



CODE OF CONDUCT

Hanoverian Horse Society of Australia



HANOVERIAN HORSE SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
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CODE OF CONDUCT

1 SCOPE

This Code of Conduct applies to all office holders, employees and volunteers of the Hanoverian Horse Society of Australia, INC (“HNSA”). The HNSA is committed to providing a safe, respectful and thoughtful environment for all who participate in all its activities.

Our actions will be guided by a commitment to honesty and integrity. Our decisions will be made ethically, in compliance with relevant State and Federal legislation, HNSA policies and procedures that are consistent with the fulfilment of the HNSA’s goals and objectives.

2 GENERAL CONDUCT

2.1 DEALING WITH EACH OTHER AND THIRD PARTIES

Office holders, employees and volunteers of the HNSA will deal with each other and third parties with respect and in a fair and non-discriminatory manner. We recognise that our dealings with each other and with third parties can impact positively or negatively on the HNSA’s overall reputation. It is the responsibility of all office holders, employees and volunteers of the HNSA to ensure their actions enhance the HNSA’s reputation.

Office holders, employees and volunteers of the HNSA will at all times comply with applicable State, Federal and Local Acts and Regulations and the HNSA’s Constitution and breeding guidelines.

2.2 RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS THE HORSE

The welfare of the horse as a working animal and as a sports partner has the highest priority. The HNSA is committed to the responsible and ethical treatment of the horse at every stage of its life: as a partner, a sports participant and in breeding and rearing.

The HNSA has zero tolerance for any form of performance enhancement drugs or doping. The zero-tolerance requirement applies to any HNSA horse-related activity.

Office holders, employees and volunteers of the HNSA who become aware of, or suspect, that there has been a breach of this clause 2.2 , and that an animal’s welfare has been put at risk is obligated to report the matter to The Commission as specified in Clause 4.

2.3 RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS JUDGES

It is paramount that all members of the HNSA show respect to Classifiers and Officials at all times. A judge or judges’ decisions are final, the only avenue permitted to question a decision is through the Grievance process outlined in Section 7. Where a Member has a grievance in relation to a judging decision, the grievance must be lodged with the Grievance Committee within 3 days of the judging decision being made. There is a fee of \$100 for any grievances lodged.

Any Member of the HHSa who engages in conduct that may be considered, at the absolute discretion of the Committee, to be rude behaviour, harassment, bullying or intimidation of a Classifier/Official may be subject to disciplinary action by the HHSa. These actions could include suspension or revoking of membership and exclusion from HHSa events.

3 CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

3.1 OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY

In all its dealings the HHSa will, through its actions, demonstrate its commitment to equality.

The decision-making of volunteers and employees will always be made without consideration of factors that are not specifically related to the matter being considered, including personal interests or advantages.

3.2 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

An actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest exists when an office holder, volunteer or employee could be influenced by a personal interest in the course of their official duties. Where a office holder, volunteer or employee identifies a conflict of interest exists, that person must declare the conflict and must not participate in any way in the decision-making process nor attempt to influence the outcomes of the decision.

Where an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest exists for a officer holder, volunteer or an employee and that office holder, volunteer or employee has failed to declare the conflict, the conflict may be reported by a Committee Member where that Committee Member reasonably believes that the conflict could influence the making of a fair and unbiased decision.

The Committee may at any time, request that an office holder, volunteer or employee excuse themselves from the decision-making process where the majority of the Committee has resolved that the volunteer or employee has a conflict of interest. Where this occurs, the resolution is binding, and the office holder, volunteer or employee must not participate in the decision-making process nor attempt to influence the outcome of the decision.

3.3 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: CLASSIFIERS

Appointment as a recognised Classifier of the HHSa is not a right, but a privilege awarded by the Stud Book Committee and the Committee, according to the procedures determined by them, to individual persons qualified for this task due to their equestrian expertise and personal suitability.

Classifiers, whether acting in a professional or voluntary capacity, must always act with integrity, ensuring decision-making adheres to the HHSa's commitment to equality and fairness.

