

Horse welfare and registration for inspections and competitions

1. General principle

The well-being and health of the horse are paramount at all times. In all activities of the BPS, the interests of the horse prevail over financial, commercial or other interests.

2. Exclusion in case of signs of animal-unfriendly treatment

If external or other observable characteristics are found in a horse that may indicate animal-unfriendly, careless or otherwise inadmissible actions, the horse can be excluded from further participation in the relevant activity with immediate effect by a designated person, such as a jury member, ringmaster, veterinarian or supervisor.

Such circumstances may include:

- a bleeding or injured mouth;
- animal-unfriendly or unsuitable hoof shoeing;
- excessive or improper use of the whip;
- other visible characteristics that give rise to reasonable doubt about the horse's welfare.

3. Health and eligibility for participation

Only horses that:

- be healthy and fit;
- be in good physical condition; and may reasonably be considered capable of participating in the relevant inspection or competition.

Horses that are lame or have other visible or not directly observable health problems or conditions that make participation irresponsible will be excluded from further participation.

4. Mares with foal

A mare with a foal may only be present on the inspection site with the foal if the mare is in a sufficiently good physical condition and her health and well-being make participation in the activity justified.

If, in the opinion of a designated person, the mare is not in sufficient condition, the combination of mare and foal can be excluded from participation and/or presence on the inspection site. Such a decision will be discussed with the board in advance, if circumstances permit.

The interests and well-being of the mare and foal are paramount. The non-participation of a foal in an inspection is not considered an obstacle to the further development of the horse. The foal can be presented for an inspection again at a later time, for example from the age of three.

5. Young and older horses

Horses of one year, two years, three years and older that are presented for an inspection must also be in a sufficiently good physical condition to participate in the inspection in question in a responsible manner.

If a horse is not in sufficient condition or if, in the opinion of a designated person, there is a situation in which participation is not justified, the horse can be banned from participation and/or presence on the inspection grounds. Where possible, this will be discussed in advance with the board.

6. Power to refuse participation or access

A person designated by the BPS, including a jury member, ring master, veterinarian or supervisor, is authorized to remove a horse that does not meet the aforementioned conditions participation in the activity or, if necessary, denial of access to or further presence on the inspection site.

In case of doubt about the health, suitability or welfare of the horse, consultation is held with the board and/or a veterinarian where possible. The well-being of the horse should always be leading.

7. Legal responsibility and protection of members

The BPS considers it necessary to apply these provisions strictly within the framework of the applicable laws and regulations on animal welfare and the responsibility of the herdbook for the activities that take place under its responsibility.

In addition, situations involving horses during inspections and competitions, partly due to publication and dissemination via social media, can have major consequences for the owner or participant involved and for the image and position of the BPS.

With these provisions, the BPS aims to guarantee the welfare of the horses on the one hand and to protect its members against situations that can lead to unnecessary publicity, reputational damage or other unpleasant consequences on the other.

The BPS emphasizes that the non-participation of a foal or horse in an inspection is not in itself a problem when this is necessary for the health, condition or welfare of the animal. A foal that cannot be inspected at a young age because the mother is not in sufficient condition can be presented again for an inspection at a later appropriate time, for example from the age of three.

8. Schooling and physical condition

Participating horses must, in view of their training, level of education, age, physical development and condition, be sufficiently prepared and suitable for the inspection or competition for which they have been registered.

9. Doubts about well-being

If there is doubt about the health, suitability or welfare of a horse during an inspection, competition or other studbook activity, the jury and/or the veterinarian must make the decision in the interest of the horse. When in doubt, the welfare of the horse prevails over the interest of participation.

10. Responsibility for well-being

The BPS focuses on the welfare of the horse at all times. Financial, commercial, sporting or other interests are subordinate to the well-being, health and safety of the horse.

11. Care and conditions

The owner, keeper and/or participant is responsible for adequate care and treatment of the horse. This includes, but is not limited to:

- care and housing;
- food and drinking water supply;
- sufficient rest and recovery;
- appropriate social contacts;
- responsible and appropriate transport; and
- any other conditions that may affect the welfare and health of the horse.

In all these aspects, the welfare of the horse should be used as the first starting point.