

NATIONAL REINING HORSE ASSOCIATION

Statement of Policy

DATE SUBMITTED July 16, 2011 **POLICY NUMBER** 11-07-27

DATE APPROVED July 17, 2011 **CATEGORY**

DATE REVISED December 19, 2025 **DATE EFFECTIVE** Jan. 1, 2026

SUPERSEDED BY _____ **DATE REVIEWED**

Animal Welfare and Medications Policy

Purpose & Authority

This policy supplements the **NRHA Handbook**, which is the final and binding authority on all rules and regulations. The **digital handbook** is the ultimate source for updates.

Responsible Party

- The **rider of the horse tested** is the **responsible party** for following this policy and all related rules.
- Penalties are applied to the rider.
- The NRHA Hearing Body may also hold others accountable (trainer, owner, agent, etc.) or release others from accountability if evidence supports their involvement.
- Owners will be notified of violations.
- NRHA does not give medication advice. Members should consult with a licensed veterinarian.
- Never give medication without the owner's knowledge and consent.

Medications Violations

Violations include:

- Not filing a completed medications report form for a conditionally permitted substance prior to the horse competing.
 - Use of conditionally permitted medications within 24 hours of competition or for unacceptable reasons.
 - Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug ("NSAID") stacking
 - Stacking is the use of more than one NSAID within 72 hours
 - Exceptions: Diclofenac, Salicylic Acid.
 - Exceeding permitted concentration thresholds (overages).
 - Use of any banned substance.
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Event Selection & Testing Protocol

- All NRHA-approved events are subject to **random testing**.
 - Para reining classes and exhibition classes are exempt.
 - Medications testing fees are a part of the official [Fees Policy](#) and are approved every year by the NRHA Board of Directors.
 - Horses are selected randomly by using an electronic number generator based on total entries in the class to preserve the integrity of the process.
 - No identifying information such as horse's name, back number, exhibitors name, etc. is utilized.
 - This process is witnessed and recorded and is kept strictly confidential.
 - NRHA Owned Events testing selections may vary and are approved by the NRHA Executive Committee.
 - The rider (responsible party) must cooperate, witness sample collection, and sign all necessary paperwork.
 - Any objections must be documented immediately by the testing team and appropriate show officials (Show Steward, Manager, and/or Representative); failure to witness the testing process and/or sign the required documentation forfeits the right to object by the Responsible Party.
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Failure to Cooperate

- Refusal or unreasonable delay in the medications testing process will result in an **unsportsmanlike conduct grievance**, disqualification from the entire event, no refunds, and possible membership suspension and fines.
 - Falsely listing another person as responsible will also result in an unsportsmanlike conduct grievance being filed.
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Medications Report Forms

- Required for all conditionally permitted substances.
 - Must be completed, signed, and filed with NRHA **before the horse competes**.
 - Filing a report does not guarantee compliance with medications use under the policy.
 - The rider must keep proof of timely and accurate filing.
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Medications Classification

- NRHA provides an [online database](#) for medication classifications (permitted, conditionally permitted, banned) and compliance guidelines.
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Testing Results and Sample B

- If no violation is found in Sample A, results are filed with NRHA, and no action is taken.
- If Sample A shows a violation, the responsible party may by the required deadline:
 1. Accept the maximum penalties as outlined in Policy.
 2. Request Sample B testing (at their expense).
 - If Sample B is not tested, the responsible party waives the right to contest Sample A findings.
 3. Request a hearing before the NRHA Hearing Body (and pay the protest of findings fee).
- Failure to respond by the designated deadline results in maximum penalty application with no opportunity to appeal.

- If Sample B shows no medications violation, then all penalties are removed.
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NRHA Hearing Body

- The NRHA Hearing Body reviews cases to confirm the testing process and that the findings are valid.
 - It may uphold or adjust penalties based on the official penalty chart.
 - It includes up to five members, with at least one veterinarian.
 - Hearings, and the makeup of the hearing body, are confidential.
 - Compromising the integrity of the Hearing Body will result in disciplinary action.
 - The responsible party may have legal representation and provide evidence.
 - Failure to appear results in automatic maximum penalties, no refunds, and no right to appeal.
 - Character references are not allowed, and personal factors like popularity, sponsorship, or membership status are not considered.
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Appeal Process

- The responsible party may request an appeal by the designated deadline.
 - The executive committee can only hear the evidence provided to the Hearing Body.
 - The executive Committee decision is **final and binding with no further appeals allowed.**
 - All appeal decisions are reported to the NRHA Board of Directors. Published offenses will be reported as published; unpublished offenses will remain anonymous.
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Penalty Charts

	First Offense	Second Offense	Third Offense
NSAID Stacking /Romifidine Overage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$250-\$500 fine 1-2 year probation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$1,000-\$2,000 fine 1-2-year probation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$4,000 fine Disqualification Publication 6-month suspension 1-2-year probation
Overage of a Permitted Substance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$250-\$500 fine 1-2 year probation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$500-\$1,000 fine 1-2 year probation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$2,000 fine 1-2 year probation
Conditionally Permitted Substance Violation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warning letter-\$1,000 fine 1-2 year probation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$1,000-\$5,000 fine 1-2 Year probation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$5,000-\$7,500 fine Disqualification Publication 1-2 Year Probation
Banned Substance Violation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$5,000-\$10,000 fine May be up to one-year suspension. May be up to disqualification. 3- year Probation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$7,500 fine-\$15,000 fine Disqualification Publication 6 months- 1 year suspension 5 year- permanent probation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$30,000 fine Disqualification Suspension Publication Up to Permanent probation

Enforcement

- Penalties take effect once accepted or after due process.
- If multiple violations occur in one test, only the most serious penalties apply.
- Failure to comply** with any penalties handed down may result in further disciplinary action.
- The NRHA Board of Directors will be informed of all results of the NRHA Hearing Body and medication testing statistics are posted online.
- Probation:** Time during which additional violations are counted resulting in additional penalties.

- **Fines:** Must be paid on time; non-payment can lead to suspension or collections.
 - **Suspension:** No competing, voting, or other privileges (such as judging, stewarding); not allowed on the grounds of NRHA approved events, and unable to complete association transactions (such as nominations).
 - **Disqualification:** Loss of titles, purse points, and/or awards.
 - **Publication:** Offenses published in ReinerSuite (not for youth).
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Policy Changes

- Requires **67% Board of Directors supermajority**.
- Stricter rules for banned substances require a **180-day notice** to the membership prior to taking effect.
- Looser rules may take effect **immediately or on a date set by the board of directors**
- The NRHA Executive Committee review the Policy annually and may make recommendations to the board of directors for consideration.