



FAQ – NON PRO MEMBERSHIP CONDITIONS – Starting 1/1/2022

Q: Who is a Non Pro according to NRHA rules?

A: The definition of “Non Pro” is listed in the NRHA Handbook under Non Pro Membership Conditions. *Starting in 2022*, the general definition of who is eligible for Non Pro status will read as follows:

B. NON PRO MEMBERSHIP CONDITIONS

(1) Eligibility:

(a) A Non Pro is a person who:

(1) At the time of the member’s Non Pro application and Declaration, has not won more than \$200,000 in Open reining competition (Categories 1, 2 and 6); and

(2) In the three years preceding the date of application has not received remuneration for the following activities (“Prohibited Activities”):

- i. Training or showing astride in any equine discipline; or
- ii. Giving instruction on the showing or training of a performance horse.

(3) While holding a Non Pro card has not engaged in a Prohibited Activity.

Q: What is “NIL?”

A: “NIL,” which stands for “name, image, and likeness.” The recent rule change is connected with this term allowing Non Pros to benefit from their NIL. They can do so by being sponsored by products, good services, etc. for their endorsement. The Non Pro may receive remuneration for this endorsement or sponsorship arrangement. In mainstream news, you may have heard this term due to recent changes in state laws and NCAA rules that allow college athletes to benefit from the NIL through endorsement deals.

Q: What is “remuneration,” or “pay,” as defined by NRHA?

A: “Remuneration” is defined as the receipt of:

- i. Money, pay, or financial gain for work completed; or
- ii. Goods, services, or discounts in return for work completed.

Q: Can I receive cash or funds for endorsing a company (or being sponsored by them)?

A: Yes. This allows Non Pros (and Youth Non Pros) to seek sponsorships from local businesses that offer goods or services that cannot practically be used by the Non Pro. For example, a local auction company, real estate agency, health care provider, contracting service, etc. could provide a cash sponsorship to the Non Pro (Youth Non Pro). This gives the him/her the opportunity to seek out non-traditional sponsors, even at small amounts. Those funds can help pay for expenses to compete in reining that might not otherwise be available.

Q: Can a company give me a discount on their products in return for me endorsing those products?

Y: Yes! A Non Pro can receive goods, services, or discounts in return for work completed. For example, a local gas station could provide a Youth Non Pro with a gift card to the station. The youth’s parents can then use it to pay for fuel to attend a reining.

Q: Can I be paid to train or show horses?

A: No. Non Pros are prohibited from training or showing astride in any equine discipline for remuneration (direct or indirect). “Training” is the mounted preparation of a horse with the intent to improve the horse’s performance in any equine discipline. Being paid to train or show horses would be a violation of this rule.

Q: Can I show horses that I do not own?

A: If your immediate family (as defined by NRHA) owns the horse, YES, you may show it in Non Pro competition. You or your immediate family must pay for those entry fees or expenses or you will be in violation of the Non Pro conditions.

If you show a horse not owned by you/immediate family outside of Non Pro competition (ex. to try a horse for sale), you must abide by the rules by paying for all of the entry fees and expenses associated with showing – and must not receive any remuneration for showing the horse.

Q: Can I be paid to give lessons to riders who ride in a western saddle?

A: No. Non Pros are prohibited from giving instruction on the showing or training of a performance horse. “Giving instruction on the showing or training of a performance horse” means providing coaching or lessons with the intent to improve the rider’s ability to show or train a performance horse. “Performance horse” includes horses that engage in the western stock sports, including but not limited to, reining, reined cow horse, cutting, roping, ranch riding, ranch versatility, etc. This includes giving lessons to riders in a western saddle performing at a lope. Things such as learning leads and how to lope circles are precursors to the sport of reining are considered giving instruction on the showing or training of a performance horse.

Q: Can a sponsor buy a horse for me to show?

A: No. Any transaction relating to the sale or transfer of a horse to a Non Pro other than by immediate family members must be at fair market value. The Non Pro is responsible for documenting said transaction in a satisfactory fashion in the event of any protest. This is an existing historic rule that has remained unchanged.

Q: Can I be compensated (with money or good/services) to show horses that I don’t own/my immediate family doesn’t own?

A: No. Non Pros are prohibited from training or showing astride in any equine discipline for remuneration (direct or indirect). “Training” is the mounted preparation of a horse with the intent to improve the horse’s performance in any equine discipline. Being paid to train or show horses would be a violation of this rule.

Q: What activities are considered as me endorsing products?

A: Endorsement is the act of giving one's public approval or support to someone or something. People can use their name, image and likeness to share information publicly to formally share their support of a product, service or company. There are numerous ways to endorse a product through social media, appearances, blogs, podcasts, and other platforms.

Q: If I accept a sponsorship, will I be considered as a Non Pro or Amateur with other associations like AQHA, APHA, etc.?

A: For other associations, please check with those organizations for their rules on how accepting a sponsorship may affect your eligibility for entering their events.

Q: Why was this rule changed quickly?

A: It is often said that our world changes rapidly and those who wish to be successful should be able to adapt to changes to improve. These changes were approved according to the process that allows the board to be more nimble and to approve proposals that do not directly impact the rules of competition, such as the rules for judging, equipment, patterns, show rules, etc., on an abbreviated path in comparison to the traditional review process. This rule change process was proposed in 2018 and approved for the *2019 NRHA Handbook*. With that said, it also means this non pro rule can be adapted as needed to adjust to the current climate.

Q: What general information on NRHA and reining can I use to educate a sponsor on the sport?

A: NRHA has approximately 15,000 members worldwide who compete in around 1,200 shows offering \$16 million in purses annually. The NRHA website also has information that any member can use to share your passion for the sport. Some helpful links are listed below.

About NRHA: <https://nrha.com/about>

How reining is judged: <https://vimeo.com/311245918>

Respect the Horse. Respect the Sport: <https://vimeo.com/293160603>