



Code of Conduct Policy

INTRODUCTION

The reputation and integrity of Ontario Equestrian (OE) is upheld when all participants act, and are seen to act, with the highest standards of professionalism, ethics, and respect for both people and horses. The OE Code of Conduct Policies serves as a foundational document that outlines the standards of ethical, professional, and responsible behaviour expected of all individuals involved in equestrian sport across the province. The purpose of this manual is to ensure the safety of participants, promote the welfare of horses, foster a culture of respect and integrity, and support fairness and accountability at all levels of the sport.

It is expected that all participants, individually and organizationally, will support and implement OE's Code of Conduct Policies while adapting them as necessary to reflect the unique nature of their discipline, event, or barn. Participants are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that inspires confidence, earns respect, and upholds the spirit of equestrian sport.

These standards serve to guide, not restrict, activities by clarifying the standards of conduct that support our core values. By establishing clear expectations and guiding principles, this Code of Conduct reinforces OE's commitment to a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment where both human and equine Athletes can thrive.

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Code of Conduct Policy, herein referred to as the “Code”, is to outline the minimum expected standards with respect to appropriate behaviour in equestrian sport programs, business, events, and competitions, consistent with OE’s core values and in alignment with the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS).

It is intended to foster a safe, positive, and inclusive sport environment. All participants are required to comply with this Code at all times while engaged in OE-sanctioned activities. While this document outlines baseline expectations, OE expects all members of the equestrian community to consistently demonstrate conduct that exceeds these minimum requirements and reflects the values of integrity, sportsmanship, and respect.

Individuals can and typically will be subject to the provisions of more than one code. This Code reflects the minimum expectation of OE. Conduct that does not meet minimum standards articulated in this Code is subject to actions as determined through the application of the *OE Discipline Policy*.

2. CORE VALUES

Excellence

Striving for the highest achievement standards, professionalism and quality in all aspects of equestrian sport development, delivery and administration.

Community

Building strong relationships across the equestrian community through shared experience, mutual support, and collective wisdom

Leadership

Raising the standard for equestrian sport through proactive industry modernization and bold action.

Innovation

Championing creative approaches and forward-thinking solutions that enhance equestrian sport while honouring tradition.

3. PRINCIPLES

- Sport must be safe, fair, inclusive, and free of maltreatment.
- Participation in equestrian sport is a privilege, not a right.
- The welfare of the horse is paramount.

4. DEFINITIONS

The following terms have these meanings in this Code of Conduct:

- a) *Athlete*: an individual registered with OE or its affiliated organizations and participates in equestrian sport.
- b) *Coach*: an individual who is registered or recognized by OE and who is responsible for the instruction, training, or supervision of Athletes in equestrian sport.

- c) *Committee Member*: an individual appointed by the board of directors to serve on a smaller group that focuses on a specific aspect of OE's work.
- d) *Director*: an individual elected or appointed to serve on the OE Board of Directors.
- e) *Employee*: An individual employed by OE operating in a full-time, part-time, term, contract, or voluntary capacity.
- f) *Executive Director*: Most senior staff person of OE, accountable to the OE Board of Directors.
- g) *Officer*: an individual elected or appointed to serve as an Officer of OE.
- h) *Official*: An individual who has the responsibility to enforce the rules and maintain fair play during equestrian sport competitions or activities. This includes, but is not limited to, referees, judges, stewards, technical delegates, course designers, timers, scorers, and other individuals appointed to a regulatory or adjudicative role during an event or competition.
- i) *Parent/Guardian*: A birth or adoptive parent, legal guardian, or other person having responsibility for, or legal custody, of a minor.
- j) *Participant*: Any individual who participates in equestrian sport activities, including but not limited to, Coaches, Athletes, volunteers, Officials and other members.
- k) *Persons in Authority*: Individual(s) who holds a position of power, influence, or trust over an Athlete or other Participant.

5. SCOPE AND APPLICATION

This Code applies to all participants in equestrian sport during any activity or competition held or sanctioned by OE or OE and Equestrian Canada, or as a participant in any programs, activities, business, and events held by or under the auspices of OE.

6. GENERAL CODE OF CONDUCT

General Conduct

All individuals agree to:

- Adhere to all applicable International, Canadian, Provincial, and municipal; laws, regulations, guidelines, or other requirements that have the force of law;
- Comply with the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS) at all times;
- Treat all individuals fairly within the context of equestrian sport, regardless of gender, place of origin, colour, sexual orientation, religion, political belief, economic status, or any other ground of discrimination;
- Demonstrate integrity, professionalism, and ethical conduct, both in behaviour and appearance;
- Participate within the rules and spirit of equestrian sport, upholding fair play and good sportsmanship;
- Refrain from any form of abuse, harassment, discrimination or misuse of authority;
- Respect the rights, dignity, and worth of all participants, recognizing potential power imbalances;
- Abstain from alcohol, illicit drugs, and performance-enhancing substances while participating in equestrian activities;
- Use social media responsibly and in a way that reflects positively on the sport;
- When operating a vehicle: Hold a valid driver's or operating license, as appropriate, insurance, and refrain from impaired or distracted driving;

- Abide by OE's bylaws, policies, procedures, and Safe Sport Policy at all times;
- Report any suspected Code violations, criminal activity and anti-doping violation to complaints@ontarioequestrian.ca.

