



ALBERTA ASSOCIATION OF HARNESS DOG SPORTS ("AAHDS")

RULES & REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPANTS

Last updated: January 2023

1 General Rules

1.1 Officials

- 1.1.1 **Event Official:** The "Event Official" or "Event Judge" is responsible for ensuring the event site is safe and that all AAHDS rules are respected and followed. The Event Official has exclusive jurisdiction at a sanctioned event.
- 1.1.2 **Safety Officer:** The "Safety Officer" is responsible for ensuring the safety of participants during sanctioned events. During an event, this individual reports to the Event Official. They wear a "security " bib.
- 1.1.3 For more details on their respective roles, refer to the document "*AAHDS Rules & Requirements for Officials*"

1.2 Equipment

- 1.2.1 All dogs must be equipped with a harness that is designed for harness dog sports and is fitted properly for the dog's size, shape and weight. The harness must not restrict or hinder the dog's range of motion while running and pulling or cause any physical harm to the dog.
- 1.2.2 At all times while actively participating, the bungee line must be attached directly to the back of the harness and not to the dog's collar.
- 1.2.3 Only flat collars may be worn during a sanctioned event.
- 1.2.4 The participant is responsible for ensuring that their equipment complies with these regulations. A gear verification station will be available on the event site. The Event Official and Event Organizer reserve the right to refuse any team the opportunity to participate if their equipment does not comply with the regulations. The participant is not entitled to and may not request reimbursement from the Event Organizer in such circumstances.

- 1.2.5 The participant is not permitted to wear headphones while on the trail with their dog(s) at any sanctioned event.

1.3 Surface

- 1.3.1 Road running events are not safe or suitable for dogs to participate in. Pavement can harm a dog's pads and the impact on canine joints of running on pavement is substantially higher than the impact on humans and can have long-term negative ramifications. A course may cross a road, but may not be entirely or primarily on pavement or concrete type surfaces. Please see Article 9.2 of the *"AAHDS Rules & Requirements for Event Organizers"* for further information regarding abrasive surfaces.

1.4 Minimum Age of Dogs for Races

- 1.4.1 The following guidelines apply to all classes:
- 2 km and under: 10 months
 - 2 - 6 km: 12 months
 - 6 - 10 km: 15 months
 - 10+ km: 18 months

1.5 Decisions Regarding Dog's Ability to Participate

- 1.5.1 Any decision regarding the ability of a dog to participate in a sanctioned class or to finish a class safely is the responsibility of the Event Veterinarian and/or the Event Organizer. However, if the participant is able to present a valid certificate from a veterinarian indicating the dog's ability to participate in the class, it will take precedence over the Official's opinion.
- 1.5.2 **Visible Weakness:** A dog showing any sign of illness, infection or weakness (contagious or not) will be disqualified and may be required to leave the event site. The Event Organizer and/or the Event Veterinarian reserve the right to make all inquiries necessary to this determination.
- 1.5.3 **Dogs in Heat:** A dog in heat will be able to participate only if she is kept at the back of the event site where she is not disturbing the other dogs. In addition, she must be kept under surveillance at all times and may not be tied out unattended.

1.6 Penalty

- 1.6.1 Failure to comply with any provision under Article 1 without the participant having previously obtained an official exemption shall result in immediate disqualification of the team. In this case, the Event Official may prevent the team from starting a class or may request the team to leave the course before they finish the class.

2 Rules Concerning Start & Finish

2.1 Starts

- 2.1.1 AAHDS highly recommends the use of wave starts for canicross and canitrail type classes. For more information on wave starts, please see Article 6.2.3 of the *AAHDS Rules & Requirements for Event Organizers*.
- 2.1.2 AAHDS recommends the avoidance of mass starts for events involving dogs, as this creates a substantially higher risk for injury to both human and canine participants. However, if a mass start style is to be used, the start area must be wide enough to accommodate sufficient spacing between teams. The width of the start area and proposed start type must be indicated on the organizer's application and will be assessed by AAHDS when the application is processed.
- 2.1.3 If the event is a mixed run where there will be runners with and without dogs, runners with dogs should start first. This is to ensure a minimum of passing by either group. Runners with dogs will typically be faster than the majority of runners without dogs.

