

Provincially Recognized Officials Development Certification Program

Guidelines & Code of Conduct Policy

Duties and Responsibilities

Your duties and responsibilities as an official begin the moment you are contracted to officiate at a competition.

- Get exact dates of the competition and check your calendar for any possible conflicts – before you commit.
- Write down the name, address and telephone number of whom you are to contact with questions, confirmations, etc.
- Find out what divisions and classes will be offered. Make sure you are confident to officiate at the level that is being asked of you.
- State your fees. Advise the caller of any additional fees you might have for mileage, particular class of air travel, etc., and reach an agreement on the amount and method of payment at this time.
- Ask for an official's contract or "Letter of Agreement", stating all the details of your arrangements, from the show management.
- If everything is satisfactory and you wish to accept the job, sign the contract and return it to horse show management in a timely fashion.
- Inform show management of any food sensitivities or allergies.

If you must cancel:

If you must cancel your agreement to officiate a particular competition due to illness, or emergency

- contact the show manager as soon as you know you must cancel.
- The option of hiring any particular official rests with show management, but if possible suggest a suitable replacement
- You should confirm this cancellation with show management and HCBC Competition Manager via email and in writing to alleviate any misunderstanding

Conduct,

- First impressions are everything.
- Exercise proper manners, and courteous behavior both in and out of the arena.
- Do not smoke or use tobacco, while officiating.
- Stay off of your cell phone.
- Exhibitors and the general public respect your position and will listen any time an official speaks. Profanity or suggestive remarks are unprofessional and not appropriate at any time on the show grounds.
- Drive or be taken directly from your room to the show office.
- Judges should not visit, or fraternize with exhibitors.
- Dine alone, with other officials, or with show management.

Conduct,

- Use common sense regarding your conduct and the consumption of alcohol.
- Officials should be on the grounds one hour before the first class.
- Officials should check in with the ingate, whipper in or ringmaster to explain what is expected of them, how you expect classes to be handled, and any other instructions you feel necessary.
- Arrive prepared, if you have a favorite pen...bring it, like to make notes in a certain note book, make sure you have it. Most shows will provide you with pens etc., but its always good to bring your own just in case.

Dress

An official is expected to look and act as a professional, and should present themselves as such. Dress is expected to be clean business-like attire and of course weather appropriate.

- A coat and tie, button up or collared shirt, dress pants or khakis are proper for men at most competitions.
- Women should dress in casual business attire, button up blouse or dress pants are suitable.
- Dress should be formal for night classes. Suit and tie for men and suit or jacket and long dress or skirt for women.
- Footwear should be clean and comfortable; flip flops or worn out untidy footwear are not acceptable.
- Hats? Yes. Who doesn't love a good hat! Keep it appropriate though, dirty trucker flat tops are not ok, be sure your hat isn't going to be a distraction or spook the horses.
- Jeans are not acceptable attire at any competition. The only exception might be as course designer where manual labour is required. Even then, the level of the event, and the possibility of a quick change should be kept in mind.

During Competition

- You are expected to know the best vantage point from which to judge each class. Whenever possible, use either the centre of the arena, or a seat elevated enough to properly see the whole class. Both are good places to view each and every horse, and it is relatively hard for exhibitors to talk to you if you are isolated in either place.
- Any comments you might make to an exhibitor should be limited to class routine or instruction.
- Should an exhibitor request an opinion of you, do so only in the presence of show management. Be courteous and render your opinion in a professional manner.
- You are officiating at a Provincial level show, these are primarily lower level or schooling type shows, there is some leeway to give pointers as time allows. Provide feedback as to why a certain placing happened, i.e. wrong lead etc. Provincial shows are a training ground for entry level exhibitors. Try to keep your comments positive and encouraging. A smile goes a long way!



