



HIGH PERFORMANCE ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

2025 Rider, Parent and Coach Guide

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Introduction

The Alberta Horse Trials High Performance (HP) Program is aimed at developing Alberta riders and horses that are competing at a Training level and above, and are interested in pursuing the sport of Eventing at the upper levels. In 2025, the program will be separated into two tiers, the 'High Performance Team', and the 'Development Team'. There is an 'Under 18 (U18) Team' that is also included under the High Performance umbrella. However, U18 has their own set of team qualifications, found under separate cover. Riders, meeting the membership criteria, are invited to apply for the program for the 2025 season. Active Eventing coaches are welcome to audit all HP riding sessions at no charge.

Mission Statement

The aim of this program is to support Alberta based Eventing riders, who intend on competing at the upper levels of their sport, to obtain the coaching and tools to become qualified for the EC National Team Program or the USEF Youth Eventing Championships. Through doing so we are fueling the future of our sport in Alberta, and in Canada. We are encouraging all riders to strive for their top level, whether that is competing locally or internationally.

High Performance and Development Team Support

Members of the Team will receive support in the following ways:

- Access to subsidized High Performance clinics and training sessions
- Training program consultation with team coach/consultant Leahona Rowland
- Performance planning and skills assessment
- Help finding suitable training situations and working student positions

**Level of subsidization will depend on available funds.*

Coach Support

This program does not replace full time coaching, but is in place to supplement and help guide a full program. HP program members are required to be in a training program with their own coach(es). The team members are encouraged to bring their coach(es) to audit the riding sessions, at no charge, so that a Training Program can be developed including all parties. Discussion can follow regarding the rider's plan/program, what is working well, what may be lacking, and what should improve if a rider wants to move up the levels .

Welcome

2025 High Performance Administration

High Performance Coach/Consultant - Leahona Rowland

Leahona has been involved in the sport of Eventing for more than 20 years and 2025 will be her ninth year coaching the Alberta High Performance Team. She has trained with the likes of David O'Connor, Scott Keach, Beth Underhill, Peter Gray and Penny Rowland, as well as being the 'head rider' for William Fox-Pitt. She has personally competed and brought horses along through the levels to Advanced and the former CCI**, in the US and the UK. Leahona offers an enthusiastic and knowledgeable support base for the entire High Performance Program. Leahona holds her Eventing High Performance 1 Coach designation, which she obtained in 2019.

High Performance Chair - Kathleen Ziegler

Kathleen has been involved with high performance Eventing for several years, having supported her children through the competition levels and to NAYC. Her son David Ziegler, is currently the only person in the history of North American Young Riders Championships to medal in two different disciplines in the same year (Individual Gold in Eventing and Individual Silver in Dressage). Kathleen offers invaluable experience when it comes to knowing what it takes to get to NAYC, and to earning placement and coaching with the top coaches in working student situations. She has been a member of the AHTA Board of Directors, serving as the Athlete Development Chairperson since 2012.

High Performance Committee

The High Performance Committee will consist of the current Coach/Consultant; the current HP Chairperson; a current Senior rider and one additional person involved with High Performance (could be a rider or a parent).

The 2025 HP Committee is Leahona Rowland and Kathleen Ziegler. The final committee members will be determined once membership registrations are received.

High Performance Program Outline

Tier 1- High Performance Team

- The High Performance Team is designed to help riders gain the extra coaching and tools that they require to successfully move up through the levels. Through coaching and consultation, the aim is to prepare horses and riders to be considered by the National Federation for the EC Development Squad or the Youth Championship Team.

2025 Criteria for 'High Performance Team' Membership

For 2025, applications will be considered based on the following criteria:

- Member is in good standing with the Alberta Equestrian Federation, Alberta Horse Trials Association, our Event Organizers, Equestrian Canada and US Eventing
- Riders agree to adhere to and comply with the Equestrian Canada Code of Conduct and Ethics and the Horse Welfare Policy (see attached)
- Based at least six months of the year in Alberta, Canada, unless training in a working student capacity
- Riding/training with the intent of moving this horse up the levels to compete at a minimum of CCI2*-L within the next 12-24 months
- Successful completion for both horse and/or rider, not necessarily as a combination, of three or more Preliminary Level horse trials. Scores need to have been achieved in the 2023 or 2024 seasons, and horse/rider as a combination must have the intent to compete at Preliminary or above in the 2025 season
- Fully completed application form, signed by coach, applicant and parent/guardian if applicant is under 18 years of age
- Willing to communicate regularly via email with the Coach/Consultant, and HP Chair, and complete training plans as required.
- **Application deadline December 31, 2024**

Horse Sale, Injury or Loss

In the case of a sale, severe injury to a horse, or the loss of a horse, during the season, a High Performance member still qualifies for the High Performance team for the following season (2025), as they rehab or find their next mount. They will need to qualify with their new mount following the same criteria as everyone else, the year after (2026).

Application Process and Registration Fee - \$175.

The rider will receive a Letter of Acceptance from the HP Chairperson confirming their application meets the Team membership criteria. This will be sent within 10 days upon receipt of the completed Team Application. This letter will include payment instructions and information regarding swag available to the rider.

A registration fee is collected annually. The funds are used to pay the Coach/Consultant for her review of the Training Plans submitted throughout the year and the subsequent communication with the rider. Any funds left over will be used to decrease HP clinic registration fees and/or purchase an HP branded item.