Classifiers must stringently avoid any conflict between the interests of the HHSa and their own personal, business-related or financial interests. If such a conflict of interest arises, the judge must declare that a conflict exists and immediately step down from judging duties. Where a judge is able to renounce their personal interests, that judge may return to judging duties.

If a Classifier is unable to make an objective decision free of prejudice, preferences or external influences, the Classifier in question must step down from their position and play no role in the

judging process. Situations include if the Classifier maintains a special relationship to owners, participants or is or has been personally involved with the horse being assessed.

Members who choose to provide support to the HHSA by hosting a Classifier during a competition, or the annual tour, acknowledge that they are placed in a unique position whereby they have firsthand contact with judges, which could create a conflict of interest. Consequently, members hosting Classifiers agree that at no time will they in any way attempt to influence a Classifier's work or the outcome of the judging process.

3.4 REPRESENTATION OF INTERESTS

Committee Members, volunteers and employees must represent the interests of the HHSA in a transparent and responsible manner that reflects the HHSA's values and ethics.

Where representations on the HHSA's behalf are being made to politicians, Federal or State Government agencies, sports administration bodies or other influential organisations they must be carried out in a professional and ethical manner. It is expected that such interactions will usually fall within the responsibilities of the Committee, unless the Committee resolves otherwise.

In any form of representation, it is not acceptable to attempt to influence the outcome of any decision with the promise of any type of favour or benefit.

3.5 STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

The HHSA is committed to engaging with internal and external stakeholders to gain a better understanding of the concerns and expectations held in relation to the HHSA, and in order to inform its growth and development.

Internal and external stakeholders of the HHSA are organisations, groups and individuals who influence the HHSA's actions or are affected by the implementation of the HHSA's objectives e.g. breeders, customers, employees, the public, legislators and like organisations.

To ensure a fair dialogue with stakeholders, the following provisions are to be fulfilled:

- fairness and reliability: commitments and agreements are to be kept. Should fundamental changes in the framework conditions or new circumstances arise, this must be explained.
- transparency: complete and up-to-date information must be provided by both sides.
- timeliness and regularity: amendments that become apparent will be made accessible to the affected stakeholders as early as possible.

Stakeholder consultations must be clear about their intended purpose, set an appropriate framework for exchange of ideas and identify the objectives to be pursued by both sides. The outcome of consultations may be shared with stakeholders either in full or in part at the discretion of the Committee.

The findings of stakeholder consultations will inform the setting of the strategic directions of the HHSA. Information provided in confidence by stakeholders during a consultation will be held in confidence by the HHSA.

4 COMMISSIONS, DONATIONS AND GIFTS

4.1 COMMISSIONS

In connection with their position or function Committee Members, volunteers and employees of the HHSA and any of its associated entities are prohibited from accepting any form of commission or discount, or promises of such, for arrangements of any kind that would benefit either the office holder, volunteer or employee or a person related to the office holder, volunteer or employee.

This does not preclude genuine business arrangements. Where a volunteer or employee enters into a genuine business arrangement, in the interests of transparency the arrangement should be declared in writing to the Committee. The details relating to the commercial arrangements do not need to be disclosed, merely the broad arrangements such as the services to be provided and their duration.

4.2 GIFTS

Office holders, volunteers and employees must avoid conveying any impression of being open to receiving personal benefits or advantages within the scope of their work for the HHSA.

Office holders, volunteers and employees are only allowed to accept gifts where the value of the gift is no more than \$AUD50. Where the recipient of the gift is unsure as to the value of the gift, then the gift must be refused. In the case of more than one gift being made within the same Financial Year, this threshold applies for the total sum.

If the gift is accepted in the context of the Committee Member, volunteer or employee representing the HHSA, then the gift is to be handed over to the Committee as soon as possible after its receipt.

When representing the HHSA at international level, should gifts be given, they must be handed over to the HHSA as soon as possible after receipt, unless the Committee provides written permission otherwise.

4.2.1 Gifts of Cash

The acceptance of a cash gift by office holders, volunteers and employees is strictly prohibited. Accepting price discounts or other price reductions is also considered to be a gift of cash.

