

UNITED STATES EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION, INC.
SELECTION PROCEDURES
2026 FEI WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS – AACHEN, GERMANY
AUGUST 12-16, 2026
DEFENDER U.S. EVENTING SQUAD

1. SELECTION SYSTEM

1.1. Minimum eligibility requirements for an athlete to be considered for selection to the Squad:

1.1.1. Nationality/Passport requirements:

- Athlete must be a national of the United States at the deadline for the application of intent through to the end of the 2026 FEI World Championship – Aachen, Germany (“Championship”). Athlete must hold a valid U.S. passport that will not expire for six months after the conclusion of the Championship.

1.1.2. Minimum International Federation (IF) standards for participation:

- All Athletes and Horses wishing to compete on the Championship Squad (“Squad” or “Team”) must achieve the following minimum eligibility requirements (MERs) as a combination between January 1, 2025, and FEI Nominated Entry Deadline (“Qualifying Period”) to be eligible to compete in the Championship (see the [FEI Rules for Eventing](#), Article 517). Combinations must achieve their MER result at:
 - One (1) qualifying result at a CCI5*-L; or
 - One (1) qualifying result in a CCI4*-L AND 1 qualifying result in a CCI4*-SThe list of selected events in 2025 and 2026 where an MER may be achieved is published on the FEI Website.
- An FEI qualifying result is achieved by completing the above Competitions within the minimum parameters of an all-round performance, with: (i) Dressage test: Not more than 45 penalty points (or 55%), Dressage (no more than forty-five (45) penalty points); (ii) Cross Country test: A clear round at obstacles (activating a maximum of one frangible device or having a maximum of one missing flag will maintain the MER result on Cross Country), not more than 75 seconds over the optimum Cross Country Test for the one, two, three and four star level competitions. At CCI5*-L, the maximum time by which the optimum time may be exceeded is 100 seconds; (iii) Jumping Test: Not more than sixteen penalties at obstacles.
- The Athlete must have been born on or before December 31, 2008, making them a minimum of eighteen (18) years of age in the year of the 2026 FEI World Championships (see the [FEI Rules for Eventing](#), Article 503.2).
- The Horse must meet all FEI eligibility requirements, including the minimum age to participate in the 2026 FEI World Championships (see the [FEI Rules for Eventing](#), Article 503.4).
- The Athlete and Horse must be registered and in good standing with the FEI at the time of FEI Nominated Entry, and until the conclusion of the Championship.
- To be eligible for participation in the Championship, Athletes and Horses must comply with all current [FEI Rules & Regulations](#).
- Individual horse owners must be in good standing with the FEI at the time of FEI Nominated Entry, and until the conclusion of the Championship.

1.1.3. Other requirements:

- The Athlete and any individual horse owner of U.S. horses must be a Competing Member of the United States Equestrian Federation (“USEF”) in good standing at the time of FEI Nominated Entry, and through the conclusion of the Championship.
- Horses must be recorded with USEF pursuant to USEF General Rule 1102 and in good standing with USEF or recorded and in good standing with their National Federation at the time of FEI Nominated Entry, and through the conclusion of the Championship.
- Horses must have a valid FEI passport by the deadline for the Application.
- **Application** – Athletes wishing to be considered for the Championship must complete the online application with the application fee through their [USEF Athlete Dashboard](#). Applications must be submitted online on or before 11:59 PM ET, April 17, 2026, along with the non-refundable fee in the amount of seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) per application. Athletes must list any and all horses they wish to be considered for the Team on their Application by the stated deadline. Each Athlete must certify, by signing the Application, that they have received, read, understand, and agree to be bound by these Selection Procedures for the Championship, [the USEF Code of Conduct](#), [the USEF Release, Assumption of Risk, Waiver and Indemnification](#), [the U.S. Center for SafeSport Code](#), [the USEF Safe Sport Policy](#), including the [Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies](#), [the USEF Non-Discrimination Policy](#), and the [USEF Whistleblower & Anti-Retaliation Policy](#).
- Horse Participation Consent Agreement: Individual owners of U.S. horses named to the FEI Nominated Entry must sign the USEF Horse Participation Consent Agreement ([Attachment F](#)) prior to the FEI Nominated Entry deadline. If an owner is under 18 years of age, then a parent or legal guardian must sign too. The failure of a U.S. horse owner, or parent/legal guardian if applicable, to timely sign the USEF Horse Participation Consent Agreement may result in the removal of the horse and/or Athlete from the FEI Nominated Entry. The Owner(s) must certify, by signing the Horse Participation Consent Agreement, that they have received, read, understand, and agree to be bound by these Selection Procedures for the Event, [the USEF Code of Conduct](#), [the USEF Release, Assumption of Risk, Waiver and Indemnification](#), [the U.S. Center for SafeSport Code](#), [the USEF Safe Sport Policy](#), including the [Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies](#), [the USEF Non-Discrimination Policy](#), and the [USEF Whistleblower & Anti-Retaliation Policy](#).
- Any athlete age 18 or older as of the end of the Championship will be required to undergo a background check in accordance with the current [USEF Background Check Policy](#).
- Any athlete age 18 or older as of the end of the Championship will be required to remain current with the U.S. Center for SafeSport’s education and training requirements in accordance with the [USEF Athlete Safety Policy](#).

