

## **Compliance FAQ for Competition Managers and Licensed Officials**

### **How does the Compliance Department work with managers and licensed officials?**

One of the ways the Department works with managers and licensed officials is by conducting competition site inspections. The Department reaches out to the managers before, during, and after these inspections. Compliance staff assess USEF rules compliance and competition standards while they are at the show and communicate what they find to the managers and the steward or TD. This work enables the Compliance Department to suggest improvements and required changes for the managers to implement to meet the expectations for a positive and safe competition environment for members and their horses.

### **How does the Compliance Department decide which competitions to inspect?**

The decision to conduct an on-site assessment is determined through a holistic review of USEF-licensed competitions, including assessment of Steward and TD reports, member evaluations, and discussions with USEF staff. Staff resources and time also dictate which competitions we evaluate. The Compliance team also follow up on previous competition assessments to verify that the competition has implemented any previous required improvements.

### **Approximately how many competitions does the Compliance Department inspect per year?**

While this figure is variable, in recent years, the Compliance Department has inspected between thirty-five and sixty-five competitions each year.

### **What does the compliance representative look for during an onsite inspection?**

The compliance representative assigned to the competition checks into areas of concern that previously have been communicated through steward or TD reports or Members' Confidential Evaluations. Such items may include reported concerns with facility maintenance, management, stabling, footing, operations, or other fairness or safety concerns. Talking with participants at each competition to gather their input about their experiences is an essential part of the compliance inspection process.

### **What are examples of commonly encountered areas of concern noted by compliance representatives during inspections?**

- Compliance representatives may address USEF rule or standard-related items with the competition manager and officials while onsite. Additionally, the representative may point out areas that may be a safety concern. Below are some examples: Lack of competition/schooling/exercise/lunging area footing maintenance
- Lack of signage (SafeSport, COVID-19, parking, etc.)
- Poor sharps container maintenance or incorrect types of sharps containers found
- Poor drainage at horse wash areas
- General lack of facility maintenance, such as broken boards or exposed nails in the paddock areas
- Uneven stall flooring, gaps under walls/doors, or other possible safety hazards in the stabling area
- Loose dogs
- Mixed vehicle and horse traffic in a busy or crowded area

Do not hesitate to reach out to the Compliance Department if you have questions about any of the items mentioned above, or if you have any other questions. The best way to contact us is by sending an email to [compliance@usef.org](mailto:compliance@usef.org).

**What happens after a compliance inspection?**

After concluding the inspection, the compliance representative drafts a report which notes identified areas for improvement, as well as areas where the competition exceeded expectations. This information is recorded in USEF's database and shared with internal staff for their review. A letter is then sent to the manager after the inspection and review, which captures the overall content of the report such as which areas must be improved, recommended areas for improvement, and areas that may have exceeded expectations. Managers can expect to receive a follow-up letter three to four weeks after the compliance inspection.

**How can the Compliance Department help competition managers?**

The goal of the Compliance Department is to engage collaboratively with USEF members by investigating and evaluating rules compliance and competition standards to safeguard horse welfare and promote fairness, safety, and enjoyment. Meeting this goal would not be possible without working with competition managers and licensed officials to make improvements at both privately owned and rented facilities across the United States. By making suggested improvements and noting required improvements, the Compliance Department strives to point out areas where improvements are needed in addition to areas where exhibitors have expressed their desire for improvements.

We also recognize that many competition managers rent facilities and are not in a position to make necessary facility improvements. In those instances, it is strongly encouraged that the manager shares the letter sent to them by USEF following an inspection with the facility management team. If there are further questions from the facility management team following the inspection, the Compliance Department welcomes having an open conversation with the facility management team and encourages the competition manager to make this suggestion. Doing so will ensure that any required improvements would meet USEF rules and standards.

**What happens if the areas of concern identified at the competition are not addressed?**

The Compliance Department's goal is to work collaboratively with the manager. However, if there are recurring safety concerns or noted areas for improvement which are not addressed in a prompt and timely manner, USEF may place additional conditions upon a license or may not renew the license entirely.