

USHJA

COMMITTEE

HANDBOOK

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Introduction

The purpose of the USHJA Committee Handbook is to provide committee members with educational information and guidelines for the conduct of committees and committee members. In order to make certain that the organization maintains compliance with all Federal, State and Local regulations as well as our own financial policies and procedures, the USHJA has established policies and procedures for the operation of the USHJA Committees. Please review the following and contact the office if you require clarification on any of the information contained in this Handbook.

** For purposes of this document, all USHJA committees, councils and task forces are referred to as committees.*

Committee Member Code of Conduct

USHJA committee members are dedicated to effective decision-making and, once a decision has been made, speaking with one voice. To achieve this goal, committee members will:

- Speak from broad member and community interests, putting the needs of the sport ahead of the needs of a specific group, individual or faction of the membership and stakeholders.
- Speak for themselves (“my own thinking on this is that...”) rather for than a group of members.
- Express additional or alternative points of view and invite others to do so.
- Refrain from “lobbying” other committee members outside of meetings that might have the effect of creating factions and limiting free and open discussion.
- On important issues, be balanced in one’s effort to understand others and to make oneself understood.
- Once made, support, indeed defend, committee decisions, even if one’s own view is a minority one.
- Not disclose or discuss differences of opinion on the committee outside of committee meetings, especially with staff, volunteers or clients. (For this reason information on who votes for and against any particular motion will not be recorded in meeting minutes unless the Chair requests it).
- Respect the confidentiality of information on sensitive issues.
- When a USHJA Board Member is serving on a USHJA Committee they are serving as an individual rather than as a Board Representative/Member.
- Refrain from speaking for the organization unless authorized to do so.
- Disclose one’s involvement with other organizations, businesses or individuals where such a relationship might be viewed as a conflict of interest (see Conflict of Interest Policy) and willingly set aside the interests of those organizations, businesses or individuals when making policies and decisions that impact the overall sport and USHJA membership and stakeholders.

Conflict of Interest Statement

Committee members are expected to reveal any personal, family or business interests that they have, that, **by creating a divided loyalty, could influence their judgment and hence the wisdom of decisions.** A conflict of interest exists wherever an individual could benefit, disproportionately from others, directly or indirectly, from access to information or from a decision over which they might have influence, or, where someone might reasonably perceive there to be such a benefit and influence. A perceived conflict of interest may be just as damaging as an actual conflict of interest.

The reality is that in order to avoid all conflict in equestrian sports, you would have to go outside of our sport to find people who have no vested interest. At that point, you end up having a sport governed by people who have no idea of what the sport is about. We acknowledge that everyone in this sport has an inherent conflict of interest. The problems occur when that conflict reaches a level that compromises an individual's ability to objectively consider a matter and render a recommendation on the issue at hand that first and foremost serves the needs of the organization and its stakeholders.

Examples of possible conflict of interest situations with respect to our Association include:

- A committee member has a personal or business relationship with the Association as a supplier of goods or services.
- A committee member has a personal or financial relationship with an individual or organization or other entity which will be significantly impacted by decisions of the Committee.
- The Association is employing someone who is directly related to a committee member.

Conflicts of interest (real and perceived) are unavoidable and should not prevent an individual from serving as a committee member, director or staff member unless the extent of the interest is so significant that the potential for divided loyalty is present in a large number of situations.

Committee Role and Responsibilities

- Committees create open discussion on topics within the industry related to their specific purpose.
- Committees make recommendations on programs for consideration to the Executive Committee and Board of Directors, review proposed rule changes, make recommendations for rule changes and perform such other duties as may be specified within the USHJA Bylaws.
- Committees hold meetings and/or forums as required by the USHJA Bylaws throughout the year.

Committee Chairman Responsibilities

- Appointed by the President in accordance with the Bylaws.
- Sets the tone for the committee work.
- Ensures that the committee has the information necessary to conduct its business.

- In collaboration with the Staff Liaison, oversees the logistics of the committee's operations.
- Assigns work to the committee members, sets the agenda, conducts the meetings and works with assigned Staff Liaison to ensure distribution of meeting minutes.
- Serves in collaboration with staff liaison, as the committee spokesperson to the CEO, Executive Committee and Board of Directors.
- Initiates and leads the committee's annual evaluation.