2. Step-by-step description of the selection process for the Championship:

2.1. Selection Trials

- 2.1.1. Event names, dates, and locations of all competitions to be used as part of the selection process:** Athlete/Horse combinations wishing to be considered for Squad selection for the Championship must successfully complete or have already completed at least one (1) of the following Selection Trials. The 2025 and 2026 Selection Trials, as published to all potential Championship applicants in May of 2024 (Attachment F), include the following:

2025

APR 24-27	Kentucky Three-Day Event (USA)	CCI5*-L
MAY 07-11	Badminton International Horse Trials (GBR)	CCI5*-L
MAY 07-11	Trying Spring International Horse Trials (USA)	CCI4*-L
JUN 04-08	MARS Bromont CCI Three-Day Event (CAN)	CCI4*-L
JUN 05-08	Bramham International Horse Trials (GBR)	CCI4*-L
JUN 12-15	Longines Luhmühlen Horse Trials (GER)	CCI5*-L
JUL 16-20	The Event at Rebecca Farm (USA)	CCI4*-L
SEP 04-07	Burghley Horse Trials (GBR)	CCI5*-L
OCT 09-12	Military Boekelo-Enschede (NED)	CCIO4*-NC-L
OCT 09-12	Morven Park International & Fall Horse Trials (USA)	CCI4*-L
OCT 15-19	Maryland 5 Star at Fair Hill (USA)	CCI5*-L
OCT 24-26	Les 5 Etoiles de Pau (FRA)	CCI5*-L
OCT 28-NOV 2	Galway Downs International Three-Day Event (USA)	CCI4*-L
NOV 14-16	The Event at Terra Nova	CCI4*-L

2026

APR 22-26	Kentucky Three-Day Event (USA)	CCI5*-L
MAY 6-10	Badminton International Horse Trials (GBR)	CCI5*-L
MAY 6-10	Tryon Spring International Horse Trials (USA)	CCI4*-L
MAY 27-31	Royal Jump de Bertichères (FRA)	CCI4-L
JUNE 03-07	MARS Bromont CCI Three-Day Event (CAN)	CCI4*-L
JUNE 11-14	Bramham International Horse Trials (GBR)	CCI4*-L
JUN 18-21	Longines Luhmühlen Horse Trials (GER)	CCI5*-L/ CCI4*-S

* Athlete request and approved by the Selection Committee

Any Athlete wishing to use a European CCI4*-L as a Selection Trials must make the request in writing to Christina Vaughn, Director, Eventing Elite Program (cvaughn@usef.org) no less than 30 days prior to the start of the relevant European CCI4*-L. Requests will be reviewed by the Eventing Selectors and forwarded to the USEF Eventing Department for determination. The Eventing Selectors and USEF Eventing Department will consider the timing of the request, number, and quality of entries at the relevant competition, the timing of the competition in relation to the above-listed Selection Trials, in addition to other relevant information when considering the request. All applicant Athletes will be notified via email if any additional Selection Trials are added to the schedule. Notification will be given at least 30 days prior to the start of the approved Selection Trial.

Additional competitions may be identified as Selection Trials by the Chef d'Equipe, USEF Staff, and/or Eventing Selectors should it become necessary. All applicant Athletes will be notified via email if any additional Selection Trials are added to the schedule. Notification will be given at least 30 days prior to the start of the approved Selection Trials.

2.1.2. Describe how Athletes qualify for the events listed in 2.2.1: Athletes must qualify for the Selection Trials per the [FEI Rules for Eventing](#).