2.2 Missed Starts

- 2.2.1 Participants must be on time for their start. A team that does not start at their scheduled time will not be permitted to start until the last registered team leaves, unless they are ready to start within the scheduled interval of the start schedule immediately after their scheduled start time, such that the next scheduled start is not delayed. The timer will start at the scheduled start time without change, whether the timing system is manual or chip.

2.3 Start Position

- 2.3.1 The front edge of the tire, tip of the sled brush bow, or front toe of the human racer must remain behind the start line until the start timer indicates the team may start. Crossing the start line early will result in a 1-minute time penalty and a warning to the competitor. Second violation will result in the team being disqualified from the race.

2.4 Finish Position

- 2.4.1 At the finish line, the nose of the dog is the marker for crossing the line (for example, when the nose of the dog crosses the finish line, the team's run is complete). The dog must cross the line ahead of their human teammate or the team will be disqualified or be issued a time penalty of 1 minute at the Event Official's discretion.

3 Trail Rules

3.1 Teamwork

- 3.1.1 The spirit and purpose of harness dog sports requires the dog(s) and human to work together in partnership to form a team. This creates a harmony of movement and intention that allows both human and dog(s) to perform to the best of their combined abilities. This means the human teammate must always be working to assist their dog(s) and the dog(s) must willingly and easily run forward and ahead of their human teammate.
- 3.1.2 The dog must at all times be attached to their human teammate during the class.
- 3.1.3 The dog must never be overtaken or passed by their human teammate. Participants who overtake their dog at any time during the class will receive a 30 second time penalty (i.e. an additional 30 seconds will be added to their time for each infraction). Multiple reported infractions may result in disqualification.
- 3.1.4 Pulling the dog or forcing the dog to advance along the course by any means is strictly forbidden and may result in disqualification.
- 3.1.5 When participating in a class that involves driving more than one dog, each dog must be working in tandem. The participant must not allow any dog in the team to be pulled or dragged by their canine teammates. If this occurs at any time during the class, it will result in automatic disqualification.
- 3.1.6 The participant is not allowed to cross the finish line ahead of their dog.

3.2 Passing

- 3.2.1 **Definitions:** For the purpose of this section, the term "overtaking" means the team passing and "overtaken" means the team being passed.
- 3.2.2 **Bikejoring, Skijoring, Kicksled , Sled & Scooter**
In bikejoring, skijoring, kicksled, sled and scooter, the overtaking team must announce itself by shouting "TRACK" or "TRAIL" so that the other team can hear it. They may also indicate the side on which they will pass (ex.: "TRAIL LEFT").

The team being overtaken must:

- Yield to the overtaking team, preferably staying to the right side of the trail. If the overtaking team does not specify on which side they will pass, the team being overtaken should simply remain straight behind their dog;
- Maintain their speed or slow down (they should not speed up);
- Maintain control over your dog. This may require the participant being passed to shorten their bungee, reeling their dog in close, or to step off the trail or stop;
- In skijoring, the participant being passed should keep skis and poles parallel to the trail;
- During a pass the overtaking team can ask the team being passed to slow down.

3.2.3 **Canicross and Canitrail**

In canicross and canitrail, the overtaking team can ask the team being overtaken to maintain a constant speed without accelerating. This is so the overtaking team can have the space and time necessary to advance safely. This rule does not apply to teams that start at the same time.

3.2.4 **Pass Delay Rule**

The newly overtaken participant must respect the request made by the overtaking team and keep a distance of at least two teams between them and the team in front. This rule does not apply for classes that start in waves or for teams that start at the same time.

Once the overtaking team has completed their pass, it will not be possible for the overtaken team to pass until they have gone a minimum of 300 meters (330 yards) from where the pass was completed or a minimum of 30 seconds has gone by, except with the authorization of the team that originally passed them and as long as the latter is advancing.

NOTE: This rule does not apply when the teams are within 400 meters of the finish line or within the 'no right of way zone' as designated by event officials. The 'no right of way zone' is defined as the final approach to the finish line where passing and repassing is permitted. The 'no right of way zone' shall be clearly marked and explained by officials in the race briefing.