If office holders, volunteers or employees purchase goods or services for their private use from member organisations, other associations, customers, suppliers, service providers or other business partners of the HHSA, then this business is to be conducted exclusively as a private person within the usual scope of business and for prices in line with market standards.

4.3 INVITATIONS

Where office holders, volunteers or employees receive an invitation from a third party to attend any event and that invitation is clearly issued as a result of the person's involvement with the HHSA, it must be declared to the Committee prior to acceptance being conveyed to the third party.

Generally repeated invitations from the same customer, supplier service provider, business partner or other third party would only be permissible in exceptional circumstances and with the Committee's prior approval.

4.4 DONATIONS

Donations are monetary or non-monetary contributions made voluntarily and without expectation of any benefit in return.

Donations to the HHSA, may be arranged through a Committee Member, volunteer or employee, but must be paid directly into the HHSA's bank account.

The HHSA may, by resolution of the Committee, make a donation to a third-party. Donations to third parties can only be made where the recipient is a not-for-profit organisation. All donations to third parties must be made transparently. Where the donor has indicated that the donation will be made for a specific purpose, the expectation is that the HHSA will request that the donor provide evidence that the donation was used for that purpose.

4.5 SPONSORSHIPS

The HHSA may seek sponsorship for an event or activity from a third party. Sponsorship occurs when money or non-monetary benefits are provided to the HHSA in return for recognition of the sponsoring entity's involvement.

In addition, the HHSA may elect to sponsor an event or organisation. Sponsorship occurs when money or non-monetary benefits are provided by the HHSA in return for recognition of the HHSA's support.

All sponsorships must be approved by the Committee, with the obligations of each party clearly set out including timeframes for the delivery of any services or recognition.

Where sponsorship funding has been provided by Local, State or Federal Government the HHSA will manage those funds in accordance with the grant provisions laid out in the funding document.

The HHSA will not enter into any sponsorship arrangement that does not reflect its values and ethics. Generally, the HHSA will avoid any sponsorship arrangement where it involves a party associated with the following goods or services:

- tobacco and vaping products
- high-percentage alcoholic beverages
- products that are legally restricted from persons under 18 years of age
- weapons
- sports betting providers

Sponsorships will be reviewed by the Committee on at least an annual basis to ensure they are continuing to meet the HHSA's needs.

4.6 ORIGIN OF FINANCES

The HHSA is committed to ensuring integrity in all that it does. Where an office holder, volunteer or an employee suspect that funds being offered for the HHSA's use may conflict with the HHSA's values and ethics, or there is any ambiguity concerning the origin of the funds, this must be immediately reported to the Committee.

5 FINANCE AND PROPERTY

5.1 FEES

5.1.1 Service Fees

Fees levied by voluntary office holders and employees, e.g. for issuing appraisals, giving lectures, participating in discussion events or forums, etc., are to be handled as follows:

a) *Work Carried out in the Service of the HHSA*

This means the work undertaken is provided in the volunteer or staff member's capacity as a representative of the HHSA and within the scope of the office or the position held within the HHSA. In this instance the HHSA is the provider of the service and consequently will issue a HHSA invoice for the services rendered by the volunteer or staff member.

The activity is therefore not a private activity, and the volunteer or staff member is acting on behalf of the HHSA in delivering the requested services.

b) *Work Carried out in a Private Capacity*

This means the work undertaken is clearly outside of the volunteer or staff member's role within the HHSA. The person is contracted by a third party to provide services that are outside the scope of the work or services that would be provided by the volunteer or staff member in the normal course of their involvement with the HHSA.

Where this occurs the volunteer or staff member assumes all the risk involved with delivering the services and is responsible for matters associated with it including billing.

5.1.2 Fees Associated with Membership of the HHSA

The Committee may from time to time set fees associated with the Membership of the HHSA. Where the fee set is an annual subscription fee the fee must be endorsed by the majority of members at a General Meeting for the HHSA. All other fees may be set at the discretion of the Committee.

