



## **POSITION TITLE: RIDE STEWARD**

The mission of EDRA is to promote, at all levels and to all members, safe, competitive equine distance riding events, and experiences. Central to EDRA's mission is a Ride Steward Program and volunteers filling the Ride Steward (Steward) role that supports participants and ride managers by helping ensure a consistent and reliable interpretation of rules and that disputes are resolved at the earliest possible juncture, driven by safety of the horse and rider, and in a respectful manner that focuses on building a learning culture.

Ride Stewards will not be able to ride in the event they are assigned to steward. They need to be available in ride camp to adjudicate any disputes, address rules issues that surface during the competition and/or participate in the drug sampling process if required.

### **QUALIFICATIONS**

- Experienced distance rider with a minimum of 500 miles accumulated. Preferably distances will include competitions of 50-miles or longer or the individual will have sufficient experience and knowledge to address complicated issues such as rider(s) off-trail, unsafe equine, or rider behavior. The Steward Coordinator will determine knowledge and experience assessment.
- For ride distances of 75-miles or longer, the Steward must have successfully completed at least one ride of that distance or have sufficient experience and knowledge as determined by the Steward Coordinator.
- Successful and documented completion of all required SafeSport training.
- Demonstrated problem-solving, critical thinking, conflict resolution, and communications skills.
- If possible, participation as a Steward-in-Training by shadowing a Steward at an event, or a requirement, if deemed necessary if determined by the Steward Coordinator.

### **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND ESSENTIAL TASKS**

#### **Represent EDRA**

- Know the rules. Read them, don't assume you know the answer. The rules are reviewed and updated annually, so they may have been modified since the last time you were a Steward. When dealing with a behavior issue, use the discipline matrix as your foundational tool. If a scenario is new to you, feel free to consult an EDRA officer or another Steward who may be attending or participating in the ride.
- Wear the Ride Steward vest for the duration of the event (approximately noon the day before the competition until noon the day following the competition).
- Review these key responsibilities and tasks with the Ride Manager. Ask for time to speak briefly at both the pre-ride meeting and the post ride awards sessions.
- Walk around camp. Be visible and available to participants. This includes both pre-ride and post-competition – checking on participants and equines, monitoring safety of both

participants and equines; and rules compliance – helmets, dogs, horse containment, etc. Focus on the positive when interacting with individuals. Provide both compliments and coaching when needed.

- Participate in the pre-ride meeting by identifying yourself and the role you will be performing. (See sample talking points).
- Provide a brief post-ride summary at the awards ceremony.
- Complete and submit a Steward Report to the Steward Coordinator within ten days following the event. (See sample report.)
- When trying to get the Steward Manual off to the next Steward, do not hand it to just anyone. There is confidential information recorded in the manual, and it should only be given to another Steward, the Steward Coordinator, or an EDRA Officer/Board Member for transport.

### **Consistent interpretation of EDRA rules**

- Stewards are expected to read rules and associated appendixes in advance of filling the Steward role. You should also read the historical log as this will give you an idea of the issues that have surfaced in the past which create a precedent in the way in which a rule has been historically interpreted.
- The Steward performs tasks outlined in both the rules/appendixes and this summary document during their assigned EDRA-endorsed event.
- Don't assume you know the answer. When dealing with a behavior issue, use the discipline matrix as your foundational tool. If a scenario is new to you, feel free to consult the Steward Coordinator, an EDRA officer or another Steward who may be attending the ride.
- When addressing potential rule violations or inappropriate behavior, Stewards are encouraged to do so in a manner that projects our focus on learning and improving. It is our desire for the Steward role to facilitate education and not for the Steward's conversational tone to be punitive in nature.

### **Rules-related decisions and rules compliance at an EDRA event**

- In joint determination with the Ride Manager, cancel an event, if at any point you collectively feel conditions become unsafe for riders, equines, volunteers, the public and/or other ride management staff.
- In joint determination with the Ride Manager, modify the course for emergencies and/or safety reasons. In the event the course is modified, the Steward reminds the Ride Manager that a new GPS submittal must be sent to EDRA's Endorsement Coordinator before ride results can be accepted. This applies to all Distance Rides and Test Your Mettle Relays.
- In joint determination with the Ride Manager, for a specific reason (e.g., poor trail marking which causes participants to exceed their allotted ride time and the equivalent or a longer distance is completed), a "Completion Only" determination may be awarded to the participant (no placing is given, but a member's mileage record is credited). The Steward is responsible for documenting the rationale for the determination in his/her Steward Report of the event.
- In joint determination with the Ride Manager and any available medically trained personnel, the Steward and Ride Manager have the responsibility and authority to issue a Rider Option pull if they believe a rider may have sustained a concussion after following the Concussion Protocol, Appendix G. With their joint determination, a refund of the participant's ride entry

fee will be issued from EDRA, and it is the Steward's responsibility to report the incident in their Steward Report and work with the Ride Manager and EDRA Treasurer to ensure a refund is processed.