Committee Member Responsibilities

- Each member, by accepting a seat on a USHJA committee, shall be bound by and perform his duties in accordance with the USHJA Committee Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy.
- Committee members must attend 50% of the committee's meetings each year.
- In order for an absence to be considered excused, the committee member must contact the Committee Chairman either directly or through the Staff Liaison prior to the meeting to get the approval.

Staff Liaison and/or Manager Responsibilities

- Work in collaboration with Committee Chair and members to insure all USHJA policies and procedures are followed.
- Works in collaboration with the Chair in preparation and monitoring of the committee budget, if applicable.
- Serves as recording secretary, except where that duty is assigned by the Chair to a committee member.
- Schedules and notices all conference calls and in person meetings.
- Provides committees with data necessary to conduct business.
- In collaboration with Chair, prepares presentations for new programs or projects to be presented to the CEO, President and/or Executive Committee for approval.
- Serves as the link between the committee and the CEO.

Committee Meetings

- Committees are required to hold a minimum of three meetings annually and submit reports to the Board of Directors.
- Meeting by teleconference is permitted for all meetings except the meeting designated as the Annual Meeting.
- Meetings must always have an USHJA appointed Staff Liaison present.
- All calls are recorded and records are maintained in accordance with USHJA retention policies.
- A quorum consists of one-third of the committee and is established when the roll call is taken.
- Robert's Rules of Order will be used as a guide in the conduct of all meetings.

Procedures for Handling A Conflict of Interest

The USHJA acknowledges that committee members may have potential or actual conflicts of interest in certain agenda items requiring committee vote. Members of USHJA committees have a duty to disclose any personal, family, or business interests that may, in the eyes of another person, influence their judgment.

- Committee members have a duty to disclose specific conflicts of interests to Association members, staff and external stakeholders where that interest may, in their judgment, affect the reputation or credibility of the organization, and to disclose the Board's procedure for operating in the presence of such conflicts.
- Committee members have a duty to exempt themselves from participating in any discussion and voting on matters where they have, or may be perceived as having, a conflict of interest. Such exemptions should be recorded in minutes of meetings.
- Voting members with a potential or actual conflict of interest in an agenda item shall declare that interest prior to discussion. At that time, the committee shall decide by majority vote, whether the conflict of interest is acceptable to the committee or whether the individual member must abstain and absent himself or herself from the discussion and vote on that agenda item.
- Any business relationship between an individual (or a company where the individual is an owner or in a position of authority) and the Association, outside of their relationship as a committee member must be formalized in writing and approved by the Board.

Voting

- Duly appointed committee members are entitled, but not required, to vote, providing there is no conflict which prevents them from voting.
- The President and CEO are ex-officio members of all committees, except where specified in the Bylaws.
- Committee Chairs are not required to vote except to break or cause ties.
- Committees are required to vote by secret ballot when requested by the President, CEO or any member of that entity.

Confidentiality

- All discussions, opinions, ideas, information and proposals discussed during a committee meeting must remain confidential within the committee until a work product is produced which the committee agrees is suitable for public review or until the committee has been released from confidentiality by the CEO or the President.
- In the course of a Committee's work, members may receive material that is marked confidential. These materials as well as all working documents of the Committee **must** be kept confidential. When a Committee's work product is deemed suitable for public review then all confidential materials should be shredded and all earlier versions of the work product should be deleted from Committee member's personal computers.
- Strict observance of confidentiality is required and any breach may result in the removal of the individual from his/her committee seat by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

Committee Resolutions

Committees must direct any resolutions regarding organization policy to the Board of Directors for consideration. However, no resolution may be presented to the Board of Directors without first being reviewed by the Executive Committee..

Use of the USHJA Logo, Name and Brand

- In order to use the USHJA name, logo or brand in order to promote or support an event, program, activity or idea, you must obtain written permission from the USHJA and use a USHJA approved vendor if applicable.
- The process for obtaining this permission is very simple, easily accomplished. The USHJA staff will assist you with all your needs. If you should have any questions regarding the use of the logo or to obtain permission for use of the logo, please contact Whitney Allen, Director of Marketing and Communications, at wallen@ushja.org or 859.225.6967.
- Providing our logo to printers and embroiderers, or using the USHJA brand name without our knowledge and permission, exposes the USHJA to an array of problems, challenges and potential legalities and is not permitted.
- Improper use of the USHJA logo or name may jeopardize our non-profit status and trademark.

