

IEA Steward Guide



Thank you for contributing to the IEA by being a steward. This Guide will assist you as you navigate through the many roles and responsibilities in an IEA competition. This Guide is intended to supplement your existing knowledge. You should already have an excellent knowledge of the IEA rules, show policies, and the IEA show format. You need to determine that both horse and rider are level appropriate. All classes have testing requirements/limits as well. It is highly recommended to keep a copy of the rule book with you at all times. **All IEA stewards are required to be members of the IEA. (Rule 6501)**

Why is the role of steward so important?

First and foremost, rider safety, horse welfare, and fair play are your top priorities. Your primary role is to ensure that all riders and horses are capable of safely performing in the levels in which they are assigned. It is the coaches' responsibility to place riders in the appropriate division. Please note any concerns about rider placement in your Steward's Report. All show participants rely on your judgment and impartial decision-making skills. Not all decisions are black and white, so make sure to rely on your rulebook knowledge and what you believe is the fairest option for all involved. Every decision you make should be seen as an educational opportunity. (Rule 6700)

2-3 days before the show:

1. Check in with the show host: Although this is not required, it helps build a working relationship, and allows some time to talk before the competition. Show mornings can be very stressful for the show host, so now is a perfect time to iron out the details:
 - a. What time should you arrive?

- b. Is the show indoors or outdoors?
 - c. Approximately how many rides are expected?
 - d. How many horses will be provided? (Horses should be scheduled for no more than 5-8 classes and designated as an alternate in 1 class.) (Rule 4204.4)
 - e. Does the manager have any concerns or questions?
 - f. Be sure to let the host know what items you will need (e.g. horse grid, horse descriptions, courses/reining patterns, Steward's Report, and copy of the horse draw).
2. Research your travel route and have directions handy. Being on time is vital and sets precedence for the day.

The night before the show:

1. Every steward has his or her own personal routine. You want to be as physically and mentally prepared as possible. Find what works for you, and try to stick with it. Here are a few suggestions:
 - a. Pack several layers of clothing and a change of socks and shoes.
 - b. Bring a few snacks and drinks to help keep you hydrated and focused.
 - c. Remember to have essential steward supplies such as: pens, sharpie marker, highlighter, clipboard, Steward's Report, and copy of the rulebook.
 - d. You have a big day ahead of you. Get a good night's rest.

Show day morning:

1. When you arrive at the show there is no telling how stressful or chaotic the office will be. Be sure to check in with the show manager and secretary first to find out the following:
 - a. Inquire where the Accident Preparedness plan worksheet is located. This form is intended as a helpful tool for show hosts to develop a safety plan that works best for the competition.
 - b. Where and when does warm up start? Who is the schooling supervisor? (Rule 4502.1)
 - c. Introduce yourself to the official medical personnel. Develop a plan in case of emergency.
 - d. Let the show host know where you plan to watch the competition.
 - e. How will you communicate with the show staff? (i.e. judge, show manager, show office)
 - f. Review the warm-up pattern and make sure it is posted at the warm up ring. How do the courses look? Are they level appropriate? Do the ground lines, standards, and jump cups comply with the rules? (Rule 4404)