3.2.5 **Penalties**

Any infraction of the rules in Article 3.2 is punishable by a 30 second time penalty (i.e. an additional 30 seconds will be added to the participant's time for each infraction). Multiple reported infractions may result in disqualification. This is left to the discretion of the Event Official following a meeting with the offending participant and, if required, the complainant.

4 **Temperature & Distance Requirements**

4.1 **Measurement**

- 4.1.1 The temperature is measured 50 centimeters from the ground, in the shade, and sheltered from the wind.

4.2 **Minimum & Maximum**

- 4.2.1 No dogs may be harnessed or participate in any class when the temperature is above 30 degrees Celsius ("°C") or below -30 °C.

4.3 **Temperature-Specific Safety Requirements**

- 4.3.1 When the temperature exceeds 15 °C, a small swimming pool or a body of water must be available for dogs to cool off near the finish area.
- 4.3.2 A full list of sport-specific heat schedules can be found at Article 15 of the *AAHDS Rules*

& Requirements for Event Organizers and must be adhered to in full.

- 4.3.3 Notwithstanding the sport-specific heat schedules provided in Article 15 of the *AAHDS Rules & Requirements for Event Organizers* and below, AAHDS shall at all times have the authority to require a route distance be reduced or class be canceled or rescheduled if, at the discretion of the AAHDS board or appointed representative, the temperature (inclusive of humidity and windchill) poses a safety risk to dogs. In case of extreme conditions, the organizer, in collaboration with AAHDS may further modify or cancel an event or class to address temperature concerns.
- 4.3.4 Where a heat schedule comes into effect, no dogs may participate in more than one class in a single day.

4.4 Summer Events

- 4.4.1 All Event Organizers must be prepared to adjust route distances up to the day of the event to accommodate for the safety of the dogs given the temperature on the day of the event.
- 4.4.2 Given typical temperatures in the Prairies in July and August, no classes will be sanctioned as “competitive regional circuit” classes during these months. Non-competitive classes may be approved during this period, as long as the temperature is not above 30 degrees Celsius ("°C") on the day of the event and the sport-specific heat schedules provided in Article 15 (referenced above) and below are enforced.
- 4.4.3 Organizers hosting events during the months of July and August must ensure any run allowing dogs takes place in the early part of the day and must not publicize the event at a distance longer than 3.5km. Organizers must be prepared to shorten the route on the day of the event if temperatures (inclusive of humidity) require and must provide a notice to participants indicating that the route distance may require adjustment depending on the temperature on the day of the event. Please see Article 4.5.1 of this document for an example of this notice.

4.5 Notice to Participants

- 4.5.1 AAHDS recommends providing the following Notice to Participants for running events:

We have partnered with the Alberta Association of Harness Dog Sports (AAHDS) and are working together to ensure a safe and fun run for all human and canine participants! To that end, we may need to adjust the distance of the course for our dog-friendly fun run on the day of the event depending on the temperature. We also require all dogs be attached to their human using a hands-free leash and harness with back attachment. These requirements help to make sure our running buddies are safe and healthy throughout the event! We can't wait to see you and your canine team at the start line!

5 Sport-Specific Rules by Discipline

5.1 Bikejoring

- 5.1.1 This discipline is practiced with one dog. Two-dog bikejor is NOT a recognised competitive class. It can be offered as a developmental class within a sanctioned event.
- 5.1.2 When the team is made up of two dogs, the dogs must be connected by a neckline.
- 5.1.3 The dog(s) must be permanently attached to the bike by a bungee line whose distance between the front of the headset and the base of the tail of the dog is at most 2.45 meters when stretched without elongation. However, the recommended distance is 2.20 meters.
- 5.1.4 Tandem Team exemption: AAHDS allows Tandem teams with longer than the above line rule. The participant should make it known to the event official at time of entry and no later than the event morning meeting, as their starting placement may be affected so as to not conflict with other teams during a pass. See Tandem Team exemption for more information.
- 5.1.5 Wearing a helmet is mandatory for the cyclist.
- 5.1.6 The bike must be equipped with mountain bike tires and must have brakes capable of immobilizing the team.

