

SAN DIEGO COUNTY 4-H HORSE AND PONY PROJECT RULES AND REGULATIONS

It is the responsibility of the 4-H member, their parents, and their project leader to read and know the rules. Rules are to be enforced by all parents/guardians, leaders, co-leaders and event management at any/all 4-H horse event(s).

Youth Eligibility

1. A 4-H rider, handler and/or participants of the 4-H Horse and Pony Project must be at least nine years of age by January 1st of the current 4-H year. Only enrolled 4-H Horse and Pony Project members may ride, handle, or exhibit a horse at any 4-H project meeting or event at any time.

Horse Identification Certificate

2. If an enrolled 4-H Horse project member wishes to participate in any 4-H Horse event with a horse, a Horse ID Certificate is required to be on file at the County office prior to the member's participation at the event. A separate Horse ID Certificate is to be turned in for each horse and member combination. While Horse ID's can be turned in throughout the year as needed, any/all Horse ID Certificates are to be turned in to the County office by January 1st of each 4-H year and must be accompanied by photos showing front and side views for the horse being registered in order for Horse Project members to be eligible to show at any County Fair. *Returning* 4-H Horse Project members who own and use the same horse as in the previous year do not have to submit another form for the same horse. . Once these ID's are turned in, they do not need to be redone unless there are changes to the horse and member combination. A member may have as many horses registered to them as they wish.

Horse Ownership/Leasing

3. Horse project members must have owned or leased their project horse for at least 60 days prior to any Regional competition, 90 days prior to any County competition and 120 days prior to the opening day of any County Fair or State Fair competition AND have a Horse ID on file with the County office for the horse they are exhibiting prior to the competition. Horse Project members may exhibit no more than two registered project horses at any one 4-H horse event at a time, despite being registered with multiple horses. *Members who lease horses must have a copy of the lease agreement with them at any 4-H event.*

Helmets

4. 4-H Horse Project members must wear a properly fitting ASTM/SEI approved helmet, fastened at all times, and heeled riding boots when handling, riding, or driving any horse or horse drawn carriage at any/all 4-H sponsored horse events.

Conduct at 4-H Sponsored Horse Events

5. Horses must be walked, both in hand and riding when moving through a parking, barn, or stall area at any 4-H sponsored horse event. Bareback riding is allowed during approved class/times or in the warm-up area prior to the approved class/times only. There is no riding double or riding in a halter allowed at any time at any 4-H sponsored horse event.
6. Stallions are not allowed to be ridden, handled, or present at any 4-H sponsored horse event.
7. Dogs must be kept on a leash no longer than 6 feet in length at all times. In addition, dogs must be kept at least 10 feet away from any/all horses or the rail of any arena at all times while at a 4-H sponsored horse event. It is preferred that dogs be left at home. *The event management has the authority to ask any one at a 4-H sponsored event to remove a dog that is disruptive or scaring horses.*
8. Tied horses must be watched at all times.
9. At any 4-H horse event or project meeting, the ratio of leaders/adults to horse project members shall be no less than one leader/adult to every three mounted riders. Inexperienced riders should never ride without supervision.
10. At any 4-H sponsored horse competition, horse project members are responsible for their own tacking and grooming. Horse project members who are not physically capable of tacking up their horse are encouraged to enlist the help of another, older 4-H Horse Project member. Leaders/parents may only assist to ensure the safety of the rider or horse. Failure to follow this rule may cause the Horse Project member in question to be disqualified from a portion of or the entire event. This is done at the discretion of the show management.
11. No adult may physically school/warm-up a horse at any 4-H horse event. The horse project member or a more advanced horse project member must do all the schooling/warm-up with adult coaching if needed. No coaching is allowed from the sidelines while the members are in the show ring, with the exception of gymkhana competitions. Excessive or unruly coaching (implying hurtful, loud, un-needed, or inappropriate) may permit disqualification. Coaching refers to any verbal statements, hand gestures, other body gestures or movements or facial expressions that are intended to correct a member while they are in the show ring. Failure to follow this rule may cause the Horse Project member in question to be disqualified from a portion of or the entire event. This is done at the discretion of the show management and the judge.
12. It is not consistent with California State 4-H policy to administer any drug or medication that could affect the performance or disposition of the horse resulting in an unfair advantage in the show ring. Questions concerning this issue should be brought before Horse Advisory or the show management. A veterinarian's certificate

may be required to prove the need for the drug or medication. Members should have in their possession a medical history including any drug administered to their horse at all 4-H sponsored events.