5.2 PROPERTY AND MATERIALS

Voluntary office holders and employees are to manage the HHSA's means prudently and carefully.

5.2.1 Procurement

Where property is to be procured by the HHSA the following will apply:

- a) Where the value is between \$1,000 and \$5,000 – a minimum of TWO quotes will be obtained. Where a quote for a good or service is provided by a Member of the HHSA this must be clearly declared by the person providing the quote.
- b) Where the value is over \$5,000 – the Committee in consultation with the HHSA President will determine whether the procurement should be published as a Request for Quotation.
- c) Where the purchase is over \$10,000 – the Committee in consultation with the HHSA President will determine whether the procurement should be published as a Request for Quotation or a Tender.

5.2.2 Property

HHSA property includes both physical property (such as office equipment, computer systems and equipment, inventory, tools) and intellectual property (such as data, business secrets, specific expertise of the HHSA).

The following applies in relation to dealing with HHSA property:

- a) Damage to HHSA property is a serious matter, whether it occurs accidentally or not. All damage must be reported immediately to the most senior staff member. Where the senior staff member is responsible for the damages the report must be made to the Committee.
- b) HHSA property may only be used for purposes associated with a HHSA activity.
- c) Software may only be used in accordance with the corresponding licence agreement. All login data, for example for a business account in a social media network, and registration codes are the property of the HHSA.
- d) Office holders, volunteers and employees must comply with internal HHSA provisions and guidelines, if applicable, for example concerning (private) use of the internet, email, (mobile) phones, laptop/tablets as well as pool or leasing vehicles.

6 CONFIDENTIALITY & PRIVACY

Volunteers and employees are required to observe confidentiality in all matters, especially in particular in relation to personal information that is held on Members of the HHSA.

6.1 OBLIGATION TO PROTECT PERSONAL INFORMATION

The HHSA is bound by the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) ("**Privacy Act**") The Privacy Act is the principal piece of Australian legislation protecting the handling of personal information about individuals. This includes the collection, use, storage and disclosure of personal information in the federal public sector and in the private sector.

Personal information includes a broad range of information, or an opinion, that could identify an individual. What is considered to be personal information will vary, depending on whether a person can be identified or is reasonably identifiable in the circumstances. For example, personal information may include:

- an individual's name, signature, address, phone number or date of birth
- sensitive information – such as race, religion, political affiliations, sexual orientations or criminal records
- credit information -
- employee record information
- photographs
- internet protocol (IP) addresses
- voice print and facial recognition biometrics (because they collect characteristics that make an individual's voice or face unique)
- location information from a mobile device (because it can reveal user activity patterns and habits).

Personal Information may only be used for the purposes for which it was collected and may not be shared with persons for any other purpose, unless required to do so by law.

Should a data breach occur, for whatever reason, the HHSa will follow the protocols set down at the time by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (or successor agency) in relation to the notification of the breach and the processes for dealing with it.

6.2 OBLIGATION TO PROTECT INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

The obligation to keep HHSa Intellectual Property confidential remains in place for 10 years after a Member resigns membership of the HHSa and for employees the lesser of the period named in the employee's employment contract and 10 years.

Intellectual Property means, without limitation, any inventions, technological innovations, discoveries, designs, formulas, know-how, processes, business methods, documents, logos, patents, trademarks, service marks, copyrights, computer software, ideas, creations, writings, lectures and teaching materials, illustrations and drawings, photographs, motion pictures, scientific and mathematical models, improvements to all such property, and all recorded material defining, describing, or illustrating all such property, whether in hard copy or electronic form.

6.3 OBLIGATION TO DEAL WITH HHSa DOCUMENTS APPROPRIATELY

Volunteers and employees must deal with all HHSa documents in a respectful and appropriate manner.

Both during and outside of working hours, documents must be kept in such a way that they cannot be accessed by unauthorised persons. Care is to be taken to ensure that documents that are no longer required are destroyed in a controlled manner, i.e. they are shredded or made unrecognisable in such a way that they cannot be reconstructed by unauthorised persons. Subsequently they may be disposed of as general waste. Larger volumes of address labels and similar cards no longer required are to be disposed of as special waste.