Public Relations

- We encourage you to promote the USHJA and request that if you are writing an article, being interviewed or quoted in an article in media sources outside the USHJA, regarding any USHJA program, event, or concept, that you inform the USHJA office. In addition, we ask that USHJA staff receive advance copies on any editorial materials in order to assist them in responding to member inquiries. If you have any questions concerning information released to a media outlet, we encourage you to contact the USHJA immediately for clarification.
- While committees and committee members are encouraged to support and promote the USHJA, they are not approved to create their own promotional materials for the USHJA such as banners, flyers, etc. Further, committees are asked not to make copies of existing materials without prior consent. This is to ensure quality as well as ensure the most recent materials are being distributed. If you are interested in having printed materials created (i.e. flyers, ads, brochures, etc.), please contact the USHJA office for assistance.

Fundraising Activities

- Committee fundraising efforts must be in accordance and consistent with our 501(c)(3) status and USHJA Financial Policies and Procedures.
- Committees are strictly prohibited from maintaining and/or operating their own bank accounts.
- Please direct fundraising questions to Shelby French, CEO at (859) 225-6701 or sfrench@ushja.org.

INFORMATION SPECIFIC TO ZONE COMMITTEES

** Please note that this information is in addition to the information provided above.*

Zone Treasurer Responsibilities

- Manage the finances of the zone committee in coordination with the zone liaison and USHJA Accounting Department.
- Signs and submits the committee approved budget.
- Advises the committee on fiscal matters by overseeing Zone Committee budget with the zone liaison.
- Collects checks for Fundraisers, Zone Finals/Championships entry fees, Selection Trials, Clinics, etc. and submits to USHJA on a Zone Raised Revenue Form.
- Submits Donation forms for Cash, In-Kind, or Silent Auction Donations and Bid Sheets used for Silent Auctions.
- Collects receipts, invoices, and approved expenditures, and submits to USHJA on a check request form with receipts, and invoices attached.
- Gives Zone Committee treasurer's report at committee meetings.

Jumper Zone Chef d'Equipe and Coordinator

Listed below are some of the duties of the Chef d'Equipe and Coordinator for the North American Junior Young Rider Championships, USEF National Junior Jumper Championships, and the USEF Pony Jumper Championships. As important as these duties are, equally as important is the ability of the Chef d'Equipe and the Coordinator to work as a team. In addition, if a Zone decides to name one person to fill both positions, we recommend that help is provided in the form of an assistant.

Chef d'Equipe Responsibilities

- A Chef d'Equipe will be appointed by the Zone Jumper Committee upon the recommendation of the team members and their trainers.
- Attend technical and/or rider meetings for the competition.
- General management and fitness of horses entered in the competition including observance of drug rules for competition.
- General management, fitness and behavior of riders entered in the competition.
- Declaration and scratches of competitors and horses entered at the competition.
- Notifying organizer of order of go in which the team of horse/rider combinations have been selected to compete in the team competition.
- As needed, provide coaching assistance, e.g. with warm-up, walking courses, etc.
- A Chef d'Equipe may not perform any other official duties at the competition.

Coordinator Responsibilities

- A Coordinator will be appointed by the Zone Jumper Committee and does not have to be a Committee member.
- Communicate Championship rules and Selection Procedures to interested individuals.
- Once standings are complete, coordinate with riders in order of their placement on the standings until a full team has been established.

- Conduct a meeting of the team members and their trainers for their recommendation of a Chef d'Equipe for the Championship to recommend to the Zone Jumper Committee for approval.
- Assist riders with required documents for entry into Championship (i.e. passports, health certificates, entry blanks, accreditation requests, etc.)
- Send entries for riders to USHJA by date specified from USHJA and coordinate with Zone for any financial reimbursement.
- As needed, assist and/or coordinate transportation and housing.

Website

The USHJA provides an area for each Zone on our website at www.ushja.org to publish any information that the Zone Committee would like to make available to the membership. **USHJA Zones are not permitted to create or maintain their own websites.** If you have any questions, please contact Shelby French, CEO at sfrench@ushja.org or 859.225.6701.