- As an official you are expected to know the Rules concerning the classes and divisions that you are judging, as well as the rules concerning your duties and eligibilities.
- Have a copy of the HCBC rule book with you. Request a hard copy at no charge, email competition@hcbc.ca to have one sent to you
- Use common sense and good judgment in determining the numbers to be judged in flat or line classes. Do not over crowd a small arena and keep everyone's safety in mind. Plan ahead to avoid difficulties.
- You have a fundamental duty to consider each and every horse in the class. The class should be placed on the merits of each entry.
- Do not be influenced by owners, exhibitors, high profile coaches or any other factors.
- Mark your cards neatly and clearly. (There could be the possibility that someone else i.e.; entry secretary inputting results or show management following up on a dispute will need to read your cards.)
- You are responsible not only for placing the classes; but also, for the orderly and safe conduct of the classes. It is your duty to see each class is started, presented and excused in a manageable manner.
- Any horse that becomes unruly or poses a danger to the other competitors should be excused. The same holds true with a horse that is unsound.

Patterns, Tests, Course Designs

- Confirm well in advance with show management if you are expected to provide your own tests and patterns for such classes as horsemanship, equitation, trail, etc.
- Ask to have any tests/patterns provided by show management to be sent to you in advance for review so you can determine that they are legal, suitable and acceptable.
- Check all working hunter and jumping courses to see that they have been properly designed, built, and conform to the Rules.
- Be certain that all courses and patterns have been posted at least one hour in advance of the class and that you have copies in your judge's booth.

Post Competition

- Your responsibilities do not end when the last class is placed. Depending on your particular role in officiating at the competition, there are several functions still to go:
- As a judge you should check with show management to see that all your cards are clear, and assist them if necessary with championships or other awards.
- If there were any problems that should be reported, write them down on the judge's report form and submit to management.
- Any feedback or suggestions for improving the competition should be put in writing while they are fresh in your mind and discussed with horse show management. If such were made other officials be sure to include these with a name attached to them.



Final Word

- Your educated eye along with your integrity and judgment will affect the impression you make on show management, competitors and spectators alike. This will ultimately be the deciding factor on how many shows you are hired to officiate. With the completion of each assignment, be confident your decisions were made fairly and without bias, and your performance as an official was the best it could be. Remember your decisions and comments will have an impact. You are a major player in molding the show career of every competitor you reach. Encouraging remarks and a positive experience at the horse show will have an impact whether the competitor is a beginner, getting back into the sport or a seasoned horse show junkie.
- The requirements of being an official mandate, you must be honest, an arbiter, and a diplomat. You are being paid to give your opinion. It is not always an easy task, but you must try to make each exhibitor feel, they were given your upmost attention and consideration and that in your honest, professional opinion, the horses that were placed were the best at that time in that competition.



OFFICIALS CODE OF CONDUCT DISCIPLINE POLICY

Horse Council BC is committed to providing a sport environment in which ethical conduct is respected and promoted. Horse Council BC believes that these values and ideals shall guide the communications and actions of all Provincial Recognized Officials who are members of Horse Council BC. Horse Council BC states that any Official who holds recognized certification as an Official represents Horse Council BC, and is bound to uphold the Code of Conduct and abide by the General Rules of the Horse Council BC Rule Book as well as abide by the Horse Council BC Officials Code of Conduct Discipline Policy.

- 1) This policy applies to all HCBC member Officials recognized by Horse Council BC, including but not limited to Officials living and working in British Columbia, and who are considered to be “current” officials as per the Officials directory at the time of any complaint.
- 2) Equestrian Canada Officials are first bound by the Equestrian Canada Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics and are subject to the rules, regulations, and constitution of Equestrian Canada. Complaints regarding Equestrian Canada Officials may be required to be resolved by Equestrian Canada. The Equestrian Canada member Code of Conduct is contained in the current Equestrian Canada Rule Book Section A – General Regulations.
- 3) This Horse Council BC Officials Code of Conduct Discipline Policy provides guidelines for disciplinary action that may be taken for Provincially Recognized Officials who violate Horse Council BC’s policies in the course of carrying out duties of an Official at a competition or event regardless of the competition sanctioning in B.C.
- 4) Horse Council BC Officials are bound by this policy when they are actively officiating at any competition or event.
- 5) Behavior by an Official that may lead to sanctions which may include, but are not limited to:
 - a) Physical or verbal confrontations or abuse of a rider, parent, official, horse, coach or other industry professional.
 - b) Any behavior that constitutes sexual misconduct, defined as unwelcome sexual comments and or sexual advances or conduct of a sexual nature.
 - c) Any action or inaction that endangers the welfare of a rider or horse.
 - d) Drinking alcohol or taking illicit drugs before or during officiating duties.
 - e) Unprofessional conduct or performance by the Official while officiating at an event or competition.
 - f) Misrepresentation of Official’s status and or certification.

