

**USEA INSTRUCTORS' CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**  
**COMPLAINTS RESOLUTION PROCEDURE**  
Procedure initiated in 2005

Occasionally, ICP receives direct, negative commentary from an observer of an ICP-certified instructor's teaching, coaching, competing, horse care, or professionalism. This commentary focuses upon an observed behavior or attitude which the observer believes ICP would not or should not support. The ICP Complaints Resolution Procedure does not accept complaints related to the buying/selling of horses.

**A. ICP's procedure for responding to and resolving a complaint from a non-certified observer:**

1.) The observer must identify him- or herself. ICP accepts no anonymous complaints. The identity of the observer will be maintained in confidence if so desired by the observer.

2.) An ICP Committee member (hereinafter complaint investigator) interviews the observer, normally by telephone, sometimes by writing, sometimes in person.

The complaint investigator may request that CRP telephone calls be recorded after receiving agreement from each individual on each call, whether those individuals are the observer, the observed, or the supporters of either. If the observed instructor refuses to participate in recorded calls, the complaints resolution procedure may use written communication if ICP chooses to proceed with that method of interaction. If the observed instructor fails to fully cooperate with the complaints resolution procedure either by phone or in writing and chooses not to present his/her case to ICP's 3-member hearing panel (see below in 7.), his/her ICP-certification may be revoked. The observed instructor will be informed of this possibility by the complaint investigator in advance of the observed's decision-making about how to proceed.

3.) If the complaint investigator believes a valid complaint has been reported and if that complaint implicates a behavior(s)/attitude(s) that appear to be unsafe, inhumane to rider or horse, unprofessional, significantly inadequate to the professional task at hand, and/or significantly different from the classical riding/teaching principles/practices that form the base of the ICP curriculum, then further investigation will take place.

4.) The complaint investigator will contact the observed ICP-certified instructor in question and present the commentary offered by the observer. The ICP invites, receives, and discusses with the instructor his/her response to the observation and also invites the instructor to identify others, including others who are ICP-certified, to offer comment on his/her behalf.

5.) The complaint investigator gathers evidence from these witnesses named by the instructor.

6.) After gathering evidence deemed sufficient by ICP to support a valid complaint, by the instructor, and by the observer, ICP continues discussion with the instructor in order to come to a resolution satisfactory to both ICP and the instructor:

\*If the instructor's teaching/training/riding/horse care philosophy, principles/practices, and/or professionalism are insupportable by ICP yet the instructor wishes to retain them, ICP requests the instructor to continue forward as a non-certified instructor. In other words, ICP and the instructor part company with a handshake, the instructor's ICP-certification is revoked, and his/her name and contact information are removed from the USEA's ICP Certified Instructor list.

**\*If the instructor wishes to remain an ICP-certified instructor, the instructor agrees – and is required – to have discussion with an ICP Committee member. The purpose of this discussion is to review the substance at the base of the complaint and to develop an alternative behavior(s)/attitude(s) for adoption by the instructor, an alternative that is personally workable for the instructor and professionally acceptable to ICP and the instructor. Via an ICP-appointed mentor, ICP subsequently contacts the instructor with sufficient regularity to effectively support the instructor’s implementation of this alternative behavior/attitude. It normally takes some time and conscious focus for the instructor to integrate this new behavior/attitude into his/her professional life.**

**7.) If the instructor does not agree that he or she has failed to abide by the principles, practices, and/or professional standards of ICP instruction and horse care, he or she must engage in a hearing in front of a panel comprised of 3 ICP Committee members. To the extent practicable, these panel members shall not have prior knowledge of the specific details of the complaint at issue. The instructor will be notified in writing via email or hard-copy mail of the date and time of the hearing, which may be conducted via conference call or in person, and which may be recorded in either case. Before the hearing, the observed instructor and the hearing panel members will be notified in writing of the nature and factual basis of the complaint against that instructor. At the hearing, the instructor may address the complaint and offer evidence in his or her favor. The panel shall make a recommendation to dismiss the complaint or to find that the complaint is valid. If the panel finds the complaint to be valid, the panel shall make recommendations to the instructor to improve his or her practices. The panel may also revoke the instructor’s ICP certification if the panel finds that the instructor will not make necessary changes to his or her principles and/or practices to make them consonant with the principles and/or practices of ICP instruction, horse care, and professionalism.**

**The ICP informs the observer that the Complaints Resolution Procedure has been utilized and shares its outcome.**

**8.) ICP makes and retains a written record of the above procedure and any and all complaints received and how they are handled. These records are kept in the instructor’s ICP file in the USEA office. If, over time, 3 complaints about the same instructor are registered with ICP, an investigation will be conducted and the hearing process outlined above may be utilized.**

**B. ICP’s procedure for responding to and resolving a complaint from a certified instructor observer about the behavior/attitude of another certified instructor:**

**A certified instructor might observe another certified instructor engaging in what the first instructor believes to be behavior/attitude that is unsafe, inhumane to horse or rider, unprofessional, significantly inadequate to the professional task at hand, and/or significantly different from the classical riding/teaching principles/practices that form the base of the ICP curriculum.**

**If the observing instructor wishes to caution or work with that instructor about this observed behavior, he or she is able to do so directly, without recourse to the ICP Complaints Resolution Procedure.**

**If the observing instructor prefers to use the ICP Complaints Resolution Procedure, he or she may do so by contacting a member of the ICP Committee. Then the Complaints Resolution Procedure goes forward as described above under 1.) through 8.).**

**June, 2017**