

**Implementation Guide for Licensed Officials**  
**GR 1037.1 – Warning Card System**  
Effective April 1, 2025

**What Has Changed**

The Warning Card System rule (formerly titled Yellow Warning Card System – Stewards and Technical Delegates) was amended to encourage and empower Judges, Stewards, and Technical Delegates to address conduct as it happens and correct behavior that should not be repeated. As part of the revision of this rule, the United States Equestrian Federation (“Federation”) focused on clarity and flexibility by streamlining the existing Yellow Warning Card process and adding a Recorded Warning process to provide a mechanism for addressing less egregious behavior.

This document is intended to serve as a guide to the implementation of the Federation’s newly revised GR1037, Warning Card System, and is not intended to supersede the rule. For the full text and updates of the rule, see [GR1037](#).

**Recorded Warning v. Yellow Warning Card**

<b>Type of Warning</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<b>Recorded Warning</b>	To address minor offenses such as behavior that, even if unintentional, should not be repeated.	Examples may include, but are not limited to, loose dogs, one-off or uncharacteristic outburst, incorrect attire, minor incorrect equipment, minor or unintentional instances of unethical treatment of the horse, or issues discovered prior to competing or while generally on the grounds.
<b>Yellow Warning Card</b>	To address non-minor offenses that are not severe enough to warrant more formal disciplinary action through the Federation Regulation Department.	Examples may include, but are not limited to, unethical treatment of the horse, failure to sign entry blank and waiver, unsportsmanlike behavior toward officials and/or show staff, incorrect or illegal equipment, repeated loose dogs or dogs interfering with operations or lunging at people or animals, or conduct that endangers others.

Nothing in this rule prohibits or is intended to prohibit or limit your ability to give an individual a verbal warning. If the conduct persists despite the verbal warning, a Recorded Warning or Yellow Warning Card may be appropriate depending upon the specific circumstances of the conduct and the persistence of the conduct despite the verbal warning.

You are not required to provide a verbal warning prior to issuing a Recorded Warning or Yellow Warning Card. You may issue a Recorded Warning and Yellow Warning Card to the same individual at the same competition if circumstances are escalating and both types of warning are warranted.

### **Addressing Unethical Treatment of the Horse**

As you are aware, recent changes to [GR838](#) expanded the scope of the rule to address action or inaction that may compromise the horse's health, safety, or wellbeing, including behavior that causes or is likely to cause the horse pain, a state of obvious distress, or unnecessary discomfort.

If you observe conduct or substantiate a report of conduct that you believe may qualify as unethical treatment of the horse, you should address that conduct by issuing a Yellow Warning Card or by issuing a Yellow Warning Card **and** submitting an unethical treatment report through the [Online Reporting Portal](#). Our goal is to have the conduct addressed and documented immediately through issuing the Yellow Warning Card, then filing an unethical treatment report form and collecting, preserving, and submitting witness statement(s), video(s), and photo(s) of the conduct.

### **How to Issue a Recorded Warning or Yellow Warning Card**

The process for issuing either a Recorded Warning or a Yellow Warning Card will be completed online. Forms are being updated and will be available to you by April 1, 2025.

1. Use the new forthcoming tile on your USEF Dashboard to complete and submit the online form. The form will allow you to select whether you are issuing a Recorded Warning or a Yellow Warning Card. Be sure to submit the online form in a timely manner. This means prior to the completion of the competition or within a day of the last day of the competition.
2. A copy of the warning will be emailed automatically to the individual's email address on file, as well as emailed to the issuing Licensed Official.
3. Make sure that your Steward/Technical Delegate Report accurately reports the number of Recorded and Yellow Warning Cards issued (if any) at the competition.

The issuance of a Recorded Warning or Yellow Warning Card is final and not appealable. In addition, a list of Recorded Warnings and Yellow Warning Cards issued during the preceding 12 months will be posted on the forthcoming Warning Card page of the website.

**IF ANYONE ATTEMPTS TO INFLUENCE YOU OR INTERFERE WITH YOUR DECISION TO ISSUE A RECORDED WARNING OR YELLOW WARNING CARD, PLEASE REPORT IT IMMEDIATELY TO [MAKEAREPORT@USEF.ORG](mailto:MAKEAREPORT@USEF.ORG).**

### **Impact of Recorded Warnings and/or Yellow Warning Cards**

Issuing a Recorded Warning or Yellow Warning Card does not preclude the Federation from seeking further penalties under Chapter 7 of the Rules.

If an individual receives three (3) or more Recorded Warnings or two (2) or more Yellow Warning Cards within a twelve-month period, the Federation will levy a fine or seek to suspend that individual for at least two months.

If you have questions about the revisions to GR1037 or the process for issuing Recorded Warnings and Yellow Warning Cards, please email [makeareport@usef.org](mailto:makeareport@usef.org).