- g. How do the reining patterns look? Are they approved patterns and level appropriate? (Rule 7700)
 - h. Make a plan for the horse draw. Find out where, when, and how. Organize this now, so that you can supervise the draw right after warm-ups. (Rule 4503.1)
 - i. Does the secretary have an understanding of the point board, and all IEA required documents (e.g. judges cards, point sheets, add drop sheets etc.)?
 - j. 4th & 5th graders are now fully integrated into Future Teams, and may be used as point riders provided they are assigned to a class that may earn team points.
2. Horse warm-up! Your first big job as a steward is to watch all horses warm-up. Remember, it is the responsibility of the show manager to run warm up or have a schooling supervisor who is qualified by experience to assist you. (Rule 4502.1) Your focus should be determining if each horse is level appropriate or not, and make adjustments as needed. Show management should choose warm up riders that will best prepare each horse to compete. If you have any concerns regarding a warm up rider, please discuss these concerns with the show manager/schooling supervisor and adjust accordingly.
- a. Make sure all warm-up riders have signed a schooling rider waiver if they are not members. If they are not IEA members, the riders must be 18 years of age or older. (Rule 4501.2) If they are IEA members, they may not school horses over fences higher than their designated IEA competition level. (Rule 4501.2.4) Riders competing in a competition may not school horses until they have finished all phases of competition. (Rule 4501.2.4.1) Exceptions for open riders are outlined below.
 - b. Open riders may school horses **that are provided by their team** during a regular season show. During post season, open riders **may not** school horses until they are finished competing under any circumstances. Open riders are permitted to compete on a horse they have schooled when randomly drawn. Do not move the rider to the alternate. (Rule 4501.2.4.3, Rule 4501.2.4.4)
 - c. Introduce yourself to all warm-up riders as they come in the ring. Does each rider meet the guidelines to warm-up? Have them check in with you before and after warming up. You want to make sure that each horse jumps all fences in the directions and at the highest height over which they will show. Ensure that you feel comfortable with the amount of horses schooling in the ring at one time. If you feel as if there are too many horses schooling at once, please communicate with the schooling supervisor so that they may make adjustments.
 - d. Take notes on each horse. If you notice any issues (e.g. horse is spooky) make note of that. This attention to detail will help you make decisions if you are asked for re-rides later in the day.
 - e. Do the horses look level appropriate? Are they sound?
 - f. Do any of the horses need additional warming up before they show? For example, if there are horses warming up in the morning that do not show until

later in the day, it may be smart to have them briefly warmed up before any riders mount.

- g. Make sure all hunt seat horses warm-up with the recommended aids. For example, if a horse is marked “no spurs” on the description, make sure it jumps the final warm-up course without spurs. Be sure that all changes to the horse descriptions are clearly communicated to all coaches. All spur optional hunt seat horses must be shown in spurs provided by the horse provider that are no larger than 1/2 inch and must be smooth. Under no circumstances should a hunt seat rider wear their own spurs. (Rule 4507.6-10)
 - h. Western horses may school in whatever manner that best prepares them for competition. It is not mandatory to switch to a non-roweled spur for schooling purposes. Western riders should be prepared to supply their own ball (non rowled) or roweled spurs. (Rule 4507.10).
 - i. Western beginner riders may use only ball spurs in the beginner class when indicated in the horse description. The use of roweled spurs for beginners is not allowed, and will result in elimination. (4507.11)
 - j. Discuss any possible horse issues with the show host and work together to make any necessary updates. Schooling may occur at anytime during the show as needed. (Rule 4501.1.7) It is highly encouraged to have warm-up riders available if there is need for any re-schooling during the competition.
3. Horse Draw! There are several ways to conduct the horse draw. Ask the show host if they already have something planned (e.g. a live draw). No matter how they do this, make sure the following criteria are met in a fair manner:
- a. A quiet place with 1-2 helpers to record the numbers.
 - b. Are all point sheets in? The secretary should make sure that each team has turned in a point sheet. (Rule 4503.1) If for some reason they have not, and the draw must be done, let them know that the team’s point rider by default is designated to the first rider listed on the team’s entry form in their respective classes. After the draw is completed, there can be no changes to the point sheet unless the steward is involved. Any changes should only be allowed in an emergency or extreme situation and is up to your discretion. (Rule 8106.4)
 - c. The correct amount of horses listed on each draw sheet. There should be at least 1-2 alternates assigned for each class. The names of the alternates should not be publicly posted, but the steward must be aware of the alternate horses. Only the steward may choose the alternate when a re-ride is requested.
 - d. Let your draw helper(s) know who needs copies of the draw sheets (e.g. yourself, the posted copy, ingate person or warm-up ring supervisor, office or secretary).
 - e. Make any substitutions for riders who draw height or weight-restricted mounts. It is a good practice to discuss with the show host a baseline height limitation for ponies who may not have a weight limit (e.g. riders over 5’7” may have legs too long to safely ride a narrow pony) as well as a weight minimum for very large or heavy horses (e.g. a 80 lb, 4’10” child might not have enough mass/leverage to

ride a large draft-cross.) There are no specific IEA rules that detail these minimums or maximums- the IEA relies on your good judgment and common sense. Substitutions should only be made after you have had an opportunity to meet the rider in question.