Tier 2- Development Team

- The Development Team is designed to initiate a relationship between up and coming Alberta riders and the High Performance Team and coach. By attending HP clinics, developing riders will be able to make the HP team aware of their intent to move up the levels with their horse. Resources are made available to provide riders with a road map to success.
 - Athletes registered for the Development program are invited to attend the Alberta High Performance Clinics and team training sessions.
 - Junior riders who wish to compete at the USEF Youth Eventing Championships are strongly encouraged to be a member/active participant in the High Performance Program. a minimum of 1 year prior to attending the Championships.
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2025 Criteria for ‘Development Team’ Membership

For 2025, applications will be considered based on the following selection criteria:

- Member is good standing with the Alberta Equestrian Federation, Alberta Horse Trials Association and our Event Organizers, Equestrian Canada and US Eventing
 - Riders agree to adhere to and comply with the Equestrian Canada Code of Conduct & Ethics and the Horse Welfare Code of Conduct (see attached)
 - Based at least six months of the year in Alberta, Canada, unless training in a working student capacity.
 - Riding/training with the intent of moving their current horse up the levels to compete at a minimum of CCI2*-L within the next three years
 - Successful completion for *both* horse and rider, but not necessarily as a combination, of three or more Training Level horse trials (with qualifying Minimum Eligibility Requirements per current EC Guidelines). Scores need to have been achieved in the 2023 and/or 2024 seasons
 - Fully completed application form, signed by coach, applicant and parent/guardian if applicant is under 18 years of age
 - Willing to communicate regularly via email with the Coach/Consultant, and HP Chair, and complete training plans as required.
 - **Application deadline December 31, 2024**
-

Application Process and Registration Fee - \$175.

The rider will receive a Letter of Acceptance from the HP Chairperson confirming their application meets the Team membership criteria. This will be sent within 10 days upon receipt of the completed Team Application. This letter will include payment instructions and information regarding swag available to the rider.

A registration fee is collected annually. The funds are used to pay the Coach/Consultant for her review of the Training Plans submitted throughout the year and the subsequent communication with the rider. Any funds left over will be used to decrease HP clinic registration fees and/or purchase an HP branded item.

2025 High Performance Clinic Dates

TBD. These will be announced over the next few weeks, once Alberta Competition dates have been established. We have one clinician booked now:

June 27/28 (or June 29/30) – Jon Holling Clinic/Dressage Instructor TBD at Alhambra Stables, Red Deer

Professional Development Sessions

These will be unmounted sessions presented by equestrian professionals on a variety of topics such as Alternative Therapies, Rider Fitness, Sports Psychology, and more.

Dates and presenters are being finalized. These will be in the form of Zoom sessions and unmounted sessions at the clinics.

Fundraising Expectations

Our goal through fundraising and sponsorship is to be able to subsidize as much of the clinic cost as possible, and to be able to allow for more one on one time with clinicians. The more finances we are able to raise, the better we will be able to serve the High Performance and Development Team riders.

The Silent Auction that is held at the end of the season is usually our sole source of fundraising. Other fundraising activities will be discussed at a clinic at the start of the year.

The members of the High Performance or Development Team are expected to supply at least one item to the AHTA Silent Auction.

Failure to meet the fundraising requirements of the HP or Development teams may result in the removal of the rider from the team and make them ineligible to apply the following year.

Rider Commitment

A full commitment is one of the key factors to the success of the program. We want to see riders that are committed to the program schedule and who show up ready to work hard and improve as an individual and as an equestrian. This includes regular communication with the Coach/Consultant and HP Chair, timely completion of the training plans as required, and fulfilling all fundraiser and sponsorship expectations.

We expect each participant to attend the majority of the HP activities scheduled throughout the year, in at least an auditing capacity. This includes meetings, training days, and competitions. We understand that scheduling conflicts will arise, particularly throughout winter months. It is the rider's responsibility to contact the HP Chair to inform them of any team clinics which they will be unable to attend.

You have been accepted on the basis of your individual athletic merit and your horse's ability to perform. Your personal conduct throughout the program reflects on all participants, presenters, Equestrian Canada, Alberta Equestrian Federation, Alberta Horse Trials Association, and the team itself. Breaching the EC Code of Conduct and Ethics or the Horse Welfare Code of Conduct; not being in good standing with or receiving complaints or disciplinary infractions from AHTA/AEF/EC or FEI may affect future eligibility to the program and other AHTA activities.

It is our sincerest hope, that the eventers in Alberta, of all ages, will look up to the athletes in the High Performance Program and be able to count on them to set a great example of horsemanship and sportsmanship.

All Alberta High Performance Athletes must ensure that they hold current memberships with the Alberta Equestrian Federation, Alberta Horse Trials Association and Equestrian Canada

Any questions or comments, please contact:

Kathleen Ziegler

High Performance Chair of AHTA

ahtahighperformance@gmail.com



CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS

Definitions

1. Refer to the [Universal Code of Conduct to Address and Prevent Maltreatment in Sports for Maltreatment related definitions](#).

