

**SHW900. AQHA-APPROVED JUDGES:** Designation as an AQHA-approved judge is a privilege, not a right, bestowed by the Judges Committee according to procedures formulated by it, to individuals whose equine expertise and personal character merit the honor. Such designation is revocable by the Judges Committee with or without notice and formal hearing, subject only to ultimate review by the Executive Committee, with or without notice and formal hearing.

**SHW901.** An individual's conduct as a member, exhibitor and judge must be exemplary; is subject to continual review by the Judges Committee, with an automatic review after five years of becoming an AQHA judge.

**SHW902.** An AQHA-approved judge shall not have a conflict of interest between AQHA's objective and their own personal business or pecuniary interests. Each judge should refrain from using his or her official status to further one's own personal or financial purpose. When such conflict of interest arises, the judge is expected to either withdraw the personal objective from the transaction in question or resign as an AQHA-approved judge, so he or she may pursue the personal objective. Breach of this ethical rule shall be subject to review.

**SHW903.** If a judge cannot exercise an objective opinion, free from possible prejudice, bias or outside influence, because of a connection with an owner, exhibitor or anyone else connected with the horse, or, for that matter, if such connection would appear to others as possible bias, whether or not the judge feels he or she would be affected, a judge must disqualify himself or herself.

**SHW904.** These following specific areas of conflict of interest are not exclusive and judges are ineligible to judge any horse in other situations not designated by this rule. Certain specific areas of obvious conflict of interest for judges include:

**SHW904.1** judging a horse that is owned or exhibited by anyone from whom he or she has received a salary, commission or any kind of remuneration for selling or buying any horse for that individual, whether or not a horse is concerned in the transaction, has been in the employ, or has represented such individual in any capacity for remuneration, within three months from the date of the subject show.

**SHW904.2** personally exhibiting a horse at a show or set of shows at which he or she is judging.

**SHW904.3** owning, in whole or part, a horse being exhibited at an approved show or set of shows held on the same show grounds in which that judge is officiating. However, the judge is allowed to judge speed events or **Level I** (Novice) classes and be allowed to show at the same show or set of shows on the same show grounds.

**SHW904.4** being involved in the management of a show while officiating as a judge at that show

**SHW904.5** judging a horse belonging to or being exhibited by any member of his/her immediate family (spouse, son, daughter, father, mother, sister, brother.)

**SHW904.6** judging a horse that he/she has been owner, trainer, agent in any capacity, or conditioner of that horse within the previous three months.

**SHW905. TO MAINTAIN APPROVAL AS A JUDGE,** an individual must:

**SHW905.1** maintain current individual AQHA membership

**SHW905.2** attend an AQHA-sanctioned judges conference once every two-years beginning January 1 of the year in which the indi-

vidual becomes an AQHA-approved judge; furthermore, all AQHA-approved specialized judges must attend a judges conference when their discipline is conducted.

**SHW905.3** attain a minimum of three credits from AQHA-approved shows per calendar year beginning January 1 of the year following the individual's approval as an AQHA-approved judge. In cases where four or more, show numbers are judged at the same show, or set of shows, only four credits will be counted against the maximum of 25 shows for that judge. AQHA-approved specialized judges must earn a minimum of one credit every three years beginning the date they go on the list of AQHA-approved judges. **This credit may be earned by judging an AQHA approved show or an alliance show in the discipline for which they are approved.** An individual who has served as a panel member for an AQHA-sanctioned judges conference; a panel member for an AQHA-sanctioned educational judging seminar; and/or an official judge for an AQHA-sanctioned qualifying exam will receive credit for one show judged.

**SHW905.4** hold and maintain a judges card with the alliance in that discipline (i.e NCHA, NRHA, NRCHA, USTPA, WCHA) to serve as a specialized judge.

**SHW906. GROUNDS FOR REMOVAL** as an AQHA-approved judge shall include, but not be limited to:

**SHW906.1** suspension from AQHA membership or denial of any privilege thereof.

**SHW906.2** failure to comply with AQHA's rules and regulations.

**SHW907.** Removal of an individual as an AQHA-approved judge, for any reason, shall be absolute, with no provision for automatic reinstatement.

**SHW908.** An individual who is suspended from AQHA membership or is denied AQHA privileges may not apply to become an AQHA-approved judge until the expiration of one year following reinstatement of AQHA membership or privileges.

**SHW909. INTERNATIONAL AQHA-APPROVED JUDGES** residing in an international country may make four trips or judge four shows in any one country in a calendar year, excluding Canada.

**SHW910. A JUDGE SHALL:**

**SHW910.1** judge an AQHA-approved event in accordance with all rules, regulations, directives and guidelines issued by AQHA.

**SHW910.2** honestly, fairly and impartially judge each horse exhibited to him or her, strictly on the horse's conformation and/or its performance as the rules of the particular event dictate.

**SHW910.3** at all times act in a professional manner.

**SHW910.4** disqualify any contestant for abuse of the horse.

**SHW910.5** eliminate any horse/exhibitor as an entry which he/she feels is in violation of the intent of AQHA's prohibited conduct rules, or which he/she does not feel has legitimately attempted to exhibit the horse to the best of the horse's ability.

**SHW910.6** adhere to the AQHA Judge Code of Ethics.

**SHW910.7** during an approved show, be present to meet his/her responsibilities under AQHA rules and shall be available to assist show management in meeting its responsibilities of rule compliance.