2.2. Selection of Team and Alternates

2.2.1. FEI Nominated Entry Deadline (July 6, 2025): By no later than the closing date for the FEI Nominated Entry, based upon the procedures set forth herein, the Selectors will recommend

up to the maximum number of athletes and their horses permitted to be named to the FEI Nominated Entry. In making their recommendations, the Selectors may elicit feedback from the USEF Eventing Chef d'Equipe, the Team Veterinarian, and/or a Team Evaluating Veterinarian (if requested by the Team Veterinarian), the Human Physiotherapist, the Team Farrier, and/or the Team Equine Physiotherapist. The Selectors' recommendation will be subject to approval of the USEF Board of Directors, Executive Committee, or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the USEF Board of Directors. In making their recommendation, the Selectors will consider the following factors in no particular order:

- The overall performance of the Athlete/Horse combination in Selection Trials, with emphasis on dressage scores, cross-country, and show jumping performance: jumping without faults and/or incurring time penalties, boldness, rideability, and speed.
 - Performance may be evaluated using the Athlete/Horse combination's competition records (see definitions) and/or EquiRating's High Performance Metrics (see definitions) from the Selection Trials designated within these Procedures.
- Consistency and trend of performance of the complete competition records (see definitions) within the Qualifying Period, with emphasis on dressage scores, cross-country, and show jumping performance: jumping without faults and/or incurring time penalties, boldness, rideability, and speed.
 - Performance may be evaluated using the Athlete/Horse combination's competition records and/or EquiRating's High Performance Metrics from events within the Qualifying Period.
- The previous International Competition Experience (see definitions) of the Athlete/Horse combination. Preference may be given to Athlete/Horse combinations who have demonstrated ability to succeed in multiple international Eventing competitions, per their complete competition records.
- Soundness (see definitions).
- Fitness (see definitions).

Chef d'Equipe Permissions: Once Athlete/Horse combinations have been named to the FEI Nominated Entry, they will come under the leadership of the Chef d'Equipe through the conclusion of the Event. The Athlete must develop and discuss their training, competition, and coaching schedule with the Chef d'Equipe. Deviations from the agreed-upon plan must be communicated to and approved in advance by the Chef d'Equipe.

2.2.2. FEI Definite Entries: Prior to the FEI Definite Entry Deadline for the Championship, the Selectors will recommend a Squad of five athlete/horse combinations for approval by the USEF Board of Directors, Executive Committee, or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the USEF Board of Directors, using the criteria detailed in Section 2.2.1 above. The Squad will be comprised of the five athlete/horse combinations named from the Nominated Entries, except in instances of removal or replacement, see Section 5. From the five Athlete/Horse combinations, four Athlete/Horse combinations will compete for the Team and Individual medals and one Athlete/Horse combination will compete only for the Individual medals. The Team makeup will be confirmed no later than the Declaration of Starters after the First Horse Inspection at the Championship by the Chef d'Equipe, in consultation with the Team Veterinarian.

2.2.3. MANDATORY TRAINING AND/OR COMPEITION

2.2.3.1. **Mandatory Outing(s)** - All Athlete/Horse combinations listed on the Nominated entry may be required to demonstrate their continued preparation, soundness, and

ability. By no later than May 1, 2026, all details regarding the Mandatory Outing(s) will be communicated via email to Athletes.

- 2.2.3.2. **Mandatory Training Session(s)** - All Athlete/Horse combinations listed on the Nominated entry may be required to participate in Mandatory Training. By no later than May 1, 2026, relevant details of the Mandatory Training session(s) will be circulated to the Team and Alternates via email to Athletes.
- 2.2.3.3. **Waiver Requests** - An Athlete/Horse combination that is not able to participate in the Mandatory Outing(s), Veterinary Evaluation(s), or Training Session(s), as applicable, because of veterinary, medical, or family emergencies or for logistical reasons may request special consideration for selection by submitting a written request prior to the Mandatory Outing(s), Veterinary Evaluation(s) or Training Session(s), as applicable, to the USEF Eventing Department. The Selectors, in conjunction with the Chef d'Equipe and Team Staff, will approve or disapprove the request based on the circumstances, facts, and, in the case of illness or injury to Athlete or Horse, documentation by a member of the Team Veterinarian (and/or a Team Evaluating Veterinarian, if requested by the Team Veterinarian) or physician(s) approved by USEF. In the event the applicant's request is not approved, the Athlete/Horse combination must participate in the Mandatory Outing(s) or Training Session(s), or they will no longer be considered for selection.