- f. There are several effective methods of conducting the horse draw. You may supervise or appoint a designee for the drawing of horses. Some example methods of completing draw: Live draw with candy/trinkets, steward calling off random numbers from each class while a helper writes down the numbers in order on the draw sheets. Live draw can be fun for riders, but it does take a significantly longer amount of time, requires detailed preparation in advance, and requires more helpers to organize all riders. When conducting live draw, be sure that all items are identical. Above all, the draw needs to be fair and impartial.
4. Check in with the judge.
 - a. Has the judge ever worked an IEA show before? Do they have questions on class descriptions and/or tests allowed/required in each class?
 - b. Does the judge know to look for the best rider and not the best horse?
 - c. Let him/her know that you are available for any questions during the day, and that you may be conferring with them on issues that potentially pop up.
 - d. Explain the process of re-rides. Is the judge comfortable judging through possible issues?
 - e. Discuss flat class safety. You may have to disrupt a class if there are any safety issues. In the event that a rider or horse is unsuitable or unsafe for the class, the steward and/or judge may excuse the rider and/or horse.
 - f. Have a discussion about not penalizing riders for well-executed simple changes. Riders should be judged on smoothness and not necessarily on the number of strides in between jumps.
 - g. Inform the judge that the IEA defers to USEF rules in regards to hunt seat attire and coaching from the rail. (Rule 4508)
 - h. When two judges are used in a Western competition, a tie breaker judge for each class must be determined before the start of the competition (Rule 7601.5)
 - i. Appropriate use of the crop should not be penalized. Point out any horses that have specific recommendations.
 - j. Ask if the judge has anything he/she would like shared at the coaches meeting

Coaches Meeting:

1. You should attend the coaches meeting so that you may introduce yourself to all coaches, and set the precedence for the horse show. Make sure to introduce yourself to essential show staff/volunteers as well.
 - a. Ask all of the coaches to introduce themselves and say which team they are with.
 - b. Let them know how and where they can reach you if they have questions.

- c. Explain how to go about asking for a re ride. Only the rider's coach may ask for a re ride. They must simply ask for a re ride. It is vital to remind coaches that when asking for a re ride, it is not appropriate or sportsmanlike to be rude or argue a decision. Your job is to make a decision whether or not the issue is through no fault of the rider. (Rule 4505.1)
 - d. Share any important reminders to help the coaches out (e.g. no spurs for hunt seat and dressage beginners, no loud coaching from the sidelines etc. Western beginner riders are allowed spurs with stipulations). (Rule 4507.11)
 - e. Share any Horse Description updates. It is recommended that horse providers attend the meeting so that they can share additional horse information if need be.
 - f. Let coaches know that if time allows you will do your best to explain all re-ride decisions, but that all decisions are final. This is a courtesy educational opportunity for the coaches and not an invitation for a debate.
 - g. Discuss the importance of good sportsmanship from all coaches, riders, and audience members. Everyone should be courteous and respectful to all riders and horses. (Rule 4511)
 - h. Explain how the rider warm-up will be carried out. (Rule 4502)
 - i. Now is a perfect time for a bathroom break! You will want to be available ringside during schooling and competition, so squeeze this in before the day begins. While riders are in the show ring, **you must watch the ring.**
2. Check in with other show staff.
- a. Introduce yourself to ingate and warm-up ring officials.
 - b. Do they understand their roles?
 - c. Remind them of all warm-up rules. (Rule 4502)
 - d. Riders should not be eliminated for falling off or going off course in the warm-up.

Start of the show:

1. Watch all rides as closely as possible. You should always keep the safety of the riders and horses as your first priority. It is vital that you watch the ring at all times. You can not effectively steward an IEA event unless you are focussed on the horses and riders in the ring. If you happen to miss something, you should check with the judge for their opinion.
 - a. Keep an eye on your horse grid to make sure that all horses are being used fairly, and have enough energy to carry on. (Rule 4204.4)
 - b. Publicly announce and note any change in tack (crop/spur) that effect a horse's description throughout the competition.
 - c. Make note of any issues you see. This will help in case a coach asks for a re-ride during a class.
 - d. If you notice any long breaks in between trips, please feel free to talk to the show host to see if he/she needs help or tips to keep the show running efficiently. It is

not your job to manage the show, but helping the show run smoother by educating staff can be extremely helpful.