**SHW910.8** make every reasonable effort to judge a show after accepting a judging commitment. If unable to fulfill the commitment, the judge must notify show management in a timely manner to allow show management maximum time to secure a suitable replacement. The judge must also immediately notify AQHA in writing with a complete explanation of the failure to meet the commitment, including the time, date and manner that show management was notified.

**SHW910.9** contact an official of the show upon arrival in a city in which he/she is to officiate and advise him/her of his/her presence and location.

**SHW910.10** wear western attire, including hat and boots, while judging an AQHA-approved show except when judging a dual approved AQHA/USEF hunter competition when they may wear appropriate English judging attire.

**SHW910.11** be at least 21 years of age to serve as a specialized Level I (Novice) show judge or 25 years of age to judge all other approved shows/events.

**SHW910.12** accept mandatory retirement at age 75.

#### **SHW911. JUDGES MAY:**

**SHW911.1** judge two judged special events in the same state; province or country within one calendar year.

**SHW911.2** order any person or horse from competition for poor conduct of either.

**SHW911.3** at his/her discretion, refuse entry into the arena or remove an entry from a class for improper attire and/or equipment.

**SHW911.4** use the ring steward, other show officials or approved AQHA judges to assist in scoring individual jumps in jumping.

#### **SHW912. JUDGES MAY NOT:**

**SHW912.1** judge two consecutive years at the same show, set of shows or circuit except when judging cutting, working cow horse, roping, team penning, ranch sorting, speed events, ranch horse pleasure or versatility ranch horse where they may judge up to two consecutive years.

**SHW912.2** make more than three trips to one state, province or country to judge within one calendar year. One of the trips must be a single day show if three trips are made.

**SHW912.3** judge two shows within 150 miles of each other within 30 days, except he/she may judge multiple shows on the same grounds on consecutive days as long as the judge does not judge a particular class but one time during those shows.

**SHW912.4** appear on the show grounds more than one hour before the judging.

**SHW912.5** visit the stall area, nor visit with owners, trainers, exhibitors or owners' representatives, nor inspect or discuss any horse entered in the show before the judging (including the day prior to the contest).

**SHW912.6** visit, socialize or fraternize with any exhibitor the day prior to or during the show.

**SHW912.7** review the program until after the judging has been completed; but he/she shall be furnished a schedule of events by the show management prior to the judging.

**SHW912.8** ride or, in any manner, participate in the role of an exhibitor for a horse in the class while judging an event.

**SHW912.9** ask the exhibitor to change horses with another exhibitor.

**SHW912.10** rejudge a class once it has been judged.

**SHW912.11** change his/her score card (record) after awards have been presented unless a clerical error has occurred. In the event of a clerical error, validated by proper documentation, the clerical error must be corrected before show results are entered by AQHA.

#### **SHW913. IT IS THE JUDGE'S RESPONSIBILITY TO:**

**SHW913.1** control the cattle pens and treatment of all cattle in cattle classes.

**SHW913.2** tally the correct number of entries actually exhibited in each class and record the correct figure on the judge's report card.

**SHW913.3** complete, sign and return the judge's report card to AQHA within 10 days of the show.

**SHW913.4** have bridles dropped in at least one class per show.

**SHW913.5** allow exhibitors in individually worked classes who incur a penalty of 0 to complete the pattern as long as they stay within reasonable confines of the described pattern or course, stay within a reasonable working time allowed for the pattern or course and avoid abusive or excessive training.

**SHW913.6** submit all score sheets to show management to be posted.

**SHW913.7** rely on the ring steward to facilitate an exhibitor's request to speak directly to him/her. When an exhibitor makes a request through the ring steward or other show official for the judge's opinion concerning that exhibitor's horse, the judge will give his/her opinion courteously and sincerely in the presence of the ring steward or other show official.

#### **SHW914. IN ANY PERFORMANCE CLASS, the judge:**

**SHW914.1** shall not call contestants off the rail at any gait other than a walk, where horses are worked on the rail.

**SHW914.2** may, at his/her discretion, require the backing of only the finalists in the class where backing is required.

**SHW914.3** may at his/her discretion penalize the horse, anytime a horse is ridden with a hackamore and has an open, raw or bleeding sore that comes in contact with the hackamore, or if the horse appears sullen, dull, lethargic, emaciated, drawn or overly tired.

**SHW914.4** must disqualify a horse any time a horse's mouth is bleeding

**SHW914.5** is not to penalize a horse for the manner in which it carries its tail nor for normal response with its tail to cues from its rider or when changing leads. A judge may, at his/her discretion, penalize a horse for excessive or exaggerated switching or wringing of the tail or for a seemingly dead tail that merely dangles between the legs and does not show normal response.

**SHW914.6** the fall of a horse or rider being judged shall be cause for disqualification in all classes except for team penning and ranch sorting. A horse is considered having fallen when he or she is on their side and all four feet are extended in the same direction. Rider is considered to have fallen when he or she is not astride.

**SHW914.7** shall disqualify a horse any time its mouth is tied or fastened.

**SHW914.8** must inspect horses in at least one class per show by examining both sides, front and rear for signs of abuse or excessive training.

#### **SHW915 CLASS PLACINGS - A judge must place**

**SHW915.1** through nine places in classes where there are 9-34 qualified horses exhibited

**SHW915.2** through 10 places in classes of 35-39 horses

**SHW915.3** through 11 places in classes of 40-44 horses

**SHW915.4** through 12 places in classes of 45 or more horses.

**SHW915.5** All qualified horses in classes of nine or less. If a horse is disqualified, however, it is not to be placed regardless of the number of horses in the class.