Equine Welfare

All individuals agree to:

- Uphold the welfare and humane treatment of the horse as the primary consideration in all activities;
- Abide by the principles of the FEI Code of Conduct for the Welfare of the Horse, and any applicable provincial and Canadian standards;
- Provide appropriate care, handling, and treatment for the continuous well-being of the horse;
- Avoid any practices that cause unnecessary pain, distress, or risk to horses.

Alcohol and Non-Prescription Drugs

OE maintains a *zero-tolerance* policy with respect to the consumption of alcohol and non-prescription drugs in competition settings. This policy is intended to safeguard the health, safety, and integrity of OE Athletes, team members, and the sport as a whole.

- Athletes under 19: Absolutely no consumption of alcohol or non-prescription drugs is permitted at any time while representing OE in competition, whether nationally or internationally, regardless of local laws or regulations.
- All OE team members (including staff and Coaches): No alcohol or non-prescription drug use is permitted, regardless of age, when participating in competitions specifically for Junior or Youth Athletes.
- Participants shall not consume alcohol or impairing substances while participating in activities that involve the handling, riding, or care of horses;

Prohibited and Banned Substances

- The use of prohibited or performance-enhancing substances is strictly prohibited;
- Alcohol consumption is only permitted in designated areas and must not compromise safety or conduct;
- All equine drug use must comply with sport rules and veterinary regulations. For further information, please refer to Equestrian Canada's [Equine Medication Control Policy](#).

Prohibited Conduct

All participants are strictly prohibited from engaging in conduct that includes, but is not limited to:

- Maltreatment and Abuse: Any form of physical, sexual, emotional, or psychological abuse, harassment, bullying, hazing, or exploitation of power imbalances, as defined by OE's Safe Sport Policy and the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS);
- Failure to Uphold Safe Sport Duties: Failing to comply with reporting obligations, or otherwise ignoring suspected or known instances of maltreatment, harassment, abuse, or unsafe practices;
- Harassment and Discrimination: Harassment, bullying, hazing, or discriminatory conduct based on protected human rights grounds;
- Discrimination: Any discriminatory conduct based on race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religion, age, or other protected grounds under human rights legislation;
- Sexual Misconduct: Sexual harassment, coercion, or relationships between Persons in Authority and athletes;

- Substance Violations: Use, possession, or distribution of illegal or prohibited substances, supplying alcohol to minors, or being impaired while supervising or participating in activities involving horses;
- Equine Welfare Violations: Any practice that compromises horse welfare, causes unnecessary pain or distress, or breaches the FEI Code of Conduct for the Welfare of the Horse;
- Integrity Offences: Cheating, misrepresentation, tampering with results, misuse of OE property, funds, or confidential information;
- Criminal Activity: Any conduct that violates municipal, provincial, or federal laws.

Retaliation, Retribution, or Reprisal

It is a breach of this Code for any Participant to engage in conduct that threatens, intimidates, or attempts to discourage another Participant from making a good-faith complaint under any OE policy or procedure. It is also a breach of this Code for any Participant to file a complaint in bad faith, including for the purpose of retaliation, retribution, or reprisal against another Participant. Any Participant found to have breached this section may be held responsible for the costs associated with the disciplinary process required to determine the breach.

7. ROLE-SPECIFIC CODES OF CONDUCT

In addition to abiding by the General Code of Conduct outlined in Part 6 above, individuals in certain roles within the OE community are subject to further conduct standards as outlined below:

7.1. ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT

Athletes must:

- Compete with integrity, fairness, and respect;
- Care for their horses responsibly, and honestly disclose illness or injury;
- Ensure the safety of both horses and riders by adequately preparing for the level of activity;
- Abide by competition rules and decisions of officials, using formal appeal processes;
- Act as positive role models within the equestrian community.

7.2. PARENT/GUARDIAN CODE OF CONDUCT

Parents and Guardians must:

- Take the OE Safe Sport Course;
- Encourage Athletes' enjoyment and personal development over winning;
- Model respect for Coaches, Officials, volunteers, and any other Participant in equestrian sport;
- Support a safe, healthy, and substance-free sport environment;
- Avoid disrespectful or abusive language, behaviour, or online conduct.