5.2 Fatbikejoring (Developmental Class Only)

- 5.2.1 This discipline is practiced with one or two dogs. Fatbikejor is NOT a recognised competitive class. It can be offered as a developmental class.
- 5.2.2 When the team is made up of two dogs, the dogs must be connected by a neckline.
- 5.2.3 The dog(s) must be permanently attached to the bike by a bungee line whose distance between the front of the headset and the base of the tail of the dog is at most 2.45 meters when stretched without elongation. However, the recommended distance is 2.20 meters.
- 5.2.4 Tandem Team exemption: AAHDS allows Tandem teams with longer than the above line rule. The participant should make it known to the event official at time of entry and no later than the event morning meeting, as their starting placement may be affected so as to not conflict with other teams during a pass. See Tandem Team exemption for more information.
- 5.2.5 Wearing a helmet is mandatory for the cyclist.
- 5.2.6 The bike must be equipped with mountain bike tires and must have brakes capable of immobilizing the team.
- 5.2.7 Tires cannot be studded with metal spikes.

5.2.8 The minimum tire width is 3.5" and the tire pressure must be less than 10 psi.

5.3 Rig

5.3.1 All dogs shall be harnessed in single or double file. Fan Hitch is not acceptable.

5.3.2 All dogs shall be fastened to the towline/central line, which shall be made of non rigid, flexible or expanded line, with a neckline and a tail line.

5.3.3 The rig in DR4 shall have a minimum of three (3) wheels.

5.3.4 The rig in DR6 and DR8 shall have a minimum of three (3) wheels. It is the recommendation of CAHDS and AAHDS that four (4) wheeled rigs be utilized and preferred over three (3) wheeled rigs in accordance with IFSS standard.

5.3.5 All rigs shall be equipped with a working brake on the back wheels. Having brakes in the front wheels is recommended. Please note: Working brakes on all wheels is encouraged.

5.3.6 A snub line about 3 meters (10 ft) shall be carried on the rig to be used to tie down and hold the rig.

5.3.7 Helmet is mandatory for the rig driver.

5.3.8 Rigs will not be propelled by anything other than the dog pulling and driver pedaling, outside energy and pedals systems are prohibited .

5.3.9 The driver shall not pace the dogs by running ahead or force any dog to run in any way.

5.3.10 Dog drop check - points shall be provided at least every 3 km (1.8 mi), and may be combined with normal check points. They shall be equipped with a stake-out, Drop-chain or Cable and water. Dogs dropped at check points shall not be allowed to start in succeeding heats. If no possibilities are provided to drop dogs and a dog becomes unfit or refuses to advance for any reason, the driver is not permitted to finish the heat.

5.3.11 The transport of a dog on the rig is strictly forbidden in all classes.

5.3.12 During the overtaking procedure the overtaken team shall make an unimpeded way for the passing team. On the command "TRAIL," the overtaken team is obliged to hold the same side of the trail and slow down. On the command "STOP," the overtaken team is obligated to stop movement forward.

5.3.13 Limited dogs for each class is 2 less than the required class number (i.e. 4 Dog must have 2 dogs , 6 Dog must have 4-6 dogs)

5.3.14 When the team is made up of two dogs, the dogs must be connected by a neckline.

5.4 Canicross

5.4.1 This discipline is practiced with one dog.

- 5.4.2 The dog must be permanently attached to the participant's canicross belt via a bungee line whose distance between the participant's abdomen and the base of the dog's tail must be no more than 2 meters when stretched without elongation. However, the recommended distance is 1.70 meters.
- 5.4.3 Cleats and snowshoes may be permitted provided they are not dangerous to dogs and other participants. The event organizer will determine if these materials can be used and may decide their prohibition or any other adaptation at their discretion. The Event Official reserves the right to refuse the use of such equipment if they consider it dangerous.