- The Ride Manager may refuse entry to a potential participant with due cause. If this action is taken, the reasoning must be discussed and documented by the Steward and included in the Steward's ride report. Refusal due to previous non-payment of entry fees is acceptable.
- Keep the Ride Manager apprised of any potential rules violations and work together to assess and address the matter.

### **On-site dispute resolution and investigation**

- Behavior that promotes safety, fairness, good sportsmanship, and quality care of their equine partner is expected by all participants at EDRA events. The Steward, Ride Manager and fellow EDRA members are expected to support other riders by exhibiting these qualities. When such behaviors are not displayed, it is the Steward's responsibility to carry out actions outlined in the Discipline Matrix, Appendix F.
- Stewards should become familiar with various deficiencies, remediations and processes outlined in the Discipline Matrix. When addressing potential rule violations or inappropriate behavior, Stewards are encouraged to do so in a manner that projects our focus on learning and improving. It is our desire for the Steward role to facilitate education and not for the Steward's conversational tone to be punitive in nature, unless absolutely necessary.
- Stewards may need to collaborate with EDRA Officers to summarize and issue written warnings. The purpose of these communications is to provide the individual with a summary of the incident and to define acceptable and expected future behavior.
- EDRA Conflict Resolution procedures are based on the founding principle that conflicts are best dealt with in a constructive, direct manner. In the event of a conflict, aggrieved parties must make every effort to achieve resolution with one another. If no resolution is reached after initial conversations between the parties, the following procedures shall be initiated:
  1. The principal parties (those directly involved) shall meet with the Ride Manager and Steward and attempt to resolve the issue at the ride. If one party refuses to meet, they will be banned from attending or participating in an EDRA event for six months. If the conflict emerges after the ride, the principal party shall contact the Steward appointed to that ride within seven days to schedule a meeting for conflict resolution. The Steward will contact involved parties, including the Ride Manager, to set up a meeting for resolution. Again, refusal to attend will result in a six-month suspension.
  2. If no resolution is reached, principal parties may file their complaint with the Conflict Resolution Committee. The Conflict Resolution Committee will consider the complaint and the response and determine culpability and consequences. Filing a complaint with the Conflict Resolution Committee must be accompanied by a \$100 filing fee which will be reimbursed if the principal party's complaint is upheld.
  3. Principle parties must initiate a solution through the Conflict Resolution Committee within 14 days of the meeting with the Steward.

### **Drug sampling**

- Function as the lead administrator, recordkeeper and witness to all drug samplings, supporting the Head Veterinarian in the following of the Drug Sampling Protocol, Appendix

D.

- Remember that this is a confidential activity that should not be announced or discussed with anyone other than those outlined in the protocol (the Head Veterinarian the day before the sampling will take place; the Ride Manager and Timers after participants are out on the course; the randomly selected participant is notified when either pulled, rider optioned, or immediately at completion of the event that his/her equine has been randomly selected to be drug screened.
- Finally, make certain the names and contact information of those participants whose equines are drug-tested is forwarded to the EDRA President so that when drug-testing results are issued s/he may contact the participant of the findings.

### **Minor athlete abuse prevention**

- Per Appendix H, EDRA's Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies, the Steward is considered a "Required Adult" and shall successfully complete U.S. Center for SafeSport's training in advance of performing the Steward function.
- It is not intended for the Steward to seek out non-compliance, but to take the required actions described in Appendix H, Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies, if an incident is reported.
- Additionally, if the minor's parent has not indicated on the ride entry registration, their preferences pertaining to the child's sponsors, written permission will be sought out and placed in the Steward records for that event. If written permission is not feasible, the Ride Manager should attempt to secure verbal permission and notes of the conversation should be placed in the Steward records for the event. If permission cannot be obtained, at the Ride Manager's discretion, the minor may not be allowed to compete in the event if two SafeSport trained adult sponsors are not available to sponsor the minor athlete.