2. Additional Definitions

- a) “*OSIC*” – Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner, an independent division of the SDRCC which comprises the functions of the Sport Integrity Commissioner.
- b) “*OSIC Participant*” – Anyone who holds or has held an EC Licence who has been designated by EC as subject to the OSIC.
- c) “*Participants*” - Anyone who holds or has held an EC Licence or anyone who has consented to be subject to this Policy.
- d) “*Person in Authority*” – an Individual who holds a position of authority within Equestrian Canada (EC) including, but not limited to, coaches, managers, trainers, support personnel, chaperones, and Directors.
- e) “*Workplace*” – any place where business or work-related activities are conducted. Workplaces include but are not limited to EC’s office, work-related social functions, work assignments outside EC’s offices, work-related travel, and work-related conferences or training sessions.
- f) “*Workplace Harassment*” – vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a Workplace that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome. Workplace Harassment should not be confused with legitimate, reasonable management actions that are part of the normal work/training function, including measures to correct performance deficiencies such as placing someone on a performance improvement plan or imposing discipline for workplace infractions. Types of behaviour that constitute Workplace Harassment include, but are not limited to:
 - i. bullying;
 - ii. workplace pranks, vandalism, bullying, or hazing;
 - iii. repeated offensive or intimidating phone calls or emails;
 - iv. inappropriate sexual touching, advances, suggestions, or requests;
 - v. displaying or circulating offensive pictures, photographs, or materials in printed or electronic form;
 - vi. psychological abuse;
 - vii. excluding or ignoring someone, including persistent exclusion of a particular person from work-related social gatherings;
 - viii. deliberately withholding information that would enable a person to do his or her job, perform, or train;
 - ix. sabotaging someone else’s work or performance;
 - x. gossiping or spreading malicious rumours;
 - xi. intimidating words or conduct (offensive jokes or innuendos); and,
 - xii. words or actions that are known or should reasonably be known to be offensive, embarrassing, humiliating, or demeaning.
- g) “*Workplace Violence*” – the use or threat of physical force by a person against a worker in a Workplace that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker; an attempt to exercise physical force against a worker in a Workplace that could cause physical injury to the worker; or a statement or behaviour that is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker in a Workplace that could cause physical injury to the worker. Types of behaviour that constitute Workplace Violence include, but are not limited to:
 - i. verbal or written threats to attack;
 - ii. sending or leaving threatening notes or emails;

- iii. physically threatening behaviour such as shaking a fist at someone, finger pointing, destroying property, or throwing objects;
- iv. wielding a weapon in a Workplace;
- v. hitting, pinching, or unwanted touching that is not accidental;
- vi. dangerous or threatening horseplay;
- vii. physical restraint or confinement;
- viii. blatant or intentional disregard for the safety or wellbeing of others;
- ix. blocking normal movement or physical interference, with or without the use of equipment;
- x. sexual violence; and,
- xi. any attempt to engage in the type of conduct outlined above.

Purpose

3. The purpose of this Code is to ensure a safe and positive environment (within EC's programs, activities, and events) by making Participants aware that there is an expectation, at all times, of appropriate behaviour consistent with EC's core values. EC is committed to a respectful sport culture that delivers quality, inclusive, accessible, welcoming and safe sport experiences.

- 4. EC believes that: a) equestrian sport is based on a partnership between the horse and human athlete;
- b) it is the right and responsibility of EC to set standards in matters of ethics, sportsmanship and the welfare of the horse, and in all matters under its jurisdiction;
- c) it is desirable to define ethical practices, delineate unethical practices, and encourage good sportsmanship, fair play, and safety;
- d) all Participants should observe the spirit as well as the letter of this Code; and,
- e) conduct contrary to this Code may result in disciplinary sanction and/or removal from participation in EC's activities and programs.

Zero Tolerance Statement

5. EC has zero tolerance for any type of Maltreatment of Participants. Participants should report instances of abuse or suspected abuse to EC. EC may take further action pursuant to the provisions of the Code and/or the Discipline, Complaints and Appeal Policy.

Application of this Code

6. EC has adopted the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport ("UCCMS"), as amended from time to time, (provided on EC's [website](#)). All Participants shall be bound by this Code and the UCCMS.

7. EC is a program signatory of the Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner (the "OSIC"), as of April 1st, 2023 (the "Effective Date").

8. EC has designated specific Participants within the organization as OSIC Participants. It is important to note that the UCCMS applies to all Participants, **but not all Participants are OSIC Participants** and subject to the OSIC process.

9. This Code applies to Participants' conduct during EC's business, activities, and events including, but not limited to, competitions, practices, tryouts, lessons, training and caring of horses, training camps, travel associated with EC's activities, EC's office environment, and any meetings.

10. An Individual who violates this Code may be subject to sanctions pursuant to *EC's Discipline, Complaints, and Appeal Policy*. In addition to facing possible sanction pursuant to *EC's Discipline, Complaints, and Appeal Policy*, pursuant to the *Corrective Action during events procedure*, an Individual who violates this Code during a competition may be ejected from the competition, an official may delay the competition until the Individual complies with the ejection, and the Individual may be subject to any additional discipline associated with the particular competition.

11. An employee of EC found to have engaged in acts of violence or harassment against any other employee, worker, contractor, member, customer, supplier, client, or other third-party during business hours, or at any EC event, will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action subject to the terms of EC's policies for human resources, as well as the employee's Employment Agreement (if applicable).

12. This Code also applies to Participants' conduct outside of EC's business, activities, and events when such conduct adversely affects relationships within EC (and its work and sport environment) and is detrimental to the image and reputation of EC. Such applicability will be determined by EC at its sole discretion.

Statement of Principles – Horse Welfare

13. EC requires adherence to humane treatment of horses in all activities under its jurisdiction.

14. All participants shall be bound by the [Horse Welfare Code of Conduct](#).

15. EC is committed to: a) upholding the welfare of the horse, regardless of monetary value, as a primary consideration in all activities;

b) requiring that horses be treated with kindness, respect, and the compassion that they deserve, and that they never be subjected to maltreatment;

c) ensuring that owners, trainers, and exhibitors and their agents exercise appropriate care and responsibility in the handling, treatment, and transportation of their horses, as well as horses placed in their care for any purpose;

d) providing for the continuous wellbeing of the horse by encouraging routine inspection and consultation with health care professionals and competition officials to achieve the highest possible standards of nutrition, health, comfort, and safety;

e) continuing to support scientific studies on equine health and welfare;

f) requiring owners, trainers, and exhibitors to know and follow their sanctioning organization's rules, and to work within industry regulations in all equestrian competitions; and,

g) reviewing, revising, and developing competition rules and regulations that protect the welfare of the horse.

