

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Standard	12/1/2025	11/9/2024	

Rule Change Intent

In an effort to align more closely with the edited GR838, the National Hunter Committee recommends updating the equine welfare rules in both the hunter and equitation chapters. These changes include a reference to GR838 for acts that are prohibited. To avoid repetitiveness between the discipline chapters and the GR, there are strikeouts of actions included in GR838. This updated unethical treatment of the horse also includes additional language on how many times a horse may be struck with a whip consecutively.

Proponent Details Contact Information

National Hunter Committee

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Linked Rules Comments



## **EQ 104 Horse Welfare Unethical Treatment of the Horse (see also GR8389)**

1. **Any acts included in GR838 are prohibited. In addition, the following acts are prohibited:**

- a. ~~Riding an exhausted horse~~
- b. ~~Lunging a visibly exhausted horse.~~
- c. ~~Excessive pressuring of a tired horse.~~
- d. ~~Riding or lunging an obviously lame horse.~~
- ea. Chasing a horse with a whip or other inappropriate use of the whip.
- fb. Appendages and attachments **to whips** are prohibited, including but not limited to bags and flags.
- gc. Excessive and/or disruptive crackling of the whip.
- gd. **Striking of the horse with the whip more than three consecutive times.**
- h. ~~Excessive use of a whip on any horse in a stall, aisle, schooling area, competition ring or elsewhere on the competition grounds. The use of a whip must be for a good reason, done at the appropriate time, in the proper place and with appropriate restraint. Excessive whipping will not be tolerated.~~
- ie. Any striking of the horse's head (on the poll or forward of the poll) shall be deemed excessive.
- j. ~~Repeated jerking on the reins and sawing on the bit unless applied to an unruly horse that is jeopardizing its own safety or the safety of its rider.~~
- k. ~~Improper use of the bit resulting in bleeding, broken skin or broken mucous membrane.~~
- l. ~~Excessive use of the spurs or spurring resulting in broken and bleeding skin.~~
- mf. Rapping the legs of a horse with the butt end of a riding crop or other implement.
- n. ~~Use of any substance to induce temporary heat causing hyper-sensitization.~~
- eg. **Manual Poling, or the use of offsets (see GR839).**
- ph. Use of a wire or chain in conjunction with any schooling jumps.
- qi. Use of electronic shock devices in schooling or showing.
- rj. Use of shackles, hock hobbles and similar devices, with the exception of kicking chains while the horse is in the stall or in transport. This does not prohibit the use of rubber or plastic exercising devices.
- s. ~~Showing a horse with hypersensitive, raw or bleeding sores around the corneets, pasterns, legs or body.~~
- tk. Use of laser beam devices anywhere on the competition grounds, except in an exhibition or if required in class specifications. (Exception: Lasers used in a therapeutic manner).
- ul. Withholding of feed or water for prolonged periods.
- vm. Letting blood from a horse for other than diagnostic purposes.
- w. ~~Inhumane treatment of a horse in a stall, aisle, schooling area, competition ring or elsewhere on the competition grounds, by any person.~~
- xn. Use of any device capable of emitting a flame or spark in and around the schooling/warm-up and competition rings during scheduled competition sessions.  
(re-letter accordingly)

2. ~~Regular and local competitions. Competitors found to be in violation of these rules by the Competition Steward or other Federation Official shall be eliminated/disqualified from competing within the upcoming 24-hour period and shall forfeit all entry fees for such competition. In addition, after consultation between Competition Management, the Steward, or other official involved, and a Senior Judge in the division, additional penalties including disqualification from the balance of the competition may be imposed. All such violations must be recorded in the Steward's Report and, if cruelty or abusive behavior is evident, it will be reviewed by the Federation for such action as may be deemed appropriate to the particular circumstances.~~

### **2. Conduct in the competition ring:**

- a. **Any action against a horse by a competitor in the ring, deemed excessive by the judge, may be penalized by official warning and/or elimination from the class.**
- b. **Such action(s) could include but are not limited to acts described in GR838 in addition to EQ104.1.**
- c. **In addition, after consultation with the Competition Manager and Competition Steward, additional penalties, including one or more of the following: the issuance of an official**

*warning card, disqualification from competing within the upcoming 24-hour period, disqualification from the balance of the competition.*

*d. All such violations must be recorded in the Steward's Report.*

*3. Conduct outside of the competition ring: Any action(s) against a horse by an exhibitor, deemed excessive by a judge, Competition Steward, Certified Schooling Supervisor, or Competition Veterinarian anywhere on the competition grounds may be punished by official warning or elimination from the class. Such action(s) may include but are not limited to acts described in GR838 in addition to EQ104.1. In addition, after consultation with the Competition Manager and Competition Steward, additional penalties, including one or more of the following: the issuance of an official warning card, disqualification from competing within the upcoming 24-hour period, or disqualification from the balance of the competition. All such violations must be recorded in the Steward's Report.*

*4. Disqualified competitors will forfeit all entry fees for disqualified classes.*

*5. The imposition of any of the above penalties will not preclude additional disciplinary action against the individual in accordance with GR838 Unethical Treatment of the Horse.*

*6. Soundness: In a case of unsoundness sufficiently severe to be considered abusive, the judge(s) must eliminate the competitor from that class and inform the competition manager, who in conjunction with the Official Veterinarian and the Steward, will evaluate disqualifying the horse from further participation in the competition.*