

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Standard	12/1/2021	12/9/2020	

Rule Change Intent

The rules on amateur and professional membership status are outdated. As the modern equestrian community evolves, the rules on amateur and professional status require updates to include new activities that were not present until recent years. If approved, these rule changes will help the rules on amateur and professional status come into the modern era.

**Webster's Dictionary defines an apprentice** as "one who is learning by practical experience under skilled workers a trade, art, or calling."

(USEF Tracking #012-20)

Proponent Details	Contact Information
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Linked Rules	Comments

Committee Actions

## SUBCHAPTER 13-B AMATEURS AND PROFESSIONALS

### **GR1306 Professional/Amateur Status**

1. Amateur. Regardless of one's equestrian skills and/or accomplishments, a person is an amateur if after his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, as defined in GR101, he has not engaged in any of the activities identified in paragraph 4 below.
  - a. In the Dressage Division, individuals are only eligible to compete as amateurs from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach age 22, see DR119.3.
  - b. For Amateurs in Jumper Sections, see JP118.
  - c. For Amateurs in Hunter Sections, see HU137-HU138.
  - d. For Amateurs in Eventing, see EV Appendix 3-Participation in Horse Trials.
2. Remuneration. Remuneration is defined as compensation or payment in any form such as cash, goods, sponsorships, discounts, or services; reimbursement of any expenses; trade or in-kind exchange of goods or services such as board or training.
3. Permitted activities by Amateur. An Amateur is permitted to do the following:
  - a. Accept reimbursement for actual expenses associated with conducting classroom seminars for a not-for-profit organization, therapeutic riding programs, or programs for charitable organizations approved in advance by the Federation.
  - b. Act as a camp counselor when not hired in the exclusive capacity as a riding instructor; assist in setting schooling fences without remuneration; give instruction or training to handicapped riders for therapeutic purposes.
  - c. Appear in advertisements and/or articles related to acknowledgement of one's own personal or business sponsorship of a competition and/or awards earned by one's owned horses.
  - d. Accept prize money as the owner of a horse in any class other than equitation or showmanship classes. Accept prize money in Dressage.
  - e. Accept a non-monetary token gift of appreciation valued less than ~~\$300~~ **\$1,000** annually.
  - f. Serve as an intern for college credit or course requirements at an accredited institution provided one has never held professional status with the Federation or any other equestrian National Federation. In addition, one may accept reimbursement for expenses without profit, as prescribed by the educational institution's program, for the internship. At the request of the Federation, an Amateur shall provide certification from the accredited educational institution under whose auspices a student is pursuing an internship that he is undertaking the internship to meet course or degree requirements.
    1. In the Hackney, Roadster, American Saddlebred, Saddle Seat Equitation, Morgan, Andalusian/Lusitano, Friesian, Arabian, and National Show Horse Divisions, college students may also accept a stipend (maximum value of the Federal minimum wage rate) and reimbursement of expenses during the internship served under the above paragraph.
    2. In the Hackney, Roadster, American Saddlebred, Saddle Seat Equitation divisions: If a college student serving as an intern exhibits a horse trained by the stable at which they are pursuing the internship, the intern shall only exhibit those horses solely owned by: the intern, the intern's family as defined by GR123, the college at which they are a student, or the stable where they are pursuing their internship. The intern shall not exhibit horses owned/leased nor co-owned by the stables' client(s).
  - g. Write books or articles related to horses.
  - h. Accept remuneration for providing service in one's capacity as a: clinic manager or organizer (so long as they are not performing the activities of instructor or trainer), presenter or panelist at a Federation licensed officials' clinic, competition manager, competition secretary, judge, steward, technical delegate, course designer, announcer, TV commentator, **social media influencer**, veterinarian, groom, farrier, tack shop operator, breeder, or boarder, or horse transporter .
  - i. Accept reimbursement for any bona fide expenses directly related to the horse (i.e. farrier/vet bills, entries). Travel, hotel, equipment, and room and board are not considered bona fide expenses.
  - j. Entries for non-under saddle classes in amateur sections at hunter, jumper or hunter/jumper competitions, must

be paid either (i) directly to the competition by the Amateur or by the Amateur's family or (ii) by someone whom the Amateur or the Amateur's family reimburses within 90 days of the last day of the competition for which entries were paid.

k. Accept educational competition or training grant(s).