- e. When rider classification is called into question, it is your job to review the rider's ability for proper placement and make a written recommendation in the Steward's Report. If time allows, discuss your concerns with rider's coach. (Rule 6702)
 - f. In the case of a fall, or serious accident to someone at the show, the show manager should complete the Incident Report form.
2. Re-ride requests are a big part of a steward's role. It is your responsibility to confidently and effectively express your decision to the coach. (Rule 4505.1 and Rule 4505.7) Please remember, it is the duty of the coach to advocate for their riders. You should be approachable and friendly, but firm in all of your decisions. Your first thoughts should be whether or not the horse and/or rider are level appropriate. Did the rider try to ride through the situation? Please remember the following:
- a. Only coaches and the judge can request re-rides. If a parent approaches you, ask them to send the coach over. (Rule 4505.3) A coach may only request a re ride for their own riders.
 - b. Your decision is final. No one should be pushy or a poor sport.
 - c. Ask the judge if they are capable of judging through a minor situation in lieu of a re-ride.
 - d. Never offer a re-ride. It is up to the coach to ask prior to the card being signed by that judge for that particular class. (Rule 4505.2)
 - e. If a coach continues talking while you are considering a request, please feel free to politely ask them to stop.
 - f. You can also ask the judge to keep an over fences card open if you need to see the horse perform with another rider to make a determination if something is horse or rider error.
 - g. If a re-ride is granted in a flat class, the judge decides where to resume the class. (Rule 4505.6)
 - h. If you miss the ride in question, ask the judge for input.
 - i. Follow your instincts: 99% of the time your initial reaction is the right one. Do not let the words of a coach sway your decision.
 - j. Under unusual circumstance a judge may confer with the show steward to request a re-ride or excuse the rider from a class. (Rule 4505.3)
 - k. Remember that every now and then you may wish you made a different decision. For example, if you deny a re-ride for a horse that you end up pulling in the next class, feel free to talk to the coach and let them know their options and your opinion (i.e. if they should write a petition). Make notations regarding these issues in the Steward's Report.
 - l. Often the level of class is considered when deciding to remove a horse from competition. For example, a horse that is scheduled to compete in Open and Intermediate may behave in such a way that you will expect the Open riders to manage, but will remove it from the Intermediate classes.

- m. The less that you say to a coach about the way a rider performed the better. It is not the job of the steward to explain how the rider should be riding.
3. Rider Elimination:
- a. Team identifying logos and names shall not be allowed on Western show clothing. Failure to use appropriate attire will result in a score of zero. (Rule 4508.7)
 - b. In all classes where safety helmets are required, riders whose safety helmet becomes lost or unfastened while in the show ring will be disqualified and immediately excused from the ring. (Rule 4508.3)
 - c. Usage of spurs in the beginner classes in both Western, Dressage, and Hunt Seat. (Rule 4507.6)
 - d. Improper usage of crops and/or spurs. (Rule 4507.4)
 - e. Riders in all disciplines are expected to compete displaying the number assigned by show management. Should a rider compete without a number or with the wrong number, he/she **will not be eliminated** as long as he/she can be correctly identified. (Rule 4508.2)
4. Examples of Non-Protestable Decisions:
- a. Soundness of the horse or suitability of rider when determined by the steward and/or judge. (Rule 6400)
 - b. All judge's decisions are final.

Finishing up the day:

- a. Look over the point board, and break any ties if need be. (Rule 4510)
- b. Be sure to complete your Steward's Report and send a copy to the IEA Membership Office and Zone Administrator within 48 hours of the competition. Do not leave your report with the show host, as it is your responsibility to send in. (Rule 6701.13)
- c. Thank the show host and see if they have any questions or concerns before you leave. Feel free to offer feedback to the show host.

Thanks again for stewarding for the IEA! Please feel free to contact the IEA Membership Office with any questions, concerns, or suggestions.