3. DISCRETIONARY SELECTION

- 3.1 **Rationale for utilizing discretionary selection:** The option of discretionary selection is used to field the best Team possible in the Championship.
- 3.2 **Define the discretionary criteria to be used (if any):** For discretionary selection used please see the following sections:
- 2.2.1– FEI Nominated Entry
 - 2.2.2– FEI Definite Entry
 - 2.2.3.3. – Waiver Requests
- 3.3. **Other Discretionary Criteria:**
- a. **Soundness** - Horses that are candidates for selection for the Championship may be examined at any time following the application deadline and through the conclusion of the Championship for soundness by the Team Veterinarian and/or a Team Evaluating Veterinarian, if requested by the Team Veterinarian, upon the request of the Selectors or Chef d'Equipe and based on the availability of the Team Veterinarian or a Team Evaluating Veterinarian. Horses found to be unsound by the Team Veterinarian and/or a Team Evaluating Veterinarian may result in the removal of the Athlete and/or Horse from the selection process, at the recommendation of the Team Veterinarian. See Section 5.
- b. **Mandatory Veterinary Evaluations:** Following the conclusion of the last approved Selection Event (see Section 1.2.1) and prior to the FEI Nominated Entry and/or Definite Entry, the Selectors may request for Horses that are candidates for selection to the Championship attend a Mandatory Veterinary Evaluation to undergo an examination by the Team Veterinarian, and/or a Team Evaluating Veterinarian, if requested by the Team Veterinarian. The Mandatory Veterinary Evaluation dates and locations will be communicated to the Athletes via email and will be available on both the East and West Coast. Being requested to attend the Mandatory Veterinary Evaluations does not guarantee selection.

The Team Veterinarian and the Athlete's veterinarian must be in communication regarding the soundness and preparation of the Horse(s) named to the FEI Nominated Entry and/or Definite Entry.

All Horses entered on the FEI Nominated Entry will be re-examined for soundness by the Team Veterinarian and/or a Team Evaluating Veterinarian, if requested by the Team Veterinarian prior to traveling to the Championship.

Horses found to be unsound by the Team Veterinarian or Team Evaluating Veterinarian may result in the removal of the Athlete/Horse combination from the selection process, but only with the recommendation of the Selectors, Chef d'Equipe, and approval of the USEF Board of Directors, Executive Committee or an Ad Hoc approved by the Board of Directors.

- c. **Team Veterinarian Request:** Athletes, at their own expense, must make available, upon the request of the Team Veterinarian, the previous 24 months' worth of veterinary records of Horses in consideration for selection. In addition, Athletes, at their own expense, will be responsible for supplying any follow-up diagnostic information requested by the Team Veterinarian for Horses in consideration for selection. Athletes, at their own expense, must complete any treatment prescribed by the Team Veterinarian, after consultation with the Horse's treating veterinarian if such a consultation is requested by the Athlete, for Horses under consideration for selection. Failure to comply with any reasonable request of the Team Veterinarian may result in the removal of the Horse and/or Athlete from the selection process by recommendation from the Selectors, Chef d'Equipe, and Team Veterinarian.
- d. **Veterinary Treatment** – From the time of the Nominated Entry through the conclusion of the Championship, Athletes on the Nominated Entry will be required to consult with the Team Veterinarian prior to Horses being treated by any person other than the Team Veterinarian. Failure to adhere to this policy and/or the directives of the Team Veterinarian may result in the removal of the Athlete and/or Horse from the selection process upon the recommendation of the Team Veterinarian and approval by the USEF Board of Directors or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the Board of Directors. Exceptions may be granted for emergency situations. The Team Veterinarian must be apprised of any emergency within 24 hours of the treatment.
- e. **Medical Request** - In the event of illness or injury, Athletes may be required to submit to a medical examination by a USEF-approved physician(s) any time during the selection process for the purposes of determining the Athlete's ability to compete at the Championship. Failure to submit to such examination may result in the removal of the Athlete from the selection process upon the recommendation of the USEF-approved physician(s) and with the approval of the USEF Board of Directors or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the Board of Directors. Following the examination, should the USEF-approved physician(s) find the Athlete to be unfit to compete, the Athlete may be removed from the selection process with the approval of the USEF Board of Directors or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the Board of Directors.

3.4. Name of the committee(s) that will be responsible for making selection recommendations, along with a complete list of the members' titles:

- USEF Eventing Selectors
- USEF Eventing Chef d'Equipe
- USEF High Performance Advisor

- USEF Human Physiotherapist
- USEF Eventing Veterinary Evaluating Panel
- USEF Eventing Team Veterinarian
- USEF Team Farrier
- USEF Team Equine Physiotherapist
- USEF Board of Directors, Executive Committee, or Ad Hoc Group approved by the Board of Directors

See Attachment X for a complete listing of committee members.