7 BREACHES AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

7.1 BREACHES OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Where there has been a breach of the provisions of the Code of Conduct the following framework will be used.

Members may choose to report breaches of the Code; however, they should be discouraged from making frivolous or vexatious complaints that are clearly lacking substance.

7.1.1 Appointment of a Grievance Sub-committee

The Committee will appoint three members of its Executive to the Grievance Sub-Committee. The appointment will be for a period of 2 years. The Committee may at its absolute discretion appoint an independent member to the sub-committee where such an appointment will enhance or support its work.

The Terms of Reference for the Grievance sub-committee will include the management and resolution of breaches of this Code of Conduct and handling grievances raised by members. In order to carry out its work the sub-committee may conduct investigations, interview HHS Members or relevant third parties and obtain any other information that is relevant to the matter at hand and that will inform their decision-making.

The Executive may in its absolute discretion appoint an independent person to the position of Code of Conduct Officer to work in a voluntary capacity. The Officer will also hold the position of Chair of the Grievance Sub-committee. The Officer should hold qualifications relevant to the position and have experience in a similar role.

The Code of Conduct Officer is not to hold any other functions within the Society and must be independent. In particular, the person is not to hold a Committee or delegate position or be employed by the HHS or its subsidiaries on a full-time or part-time basis, in any capacity.

A Committee member will provide secretariat services for the sub-committee but not be involved in its processes, decisions or recommendations.

7.1.2 Process for dealing with Breaches of the Code of Conduct

Breaches of this Code may be reported to the Committee by a Member or a third-party directly associated with a HHS service or event.

Breaches must be reported to the Chair of the Grievance Sub-committee, or the Code of Conduct Officer, in writing within 3 days of the breach occurring. On receipt of the breach the Chair of the Grievance Sub-committee will inform the Executive that a report has been received at which point the Executive will determine whether or not the matter should be referred for investigation and resolution to the Grievance Sub-Committee.

On receiving a referral of a breach, the sub-committee will:

- evaluate the information.
- determine and investigate the situation.
- obtain professional advice
- open an investigation, if necessary,
- interview the persons involved, if necessary
- forward the results of this investigation, together with a recommendation, to the Executive.

On receipt of the report and recommendation the Executive will determine, by resolution, what action will be taken. The person who reported the breach will be informed of the outcome of the investigation.

In addition, the Code of Conduct Officer may initiate an investigation where the Officer becomes aware of a breach or potential breach of the Code. Where this occurs, the process will be the same, however the reporting person will be listed as the Code of Conduct Officer.

Where the report concerns the conduct of a member of the Executive, that member will recognise their conflict of interest, as required by this Code and remove themselves from all discussions and decisions made in relation to the breach.

7.2 MEMBER GRIEVANCES

The HHSa recognises that Members may have a grievance with a process, decision or action undertaken in relation to a HHSa activity or event. A grievance in this instance may not be a breach of the Code but merely a concern held by a Member about a process, decision or action undertaken in relation to an HHSa activity or event.

Members who have a grievance are in the first instance to provide details via www.hanoverian.org.au Member Grievance Form, which will be sent to the Code of Conduct Officer or the Chair of the Grievance sub-committee where there is no Officer in place.

The process to be followed when dealing with a grievance will be determined by the Officer or the Chair of the Grievance Committee in consultation with the members of the Grievance sub-committee.

7.3 FRIVOLOUS OR VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS

Members should be discouraged from making these types of complaints. Where the Grievance Sub-committee determines that a complaint is frivolous or vexatious the sub-committee may recommend disciplinary actions against the person that made the complaint.

8 REVIEW OF THE CODE

This Code will be reviewed by the Committee every 2 years to ensure that it continues to be relevant. The reviewed Code will be adopted by the HHSa at a General Meeting of the HHSa.

As part of the review the Executive will consult with Members as to the effectiveness of the Code's operation and the amendments that could be made to improve its operation.