTIAL ARTS

TETSUDAI RESPONSIBILITIES

You are reading this letter because one of our Black Belt candidates has asked you to be their Tetsudai. This is an important role, and you should understand what it means before you agree to take it on.

DEFINITION

Tetsudai is a Japanese word that means “assistant.” Your role will be to assist the Black Belt candidate to prepare for and complete their Black Belt test. If they successfully complete the test, you will also play a role in the promotion ceremony.

BLACK BELT EVALUATION – OCTOBER 25, 2026 – 6:00PM (7:30PM FOR TETSUDAI)

The Black Belt candidates will be tested on the above date from 6:00 to approximately 8:00pm. They will be asked to demonstrate all of their karate material (Kihon, Kihonido, Shipponido, Tae Kiyoko, and Kata). They will be asked to demonstrate bunkai (analysis) of a curriculum kata. They will also be asked to demonstrate their ability to use their technique in sparring. As Tetsudai, your responsibilities are as follows...

- You will serve as Uke (demonstration partner) while the Black Belt candidate demonstrates his/her kata bunkai. This should be well-practiced prior to the test.
- You will also serve as your candidate’s sparring partner during the test. This will involve three one-minute matches. As this is a demonstration of skills learned, these will not be “point” matches; score will not be kept.

Your portion of the test will begin at 7:30pm, so you should plan to be at the dojo and warmed up at that time. While the sparring portion of the test will not take long, the duration of the bunkai presentations will depend on the number of candidates testing. You should plan to be on the floor for approximately one hour, with the understanding that there may be the possibility of leaving earlier.

PREPARING FOR THE CEREMONY

During the time between the test and the promotion ceremony, the Black Belt candidates should be preparing the kata that they will demonstrate. As a Tetsudai, you may help them to choose their kata, and even to practice it. How much you help with this is up to you and your candidate.

BLACK BELT PROMOTION CEREMONY – OCTOBER 26, 2026 - 11:00AM

“No one makes it to Black Belt by themselves.” You have heard Hanshi say this in the past. At the ceremony, Hanshi will make the promotion and award the belt (if appropriate). At that point, your Black Belt candidate will come to you and you will present them with their new rank certificate.

If you have any further questions about being a Tetsudai, just ask Hanshi. **If you are not able to fill this role, please let the Black Belt candidate know as soon as possible so that they can find a replacement.**

Domo arigato.