3.5 Process that will be used to identify and handle any potential conflicts of interest involving a member of the committee(s) listed above:

All Athletes involved in the selection of the Squad must comply with the USEF [Conflict of Interest and Gifts & Entertainment Policy](#).

Any person involved in the selection of the Squad who has an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest must disclose it to the USEF Legal Department prior to the Application deadline. Additionally, they may be required to recuse oneself from the review process and/or voting. Selectors are bound by the conflict of interest procedures and management restrictions imposed by the USEF Audit Committee.

Additionally, any person (including any potentially impacted Athlete, Owner, or Coach of a potentially impacted Athlete or Horse) with a good faith belief that an Athlete has a conflict of interest may report the alleged conflict of interest to the USEF General Counsel and/or Audit Committee. Reports may be made anonymously. No Athlete shall retaliate in any way against a person who, in good faith, reports an alleged conflict of interest.

4. REMOVAL OF ATHLETES/HORSES

At any time during the selection process through the conclusion of the Championship, USEF has jurisdiction over Athletes. An Athlete or Horse that is nominated to the Squad and/or Team by USEF may be removed for any of the following reasons, as determined by USEF:

- Voluntary withdrawal. Athlete must submit a written letter to the USEF CEO or Chef de Mission.
- Injury or illness as certified by a physician (or medical staff) approved by USEF. If an Athlete refuses verification of their illness or injury by a physician (or medical staff) approved by USEF, their injury will be assumed to be disabling and they may be removed.
- Failure to participate in veterinary exams or other requirements as defined in these procedures.
- Failure to participate in a Mandatory Outing or Training Session (see Section 2.2.3).
- Violation of the USEF Code of Conduct.
- Violation of the U.S. Center for SafeSport Code or USEF Safe Sport Policy.
- Behavior of the Athlete and people associated with the Athlete (including, without limitation, accredited Owners, Coaches, and Grooms) that may have an impact on creating a positive Team environment that will affect the ability to win a Team medal.
- Exceptional circumstances having a direct bearing upon obtaining the best qualified Team for the Championship, in consultation with the Chef d'Equipe and Selectors.
- Failure of the Horse Owner to timely sign the Horse Participation Consent Agreement.
- Injury or illness of the Horse as determined by the Team Veterinarian and/or a Team Evaluating Veterinarian. If an Athlete and/or Horse Owner refuses to have the Horse examined by the Team Veterinarian and/or a Team Evaluating Veterinarian, the injury or illness will be assumed to be disabling and the horse may be removed.

- Failure to adhere to the agreed upon plans, programs, guidance, and/or directives of the Chef d'Equipe and/or Team Veterinarian.
- Detection of a Prohibited Substance in the Horse (see Section 10 below).
- Failure to adhere to all World Anti-Doping Agency ("WADA"), FEI, USEF, and/or U.S. Anti-Doping Agency ("USADA") anti-doping protocols, policies or procedures regarding Athletes and Horses, including participation in required Out-of-Competition testing.
- Non-compliance with the eligibility requirements listed in these selection procedures.
- Failure to obtain written permission from the Team Veterinarian prior to the Horse receiving veterinary treatment by any veterinarian who is not the Team Veterinarian or a Team Evaluating Veterinarian. Written permission is required upon selection as a Squad or Alternate Horse.
- Failure to comply with reasonable requests, as determined by the Director of FEI Sport and the Managing Director of Eventing, from the USEF Eventing Department regarding logistical information and deadlines.
- Loss of form or failure to show readiness in or out of competition, as determined by the majority decision of the Selectors and with the approval of the Chef d'Equipe.

An athlete who is removed from the Team pursuant to this provision has the right to a hearing per the USEF's Bylaws, Part VII.

5. REPLACEMENT OF ATHLETES & HORSES

5.1. Selection and approval process for determining replacement Athlete(s) & Horse(s) should a vacancy occur:

5.1.1. Prior to submission of the Nominated Entries:

Replacement of Athlete/Horse combinations will be based on the list of Alternates and/or Direct Reserves as approved by the USEF Board of Directors, USEF Executive Committee, or USEF Ad Hoc of the Board of Directors.

5.1.2. After submission of the Nominated Entries but prior to submission of the Definite Entries:

Replacement of Athlete/Horse combinations will be based on the list of Alternates and/or Direct Reserves as approved by the USEF Board of Directors, USEF Executive Committee, or USEF Ad Hoc of the Board of Directors. Replacement Athlete/Horse combinations must only come from those submitted on the Nominated Entries.