5.5 Skijoring

- 5.5.1 This discipline is practiced with one or two dogs.
- 5.5.2 When the team is made up of two dogs, the dogs must be connected by a neckline.
- 5.5.3 Tandem Team exemption: AAHDS allows Tandem teams with longer than the above line rule. The participant should make it known to the event official at time of entry and no later than the event morning meeting, as their starting placement may be affected so as to not conflict with other teams during a pass. See Tandem Team exemption for more information.
- 5.5.4 The dog(s) must be permanently attached to the participant's belt via a bungee line whose distance from the participant's abdomen to the base of the dog's tail must be no more than 3 meters. However, the recommended distance is 2.75 meters.
- 5.5.5 Skate skis are highly recommended and the preferred equipment for skijoring, however, classic cross country skis are permitted for use in AAHDS sanctioned skijoring events. Whether you are using skate skis or classic skis, your skis must NOT have metal edges. Please note, classic skis are not permitted for use in nationally sanctioned skijoring events, nor in most other regions in Canada. Participants should strive to improve their skills and equipment over time and should always review the rules to be employed prior to registering for any event that is not sanctioned by AAHDS or is outside of the Alberta Region.
- 5.5.6 Wearing a helmet is mandatory for the skier.

5.6 Scooter

- 5.6.1 This discipline is practiced with one or two dogs.
- 5.6.2 When the team is made up of two dogs, the dogs must be connected by a neckline.
- 5.6.3 If the team consists of a single dog, the participant must ensure that his dog is fit enough to cover the distance and, if necessary, help him further.
- 5.6.4 The Event Organizer or Event Official may refuse the departure of a 1-dog team if they consider the trail unsuitable or too difficult.

- 5.6.5 The dog(s) must be permanently attached by a bungee line whose distance between the front of the headset and the base of the dog's tail is at most 2.45 meters when stretched without elongation. However, the recommended distance is 2.20 meters.
- 5.6.6 Tandem Team exemption: AAHDS allows Tandem teams with longer than the above line rule. The participant should make it known to the event official at time of entry and no later than the event morning meeting, as their starting placement may be affected so as to not conflict with other teams during a pass. See Tandem Team modification for more information.
- 5.6.7 The scooter must not have a motor, must be equipped with mountain bike tires, and must have brakes powerful enough to immobilize the team.
- 5.6.8 Wearing a helmet is mandatory for the driver.

5.7 Kicksled (Developmental Class Only)

- 5.7.1 This discipline is practiced with one or two dogs.
- 5.7.2 When the team is made up of two dogs, the dogs must be connected by a neckline.
- 5.7.3 Tandem Team exemption: AAHDS allows Tandem teams with longer than the above line rule. The participant should make it known to the event official at time of entry and no later than the event morning meeting, as their starting placement may be affected so as to not conflict with other teams during a pass. See Tandem Team modification for more information.
- 5.7.4 If the team consists of a single dog, the participant must ensure that their dog is fit enough to cover the distance and, if necessary, help their dog further.
- 5.7.5 The Event Organizer or Event Official may refuse the departure of a 1-dog team if they consider the trail unsuitable or too difficult.
- 5.7.6 The dog(s) must be permanently attached to the bike by a bungee line. The distance between the front of the headset and the base of the tail of the dog is at most 2.45 meters when stretched without elongation. However, the recommended distance is 2.20 meters.
- 5.7.7 The kicksled must be equipped with a brake system or a rubber mat attached to the kicksled.
- 5.7.8 The runners of the kicksled must not have metal edges .
- 5.7.9 A helmet is mandatory for the driver

5.8 Winter Sled

- 5.8.1 The number of dog that can run in a class according to discipline is as follows:
- 2-dog sled (1-2 dogs)
 - 4-dog sled (3-4 dogs)

- 6-dog sled (5-6 dogs)
 - 10-dog sled (9-10 dogs)
 - Unlimited sled (10+ dogs)
- 5.8.2 The dogs must be connected by a neckline (at the center line for the wheel and connected together for the leaders).
- 5.8.3 At a minimum, the sled must be equipped with:
- a brake system attached to the sled, and
 - a snow anchor connected to the center line.
 - a brushbow across the front of the sled.
 - a dog bag for safely transporting a dog, the dog must be fully inside the bag and covered.
- 5.8.4 The runners of the sled must not have metal edges.
- 5.8.5 A helmet is mandatory for participants under 18 years of age and highly recommended for adults.

