



Rule Change

Standard Operating Procedure

1 Purpose:

This procedure provides guidance for the creation and changing of rules for the National Walking Horse Association (NWA).

2 Scope:

This procedure applies to all rules generated by the NWA for the exhibition of horses. This procedure does not apply to rules governing business operations, nor does it apply to the generation of rules for versatility events.

3 Responsibilities:

Rules Committee Chair (RCC)

Rules Committee (RC)

Responsible for coordinating all horse show rule initiation and changes. Provides recommendations to the Board of Directors (BOD). Compiles all public comments for review. Researches, develops, and presents new rules and rule changes for horse shows. Provides recommendations and rationale for approval by the Board of Directors.

Directors

Assess the validity of any proposed rule change. Direct the Rules Committee to begin research and to develop recommendations on proposed new rules.
Approve new rules as recommended by the Rules Committee.

NWA Office

Provide information to committee members and Directors as requested. Post proposed rule changes for public comment.
Assure that new rule changes are posted and broadly announced.

Board Liaison

Provide information, reports and proposals from the Rules Committee to the Board of Directors. As a member of the committee, represent the Rules Committee at Board meetings and teleconferences.

4 Definitions:

- Rule Change** Rule changes may be defined as:
- a. An entirely new rule
 - b. A modification of an existing rule
 - c. A new rule with relevant modifications to existing rules

5 Procedures:

5.1 *Rule Change Recommendations*

The following people or groups of people may recommend a rule change to the NWHHA Office:

- Rules Committee
- General Membership
- Any Standing Committee
- Board Member

All recommendations for a rule change must include the supporting member's (or members') name(s), City, State, NWHHA member number. Committees making a rule change recommendation may use instead their committee name. Rule change recommendations may be submitted on paper or electronically, but must not be proposed verbally.

Proposers must present the desired rule change along with a stated rationale. The recommendation must include the reference number of the rule in question, or a proposal of a new reference number for the rule book. If a proposal is presented first to the RC, they may decide whether or not it warrants presentation to the Board, and may decide to proceed that way or to disregard it. The BOD, upon receiving a recommendation for a rule change, will decide whether or not to pursue the feasibility of that change. Recommended rule changes will generally be presented to the Board at a regular meeting or teleconference, but if the situation warrants (safety, error, etc.), the proposed change may be presented via email at any time.

The Board will decide whether the rule change is feasible. If the Board agrees that it is, the proposed rule is passed to the Rules Committee for discussion, study, recommendation, and construction.

5.2 *Rules Committee Study and Recommendation*

When the Rules Committee (RC) receives a recommended rule or rule change from the Board, they will work to determine whether or not the change will be beneficial to the NWHHA as a whole. The Committee will consider whether the proposed change:

- Promotes safety for horse and/or rider
- Promotes horse protection
- Clarifies ambiguous rules
- Affects tradition or professionalism

- Promotes class participation
- Simplifies criteria to avoid lengthy classes and judging difficulty
Ensures an even playing field
- Promotes a positive image

The RC will develop a recommendation based on the factors above, and either decide that the proposed rule change is unwarranted or formally prepare it for member comment. If the RC determines that the recommended rule change should not be considered, they will provide that information directly to the Board. If the RC determines that the recommendation should be considered, the Formal rule proposal will include:

- The complete wording of the new rule
- The section number to be changed or inserted
- Rationale describing the RC's recommendations

The RC will present the formal proposal to the NWHHA Office, who will assure that it is disseminated to the membership.

The RC will work on up to three recommended rule changes at a time. Once the RC begins working on these changes, it will not address another new recommended change until at least one in progress is presented for member comment.

5.3 *Member Comment*

The NWHHA Office will send an electronic request for membership input and communicate on appropriate channels. Following this communication, the NWHHA Office will allow a period of 30 days for membership to comment on the proposal. Feedback results will be forwarded directly to the rules committee for review.

Neither the NWHHA Office nor the RC should respond to comments received. Members should not be concerned about reproach for stating their opinion

5.4 *Special Provision*

In the event that a rule change directly affects horse protection or the safety of humans, AND if that rule change was supported unanimously by the RC, the public comment period may be circumvented and the rule change proposal submitted directly to the Board. In this case, the Board retains the authority to send the proposed rule back for member comment if it feels that member input would be beneficial.

5.5 *Rule Committees Formal Presentation*

Upon receipt of comments, the RC shall re-convene and again discuss the feasibility and reasons for the proposed rule change. Based on their discussion, the RC shall either decide not to pursue the rule change at all, modify the original proposal, or leave the original proposal intact. The RC will present its recommendation to the Board. This recommendation will take the form of either a recommendation to disregard or a DRAFT rule change. Unless the proposed rule change affects the safety of the horse and rider, the RC's proposals will be presented at regularly scheduled Board meetings or teleconferences.

5.6 *Board Approval/Disapproval*

The Board will review and discuss the RC's formal presentation. If the presentation includes a DRAFT rule change, the Board will either approve or disapprove that change. If approved, the NWHHA Office will assure that the change is posted on the NWHHA Web site and published in the NWHHA News. Unless a rule change affects the safety of the horse or rider, all new rules will take effect at the beginning of the next show season.

If the Board disapproves the rule change, they may:

- 5.6.1 Send the proposal back to the RC for more work
- 5.6.2 Close the item

6 *List of Appendices:*

Appendix A: Rule Change Flow Chart

APPENDIX A