13. In the event of injury to a horse at a 4-H horse event, a quorum of two registered 4-H Horse Project leaders, event management, and the judge (if a judged event), is required to evaluate the horse to determine if the horse should be allowed to return to the competition. The involved horse project member, their parents, the owner of the horse and their Horse Project leader may provide their input, however, at the conclusion of the evaluation, the decision of the event management or the judge (if a judged event) shall be final. In the event the horse project member is no longer allowed to finish the event, they will be immediately refunded the remaining entry fees or they can substitute another project horse that they are registered with via the Horse ID Certificate.
14. **SHOW ATTIRE:** Clothing shall be neat and clean and either Western or English show clothes, but not a mix of both. Shirts must be tucked in. Collared, long-sleeve or short-sleeved shirts are acceptable, but no tank tops, t-shirts, or tops in violation of the 4-H dress code. Sleeveless shirts are allowed only if a Western jacket or English coat are worn over the top of them. Long sleeves must be worn rolled down and fastened when participating in any 4-H sponsored horse competition. Vests, jackets, and chaps, are optional. This rule must be followed at all shows, including gymkhana events.
15. A two minute gate call will be given at the beginning of each class. Riders not entering the arena within the two minute time frame may be excluded from the class. All horses must enter and exit the arena at a walk.
16. **Gymkhana:** All Gymkhana exhibitors must enter the arena prior to the start of the first gymkhana class for tack inspection. Additionally, the Gate Steward, or Safety Advisor, must check each rider's girth and saddle pad prior to the rider entering the arena for each gymkhana class.
17. Gymkhana riders must show control of the horse before and after each run. Failure to maintain and/or gain control of the horse prior to and after their run may disqualify the rider from that class. This will be done at the discretion of the judge and safety advisors present at the show.
18. At any 4-H sponsored horse event, any rider not having his or her mount under sufficient control may be dismissed from that event/class. Any horse or person whose behavior poses a danger to other horses or people can be excused from the show ring, the event and/or the event grounds at the discretion of the show management.
19. At any 4-H sponsored horse event, the judge or event management may disqualify any horse showing signs of visible lameness, injury, or illness. Horses should be fit and in good health in order to compete. A veterinarian's certificate may be requested to prove good health and the ability to perform at the event/competition.

20. Only recognized horse project leaders can and must sign all entry forms for their project members. By signing the form, the project leader is stating that the member has been working with and caring for their registered project horse for the required time period and has the skills to safely compete or exhibit their horse at any 4-H horse event. A leader may refuse to sign an entry form for any project member for any horse event if the leader feels that the member is not yet ready to exhibit that horse safely at a 4-H horse event.
21. Parents and members must also sign all entry forms. A completed up to date medical release form must be filed with the 4-H event management prior to participating in each 4-H sponsored horse event. It is a good idea for the project leader or group leader to them have a copy of the medical release form with them when the member is participating/exhibiting at any 4-H sponsored event, especially if the parents or legal guardians are not present at the event.
22. Arena etiquette: If your horse kicks or you have doubts about your horse kicking, you must to tie a red ribbon to the tail to warn others not to get too close. Failure to follow this rule may be grounds for disqualification from the event and is at the discretion of the event management.
23. Tack – Western: a shanked bit must be used on horses 6 years old or older. Horses older than 6 years are not permitted to show in a snaffle (D-ring, O-ring, or Eggbutt), regardless of their training and may be disqualified in any Western class at the discretion of the judge. A suitable Western style saddle is appropriate. The reins may be split, continuous, or romel. Protective boots/wraps are not permitted except in reining classes. A bosal is permissible, provided the horse is 5 years old or younger. Refer to USEF Western rules and regulations for bit and tack specifics, www.USEF.org. Breastplates are optional. Training aids such as martingales, draw reins, hackamores, boots and bandages are all prohibited. English: Regulation snaffles, Pelhams, Kimberwicks, and double bridles, all with cavesson nose bands, are recommended. For additional bit and tack specifics, refer to www.USEF.org under Hunter rules for more information. Gymkhana: All tack that is humane may be used. If excessive or abusive use of aids is observed, or if aids are used in front of the cinch, show management reserves the right to disqualify the rider. There will be no exceptions. All spurs are prohibited. Splint boots are permitted for horses, as well as leg guards for riders.
24. Any rude or un-sportsmanship like behavior can result in the person being excused from the show ring, the event and/or event grounds at the discretion of the show management. Such continued behavior will be referred to the San Diego County Leaders' Council for further disciplinary action. This can include being barred from any further 4-H event or program. No refunds will be given in this instance.

THIS SHOULD BE IN GUIDELINES, NOT AS A RULE

When riding in an arena with other riders, each rider should be aware of the distance between the horse in front of them and the horses behind them. When passing another horse and rider, always pass on the inside. Allow ample space between horses. When passing riders from the opposite direction, always travel left shoulder to left shoulder. Give beginning riders plenty of room. A fast moving horse could spook a green horse or rider. Be considerate.