6 Sportsmanship

6.1 General

- 6.1.1 Common sense and sportsmanship should prevail throughout the event. If the Event Official judges that the behavior of a participant or a dog is at any time detrimental to the sport or the event, the Event Official may disqualify a team from the class and/or require the team to leave the venue. In this case, registration for future events may be reviewed by the Disciplinary Committee.

6.2 Canine Behaviour

- 6.2.1 All participants are responsible for the behavior of their dog(s) at the event venue and on the trail.
- 6.2.2 **Biting:** In the case where a dog bites another participant or dog with or without provocation, the participant will not be able to participate with the dog in future AAHDS events for a duration, and with such conditions as may be imposed, determined by the Disciplinary Committee. The participant may be required to have the dog evaluated by a behavioral veterinarian or a canine educator and thus demonstrate that the animal does not pose a danger to humans and dogs. Following the completion of any conditions, the file will be reviewed by AAHDS and a determination as to whether or not the dog may participate in future AAHDS events will be made.
- 6.2.3 **Repeated Bad Behaviour:** In the event that a dog has accumulated multiple complaints regarding its behaviour during events sanctioned by AAHDS, the participant may receive a notice from the Disciplinary Committee advising of conditions or suspension related to their participation at future AAHDS events (for example, the participant may be banned from participating in AAHDS events for a specified period of time or their membership

may be revoked or suspended). In addition, the participant may be required to have the offending dog evaluated by a behavioral veterinarian or canine educator and demonstrate that the animal is safe for humans and dogs. Following the completion of any conditions, the file will be reviewed by AAHDS and a determination as to whether or not the dog may participate in future AAHDS events will be made.

6.3 Participant's Behaviour & Animal Welfare

6.3.1 Dog's Well-being: Each participant is responsible for the well-being of their dog(s) before, during and after the event class(es), under penalty of a warning by the Event Official.

6.3.2 Off-leash Dogs: Dogs are not allowed to run free on the event site.

6.3.3 Mistreatment: Abuse of dogs with or without an instrument is forbidden.

6.4 Code of Conduct

6.4.1 The participant undertakes to read and respect all of the provisions included in the document "*AAHDS Code of Conduct, Ethics and Animal Welfare*".

6.5 Rule Infractions

6.5.1 Protests

Any behavior deemed harmful or unacceptable during an event must be reported to the Event Official by way of an official protest form , which will be completed by either the complainant or the Event Official.

The Event Official is entitled to complete an official protest if they witness an offense even if the prejudiced participant does not wish to do so.

Protests may be directed towards a participant, the organizer, a volunteer or the Event Official. In the latter case, the protest form should be submitted to the Chief Official.

The *Official Protest Form* is available on site and electronically. Submitting guidelines below.

6.5.2 Protests Made on the Day of the Event

In order to file a protest regarding a breach of the rules, the griever must file their complaint directly to the Event Official on the day of the event, within one hour of the finish of the last participant in the class to which the complaint relates. The grievance is subject to a fee upon submission.

This may relate to a situation witnessed or experienced by the complainant. The complaint will fall under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Event Official, unless the complaint pertains to the Event Official, in which case the complaint will fall under the jurisdiction of the Disciplinary Committee.

Any appeal of a decision rendered by the Event Official is heard in the first instance by

the AAHDS Disciplinary Committee. A complainant can appeal the decision of the official within 2 (Two) days of the end of the event by submitting a second official protest form requesting an appeal of the original decision. Where the complainant wishes to appeal the decision of the Disciplinary Committee regarding an initial complaint with respect to an Event Official, they may do so by submitting the second protest form to the AAHDS Board of Directors.

6.5.3 **Protests Made After the Event**

In special circumstances, in order to file a protest after the completion of an event, the complainant must submit an official protest form within seven (7) days of the completion of the event. Details of the reason for the delay must be included in the submission to be accepted and approved by the disciplinary committee.