7.3. COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

The Athlete-Coach relationship is a position of trust and influence. Coaches play a vital role in shaping Athletes' personal and athletic development and must recognize the inherent power imbalance in this

relationship. Coaches are expected to model integrity, professionalism, and respect, and to prioritize Athlete well-being and equine welfare above all else. The purpose of this Code is to aid Coaches in achieving a level of behaviour which will allow them to assist their Athletes in becoming well-rounded, self-confident and productive individuals.

Coaches must:

- Respect Athletes' dignity; harassment, abuse, and personal attacks are prohibited;
- Direct feedback toward performance, not the individual;
- Demonstrate high personal standards and uphold the values of equestrian sport;
- Treat Athletes, Coaches, and Officials with fairness and respect, win or lose;
- Model fair play, safety, and adherence to the rules of equestrian sport;
- Act in the best interest of the Athlete's development as a whole person, recognizing and referring to other specialists;
- Create safe, age-appropriate, and inclusive training environments;
- Commit to ongoing professional development.

7.4. OFFICIALS

Officials play a central role in ensuring fairness, integrity, and safety in equestrian sport. They represent Ontario Equestrian and Equestrian Canada and are expected to act with impartiality, professionalism, and respect at all times.

Officials must:

- Maintain and continually update their knowledge of applicable rules, regulations, and rule changes;
- Enforce the rules of equestrian sport fairly, consistently, and without bias.
- Treat Athletes, Coaches, Parents/Guardians, fellow Officials, volunteers and other Participants with dignity, respect, and professionalism;
- Honour confidentiality in all sensitive matters, including competition outcomes, disciplinary issues, and participant information;
- Provide accurate, factual, and timely reports where required;
- Fulfill assigned duties unless prevented by illness or emergency, and notify the assignor or relevant authority as soon as possible if unable to serve;
- Collaborate respectfully with colleagues while operating strictly within the boundaries of their official role;
- Refrain from public criticism of other Officials, clubs, associations, or sport organizations;
- Refer Athlete or other inquiries to the appropriate Coach and avoid providing informal feedback outside official channels.
- Avoid conflicts of interest and disclose any actual or perceived conflict as defined in OE policy.

Boundaries

Officials shall:

- Maintain professional boundaries with Athletes, Coaches, trainers, Parents/Guardians, and members of an Athlete's support team during competitions. Perception of impartiality is essential, and even casual interactions may lead to misinterpretation;

- Avoid discussing classes, horses, or exhibitors outside of formal reporting processes. Conversations overheard or held in the judge's booth or technical areas must remain confidential.

7.5. PERSONS IN AUTHORITY

Persons in Authority must:

- Recognize and respect the inherent power imbalance in their roles;
- Never abuse trust or engage in harassment, abuse, or sexual misconduct (see OE Safe Sport Policy);
- Ensure safe, inclusive, and supportive training and competition environments;
- Act in the best interests of Athletes and horses.

7.6. STABLES

As members of the OE Stable Program, stables are expected to maintain environments that are safe, professional, and consistent with the highest standards of equine welfare and participant well-being.

Stable operators must:

- Provide an environment that is respectful, inclusive, and aligned with OE policies;
- Comply with the National Farm Animal Care Council's Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Equines;
- Maintain a current Emergency Action Plan and carry appropriate liability insurance;
- Use acknowledgement of risk forms for all participants and ensure qualified supervision for instruction;
- Communicate expectations clearly to boarders, riders, staff, and other visitors of the facility.

Facility and Safety Standards

Stable members shall:

- Maintain safe, clean, and welfare-compliant facilities;
- Provide safe arenas, paddocks, and trails, maintained in good condition with secure enclosures and access to water;
- Store medications, tack, feed, and waste safely and securely;
- Require helmet use for all riders under 18 and strongly recommend it for adults. Supervision is required for minors and beginners at all times.

Lesson Horses and Instruction

Stables offering lessons shall:

- Employ at least one licensed or NCCP-certified coach;
- Ensure lesson tack is safe, clean, and properly fitted;
- Provide horses that are sound, appropriately trained, and suited to the rider's level, and ensure they are not overused.

7.7 BOARD OF DIRECTORS, OFFICERS, AND EMPLOYEES CODE OF CONDUCT

As OE operates in the public spotlight, Directors, Officers, and Employees of OE are expected to conduct their affairs on a basis consistent with the great trust that has been placed in them. This requires their behaviour to conform to the highest ethical principles, including honesty, respect, responsibility and transparency.

For these reasons, OE requires its officers, Directors and Employees to conduct business with integrity and to maintain a standard of ethical conduct consistent with the mission statement of OE. Furthermore, because the appearance of impropriety can be just as damaging as actual impropriety, conduct which appears to be improper is also unacceptable (see definitions below). Accordingly, Officers, Directors and Employees are required to comply with the OE Code of Conduct when representing or participating in OE activities.