Zone Finals, Banquet Ribbons and Award Requests

- Requests for Zone banquets or other events must be sent in writing to USHJA and require a majority approval vote from a quorum of the Hunter and/ or Jumper Zone Committee members.
- The dates, locations and judges (if applicable) must be presented for USEF Zone Finals of zones holding their own license and voted upon by the Zone Committee before any action can be taken to plan the event. Zones that do not hold their own USEF license must submit bids to managers for Zone finals and Zone Championships after deciding the following: rating, location, dates, and any other criteria as voted on by the majority of the Zone committee.
- There is a due date for award and ribbon requests. Requests are not submitted by this deadline cannot be guaranteed for delivery.
- For USHJA year-end Zone and Stirrup Cup Awards, USHJA will select coordinated awards for all Zones. Individual Zones will not have the option to select these awards. This does not preclude you from acquiring donations of additional awards for your events.
- Zones that choose to give out awards at the banquet will be responsible for mailing the awards not picked up and will need to budget the shipping costs as approved by a quorum of the committee. Zones can request just champion and reserve awards be shipped and remaining awards will be mailed from USHJA at no charge. If a zone decides to return awards for USHJA to mail out they will incur an additional shipping charge and these awards must be returned within 10 days of the close of the banquet. USHJA will only be responsible shipping cost of the awards, one time, either to banquet or members.
- Any item requiring the USHJA name, zone or logo, must be embroidered, screen-printed or engraved through our vendors.
- If awards/items are not purchased through USHJA, without prior approval, USHJA may refuse payment.

List of Programs, Scholarships, Fund Raisers and Forums

- Zones must provide the USHJA office a complete list of the Zone programs, scholarships, fundraisers and forums that you plan to offer in a Business plan to be submitted to the Board of Directors at the annual meeting each year.
- The USHJA will promote your Zone events through the USHJA website, USHJA E-News, USHJA In Stride and other media outlets. Zones must provide the staff the necessary information they need to respond to member inquiries within the established deadlines.

General Guidelines for Zone Scholarship and Grant Programs

As a 501(c)(3) organization, the USHJA is required to maintain and file criteria and documentation with the IRS regarding all scholarship programs. In order to comply with our tax exempt status, we have created the following general guidelines and criteria for our Zone Committees to use when developing their programs:

- USHJA Zone Committees may raise funds for and establish a scholarship program to benefit deserving Zone members.
- Only educational grants and scholarships, used for college, university or other continuing education/advanced training may be awarded.
- Scholarship funds will be maintained through the USHJA Foundation.
- All Zone Grants must receive written approval by the USHJA CEO prior to implementation.
- To request approval, all documentation including criteria, selection process, grant amounts, methods for solicitations, and the like must accompany the written request.
- Additional information may be requested by the CEO before granting approval.

Criteria for Scholarship and Grant Programs

- Each Zone may award one or more scholarships.
- The total amount of funds distributed by each Zone may not exceed \$50,000.00 in any one USHJA fiscal year.
- Each Zone Committee may create their own criteria to determine those individuals who will be recommended as scholarship recipient(s) as approved by the USHJA Foundation. However, recipient(s) cannot be relatives of Zone committee members, USHJA Executive Committee, Directors or substantial contributors.
- Each Zone Grant Program, including selection criteria, will be publicized on the USHJA website.
- All Zones must use the standard application forms provided by USHJA.
- Full biographical, financial and academic information for each applicant must accompany his/her application and copies of same must be submitted to the USHJA.
- Applicants must be United States citizens/legal residents, USHJA members, residents of the awarding Zone and must meet the academic, leadership/work/community service, financial need and /or other requirements of their Zone Grant Program to be eligible for a scholarship award.

- Funds awarded to recipients will be paid by USHJA directly to the educational institution or service provider. If funds are paid to the educational institution per semester, recipient(s) must supply proof of continued enrollment.
- All funds raised must be accounted for and held in accordance with USHJA/Zone accounting and banking procedures.

Funding Approval Process

- Each Zone shall recommend to the USHJA Executive Committee those individuals who they have deemed eligible for a scholarship and the amount of the requested.
- Recommendations must be accompanied by the USHJA Grant Disbursement Request Form and include the full biographical, financial and academic information for each applicant.
- All materials and applications shall be sent to the USHJA CEO.
- The USHJA Executive Committee shall meet on a monthly basis to review all grant/scholarship disbursement requests and decide whether to award the grants requested.