6.5.4 **Protest Process:**

When the Event Official identifies a protest or a participant submits a protest, the Official performs the following steps:

- The Event Official contacts the complainant or prejudiced participant and completes the Official Protest Form or reviews the Official Protest Form submitted online via the AAHDS website.
- After collecting the information from the prejudiced participant, the Event Official contacts the participant accused of committing the offense (the subject of the complaint). The prejudiced participant must not be present during this conversation. The Event Official enters a description of the incident from the point of view of the participant who is the subject of the complaint on the Official Protest Form.
- If the description of the incident received from each participant is the same, the Event Official may now decide what action to take (for example, if the complaint is made at the event during which the incident took place, the Event Official can make a decision at the event). This decision is based on the seriousness of the incident and the degree of cooperation of the participant who is the subject of the complaint.
- If the description of the incident received from each participant is different, the Event Official may collect additional testimonies and evidence before making their decision. The Event Official has the discretion to make a decision using their own judgment, with regard to the information they have on hand, the seriousness of the incident, and the degree of cooperation of the participant who is the subject of the complaint.
- The Event Official must take note of all actions taken regarding the incident (discussion, suspension, etc.).
- The completed form is then submitted to the Disciplinary Committee responsible for managing the file after the event. The Disciplinary Committee may contact the Event Official after the event to clarify certain information.

6.6 **Types of Offences**

6.6.1 There are two (2) types of rule infractions:

- **INCONSEQUENTIAL:** Refers to an offense that did not result in any psychological or physical injury to the participant or the participant's dog in this specific instance, but in other circumstances may have resulted in physical or psychological injury to the participant or the participant's dog.

- **CONSEQUENTIAL:** Refers to an offense that resulted in psychological or physical injury(ies) to participant or a participant's dog.

6.7 Repeated Offences

- 6.7.1 **Repeated Disqualification:** Any participant who, taking into account all classes the participant participates in, has been disqualified two (2) times during the same season for a violation of these rules is suspended from entry in the next two (2) events sanctioned by AAHDS. This suspension applies to all disciplines offered and is not limited to the current season.
- 6.7.2 **Repeated Unacceptable Behaviour:** A repetition of one or more behaviors of a dog or human deemed unacceptable in the context of an event will be reviewed by the Disciplinary Committee.

7 Regional Circuit Categories and Disciplines

7.1 General

- 7.1.1 Please refer to the document "*Regional Circuit Regulations*".

8 Additional Information

8.1 Rules & Requirements for Event Organizers

- 8.1.1 For more information on the different classes offered by AAHDS, the course requirements, the rules concerning departures, regulations concerning temperatures, details of courses according to the discipline, the signs on the course and more, please refer to the document, "*AAHDS Rules & Requirements for Event Organizers*".

9 Exemptions

9.1 Request for Exemption by a Participant

- 9.1.1 A request for an exemption from an article of the *AAHDS Rules & Requirements for Participants* must be made by the participant in writing to AAHDS no later than one week in advance of the event. This does not include exemptions already listed in the *AAHDS Rules & Requirements for Participants* document. The AAHDS board will then decide whether or not an exemption is warranted.
- sled
- 9.1.2 Neither an Event Organizer nor Event Official may provide exemptions to the *AAHDS Rules & Requirements for Participants* without the prior approval of the AAHDS board.
- 9.1.3 AAHDS retains the right to grant exemptions at their discretion to participants for minor infractions of the *AAHDS Rules & Requirements for Participants* at any time.

10 Classes and Disciplines

10.1 Classes Available and Associated Disciplines

- 10.1.1 An Event may consist of Competitive, and/or Developmental classes, which are further divided by disciplines.
- 10.1.2 Competitive Class includes the following disciplines: Canicross, Bikejoring 1 dog, Scooter 1 & 2-Dog, Rig, Winter Sled and Skijoring 1 & 2-dog.
- 10.1.3 Developmental Class includes the following disciplines: Canicross, Canihike, Kicksled, Bikejor 1 or 2-Dog, Fatbikejor 1 or 2-Dog, Scooter 1 & 2 Dog, Rig, Winter Sled and Skijoring 1 & 2 dog, as well as puppy class events.
- 10.1.4 Age categories for each discipline will only be divided between Juniors (under 18yr) and Adults (18yr and older). There is no separation by gender, unless organized by the Event Organizer.
- 10.1.5 Classes to be offered at each event will be determined at the discretion of the Event Organizer. The disciplines and class types available must be specified in the information communicated in the event marketing (for example, in the 'about section' of the online registration platform, in the Facebook event, or in a "Notice to Participants" document).

