

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Standard	12/1/2023	3/6/2023	

Rule Change Intent

Horses require adequate rest and REM sleep in a 24-hour period. While horses can rest during the day, sleep typically occurs after midnight in the dark hours. Conditions unsuitable for sleep (e.g. loud environments, bright lights, etc.) may limit the ability of horses to get adequate sleep which can lead to sleep deprivation and excessive drowsiness, impacting equine performance and wellbeing. There is ample science showing how sleep deprivation causes stress in horses particularly noted through behavioral changes such as spookiness or even collapsing while standing waiting for a class. Limiting a horse's ability to sleep may create a higher risk of injury to both horse and rider. Horses who are sleep deprived may have little regard for balance and often exhibit erratic and wild behavior. After reviewing the feedback received during the comment period, the committee recommends updating the language to that outlined in Draft 2 to allow for flexibility based on venue and breed or discipline needs.

Proponent Details

Safety

Contact Information

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Linked Rules

Comments

Committee Actions

AHHS

American Saddlebred

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 02/27/2023

Draft 1: The committee votes to disapprove the proposed rule change. Often times, competition management can not control the lighting. Some fire marshals, city and/or state codes, prohibit facilities from dimming or turning out lights due to safety reasons. The committee also noted that in some cases, the stabling is rated for human occupancy (so grooms can stay), therefore the lights cannot be turned off. Outside of the facility, city/state, regulations, the committee feels this would not be feasible for the Saddlebred community. Often times trainers are working horses early in the morning or late at night because that is the only time where rings and/or schedules allow.

Andalusian/Lusitano

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 01/25/2023

Draft 1: The committee agrees with the intention of giving horses time to rest, but due to safety concerns with lights being all the way off, they propose the wording be adjusted to say bright overhead lights must be turned off but that low lighting is permitted. The committee was also concerned for the safety of the people and horses that work at night.

ARHPA

ASHA

Carriage Pleasure Driving

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 01/31/2023

Draft 1: The committee disapproved this proposal due to concerns with enforceability and safety for people who may be working horses at night. The point was also made that at some facilities, lights cannot be turned off.

Competition Management

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 02/21/2023

Draft 1: The committee agrees with the intent of the proposal but is concerned with the enforceability of the rule. They had concerns regarding safety for when people are working at night in the barns. There was also the concern that there is no consistency across show grounds when it comes to lighting which may cause problems with shows being in compliance with this rule. The committee did suggest the possibility of "low lighting" being permitted at night to alleviate the safety concerns.

Connemara

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 01/31/2023

Draft 1: The committee approved the proposal but recommended that USEF encourage prize lists to include the placement of the light controls to aid members in ease of locating them.

Dressage	
Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 02/22/2023	Draft 1: A timeframe between the hours of 11:00pm and 4:00am would more appropriate, taking in to consideration grooms/ feedings/braiders/etc.
Friesian	
Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 02/02/2023	Draft 1: This committee agrees with the intent of the proposal but is concerned with the enforceability of the rule. They had concerns regarding safety for when people are working at night in the barns. There was also the concern that there is no consistency across show grounds when it comes to lighting which may cause problems with shows being in compliance with this rule. The committee did suggest the possibility of "low lighting" being permitted at night to alleviate the safety concerns.
Hackney	
Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 02/13/2023	Draft 1: The committee agrees with the intent of the rule change; however, this practice would not be practical for Hackney competitions. Often, competitions occur during times when the temperature is elevated. The best and safest time to work horses is when the temperature has dropped for the evening. In addition, competitions often run late, leaving the late hours of the evening open to work horses.
National Hunter Committee	
Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 02/06/2023	Draft 1: The committee questioned the enforceability of this rule and also felt this could be a safety and liability issue for those working in the barns at night.
Paso Fino	
Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 12/06/2022	Draft 1: The committee recommends disapproval of this rule change. While the committee agrees with the intent of the rule change, as currently written, it could not be implemented within their breed. The hours being suggested are not suitable for the Paso Fino breed and would make it nearly impossible for trainers and exhibitors to abide by adding a severe hardship on business. Often the rings do not become available until the completion of the show which would run into the rest period being proposed. The committee believes in putting the welfare/safety of the horse first, but at this time does not agree with the proposed language.
PFHA	
Roadster	
Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 02/22/2023	Draft 1: This rule change is not practical for the Roadster show industry. Often times trainers are working horses/ponies late into the evening or early in the mornings because of ring and time availability. The committee also mentioned that certain facilities, states, and cities have their own regulations and will not also the lights to be dimmed.
Saddle Seat Eq	
Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 12/07/2022	Draft 1: The committee recommends disapproval of this rule change. While the committee agrees with the intent of the change, they feel there is more work to be done to accommodate the breed/discipline groups. Could there possibly be a carve out for each breed/discipline? The rule as currently written, would not work for the equitation discipline. Often times, trainers are shipping in late or working horses well into the night. Competition managers also stated that some facilities have requirements for the lighting to stay on and/or do not provide access to shut it down to competitions for liability and safety reasonings. The committee believes in putting the welfare of the horse first, but would like more time to discuss how this could be achieved without significantly impacting the discipline.
Shetland	
Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 01/24/2023	Draft 1: The committee feels this would be a safety issue for people in the barns at night and asks who would be liable if an accident were to happen due to lack of light.
USDF	
Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 02/24/2023	Draft 1: While we support the concept of trying to provide adequate rest for horses at competitions, this proposal as written it presents a number of health, safety and enforcement concerns. Some facilities will deem it necessary to lock the light switches/boxes to ensure compliance and this will present serious problems in the event of a horse emergency or even an owner doing a late-night barn check. It would also make it either impossible or unsafe to perform the night checks required at certain competitions. In other locations, where the facility may prohibit locking of the lighting, it will be impossible to guarantee compliance.
USEA	
Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 03/01/2023	Draft 1: Although all agree with the concept, the proposal as written, does not include any provision for enforcement or named consequences for violating the rule, and extenuating circumstances, i.e. sick horse, late arrivals.
USHJA	
Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 12/15/2022	Draft 1: It's a liability issue and safety issue for braiders and nightwatch. If an emergency occurs, darkness makes it hard to get into the barn easily to provide assistance. There are too many legitimate reasons to be in the barn.
Veterinary	
Welsh	
Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 12/08/2022	Draft 1: This rule is not enforceable and is impractical for many different breed and discipline competitions.

Western Committee

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 02/01/2023

Draft 1: The committee disapproved of this proposal due to safety concerns for people who walk the stables at night, for grooms who are working at night, and trainers/horses schooling in the middle of the night. The committee also raised the concern that some facilities have their light switch controls locked, it would cost the show money to have someone from the grounds come late and then again early every day to turn them off and on at the appropriate times.

Western Dressage

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 01/24/2023

Draft 1: The committee raised the question of who would enforce this rule. They were also concerned for the safety of people traveling through the barn at night and possible accidents that could occur. A recommendation made was to educate people on the necessity of a horse getting rest at night, but not make it mandatory.

GR1215 Stabling

3. At competitions which offer overnight stabling, adequate lighting must be provided.

4. *For six consecutive hours overnight, stabling must have minimal lighting and noise to allow stabled horses to rest adequately.*

4. 5. It is recommended that at Level 4 and Level 5 Dressage Competitions, and at competitions with an A rated division provide, upon request of the official competition veterinarian, a suitable area, protected from the elements, secured from public view, adequately lighted, with adequate electrical supply and running water, to serve as a first aid station for the emergency treatment of ill and injured horses.

5. 6. Additional stabling requirements for Dressage Competitions are listed in the Dressage Levels chart posted on the Federation website.