Prohibited Behaviours

16. All Participants must refrain from any behaviour that constitutes a Prohibited Behaviour as defined by the UCCMS and this Code.

17. Participants are responsible for knowing what actions or behaviours are Prohibited Behaviours and/or Maltreatment.

18. Prohibited Behaviours under the UCCMS include, but are not limited to:

Physical Maltreatment

Sexual Maltreatment

Grooming

Boundary Transgressions

Discrimination

Failing to report

Psychological Maltreatment

Neglect

Aiding and Abetting

Retaliation

Interference with or Manipulation of Process

False Reports

19. In addition to the Prohibited Behaviours as defined by the UCCMS, the following behaviours are also considered Prohibited Behaviours under this Code:

Bullying
Harassment
Workplace Harassment
Workplace Violence

Responsibilities

20. Participants have a responsibility to:

- a) maintain and enhance the dignity and self-esteem of EC members and other participants by:
 - i. treating each other with the highest standards of respect and integrity;
 - ii. focusing comments or criticism appropriately and avoiding public criticism of athletes, coaches, officials, organizers, volunteers, employees, or members;
 - iii. consistently demonstrating the spirit of sportsmanship, sport leadership, and ethical conduct;
 - iv. acting, when appropriate, to correct or prevent practices that are unjustly discriminatory;
 - v. consistently treating participants fairly and reasonably; and,
 - vi. ensuring adherence to the rules of the sport and the spirit of those rules.
- b) refrain from any behaviour that constitutes Maltreatment;
- c) abstain from the non-medical use of drugs or the use of performance-enhancing drugs or methods. More specifically, EC adopts and adheres to the Canadian Anti-Doping Program. Any infraction under this Program shall be considered an infraction of this Code and may be subject to further disciplinary action, and possible sanction, pursuant to EC's *Discipline, Complaints, and Appeal Policy*. EC will respect any penalty enacted pursuant to a breach of the Canadian Anti-Doping Program, whether imposed by EC or any other sport organization;
- d) refrain from associating with any person for the purpose of coaching, training, competition, instruction, administration, management, athletic development, or supervision of the sport who has incurred an anti-doping rule violation and is serving a sanction involving a period of ineligibility imposed pursuant to the Canadian Anti-Doping Program and/or the World Anti-Doping Code and recognized by the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES);
- e) refrain from associating with any person for the purpose of coaching, training, competition, instruction, administration, management, athletic development, or supervision of the sport who has incurred a safe sport violation and is serving a sanction involving a period of ineligibility;
- f) refrain from the use of power or authority in an attempt to coerce another person to engage in inappropriate activities;
- g) refrain from consuming tobacco products or recreational drugs while participating in EC's programs, activities, competitions, or events;
- h) in the case of minors, not consume alcohol, tobacco, or cannabis at any competition or event;
- i) in the case of adults, not consume cannabis in the Workplace or in any situation associated with EC's events (subject to any requirements for accommodation), not consume alcohol during competitions and in situations where minors are present, and take reasonable steps to manage the responsible consumption of alcohol in adult-oriented social situations associated with EC's events;
- j) respect the property of others and not willfully cause property damage;
- k) promote the sport in the most constructive and positive manner possible;
- l) when driving a vehicle with a Participant, exercise all due cautions and respect all applicable laws.
- m) adhere to all federal, provincial, municipal, and host country laws;
- n) refrain from engaging in or assisting with any form of bribing, cheating, or manipulation of the outcome of a competition; and,
- o) comply, at all times, with EC's bylaws, policies, procedures, and rules and regulations, as adopted and amended from time to time.

Directors, Committee Members, and Staff

21. In addition to the above section on general responsibilities for all Participants, EC's Directors, Committee Members, and Staff will have additional responsibilities to: a) function primarily as a Director or Committee Member of EC, not as a member of any other particular group or constituency;

- b) act with honesty and integrity, and conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the nature and responsibilities of EC's business;
- c) ensure that EC's financial affairs are conducted in a responsible and transparent manner with due regard for all fiduciary responsibilities;
- d) conduct themselves openly, professionally, lawfully, and in good faith in the best interests of EC;
- e) be independent and impartial, and not be influenced by self-interest, outside pressure, expectation of reward, or fear of criticism;
- f) behave with decorum appropriate to both circumstance and position;
- g) keep informed about EC's activities, the sport community, and general trends in the sectors in which it operates;
- h) exercise the degree of care, diligence, and skill required in the performance of their duties pursuant to the laws under which EC is incorporated;
- i) respect all requirements for confidentiality;
- j) respect the decisions of the majority and resign if unable to do so;
- k) commit the time to attend meetings and be diligent in preparation for, and participation in, discussions at such meetings;
- l) have a thorough knowledge and understanding of all EC governance documents; and,
- m) conform to the bylaws and policies approved by EC.