5.1.3. After acceptance of the FEI Definite Entries up to the deadline for substitutions:

After the Definite Entries are submitted to the FEI, and until the deadline for substitutions set by the FEI and the Organizing Committee, whichever is later, the Chef d'Equipe in consultation with the Athlete, Team Veterinarian, and Team Leader, may amend the Team. The Chef d'Equipe may replace a selected horse with the Direct Reserve, and the originally selected horse may remain eligible to be considered for substitution, as an Alternate. The Chef d'Equipe may also substitute an Alternate combination. Decisions will be made focusing on the fitness of both athlete and horse, and their potential to contribute to a team medal-winning performance. Changes must be approved by the USEF Chef de Mission.

6. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

USEF will retain the approved Selection Procedures and all supporting documents and data from the selection process for six months past the date of the conclusion of the Championship.

7. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

The following documents are required to be signed by an Athlete and Horse owner, or the parent/guardian if applicable, as a condition of nomination to the Championship (include as attachments or provide links):

- [Application Memo](#) (Attachment A)
- [USEF Horse Participation Consent Agreement](#) (Attachment B)
- [USEF Code of Conduct](#) (Attachment C)
- [USEF Release, Assumption of Risk, Waiver, and Indemnification](#) (Attachment D)
- [USEF Safe Sport Policy](#) (Attachment E)

8. PUBLICITY/DISTRIBUTION OF PROCEDURES

The USEF approved Selection Procedures (complete and unaltered) will be posted/published by the USEF on the USEF Web site: www.usef.org. These Selection Procedures will also be available by mail or email upon request.

9. DATE OF NOMINATION

The FEI Nominated Entries will be submitted to the FEI no later than **July 6, 2025**.

10. ANTI-DOPING REQUIREMENTS

10.1 Human Anti-Doping: Athletes must adhere to all WADA, FEI, and USADA anti-doping protocols, policies, and procedures, as applicable. This includes participation in Out-of-Competition Testing as required by the WADA, FEI, and USADA rules, as applicable.

10.2 Equine Anti-Doping: All Horses are subject to drug testing both in competition and out of competition.

10.2.1 In-Competition. All Horses entered to compete in any FEI or USEF event are subject to drug testing at any time from when the event begins until the Event ends or beginning when the Horse arrives for the event until the event ends, whichever beginning occurs first. Blood and/or urine samples may be collected and tested for substances prohibited or forbidden under the subject event rules. National Events may invoke GR409 whereby samples will be tested for FEI prohibited substances, including metabolites and markers.

- a. **Positive Finding.** At any time during the observation and selection period that the presence of a prohibited or forbidden substance, or a metabolite or marker, is detected in the sample collected in- event, the results, including the level detected for controlled medications, will be reported to the USEF Chief Executive Officer and General Counsel. They will notify the Director of FEI Sport or the Discipline Director for dissemination of information as appropriate. In such instances, the positive finding may result in the elimination of the Horse and/or Athlete from the Selection Process.
- b. Before elimination occurs, the Owner and Athlete will be afforded a hearing by a panel ("Selection Hearing Panel") comprised of at least one disinterested member of the applicable discipline Sport Committee along with at least two disinterested members of the Hearing Committee, one of which must be an Athlete Representative.
- c. The Chairman of the USEF Veterinary Committee, or his designee, may serve Ex Officio and a member of the Veterinary Panel selected for the Championship may serve Ex Officio.

10.2.2 Out-of-Competition. Blood and/or urine samples may be collected out-of-competition at any time throughout the selection period, which is defined as commencing on the start date of the USEF Qualifying Period following notification to the Athlete at least 24 hours prior to collection of samples. Samples collected from Horses out-of-competition will be tested for the presence of substances prohibited by the FEI, including metabolites and markers. Failure to make the Horse available for collection of samples may result in the elimination of the Horse and/or Athlete from the Selection Process. Before elimination occurs, the Owner and Athlete will be afforded a hearing by the Selection Hearing Panel.

- a. Positive Finding. At any time during the selection period that the presence of a prohibited or forbidden substance, or a metabolite marker, in the sample, the results, including the level detected for controlled medications, will be reported to the USEF Chief Executive Officer and General Counsel, who will notify the Director of FEI Sport or the Discipline Director for dissemination of information as appropriate.
- b. In such instances, the positive finding may result in the elimination of the Horse and/or Athlete from the Selection Process unless the Veterinary Panel appointed for the Selection of the Championship certifies that the substance detected has been approved or is legitimate and appropriate under the circumstances. Before elimination occurs, the Owner and Athlete will be afforded a hearing by the Selection Hearing Panel.