Any other action that brings the reputation of Horse Council BC into disrepute.

Complaint Process:

- 5) Complaints may be made by any member of the general public including but not limited to an athlete, competitor, and representative of a club or sport organization, a coach, a parent, or any member of Horse Council BC. Anonymous complaints will not be accepted.
- 6) Complaints shall be directed in writing to the Manager Competition and Sport, Horse Council BC, who in turn will forward the complaint material to the HCBC Officials Review Committee
- 7) The complaint concerning the conduct of an Official shall:
 - a) Be made in writing
 - b) Identify the HCBC Recognized Official
 - c) Set out the details of the complaint
 - d) Identify the name and address of the complainant.
 - e) Be signed by the complainant
- 8) Upon receiving a valid written complaint, the HCBC Officials Review Committee shall determine:
 - a) Whether the complaint is one which comes within the scope of this policy.
 - b) If the complaint can only be resolved using the legal courts.
 - c) If the complaint is determined to be frivolous, trivial, or a nuisance complaint without warrant, both parties will be advised in writing, after which the case will be determined closed.
- 9) If the Complaint is determined to be within the scope of this policy the HCBC Officials Review Committee will:
 - a) Within 14 business days of receiving the complaint will provide a copy of the complaint by registered mail, to the official that has been reported.
 - b) The Official shall have 14 business days from the date of receiving the complaint to respond in writing to the HCBC Officials Review Committee
 - c) If there is potential for disciplinary action against the Official a formal hearing will be scheduled by The Officials Code of Conduct Committee no later than 30 days after determining the complaint is merited.

10) The Officials Code of Conduct Committee:

Will include a HCBC Board Director, and one Official from a different equestrian discipline than the Official subject to the complaint. The Executive Director of HCBC may be an ADHOC member of the committee. A recording secretary will be appointed by the Executive Director.

11) The Hearing:

a) All parties, the committee, the complainant and the Official will receive copies of all of the supporting documentation of the complaint upon notification of the hearing date.

b) Both the Official and the complainant have the right to present their case and be heard by the Committee.

c) Both parties have the right to bring counsel with them to the hearing.

d) The hearing may take place in person, by teleconference, webinar or other electronic meeting process.

12) Disciplinary action:

may include, but is not limited to:

a) A verbal apology to the complainant

b) A written apology to the complainant

c) A letter of reprimand from Horse Council BC to be placed in the Official's file

d) Removal of certain privileges of HCBC membership

e) Temporary or permanent suspension of Official's certification by HCBC

f) Temporary suspension of HCBC membership

g) Expulsion from membership in Horse Council BC, resulting in a Member not in Good Standing

13) After the conclusion of the hearing:

The Officials Code of Conduct Committee will send a letter of outcome to the all parties via registered mail, no later than 14 business days after the hearing is completed.

14) Appeals:

The Officials Code of Conduct Committee's decision may be appealed. All appeals will be at the Appellant's expense, and referred to the Sport Dispute Resolution of Canada for a decision. The decision of the Sport Dispute Resolution of Canada is final. Grounds or an appeal may include:

- a) HCBC failing to follow procedures set out in this policy.
- b) The Disciplinary Committee's decision was influenced by bias
- c) The Disciplinary Committee's decision was based on a misunderstanding of the evidence.
- d) The Disciplinary Committee's decision was unreasonable based on the facts and circumstances.

I, _____ (print name)

have read and fully understand the Horse Council BC Officials
Code of Conduct Discipline Policy, and agree to abide by all expectations, rules, and regulations

Officials Signature: _____ Date: _____