Coaches and Instructors

22. In addition to the above section on general responsibilities for all Participants, coaches have many additional responsibilities. The coach-athlete relationship is a privileged one and plays a critical role in the personal, sport, and athletic development of the athlete. Coaches must understand and respect the inherent power imbalance that exists in this relationship and must be extremely careful not to abuse it, consciously or unconsciously. Coaches will:

- a) ensure a safe environment by selecting activities and establishing controls that are suitable for the age, stage of athletic development, experience, ability, and fitness level of the involved Participants and horses;
- b) prepare athletes and their horses systematically and progressively, using appropriate time frames and monitoring physical and psychological adjustments while refraining from using training methods or techniques that may harm athletes and / or their horses;
- c) avoid compromising the present and future health of athletes and / or horses by communicating and cooperating with sport medicine professionals in the diagnosis, treatment, and management of medical and psychological treatments for both athletes and horses;
- d) support the coaching staff of a training camp, provincial team, or national team, should an athlete qualify for participation with one of these programs;
- e) accept and promote athletes' personal goals and refer athletes to other coaches and sports specialists as appropriate;
- f) provide athletes (and the parents/guardians of minor athletes) with the information necessary to be involved in the decisions that affect the athlete;
- g) act in the best interest of the athlete's development as a whole person;
- h) comply with EC's *Screening Policy*;
- i) report to EC any ongoing criminal investigation, conviction, or existing bail conditions they are under, including those for violence, child pornography, or possession, use, or sale of any illegal substance;
- j) under no circumstances provide, promote, or condone the use of drugs (other than properly prescribed medications) or performance-enhancing substances and, in the case of minors, alcohol and/or tobacco;
- k) respect athletes training with other coaches and with other teams and refrain from discussing topics or actions which are deemed to be within the realm of coaching with such athletes, unless first receiving approval from the coaches who are responsible for the athletes;
- l) never engage in a sexual relationship with an athlete under the age of 25;
- m) disclose any sexual or intimate relationship with an athlete over the age of 25 to EC;
- n) recognize the power inherent in the position of coach and respect and promote the rights of all participants in sport. This is accomplished by establishing and following procedures for confidentiality (right to privacy), informed participation, and fair and reasonable treatment. Coaches have a special responsibility to respect and promote the rights of participants who are in a vulnerable or dependent position and less able to protect their own rights; and,

o) use inoffensive language, taking into account the audience being addressed.

Persons in Authority

23. Participants in a position of Authority are responsible for knowing what constitutes Maltreatment. The categories of Maltreatment are not mutually exclusive, nor are the examples provided in each category of the UCCMS an exhaustive list.

24. It is a violation of this Code for sport administrators or other Persons in Authority to place Participants in situations that make them vulnerable to Maltreatment.

25. All Persons in Authority will adhere to **Coaching Association of Canada's Rule of Two**:

- a) minor athletes shall never be alone with a Person of Authority. A second Coach or Person in Authority should be with them or within eyesight or earshot. With adult athletes, it is recommended to also apply the Rule of Two;
- b) screened parents or other volunteers will be available in situations when two Persons in Authority cannot be present;
- c) for groups of athletes consisting of just one gender identity, a Person in Authority of the same gender identity will be available to participate in or attend every interaction. For groups consisting of athletes of more than one gender identity, a Person of Authority of each gender identity will be available to participate or attend every interaction.

26. All Persons in Authority who communicate with athletes will have additional responsibilities to:

- a) use group messages, group emails, or team pages as the regular method of communication between Persons in Authority and athletes;
- b) send personal texts, direct messages on social media, or emails to individual athletes when necessary and only for the purpose of communicating information related to group issues and activities (e.g. non-personal information);
- c) be professional in tone and for the purpose of communicating information related to group issues or activities;
- d) communicate with athletes between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and midnight unless extenuating circumstances exist;
- e) not communicate about drugs or alcohol use (unless regarding its prohibition);
- f) not use sexually explicit language or imagery, or hold sexually oriented conversation with athletes;
- g) not ask athletes to keep a secret for them; and,
- h) not become overly involved in an athlete's personal life.

27. All Persons in Authority who travel with athlete will have additional responsibilities to:

- a) not be alone in a car with an athlete unless the Person in Authority is the athlete's parent or guardian;
- b) not share a room or be alone in a hotel room with an athlete unless the Person in Authority is the athlete's parent or guardian;
- c) perform room or bed checks during overnight stays with two Persons in Authority; and,
- d) ensure for overnight travel with athletes sharing a hotel room, that roommates will be age-appropriate (within two (2) years of age) and of the same gender identity.

28. EC understands that some physical contact between Persons in Authority and athletes may be necessary for various reasons including, but not limited to, teaching a skill, or tending to an injury. All Persons in Authority will have additional responsibilities to:

- a) unless it is not possible because of serious injury or other circumstance, always ask the athlete's permission to make physical contact, specifically indicating where and why any touch will occur. The Person in Authority must make clear that they are *requesting* to touch the athlete and not *requiring* the physical contact;
- b) make amends when needed, such as an apology or explanation, to further help educate athletes on the difference between appropriate and inappropriate contact; and,
- c) not initiate hugging, cuddling, physical horseplay, and physical contact. EC is aware that some younger athletes may initiate hugging or other physical contact with a Person in Authority for various reasons (e.g. crying after a poor performance) but this physical contact should always be limited.

29. All Persons in Authority will have additional responsibilities regarding changing area and meeting room to:

- a) not interact with an athlete in any room where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy such as a meeting room, washroom, or changing area. A second Person in Authority should be present for any necessary interaction in any such room; and,
- b) still be available outside the locker room or changing area and able to enter the room or area if required.

Athletes

30. In addition to the above section on general responsibilities for all Participants, athletes will have additional responsibilities to:

- a) report any medical problems in a timely fashion when such problems may limit their ability to travel, practice, or compete;
- b) participate and appear on time and prepared to participate to their best abilities in all competitions, practices, training sessions, tryouts, tournaments, and events;
- c) properly represent themselves and not attempt to participate in a competition for which they are not eligible by reason of age, classification, or other reason;
- d) adhere to EC's rules and requirements regarding clothing and equipment;
- e) act in a sportsmanlike manner and not display appearances of violence, foul language, or gestures to other athletes, officials, coaches, or spectators; and,
- f) act in accordance with EC's policies and procedures and, when applicable, additional rules as outlined by coaches or managers.

