



Animal Care Tech Note

Events Covered by the Horse Protection Act

The Horse Protection Act (HPA) makes it unlawful for any person to show, exhibit, sell, or transport sore horses, or to use prohibited equipment or substances in these activities. The HPA covers horse exhibition and shows, which includes public display of horses whether or not they are in competition. The HPA also covers horse sales and auctions whether or not the horses for sale are publicly displayed as part of the sale.

Races or other events where speed is the prime factor are not covered. Rodeo events, parades, and trail rides are also excluded from the HPA. The following charts provide examples of common events and whether they are regulated under the HPA. It is important to remember that these charts are only guidance, and the determining factor for a specific event not already under another exclusion is whether or not speed is the prime factor in scoring.

This tech note provides guidance to help you determine whether an activity is covered by the HPA.

The HPA only covers members of the species *Equus caballus*. That means the HPA does not apply to donkeys, mules, or exotic equids like zebra.

Examples of Events Covered by the HPA

Event	Reason
Cart/Driving	Based on score
Costume Class	Based on score
Dressage	Based on score
Equitation, Flat Classes, Pleasure	Based on score
Halter/Showmanship at Halter	Based on score
Hunter	Based on score
Hunter Under Saddle	Based on score
Polo	Based on score
Ranch Horse Versatility	Based on score
Ranch Riding	Based on score
Reining	Based on score
Trail Classes	Based on score
Vaulting	Based on score



Examples of Events Not Covered by the HPA

Event	Reason
Barrel Racing	Speed is the prime factor/rodeo event
Cross Country	Speed is the prime factor
Endurance	Speed is the prime factor
Gymkhana	Speed is the prime factor
Horse Racing	Speed is the prime factor
Mounted Shooting	Speed is the prime factor
Show Jumping	Speed is the prime factor
Speed Coach Races	Speed is the prime factor
Steeplechasing	Speed is the prime factor
Reined Cowhorse	Rodeo event
Working Cowhorse	Rodeo event
Working Cow Horse	Rodeo event
Boxing Only	

The HPA establishes the legal requirements that must be followed. For details, refer to the HPA (United States Code Title 15, Chapter 44, Sections 1821-1831) and the Horse Protection Regulations (Code of Federal Regulations, 9 CFR Title 9, Chapter I, Subchapter A, Part 11).

More Information

For more information, contact us at horseprotection@usda.gov.