

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Standard	12/1/2025	5/5/2025	

Rule Change Intent

Adopt some FEI penalty rules for USEF levels in national competitions. Additional references to USEF High Performance classes are proposed to be removed as this language is outdated and no longer in use.

Proponent Details	Contact Information
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Linked Rules	Comments
DR 119 (177-24), DR 119 (178-24), DR 119 (180-24), DR 126 (182-24), DR 128 (183-24), DR 129 (184-24), DR 121 (194-24), DR 121 (196-24)	

Andalusian/Lusitano

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 03/27/2025

Arabian

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 03/31/2025

Connemara

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 03/25/2025

Council - Natl Breed & Discipline

Morgan

Draft 1: No Action 03/20/2025

ParaEquestrian

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 04/15/2025

USDF

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 04/09/2025

Draft 1: USDF approves this RCP in concept but not as written. In DR122.3, we believe that the percentage penalty/penalties should be deducted from the final score not from the mark for the movement, which would then eliminate the need to address the handling of coefficients. Additionally, paragraph I. should be deleted as it is a duplicative of paragraph 5.j.ii. and paragraph 5.j.iii should be deleted as it is duplicative of DR122.3.

DR122 Execution and Judging of Tests.

3. Voice. The use of the voice or other intentional audio aids in any way whatsoever or clicking the tongue once or repeatedly is a serious fault involving the deduction of two marks from those that would otherwise have been awarded for the movement where this occurred. In movements with a coefficient, judges must deduct only one mark so that the final mark, after the coefficient is applied, is deducted by two versus four points.

5.j. Other Penalties (Technical Faults).

1. For **all national tests and levels**, designated USEF High Performance classes all of the following are considered (technical faults), and 0.5% (zero point five percentage points) will be deducted per (fault) by each judge. These deductions are not cumulative and will not result in elimination (including for Freestyle tests) except as noted below. It is the responsibility of the Judge at C to decide whether a penalty should be applied and the other judges' sheets should be marked accordingly to ensure consistency.

~~1. Entering the space around the arena with a whip or with boots/bandages on the horse's legs or with discrepancy in dress (e.g. lack of gloves);~~

~~2. Entering the dressage arena with whip or with boots/bandages on the horse's legs or with discrepancy in dress (e.g. lack of gloves) will entail elimination;~~

~~3. Not entering the arena within forty-five (45) seconds; entering more than ninety (90) seconds after the bell entails elimination;~~

~~4. Entering the arena before the sound of the bell;~~

~~i. 5. For Freestyle classes, entering the arena after more than thirty (30) seconds of music but within ninety (90) seconds;~~

~~ii. 6. If the Freestyle test is longer or shorter than stipulated on the test sheet, zero point five percentage points (0.5%) will be deducted from the total artistic score; for other technical faults 0.5% (zero point five percentage points) will be deducted per fault from the technical score.~~

~~iii. 7. Using voice or clicking the tongue repeatedly;~~

~~iv. 8. Athletes not taking the reins in one (1) hand at the salute.~~

2. Please review the championship format for the U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions for specific rules for that competition.

k. Judges may not mark or deduct points for an error for any reason other than as described in DR122.5; i.e. dress code violations (DR120) cannot be penalized by an error.

~~l. For USEF High Performance qualifying and selection trials, if **if** the Freestyle test is longer or shorter than the stipulated time on the test sheet, zero point five percent (0.5%) will be deducted from the total artistic score.~~

7. l. After the sound of the bell, the competitor should enter the arena at A as soon as possible.

Exceeding 45 seconds before entering the arena after the bell has sounded will entail elimination. In the Freestyle, the rider has 45 seconds to signal to start the music; however, exceeding 75 seconds before entering the arena after the bell has sounded will entail elimination. ~~Exception: For USEF High Performance **U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions**, NAYC qualifying **classes** and selection trials, entering the arena over 45 seconds but within 90 seconds after the bell has sounded be penalized for an error as specified under DR122.5. Exceeding 90 seconds will entail elimination except where a valid reason is accepted by the Judge at "C" (losing a shoe, etc.).~~ No competitor can be required to ride prior to their scheduled time except as required in GR830.