Officials

31. In addition to the above section on general responsibilities for all Participants, officials will have additional responsibilities to:

- a) maintain and update their knowledge of the rules and rule changes;
- b) refrain from publicly criticizing other officials or any club or association;
- c) work within the boundaries of their position's description while supporting the work of other officials;
- d) act as an ambassador of EC by agreeing to enforce and abide by national and provincial rules, regulations and policies;
- e) take ownership of actions and decisions made while officiating;
- f) respect the rights, dignity, and worth of all Participants and horses;
- g) act openly, impartially, professionally, lawfully, and in good faith;
- h) be fair, equitable, considerate, independent, honest, and impartial in all dealings with others;
- i) respect the confidentiality required by issues of a sensitive nature, which may include ejections, defaults, forfeits, discipline processes, appeals, and specific information or data about Participants;
- j) honour all assignments unless unable to do so by virtue of illness or personal emergency, and in these cases inform the assignor or association at the earliest possible time; and
- k) be accurate and fulsome when writing reports, taking care to record only true statements and facts.



ATHLETE PROTECTION GUIDELINES

Definitions

1. The following term has this meaning in these Guidelines:

a) “*Person in Authority*” – an Individual who holds a position of authority within Equestrian Canada (EC) including, but not limited to, licensed coaches, managers, trainers, support personnel, chaperones, and Directors.

Purpose

2. These *Athlete Protection Guidelines* describe how Persons in Authority can maintain a safe sport environment for athletes.

Rule of Two

3. EC will strongly recommend the Rule of Two for all Persons in Authority who interact with athletes. The Coaching Association of Canada defines the Rule of Two as follows:

a) *The ‘Rule of Two’ means that the coach is never alone or out of sight with a minor athlete. Two National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) trained or certified coaches should always be present with an athlete, especially a minor athlete, when in a potentially vulnerable situation such as in a locker room or meeting room. All one-on-one interactions between a coach and an athlete must take place within earshot and in view of the second coach except for medical emergencies. One of the coaches must also be of the same gender identity as the athlete. Should there be a circumstance where a second screened and NCCP trained or certified coach is not available, a screened volunteer, parent, or adult can be recruited to act as a substitute.*

4. To ensure adherence to the Rule of Two, EC will recommend that:

- a) minor athletes should never be alone with a coach. A second Licensed Coach or Person in Authority should be with them or within eyesight or earshot. With adult athletes, it is good practice to also apply the Rule of Two;
- b) screened parents or other volunteers will be available in situations when two Persons in Authority cannot be present;
- c) for groups of athletes consisting of just one gender identity, a Person in Authority of the same gender identity should be available to participate in or attend every interaction. For groups consisting of athletes of more than one gender identity (e.g. co-ed teams), a Person in Authority of each gender identity should be available to participate or attend every interaction; and,
- d) these guidelines will be reviewed with parents and guardians to help identify situations and acknowledge instances when the group was not following the Rule of Two;

Communications

5. EC will strongly recommend the following communication guidelines for all Persons in Authority who interact with athletes:

- a) group messages, group emails, or team pages are to be used as the regular method of communication between Persons in Authority and athletes;
- b) Persons in Authority may only send personal texts, direct messages on social media, or emails to individual athletes when necessary and only for the purpose of communicating information related to group issues and activities (e.g. non-personal information);
- c) parents and guardians have the right to request that their child not be contacted by Persons in Authority using any form of electronic communication and/or to request that certain information about their child may not be distributed in any form of electronic communications;

- d) the content of all electronic communication between Persons in Authority and athletes must be professional in tone and for the purpose of communicating information related to group issues or activities;
- e) all communication between Persons in Authority and athletes must be between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and midnight unless extenuating circumstances exist;
- f) no communication concerning drugs or alcohol use (unless regarding its prohibition) is permitted;
- g) no sexually explicit language or imagery, or sexually oriented conversation is permitted;
- h) Persons in Authority are not permitted to ask athletes to keep a secret for them; and,
- i) a Person in Authority should not become overly involved in an athlete's personal life.

Travel

6. EC will strongly recommend the following travel guidelines for all Persons in Authority who travel with athletes:
- a) a Person in Authority may not be alone in a car with an athlete unless the Person in Authority is the athlete's parent or guardian;
 - b) a Person in Authority may not share a room or be alone in a hotel room with an athlete unless the Person in Authority is the athlete's parent or guardian;
 - c) room or bed checks during overnight stays must be done by two Persons in Authority; and,
 - d) for overnight travel when athletes share a hotel room, roommates will be age-appropriate (e.g. within two (2) years of age) and of the same gender identity.

Changing Area/Meeting Room

7. EC will strongly recommend the following guidelines for the changing area and meeting rooms:
- a) interactions between a Person in Authority and an individual athlete should not occur in any room where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy such as a meeting room, washroom, or changing area. A second Person in Authority should be present for any necessary interaction in any such room; and,
 - b) if Persons in Authority are not present in the changing area, or if they are not permitted to be present, they should still be available outside the locker room or changing area and able to enter the room or area if required.

