



## **Instructor/Coach/Official Dispute Resolution Policy**

100, 251 Midpark Blvd SE, Calgary, AB T2X 1S3  
Phone: 403.253.4411 Toll Free: 1.877.463.6233  
albertaequestrian.com

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**Department: Governance**

### **Preamble**

The Alberta Equestrian Federation (AEF) is committed to providing a Coaching/Officiating environment in which Ethical Conduct is respected and promoted. AEF believes that these values and ideals shall guide the communications and actions of all recognized Coaches/Instructors/Officials who are members of AEF. AEF states that any Coach or Instructor who holds EC/NCCP recognized instructor/coach certification in the province of Alberta, represents the AEF and is bound to uphold the AEF/Coach/Instructor/ Officials Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct as presented by Equine Canada (EC) and AEF. For the purposes of this document the title “Coach” or “Coaches” will be used for both Coach and Instructors, and “Official” or “Officials” will be used for Judge, Course Designer, Steward and Technical Delegate.

- This policy applies to all AEF Member EC/NCCP Certified “Coaches” and all AEF Member EC/AEF carded “Officials” living and working in Alberta that AEF recognizes to be “current” as per AEF’s bylaws at the time of any complaint.
- All AEF members are bound by the AEF Member Code of Ethics.
- EC certified “Coaches” are also bound by the EC Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics and are subject to the statements and ideals of EC. Some complaints will be required to be taken to EC for resolution, as per EC rules. The EC Code of Conduct and Ethics are contained in the current EC General Regulations rule book.
- This policy provides disciplinary action that may be used for “Coaches” or “Officials” who violate AEF’s Policies in the course of carrying out duties that encompass teaching and training or officiating.
- “Coaches” and “Officials” are bound by this policy when they are actively coaching as Certified Coaches, or those who are acting as an AEF Team Coach, or actively Officiating at an event or competition.
- Behavior by a “Coach” or “Official” that may lead to sanctions include but are not limited to:
  - Physical or verbal abuse of a rider, parent, official, horse, coach or other industry professional
  - Any action or inaction that endangers the welfare of a rider or horse
  - Physical or verbal confrontations with other coaches, riders, parents or officials
  - Unprofessional attitude, conduct and performance while acting in private or public areas
  - Misrepresentation of Coaching or Officiating status and certification
  - Any other current or past actions which are deemed to be detrimental to the interests, objectives and wellbeing of the AEF

- This policy does not apply in situations where the “Coach” or “Official” is acting outside of coaching/officiating parameters such as personal business disputes, boarding contracts, leasing or acting as a purchase agent.
- Harassment complaints must be filed with EC, the RCMP or civil court.

## Complaint Process

Complaints can be made by any AEF member or a member of the general public including but not limited to an athlete, a parent, a representative of a club or sport organization, another coach or official. Anonymous complaints and complaints by phone, will not be accepted and must be provided in writing.

1. An AEF complaint form must be completed and can be found at the AEF website or by contacting the AEF
2. A fee of \$50 CDN must be included and will be retained in an effort to deter frivolous complaints
3. Complaints received shall be directed as necessary, as per the complaint form
4. A complaint concerning the conduct of a “Coach” or “Official” shall:
  - Contain the information of the person(s) submitting the complaint
  - Identify the complaint in detail (including identifying the AEF - EC/NCCP Recognized “Coach” or AEF/EC recognized “Official”)
  - Include the date of the circumstance causing the complaint
  - Describe how the complainant has been harmed or affected by the occurrence
  - Relate the efforts taken to resolve the complaint and responses received
  - Be signed by the complainant
5. Upon receiving a complaint, the AEF shall:
  - Ensure the complaint is made in the proper format and includes all pertinent details
  - Forward the complaint to the respective department which may include the AEF board of directors, AEF competitions coordinator, AEF coaching coordinator, AEF executive director or AEF complaint committee
6. Upon receipt, the respective department of the AEF shall:
  - Determine whether the complaint can only be resolved using the legal courts or by EC, or if it falls within this policy
  - If the complaint is determined to be frivolous, trivial or a nuisance complaint - both parties will be advised in writing by the Complaint Committee Chairperson, after which the matter will be considered closed; a copy of this letter will be kept by the AEF office
7. If the Complaint is made in the proper form and is to be controlled by the AEF Complaint Committee, the following steps will be taken:
  - Within 14 business days of receiving the complaint, a copy of the complaint will be sent, by registered mail, to the AEF EC/NCCP recognized “Coach” or AEF/EC recognized “Official” against whom the complaint has been made
  - The “Coach” or “Official” shall have 14 business days from the date of receiving the complaint to respond in writing to the Complaint committee
  - If discipline action against the “Coach” or “Official” is deemed necessary - a formal hearing will be scheduled
8. The AEF Complaint committee/Hearing panel shall be an ad hoc committee of the AEF board and consist of the President (or the President’s appointed delegate), the Sport Committee Chairperson, the Provincial Coaching Committee Chairperson, and the Executive Director, and will include panel guests as required (i.e. in situation of a coaching complaint, a certified coach from a different

discipline / or in the situation of an official, an official from a different discipline may be asked to sit as well). A recording secretary will be appointed.

- The hearing will take place no later than 30 days after the determination that the complaint has merit
  - All parties, the committee, the complainant and the “Coach” or “Official” will receive copies of all of the supporting documentation of the complaint upon notification of the hearing date
  - Both the “Coach” or “Official” and the complainant have the right to present their case and be heard by the panel
  - Both parties have the right to bring counsel with them to the hearing
  - The hearing can take place in person, by teleconference, webinar, or other electronic meeting programs such as Skype
9. Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to:
- A written apology to the complainant
  - Letter sent to the National certification body or organization
  - A letter of reprimand from AEF to be placed on file
  - Removal of certain privileges of membership
  - Temporary suspension of membership
  - Expulsion from membership; become a Member not in Good Standing (applies to both AEF and EC)
  - Monetary fines as seen fit
10. After the conclusion of the hearing, the AEF Complaint Committee will send a letter of notice regarding the outcome of the hearing to all parties by registered mail no later than 14 business days after the hearing has concluded.
11. The Complaint Committee’s decision is final and binding on all parties.

*Complaints that fall under this policy are deemed to be of a serious nature, please consider this when filing your concerns.*