***l. Accepts remuneration for teaching beginners and introducing the joy of horses in a non-commercial and non-competitive environment. Non-competitive environments are defined as those environments where instruction and/or training is not related to competing at any level.***

***m. Accept remuneration when serving as an apprentice ~~working student~~ and enrolled as a full-time college student. The Amateur may not receive remuneration for any riding, training, teaching, or showing in a competition environment. The Amateur may compete on horses that are not owned by them in open classes, but they may not compete on any non-owned horses in any class restricted to amateurs or adult amateurs. At the request of the Federation, an Amateur shall provide verification from the accredited educational institution where they are enrolled. An apprentice may continue to compete on self or family owned horses in any section the horse and/or rider are qualified to compete in.***

4. Professional based on one's own activities. Unless expressly permitted above, a person is a professional if after his 18th birthday he does any of the following:

a. Accepts remuneration AND rides, exercises, drives, shows, trains, assists in training, schools or conducts clinics or seminars.

b. Accepts remuneration AND gives riding or driving lessons, showmanship lessons, equitation lessons, trains horses, or provides consultation services in riding, driving, showmanship, equitation, or training of horses.

c. Accepts remuneration AND acts as an employee in a position such as a groom, farrier, bookkeeper, veterinarian or barn manager AND instructs, rides, drives, shows, trains or schools horses that are owned, boarded or trained by his employer, any member of his employer's family, or a business in which his employer has an ownership interest.

d. Accepts remuneration AND uses his name, photograph or other form of personal association as a horseperson in connection with any advertisement or product/service for sale, including but not limited to apparel, equipment or property ***AND gives riding or driving lessons, showmanship lessons, equitation lessons, trains horses, or provides consultation services in riding, driving, showmanship, equitation, or training of horses.***

e. Accepts prize money unless permitted in paragraph 3d or 3e above.

f. Rides, drives or shows any horse that a cohabitant or family member or a cohabitant or family member's business receives remuneration for boarding, training, riding, driving or showing. A cohabitant or family member of a trainer may not absolve themselves of this rule by entering into a lease or any other agreement for a horse owned by a client of the trainer.

g. Gives instruction to any person or rides, drives, or shows any horse, for which activity his cohabitant or another person in his family or business in which his cohabitant or a family member controls will receive remuneration for the activity. A cohabitant or family member of a trainer may not absolve themselves of this rule by entering into a lease or any other agreement for a horse owned by a client of the trainer.

h. Accepts remuneration AND acts as an agent in the sale of a horse or pony or accepts a horse or pony on consignment for the purpose of sale or training that is not owned by him, his cohabitant, or a member of his family, a farm/ranch/syndicate/partnership/corporation/business in which he, his cohabitant or a member of his family controls.

i. Advertises one's equestrian services such as training or instruction.

j. Accepts remuneration AND acts as an intern, apprentice, or working student whose responsibilities include, but are not limited to, riding, driving, showmanship, handling, showing, training or assisting in training, giving lessons/coaching and/or schooling horses other than horses actually owned by him.

k. Accepts remuneration in excess of rental fee for use of a facility, ring or school horses.

l. Accepts remuneration for such use AND uses commercial logoed items while on competition grounds unless

expressly permitted by applicable division rules.

5. Professional based on one's own activity along with another's. A person is also deemed a professional after his 18th birthday, if he accepts remuneration for his spouse, family member, or cohabitant engaging in any activity enumerated in 4 a-l above. For the purposes of this rule, the term cohabitant is defined as any individuals living together in a relationship, as would a married couple, but not legally married.

6. Violations of Amateur status. After an investigation as to proper status has been initiated, and upon request by the Federation and to the satisfaction of the Federation, an Amateur shall submit verifiable proof of Amateur status, including but not limited to a bill of sale for any horse(s) the Amateur is competing in classes restricted to Amateur Owners. If the Federation deems such proof insufficient, then the Federation may initiate proceedings under Chapter 6.

a. Any individual found to have knowingly assisted in the violation of the Amateur rule may also be subject to proceedings in accordance with Chapter 6. See GR1307.