Appendix A: Rule Modifications/Exceptions

Last updated: January 2023

1 Introduction

1.1 Definition of Developmental Class

- 1.1.1 A Developmental class typically refers to running events that allow for the inclusion of a canine teammate. This class is designed to encourage safe engagement with harness dog sports, in disciplines with variations or with AAHDS rule exceptions listed in section 2. Organizers interested in offering a Developmental class must familiarize themselves with these modifications, *AAHDS Rules & Requirements for Participants*, *AAHDS Rules & Requirements for Event Organizers* as well as the *AAHDS Code of Conduct, Ethics & Animal Welfare* prior to applying for developmental class sanctioning.

1.2 Objectives

- 1.2.1 To promote events that are an enjoyable mushing experience for both human and canine participants.

1.3 General

- 1.3.1 If an organizer intends to hold a Developmental class during an event which also includes a Competitive class, these modifications must only be applied to the Developmental Class, and otherwise the *AAHDS Rules & Requirements for Event Organizers* take precedence over these rules and must be adhered to in full.
- 1.3.2 These classes should focus on promoting a positive experience for both human and canine participants and therefore should consider the safety and wellbeing of the dog a top priority. These rules, requirements, and recommendations are premised on nationally accepted safety standards and exist to assist organizers with this objective. Some minor exceptions are in place to encourage the participation of newer teams, particularly teams made up of non-typical mushing breeds.
- 1.3.3 Any discipline may be held as a developmental class, however, for all disciplines apart from canicross, full regulations must be adhered to with respect to gear and course marking as per the *AAHDS Rules & Requirements for Participants*. There is no substantial difference to the Event Organizer.

2 Exemptions and Considerations

2.1 Unique Line Set Ups

- 2.1.1 Tandem Team exemption: AAHDS will allow Tandem teams with longer lines than the AAHDS line rule.
- 2.1.2 A tandem set up has the dogs running single file with one dog acting as a lead dog and the second dog acting as a wheel dog. The dog in the 'wheel dog' position must be

attached by a tug line and a neck line to the centre line. The lead dog must be attached to the center line.

- 2.1.3 The lines used should be long enough to keep the dogs safely outfront of the apparatus being used, but not so long as to risk the dog becoming tangled in the lines. Where possible, participants should strive to keep their lines within the required line length, but may apply for an exemption where needed for accommodating larger breeds.
- 2.1.4 The participant should make it known to the Event Official at time of entry, as their starting placement may be affected so as to not conflict with other teams during a pass.

3 Minimum Age of Dogs for Developmental Class

- 3.1 The following guidelines apply to all disciplines in a Development class:
 - 2 km and under: 10 months
 - 2 - 6 km: 12 months
 - 6 - 10 km: 15 months
 - 10+ km: 18 months
- 3.2 A puppy division for dogs under the minimum age of participation, may be included in the Developmental Classes where basic skills of mushing are practiced. These skills may include putting on harness or booties, puppy dash, practicing of directional commands to name a few. Puppies participating in this division must have their first 3 vaccines in order to participate. Dash distance shall not exceed 10m for puppies under the age of 4 months, 50m for puppies 4 months to 6 months, and 100m for puppies 6 months to 1 year of age. Puppy dash shall be one dog canicross only. The purpose of this event is exposure and experience for the puppies and is not intended to be competitive in any way.

4 Sanctioning of a Developmental Class

- 4.1 A Developmental Class is eligible for sanctioning where the Event Organizer submits an application for sanctioning no later than three (3) weeks prior to the event and meets all requirements outlined within this document.

5 Timing

- 5.1 Timing is not required in a developmental class as the main focus is to develop and practice new skills. An Event Organizer may choose to include timing for the purposes of replicating a race environment but is not required to impose penalties or award prizes based on time.

6 Additional Recommendations

- 6.1 If the event will involve costumes, please bear in mind the comfort of the dog. Costumes should not restrict the dog's free-flowing movement and participants should take care to ensure their costumes do not frighten or cause injury to their dog or other participants' dogs.