Photography/Video

8. EC will strongly recommend the following photography/video guidelines:
- a) parents/guardians should sign a photo release form (as part of the registration process) that describes how an athlete's image may be used by EC;
 - b) photographs and video may only be taken in public view, must observe generally accepted standards of decency, and be both appropriate for and in the best interest of the athlete; c) the use of recording devices of any kind in rooms where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy is strictly prohibited; and,
 - d) examples of photos that should be edited or deleted include:
 - i. images with misplaced apparel or where undergarments are showing;
 - ii. suggestive or provocative poses; and,
 - iii. embarrassing images.

Physical Contact

9. EC understands that some physical contact between Persons in Authority and athletes may be necessary for various reasons including, but not limited to, teaching a skill or tending to an injury. EC will strongly recommend the following touch guidelines:
- a) unless it is not possible because of serious injury or other circumstance, a Person in Authority should always ask the athlete's permission to make physical contact, specifically indicating where and why any touch will occur. The Person in Authority must make clear that he or she is *requesting* to touch the athlete and not *requiring* the physical contact;
 - b) infrequent, non-intentional physical contact, particularly contact that arises out of an error or a misjudgment on the part of the athlete during a training session, is permitted;
 - c) making amends, such as an apology or explanation, is encouraged to further help educate athletes on the difference between appropriate and inappropriate contact; and,

d) hugging, cuddling, physical horseplay, and physical contact initiated by the Person in Authority is not permitted. EC is aware that some younger athletes may initiate hugging or other physical contact with a Person in Authority for various reasons (e.g. crying after a poor performance) but this physical contact should always be limited.

Sport-Specific Guidelines

10. EC will strongly recommend the following sport-specific guidelines:

- a) a Person in Authority should never be alone with an athlete prior to or following a competition or training session, unless the Person in Authority is the athlete's parent or guardian. If the athlete is the first athlete to arrive, the athlete's parent should remain until another athlete or Person in Authority arrives. Similarly, if an athlete would potentially be alone with a Person in Authority following a competition or practice, the Person in Authority should ask another Person in Authority (or a parent or guardian of another athlete) to stay until all the athletes have been picked up. If an adult is not available, then another athlete should be present in order to avoid the Person in Authority being alone with a single athlete; and,
- b) Persons in Authority giving instructions, demonstrating skills, or facilitating drills or lessons to an individual athlete should always be doing so within earshot and eyesight of another Person in Authority.



HORSE WELFARE CODE OF CONDUCT

Definitions

In this policy,

“Horse” – refers to an active equine under Equestrian Canada (EC) jurisdiction. That jurisdiction is limited to Horses participating in any EC sanctioned events, on any EC sanctioned teams, and or any Horse under the care and training of any Individual, whether at an EC sanctioned event or otherwise.

“Individual”- refers to a person that has a relationship with EC through employment, contract, volunteer position, official status, or the holding of a sport licence and/or coach status.

“Abuse” – refers to physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, hoarding, or other treatment of a Horse deemed cruel, harmful, distressful, or violent in nature.

Preamble & Purpose

1. Equestrian Canada (EC) is committed to fostering a safe and inclusive environment for all participants that is free from Abuse. The purpose of this Policy is to stress the importance of that commitment by educating Individuals and the public about Horse Abuse, outlining how EC will work to prevent Horse Abuse, and how such Abuse or suspected Abuse can be reported to and addressed by EC.

2. EC requires that all Individuals adhere to this Code of Conduct and acknowledge and accept that the welfare of the Horse must always be paramount and must never be subordinated to competitive or commercial influences. EC is committed to: a) upholding the welfare of the Horse, regardless of value and performance level, as the primary priority regardless of competitive commitments, expectations, or commercial influences;

b) requiring the Horse be treated with the highest level of care, compassion, respect, and empathy;

c) requiring that no Horse be subjected to Abuse (ref: Rules of Equestrian Canada, Section A General Regulations, Article A517) or maltreatment;

- d) ensuring that all Individuals accept and implement, at a minimum, the requirements within the National Farm Animal Care Council Equine Code of Practice;
- e) ongoing support for scientific studies of animal-based indicators of pain, distress, and/or compromised welfare;
- f) increasing education and awareness for the evolution of best management and equine husbandry practices;
- g) requiring Individuals to know and follow the EC Rules and implement industry regulations in all competitions; and
- h) reviewing, revising, and developing competition rules and regulations that protect the welfare of the Horse.

Zero Tolerance Statement

3. EC has zero tolerance for Abuse of a Horse. All Individuals and members of the public are required to report instances of Horse Abuse or suspected Horse Abuse to EC which shall immediately address such reports as needed under the terms of the applicable policies.

Complaint Process

4. The complaint process for instances of Abuse of a Horse will be governed by EC's [Discipline, Complaints and Appeals policy](#).

General Welfare

5. All Horses must be cared for in accordance with the [Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Equines](#).

Examples of Abuse of Horses (source)

6. "Physical Abuse" – refers to the infliction of injuries or causing unnecessary pain and/or suffering. This Abuse may be caused by hitting, kicking, throwing, beating, whipping, spurring, shaking, poisoning, burning, scalding, suffocation, etc.

Examples of Physical Abuse include but are not limited to:

- a) nosebands used in such a way that they interfere with a Horse's breathing, or be tight enough to cause pain or discomfort;
- b) excessively whipping or beating a Horse;
- c) subjecting a Horse to any kind of electric shock device;
- d) excessively or persistently using spurs or jabbing a Horse in the mouth with the bit;
- e) riding/driving an obviously exhausted, lame or injured Horse;
- f) rapping a Horse (poling or rapping is the practice of hitting a horse on the legs as it goes over a jump, to make it think it hit the fence).
- g) hyper-sensitizing any part of a Horse;
- h) using shackles or chains (not to be confused with rubber or elastic exercising devices);
- i) competing with a Horse with raw or bleeding sores;
- j) using an explosive (i.e. firecracker, fire extinguisher except in the case of fire) or using fire such as lighters, matches, etc.;
- k) ignoring adverse medication reactions that compromise the Horse's welfare (including but not limited to staggering and falling down) ;
- l) inappropriate or over-use of medications, drugs, and supplements in both on label and off label scenarios; or
- m) excess of use in activity, lesson, training, or competition to which physical or emotional impacts are demonstrated.