10.2.3 These provisions do not abrogate the enforcement of applicable Equine anti-doping rules at Federation licensed Events, including Events where GR409 is invoked whereby samples will be tested for FEI prohibited substances, including metabolites and markers.

10.2.4 **USEF GR 409.2 Equine Drugs and Medications, Prohibited Substance Provisions:** No Horse and/or pony competing in a Breed or Discipline designated as (or part of) a No Prohibited Substance Group is to be shown in any class at an Championship licensed by the Federation if it has been administered in any manner or otherwise contained in its tissues, body fluids or excreta a prohibited substance as defined in the FEI Equine Anti-Doping and Controlled Medication Regulations, which can be found at www.fei.org.

11. DEVELOPMENT OF SELECTION PROCEDURES

The following committee/group was responsible for creating these Selection Procedures:

- USEF Eventing Selectors
- USEF Eventing Athletes Working Group
- USEF Eventing Sport Committee
- USEF Board of Directors or Executive Committee (or an Ad Hoc Selection Group of the USEF Board of Directors)

See Attachment X for a complete listing of committee members.

4. USEF BYLAWS AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

The USEF Bylaws and Grievance Procedures can be found on the USEF's website www.usef.org. Athletes wishing to file a grievance, a denial or threatened denial to participate in competition, please see the Athlete's Guide to Filing a Grievance Regarding Opportunity to Participate and Grievance Form. For procedural guidance for filing a grievance, please contact Emily Pratt at epratt@usef.org.

12. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

USEF does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), sex, gender identify, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. Everyone involved in the development of selection procedures and selection process must abide by the Non-Discrimination Policy.

13. FUNDING DISCLAIMER

Selection to the Team does not guarantee that funds will be available for the expenses related to the Championship.

14. INTERNATIONAL DISCLAIMER

These procedures are based on FEI rules and regulations as presently known and understood. Any change in the Selection Procedures caused by a change in FEI rules or regulations will be distributed to the affected Athletes immediately. The selection criteria are based on the latest information available to USEF. However, the selections are always subject to unforeseen, intervening circumstances, and realistically may not have accounted for every possible contingency.

If any force of nature, or force majeure, should cause the alteration or cancellation of any of the Selection Trials listed in this document, these selection procedures may require revisions.

15. ATHLETE OMBUDS OFFICE

Team USA athletes may contact the Office of the Athlete Ombuds for independent and confidential advice on a variety of sport related matters, including their rights, applicable rules, policies or processes, and questions related to resolving disputes and grievances. The Athlete Ombuds can also help Team USA athletes connect with legal counsel or mental health resources if needed. All other NGB athletes (i.e., athletes competing domestically at the masters or youth level, recreational athletes, foreign athletes) are welcome to visit the Athlete Ombuds website to review informational resources and should work directly with their NGB to understand additional resources and options available to them.

Phone: 719-866-5000

Email: ombudsman@usathlete.org

Website: usathlete.org

Athlete Ombuds Confidentiality and Privacy Policy:

(A) In general.—The Office of the Athlete Ombuds shall maintain as confidential any information communicated or provided to the Office of the Athlete Ombuds in confidence in any matter involving the exercise of the official duties of the Office of the Athlete Ombuds.

(B) Exception.—The Office of the Athlete Ombuds may disclose information described in subparagraph (A) as necessary to resolve or mediate a dispute, with the permission of the parties involved.

(C) Judicial and administrative proceedings.—

(i) In general.—The ombudsman and the staff of the Office of the Athlete Ombuds shall not be compelled to testify or produce evidence in any judicial or administrative proceeding with respect to any matter involving the exercise of the duties of the Office of the Athlete Ombuds .

(ii) Work product.—Any memorandum, work product, notes, or case file of the Office of the Athlete Ombuds—

(I) shall be confidential; and

(II) shall not be—

(aa) subject to discovery, subpoena, or any other means of legal compulsion; or (bb) admissible as evidence in a judicial or administrative proceeding.

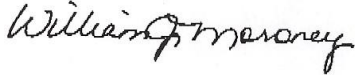


(D) Applicability.—The confidentiality requirements under this paragraph shall not apply to information relating to—

- (i) applicable federally mandated reporting requirements;
- (ii) a felony personally witnessed by a member of the Office of the Athlete Ombuds;
- (iii) a situation, communicated to the Office of the Athlete Ombuds, in which an individual is at imminent risk of serious harm; or
- (iv) a congressional subpoena.

