AQHA'S STATEMENT OF POSITION ON ANIMAL WELFARE

IN ACCORDANCE WITH AQHA'S OFFICIAL HANDBOOK, THE FOLLOWING RULES MUST BE ADHERED TO:

401. ANIMAL WELFARE
(a) Every American Quarter Horse shall, at all times, be treated humanely and with dignity, respect and compassion. Refer to rule 441.
(b) The standard by which conduct or treatment will be measured is that which a reasonable person, informed and experienced in generally accepted equine care, training and exhibition procedures or veterinary standards, would determine to be cruel, abusive or inhumane.

434. SHOW MANAGER
(c) The show manager shall:
(7) upon a report or discovery of inhumane treatment, immediately investigate the incident and report it to AQHA. Show management shall make every effort to obtain the concurrence of any AQHA-approved judge on the grounds or AQHA-authorized personnel, if available. Any verbal or written warning performed by the show manager at a show for inhumane treatment is to be reported in writing to AQHA. If an incident is later reported to AQHA and knowledge is gained that the show manager was present but did not report the incident, this could jeopardize their ability to manage an AQHA-approved show in the future.

441. PROHIBITED CONDUCT
(a) Unsportsmanlike Conduct. Unsportsmanlike conduct or any other form of misconduct that is irresponsible, illegal, indecent, profane, intimidating, threatening or abusive is prohibited. This provision applies to:
(1) AQHA members, non-members, exhibitors, trainers, owners, owner representatives, spectators and all other persons on the show grounds of an AQHA-approved event; and
(2) AQHA members on the show grounds of an event held in conjunction with an AQHA-approved event; and
(3) AQHA members on the show grounds of an event during which an AQHA-approved class is held regardless of whether the conduct is associated with or occurs during an AQHA-approved class.
(b) Show management may immediately expel individuals exhibiting unsportsmanlike conduct from show grounds and shall file a written report with AQHA concerning the conduct in question.
(c) Inhumane Treatment. Inhumane treatment of any horse (whether registered with AQHA or not) or any other animal on show grounds is strictly prohibited. Treatment of any horse will be considered inhumane if a person, educated or experienced in accepted equine training techniques, would perceive the conduct of an individual to be inhumane. Inhumane treatment includes, but is not limited to:
(1) placing an object in a horse's mouth so as to cause undue discomfort or distress;
(2) leaving a bit in a horse's mouth for extended periods of time so as to cause undue discomfort or distress;
(3) tying a horse up or around in a stall in the manner as to cause undue discomfort or distress;
(4) lounging or riding in a manner as to cause undue discomfort or distress;
(5) tieing or fastening any foreign object onto a horse, halter, bridle and/or saddle in order to de-sensitize the horse;
(6) use of training techniques or methods such as poling or striking a horse's legs with objects;
(7) excessive spurring or whipping;
(8) excessive jerking of reins;
(9) excessive fencing;
(10) excessive spinning (defined as no more than eight (8) consecutive turns in either direction);
(11) poling (altering an obstacle while the horse is negotiating the obstacle);
(12) schooling over ramped oxers in reverse order (i.e., from highest to lowest instead of lowest to highest);
(13) schooling using rails higher than four (4) feet;
(14) use of prohibited equipment, including, but not limited to, saw tooth bits, hock hobbles, tack collars or tack hackamores;
(15) use of any item or appliance that restricts movement or circulation of the tail;
(16) exhibiting a horse which appears to be sullen, dull, lethargic, emaciated, drawn or overly tired; or
(17) Intentional or negligent treatment which results in any bleeding.
This prohibition against inhumane treatment applies to AQHA members and non-members. AQHA members may be held responsible for the actions of their trainers, agents, representatives and/or employees. For violation of this rule, an individual may be disciplined, suspended, fined, denied AQHA privileges, disqualified, expelled from show grounds and/or expelled from AQHA.

106. DISCIPLINARY AND APPEAL PROCEDURE.
(a) Extent of Sanction: In regard to any violation of AQHA rules and regulations, the Executive Committee shall have jurisdiction to invoke sanction, including revocation or denial of membership privileges, revocation of participation privileges in all AQHA-approved events for a definite or indefinite period, denial of privilege of access or presence on show grounds of an AQHA-approved show, and in addition, assessment of fine not to exceed $10,000. Executive Committee sanction may include denial of privilege to advertise in AQHA's official publications.