7. "Emotional Abuse" – refers to persistent threatening behavior, failure to provide basic needs, bullying, excessive teasing, exploitation, or coercion that leads to a fragile emotional state.

Examples of Emotional Abuse include but are not limited to:

- a) on-going and deliberate isolation that results in emotional or psychological distress;
- b) training practices that are either mentally or physically inadequate for a Horse's capabilities;
- c) failing to intervene or diffuse a Horse displaying mental/emotional distress including excessive stereotypical behavior (such as crib biting, wood chewing, pawing/kicking, weaving, fence-pacing, stall-walking, or flank biting).

8. Neglect is defined as a lack of care, often resulting from ignorance, poverty, or extenuating circumstances. Neglect usually results in a failure to provide the basic necessities of life: adequate levels of food, water, shelter, veterinary care, grooming, or sanitation resulting in poor physical conditions.

Examples of neglect include but are not limited to:

- a) leaving a Horse without adequate food, drink, and exercise;
- b) failing to safely and securely tie or contain a Horse while at the event location.

9. Hoarding: Animal neglect on a large scale involving multiple numbers of animals and frequently inadequate housing and husbandry conditions.

10. Animal sexual abuse: Any abusive act involving the rectum, anus, or genitalia; or sexual contact with animals which may or may not result in physical injury to the animal.

This list and set of examples is not intended to be exhaustive.

Extreme Weather Conditions:

11. Competitors and competition organisers must observe the Equestrian Canada guidelines provided for extremely hot, cold, and poor air quality conditions during competition (attached links).

Duty to Report Abuse

12. Anyone that witnesses or has reasonable grounds to believe that a Horse is suffering or has suffered Abuse, is obligated to report it. Reasonable grounds refer to the information that an average person, using normal and honest judgment, would need to decide to report. A person should not rely on anyone else to report on their behalf nor delegate the reporting. Anyone providing information to others should be encouraged to report their concerns themselves as their duty to report.

In determining whether to report the Abuse to EC, local animal welfare enforcement, or law enforcement, the person should use as much information as they have available to them about the Horse or the person(s) involved. Reports of Abuse involving Individuals or Horses as defined in this policy should be reported to EC. Other reports should be directed to animal welfare or law enforcement. When in doubt, a person should make contact with their report and the receiving agency will direct them as appropriate.

Penalty Range is a Guideline Only

13. The penalty types and ranges below are simple guidelines and are not mandatory. These guidelines are intended to provide a basis upon which discretion can be exercised consistently in like circumstances but are not binding on the Hearing Committee Panels. Depending on the facts and circumstances of each case, a Hearing Committee Panel may determine that no purpose is served by imposing a penalty at all. Conversely, a Hearing Committee Panel may determine that the facts and circumstances of a specific case may call for the imposition of penalties above or outside of the stated range. Examples include, but not are limited to, prior rule violations, egregious misconduct, the need for increased deterrence, or certain policy considerations.

Categories of Rule Violations & Sanctions

Infraction	Policy	Fine	Suspension
15. Excessive use of whip or spurs or tongue straps and improper use of bits *	Horse Welfare Code of Conduct	First Offense: up to \$6,000.00 Second Offense: up to \$12,000.00 Third Offense: up to \$24,000.00	First Offense: up to 6 months Second Offense: up to 12 months Third Offense: up to 24 months
16. Use of illegal equipment*** with no intent to cause harm or pain to a Horse or which doesn't cause harm or pain to a Horse *	Horse Welfare Code of Conduct	Discretion of the Hearing Panel	
17. Intentional use of illegal equipment*** to cause harm or pain to a Horse *	Horse Welfare Code of Conduct	First Offense: up to \$12,000.00 Second Offense: up to \$18,000.00 Third Offense: up to \$36,000.00	First Offense: up to 12 months Second Offense: up to 18 months Third Offense **: up to 36 months
18. Cruelty/Abuse/Neglect – Includes excessive riding, lunging, training and showing, deprivation of water and feed, striking with an object, unintentional death, and violations of the 12-hour injection rule involving forbidden substances for purpose of competition. *	Horse Welfare Code of Conduct	First Offense: up to \$12,000.00 Second Offense: up to \$24,000.00 Third Offense: up to \$60,000.00	First Offense: up to 12 months Second Offense: up to 24 months Third Offense: up to 60 months **
19. Death and Maiming – Includes acts in which the death of a Horse occurred, but was not intended *	Horse Welfare Code of Conduct	First Offense: up to \$36,000.00 Second Offense: up to \$60,000.00 Third Offense: up to \$100,000.00	First Offense: up to 36 months ** Second Offense: up to 60 months ** Third Offense: Lifetime ban
20. Intentional death for financial or other means	Horse Welfare Code of Conduct	\$100,000.00	Lifetime ban
* If there are multiple horses involved, the penalty should apply to each Horse and run consecutively.			

** Must appear before the Hearing Panel and provide proof of rehabilitation before being eligible to regain membership.

*** Illegal equipment are modifications to tack/equipment to cause intentional pain or injury with the objective of punishment or to enhance performance as well as any equipment or accessories that admit or cause electric shock.