OE Directors, officers, and employees must:

- Conduct all dealings with honesty and fairness, and act in the best interests of OE and its membership;
- Know, understand and comply with the laws, regulations, and codes of conduct governing the conduct of OE competitions and business;
- Avoid and disclose conflicts of interest (see Appendix A: Conflict of Interest Policy)
- Protect confidential information and OE assets;
- Conduct themselves with integrity and professionalism.

Confidentiality

When designated confidential, any information or material given or distributed to the officers, directors and/or committee members of OE shall be kept confidential and not further passed on or disseminated.

When any written or oral communication contains the statement "Confidential" in the heading or beginning of the communication, all the information contained in such communication is "designated confidential".

Conflicts of Interest

OE requires all representatives to act with integrity and avoid situations where personal, financial, or familial relationships could influence, or appear to influence, their objectivity in conducting OE business.

These principles provide a framework of integrity for interactions with or on behalf of OE. However, given the unique makeup of OE as an organization, more in-depth questions may arise regarding conflicts of interest. For this reason, the following guidance is provided:

- A conflict of interest arises when personal or financial interests, including those of family members or close associates, may compromise integrity.
- An apparent conflict exists when circumstances could reasonably lead others to believe a conflict is present; appearance of impropriety must be treated as seriously as actual impropriety. In such cases, individuals must disclose and recuse themselves until the matter is resolved.
- Employees must disclose conflicts to the Executive Director; Board and Committee members must disclose to the Chair, using the Conflict-of-Interest Disclosure Form (Appendix A). Forms remain in effect until updated and are treated as confidential.

- Inappropriate hospitality or gifts are considered potential conflicts unless specifically permitted by OE policy. Questions regarding the application of OE's hospitality and gift policies must be addressed to OE's Executive Director.

8. ENFORCEMENT

Any person who violates or condones the violation of the Code of Conduct or this agreement is subject to disciplinary measures, as outlined in OE's Disciplinary and Complaints Policy, which may include termination of membership, employment, and expulsion from the board or committee. The OE Executive Director shall review all violations of the Code of Conduct and, if appropriate, (a) as to officers, Directors and committee members, refer the matter to the Complaints Committee for determination if the matter should be forwarded to the to the Ethical Practice Review Board for any disciplinary that should be taken, or (b) as to staff, sanction the individual in accordance with OE's standard employment practices.

This Code of Conduct serves as a framework for ethical conduct but does not cover every situation. If you are unclear about the requirements of this Code, please contact the Executive Director at OE as follows:

Ontario Equestrian

320 Harry Walker Parkway North
Unit 2
Newmarket, ON L3Y 7B8
905.709.6545

Reviewed and Approved by the Ontario Equestrian Board of Directors: March 25, 2026

Effective Date: March 25, 2026

APPENDIX A: CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE FORM

ONTARIO EQUESTRIAN

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE STATEMENT For all but Selection Matters

This statement must be filled out by every OE Board Member and/or Committee Member. This Disclosure Statement shall be submitted and updated as often as necessary to OE and at least annually. Providing the information requested herein is prerequisite to participation by directors, staff and committee members. Refusal to provide the requested information or providing incomplete or inaccurate information may result in removal from board, committee membership or employment.

1. If you or any member of your immediate family are an officer, partner, director, trustee, owner or employee of any person or any entity which does business with OE, please list the name and address of the entity(ies), the nature of your relationship with said person or entity(ies) and describe the dealings. If none, please state "none".
2. If you or any member of your immediate family holds an ownership interest in a closely-held company or other business entity, or at least a 5% ownership interest in any public company which does business with OE, please list the name and address of the entity(ies), the nature of your relationship with said person or entity(ies) and describe the dealings. If none, please state "none".
3. If you have any reason to believe that any of the persons or entities with which you or immediate members of your family are affiliated may have business dealings with OE in the future, please list those entities and the nature of such dealings. If none, please state "none".

4. Are you an employee or employer of another OE officer or director or do you have any other business dealings or financial dealings with another OE director or any company or concern that director is involved in?

_____Yes _____No

If you have answered yes to the above, please provide the details as follows.

If you or any member of your immediate family are an officer, partner, trustee, owner or part or full-time employee (contractual or otherwise) of an officer or director of OE or the entity, owned or in which said officer or director has at least a 5% ownership interest, please list the name and address of the officer or director, the nature of your relationship with said officer or director and describe the dealings. If none, please state "none".

5. If there is any relationship or matter not disclosed above which might be perceived to compromise your obligations to OE under its Conflict of Interest Policy or which may raise questions of a conflict between your duty and loyalty to OE, your loyalty to any other entity and/or your economic self-interest, please indicate here what that relationship or matter is. If none, please state "none".

Signature

Print Name

Date