Anti-retaliation Statement: No employee, contractor, agent, volunteer, or member of USEF shall take or threaten action against an athlete as a reprisal for disclosing information to or seeking assistance from the Office of the Athlete Ombuds.

16. USEF SIGNATURES

I certify that I have read and understand the standards/criteria set by the FEI and incorporated those standards/criteria into these Selection Procedures. I further certify that the information provided herein regarding Athlete Selection Procedures represents the method approved by USEF.

Position	Print Name	Signature	Date
USEF CEO	William J. Moroney		10/20/2025
Director of FEI Sport	Hallye Griffin		10/28/2025
Team USA Athlete Representative	Sydney Elliott		10/28/2025

Any questions regarding these Selection Procedures should be addressed to Christina Vaughn, Director, Eventing Elite Program.

PHONE: +1 (859) 225-6929
EMAIL: cvaughn@usef.org
WEBSITE: www.usef.org

DEFINITIONS:

BOLDNESS – Whether the Athlete/Horse combination moves forward with confidence, aggression, and vigor demonstrating a positive attitude. When presented with a question (any situation that the Athlete/Horse must answer to successfully negotiate the test, e.g., an obstacle, change of terrain, handling crowds, jumping into water, etc.), whether the Athlete/Horse combination answer the question with the same positive attitude.

COMPETITION RECORDS – Records of past competitions may be sourced from the USEF, USEA, FEI or other applicable governing bodies to review an Athlete/Horse combination's scores in the dressage, show jumping and cross-country phases.

EQUIRATINGS HIGH PERFORMANCE METRICS –

ELO Score

Eventing is a complex sport, and it can be difficult to rank horses in order of their overall *quality* and *consistency* using a single metric. The EquiRatings Elo does exactly this. It is a ranking algorithm that is affected *every time* a horse starts the cross-country phase of an event (withdrawals *prior* do not affect the metric). In terms of a single metric for predicting finishing position, this is the best in class. The Elo rewards horses that beat highly rated opponents, thus accounting for the quality of a competition.

EquiRatings Expected Values

To assess the expected performance of a Horse in each individual phase of an Eventing competition, the EquiRatings Expected Values are the most effective values. They measure expected performance in dressage, show jumping, cross-country jumping reliability and cross-country speed. These are complex formulae that account for recent trends, the difficulties of past conditions and the likely impact that these have on future performance.

HPR Score

The HPR score accounts for course difficulty, scoring conditions and the quality of opposition for a single performance.

Power Average

The power average is the average of the *three best* finishing scores for a given horse or rider over a given dataset. A horse could therefore have a season power average at four and five-star levels.

Two Phase Average

The two-phase average is the average of all dressage *and* show jumping penalties for a horse or rider over a given dataset. The two-phase average excludes cross-country penalties as these can skew the statistics if a rider is opting to compete at a slower pace.

Zone Analysis

Zone Analysis is a simple way to organize *finishing scores* into various scoring zones. This helps to give a visual representation as to whether a horse/rider/nation tends to score in excellent/good/average ranges, or whether they have poor outcomes or even non-completions.

FITNESS – Whether the athlete or horse competed at a high level more frequently than is consistent with delivering a peak performance at the event for which selection is being made. Whether the athlete or horse demonstrated in training the modicum of preparation necessary for preparedness for the rigors of the event for which selection is being made.

INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION EXPERIENCE - A competitive record over the past 3 years that indicates that the Athlete/Horse combination has successfully met the challenges of FEI international events, demonstrating an ability to perform under pressure consistently.

LOSS OF FORM - Deterioration in performance and/or demonstrated inability to produce results at the level at which the combination was performing at the time at which they were selected.

RIDEABILITY – Whether the Horse exhibits in all three tests - dressage, cross-country, and show jumping - that it responds readily to the aids (directions) of the Athlete because of its training; whether it moves forward, slows down, turns, and jumps any obstacle with composure, obedience, and confidence in itself and the Athlete.

SPEED - Evidence that in the FEI record of the Athlete/Horse combination, and in the final trials for the Team, the Athlete/Horse combination shows the ability to complete the Championship distances at the speed specifications for that level in accordance with the [FEI Rules for Eventing](#).

SOUNDNESS - A condition in which a Horse is able to do the work asked of it without undue stress or risk of injury.