7. Questions about whether you are an Amateur or Professional. For specific inquiries, email [amateurinquiry@usef.org](mailto:amateurinquiry@usef.org).

### **GR1307 Amateur Status**

1. Only active Federation members may obtain amateur status. Every person who has reached his/her 18th birthday and competes in classes for amateurs under Federation rules must possess current amateur status issued by the Federation. (Exception: This is not required for Opportunity classes except for the Dressage Division. If Opportunity classes are offered at Dressage Competitions or Regular/Local Competitions with "Open" Dressage classes and are restricted to amateurs, riders are required to have amateur status with the Federation). This status must be available for inspection or the competitor must have lodged with the competition secretary, at least one hour prior to such class, an application for such status provided by the Federation. Amateur status will be issued only on receipt of the application properly signed and is revocable at any time for cause. Foreign riders requesting Federation Amateur status, must be a Junior, Senior or Life Competing Member of the Federation (Exception: Equestrian Canada members in possession of current EC membership may sign for USEF Amateur status on a show by show basis at no cost). Any person who has not reached his/her 18th birthday is an amateur and does not require amateur status.

2. An amateur continues to be such until he/she has received a change in status from the Federation. Any amateur who wishes to be re-classified on the grounds that he/she has engaged or is planning on engaging in activities which would prevent him/her from continuing to remain an amateur must notify the Federation in writing.

3. There is no fee for amateur status for Senior Active or Life Members. A member will be deemed to continue his amateur status unless the member notifies the Federation in writing of a change.

4. If a person violates or does not comply with the above, he/she will not be eligible to compete in amateur classes and will not be entitled to an award in such classes and will be deemed guilty of a violation within the meaning of Chapter 7 in the event he/she does compete.

5. In the event a person is found to be a professional as a result of a protest or charge made in connection with a competition, all awards won by such person in amateur classes at such competition and subsequent competitions shall be forfeited and returned to the competition and the person shall be subject to further disciplinary action. The holding of an amateur card does not preclude the question of amateur standing being raised by a protest or charge.

6. The trainer may be subject to disciplinary action if an exhibitor who shows as an amateur is protested, and that protest is sustained by the Hearing Committee, and it is determined that the trainer had knowledge of their professional activities.

a. Any changes of status from professional to amateur, or vice versa, will be published on the Federation's web site.

7. An exhibitor who engages a person to ride, drive or show in halter in any amateur class and then remunerates such person beyond the extent to which such amateur is entitled as provided above in GR1306 will be subject to disciplinary action under Chapter 7.

8. Any person who under these rules is a professional and knowingly and falsely represents himself/herself to be an amateur by declaring or maintaining current amateur status issued by the Federation, and any person who violates any of the provisions of this rule will be subject to disciplinary action under Chapter 7.

9. A professional continues to be such until he/she has received amateur status by a vote of the Hearing Committee. Any professional who wishes to be reclassified as an amateur on the grounds that he/she has not engaged in the activities which made him/her a professional within the last twelve months must notify the Federation in writing. **The**

**Hearing Committee may at their discretion direct that an individual wait longer than twelve months to be reclassified as an amateur.**

- a. Such person shall submit to the Hearing Committee an amateur reclassification request which is supported by:
    1. A notarized letter signed by him/her outlining the horse related activities (using specific dates) which made said person a professional and outlining the activities performed within the twelve month period (or longer) since professional activities have ceased,
    2. Two or more notarized letters from any Senior Active Federation members stating the relationship with the applicant and outlining the applicants activities for the one year period preceding such written notification advising and testifying that the applicant has not engaged in any activities which would make him/her a professional as outlined in GR1306 during that period,
    3. A processing fee,
    4. Sign and declare amateur status on a current USEF membership application. The burden of proof of proving amateur status is on the applicant. The Hearing Committee may call for and/or consider any and all further evidence and facts which it deems pertinent. The decision of the Hearing Committee on the reclassification request shall be final.
  - b. Any changes of status from professional to amateur, or vice versa, will be published on the Federation's website.
10. Please contact the Federation office for information regarding international/professional licenses.