

JUDGES

A. JUDGING PRIVILEGES

(1) Designation as an NRHA approved judge is a privilege, not a right, bestowed by the NRHA Board of Directors, according to procedures formulated by the Judges Committee. This privilege shall be open to individuals whose equine experience and expertise, as well as personal character, merits the honor. An individual's conduct as a member, exhibitor, and judge, and his or her ability must be exemplary. An individual's conduct will be subjected to continuous committee review.

(2) Approval and Testing:

(a) A prospective judge must attend an NRHA Applicant Seminar and upon passing the testing requirements as set forth by the Judges Committee will be eligible to attend an NRHA Judges School. Upon passing the testing requirements of an NRHA Judges School as set forth by the Judges Committee, those persons will then have their names submitted to the Board of Directors for consideration for judging privileges.

(b) The applicant must be at least twenty-five (25) years of age and must have been an NRHA General member in good standing for 24 months prior to the date of application before he or she can be considered for approval as an NRHA judge.

(c) Approved judges and prospective judges must be current NRHA members.

(d) All approved NRHA judges must submit to re-testing every two (2) years.

(e) The NRHA Judges Committee may, on reasonable notice, require any current judge to submit to a Judges School and re-test. Failure to comply or failure to pass the test will result in the immediate suspension of judging privileges.

B. JUDGES COMMITTEE

(1) The NRHA President will appoint a Judges Committee Chairperson. The Chairperson will then appoint the committee members. It shall be the duty of the Judges Committee to administer judges' tests, conduct seminars, may review any and all judging after NRHA sponsored events or approved events, and review judging performances on recommendation of show representatives or by official protest. The Committee shall be empowered to take all action necessary to improve the quality, integrity and performance of the judging system.

(2) The Judges Committee, upon receipt of information which adversely affects a person's ability to be a judge, may temporarily suspend a judge's privileges pending a hearing before the NRHA Executive Committee. The Board of Directors shall have the authority, with or without the recommendation of the Judges Committee, to discipline, penalize, and/or remove a judge's name from the approved judges list.

(3) Performance reviews may be requested through the Judges Evaluation and Education Program (JEEP). All reviews performed

through the JEEP system are non punitive in nature and will be used for the education and improvement of NRHA judges. Reviews will be contingent upon the availability of official show video. Non approved classes or events will not be evaluated and the Judges Committee has the right to deny a request for review. Parties requesting the review do not receive the results of the review unless it is a review of one's own judging performance.

C. GUIDELINES

(1) A horse may not be shown under a judge if that judge has been owner, exhibitor, trainer, or agent of that horse within the previous ninety (90) days or if said horse is ridden by a member of his/her immediate family or by an employee/employer of said judge. A judge may not show to another judge whom he/she has judged or judged with within five days nor may a judge judge another judge to whom he/she has shown or judged with within five days. Volunteer NRHA judges utilized for equipment inspection are excluded from the five day requirement. A judge is responsible for disclosing an agency relationship as soon as he/she becomes aware of the problem to the show representative/steward if a horse is exhibited not in compliance with this rule. The judge should notify the show representative/steward or show management of the non-compliance at the next break, drag, or prior to the class being placed. The exhibitor should not be counted as an entry, and the horse shall not be scored in the class. All parties involved including but not limited to the owner, exhibitor, and judge will be held responsible in the event non-compliance occurs. The Judges Committee will investigate the matter and handle in accordance with its findings and consistent with NRHA disciplinary rules.

(2) Individuals who have an ongoing (regular, continuous, or contractual) business relationship within ninety (90) days in which services are provided and fees and costs are incurred shall not judge or be judged by each other. This applies to both exhibitor and owner.

(3) A judge shall not be an exhibitor at any NRHA approved event or combinations of events at which he or she is the officiating judge or member of the officiating team. Volunteer NRHA judges utilized for equipment inspection are excluded.

(4) Judges must always act in the best interest of the National Reining Horse Association avoiding any circumstances which create a conflict of interest while officiating at any NRHA approved event. Conflicts of interest are subject to review by the Judges Committee. In the event it is determined that a judge has acted in an official capacity with a conflict of interest, the judge may be removed from the NRHA Judges list and may be subject to further disciplinary action for unsportsmanlike conduct.

(5) Judges shall keep in mind that while judging they are representing the NRHA. It is strongly recommended that judges dress appropriately so as to favorably represent their position.

(6) It is recommended that a judge shall not appear on the show

grounds more than one hour prior to the scheduled start of the show unless as directed or requested by show management. Judges shall not visit with owners, trainers, exhibitors or agents before or during an NRHA approved event. The judges shall talk only with representatives of show management, beyond the exchange of normal greetings, until the entire show or contest is completed. (An exception occurs for Category 10 classes where judges are allowed to talk to exhibitors in an open forum prior to and/or following the event. After each class or event judges may provide feedback to exhibitors on an individual basis. These discussions with exhibitors should be monitored by someone appointed by show officials).

(7) A judge (or judges) must present in writing any grievance within ten (10) days of the incident that he/she may have against contestants or shows to an Official Officer, Director, or duly elected or appointed contestant's representative of the NRHA at the time of the grievance. The judge is not required to post the \$100 grievance fee. His/her case will be reviewed by the appropriate committee and dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary procedures section of the handbook. If any of the above named officials witness a grievance against a judge, he or she must report this immediately to the NRHA office. Said report must be in writing and must be accompanied by the \$100 protest fee. Any grievance concerning a judge's conduct must be filed within ten (10) days of having gained knowledge of the incident. All grievances will be dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary procedure of the *handbook*.

(8) A judge shall conduct himself/herself in a manner fitting and proper to one afforded the honor of officiating at any NRHA approved or sponsored event. Any misconduct on the part of the judge at any NRHA contest such as drinking immediately prior to or during the contest, the use of abusive language, or any other action unbecoming to one in his/her position either on the grounds or elsewhere during the duration of the show will make him/her subject to a complete and impartial hearing on the cause of the complaint before the appropriate committee.

(9) A judge who undertakes the obligation to officiate at an NRHA sanctioned event is responsible to fulfill that commitment. Should he/she be unable to officiate for any reason, he/she is required to arrange for a suitable, qualified replacement. Judges are also required to notify the NRHA office of said change. Failure to do so, for any reason, will result in immediate suspension of judging privileges.

(10) Any NRHA judge(s) that judges a reining show where classes are offered that coincide with NRHA categories but are not NRHA approved (excluding beginner and green classes, affiliate level classes held concurrent with NRHA approved classes, shows that have less than \$500 added money, breed association classes [Jr., Sr., Amateur, and Youth breed classes], and National Federation or FEI events) or is not held by an NRHA breed association affiliate and/or affiliated discipline associations will be subject to an Investigative Judges Review.