

# UNITED STATES EVENTING ASSOCIATION

## Area Chair Manual: Guidelines & Policies for USEA Area Affairs



USEA  
525 Old Waterford Rd, NW Leesburg, VA 20176  
Phone (703) 779-0440 • Fax (703) 779-0550  
[info@useventing.com](mailto:info@useventing.com)

(Revised January 2022)

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*Welcome to Area Affairs*

*Welcome to the wide world of being an Area Chairperson. There is an old Chinese proverb that contains a message all leaders need to hear. In the proverb a young boy questions an old and wise monk with the intent to play a cruel practical joke. The boy approaches the monk, his hands hidden behind his back and states "In my hand I hold a small bird old man...if you are indeed wise answer this question. Is the bird hidden in my hand alive or is the bird dead?" The wise man answers. "It is whatever you choose it to be."*

*So, in that context your Area will be exactly as you choose it to be; vibrant, alive, and successful or stagnant and regressing. Yes, the role of Chairperson is critical to the health and growth of your Area. Your vision for the Area you lead will set a tone that inspires others in the Area to grow their vision for the Area as well. Growth in Events both new event locations opening their gates and seasoned events becoming more successful is a direct result of an Area having a vision and a mission to grow. The attitude and sheer activity of the Area Chair can stimulate this growth.*

*Your Area Council is one of your best resources. Communicate with them regularly. Use the power of a Mastermind group to solve problems that affect your Areas health. You also have a valuable resource in your USEA Board representative. Use the USEA Board to help solve issues you see affecting the National scene as well as your local concerns.*

*Regarding the all-important issue of Area Finances your Area Treasurer is a critical component of your Area Council. How monies get collected and disbursed is covered in this Manual. Read these areas carefully and communicate with your Treasurer often. This is an important and often overlooked aspect of your leadership responsibilities. Your Treasurer is an asset that must have the support and confidence of the Area Chairperson.*

*Your leadership and vision are also needed to balance the many constituencies you represent. The Area Chairperson must see the Organizers, Adult Riders', Junior/Young Riders', and Volunteers as equally important to the Areas Upper-Level Rider group. The tail must not wag the dog. Most your riders and USEA members are adults that compete between the Beginner Novice and Preliminary levels. These riders pay the bills...never forget that. Of course, the USEA its members and events play a major and important role in creating a sport that brings our riders the venues and quality of competition they need to bring home medals from the international stage. But the world of eventing is not sustainable without new kids entering the sport and older kids (adult riders) staying in the sport.*

*Finally, your participation on a National level is critical. Join conversations with your USEA Board representative. Add your input to USEA committees that interest you. Call the USEA office and ask questions. Your USEA staff is a fantastic resource that you should be very familiar with.*

*Well...now you should be a least a little concerned about what you have volunteered for. Rest assured if you lead with your vision at the forefront, you will be fine. Remember, Eventing is fun, and Eventers are probably the most welcoming, horse friendly and hardworking community you can be involved with. Enjoy the ride!*

*Sincerely, Brian Sabo  
USEA President, 2011-2013*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The USEA established Areas to facilitate the sport at the grassroots level and to further support USEA's geographically diverse membership. Areas are an integral part of the USEA and are not independent entities.

These guidelines detail the management policies and responsibilities of Area personnel regarding the principal functions of an Area. These operations are to be consistent with the practices and policies of the national office.

## **FUNCTIONS OF THE AREA**

The Area provides several functions, among which are:

- Assist in the development of an Area calendar for all recognized USEA events that meets the needs of competitors and organizers alike.
- Promote the Sport of Eventing by providing education and development activities through the Area's Junior/Young Riders' and Adult Riders' Programs.
- Communicate with the USEA membership residing in the Area.
- Promote USEA membership to members of local Eventing Associations (also known as EAs or CTAs), competitors who are non-members of the USEA, and others.
- Provide for annual Area Awards.
- Provide for an annual Area Championship competition.

## **AREA ORGANIZATION**

To provide these functions, the Area must be organized properly utilizing the following concepts. The following organizational structure has proven successful in many Areas and some variation to suit local conditions is acceptable where noted. If a specific concern arises that is not addressed in this manual, it is recommended that Area Chairs contact the USEA Vice President of Area Affairs

### **Area Council**

The Area Council functions as a board with oversight responsibility for the actions of the Area. The Council will consist of individuals assisting in the roles and duties of the following: Area Chair, any Assistant Area Chair(s), the Area Treasurer, the Area Secretary, the Area Adult Riders' Coordinator, the Area Junior/Young Riders' Coordinator, the Area Organizer Representative and Area members of the USEA Board of Governors. In addition, other representatives from the Area may serve as members of the Area Council, including the USEA PHC Representative or any roles deemed necessary by the Area Council. All council members must have current membership with USEA and be in good standing.

The Area Chair will rely upon the Area Council to assist in fulfilling the Chair's responsibilities and will consult the Area Council on all matters with respect to Area scheduling matters, financial decisions (Budgets, Expenditures), Area Adult and Junior/Young Riders' Program Decisions, Area Championships and Area Year-end Awards.

### **Area Council Executive Committee (optional)**

An Executive Committee of the Area Council may be named. This is useful when the activities of the Area require more frequent sessions than can be accommodated by the full Area Council. The Executive Committee, if named, shall consist of the Area Chair, any Assistant Area Chair(s), Area Treasurer and Area members of the USEA Board of Governors

### **Area Chair**

The Area Chair administers, directs and coordinates all activities of the United States Eventing Association ("USEA") within the Area; carries out the policies of the USEA in the furtherance of knowledge and the promotion of the sport of Eventing; promotes favorable public relations; negotiates an equitable schedule of events in the Area and provides support for these events; recommends and develops policies and procedures for Area activities; and carries out the necessary administrative, nonfinancial support and supervisory functions for the efficient operation of the Area.

Area Chairs are appointed by the USEA Board of Governors upon the recommendations of the local USEA Area Councils. These individuals are appointed by the USEA Board of Governors to serve as liaisons between the USEA membership, organizers of USEA Events, competitors of USEA, and the USEF Eventing Technical Committee, to encourage the development of the sport of Eventing within the USEA Areas.

### **Nomination of the Area Chair**

An Area will appoint a committee to nominate and to recommend an Area Chair for approval by the USEA Board of Governors. The retiring Area Chair, in consultation with the Area Council will appoint a committee to nominate a new Area Chair. The committee should consist of three to five members who are representative of the Area and may include members of the Area Council and the outgoing Area Chair. The members of the nominating committee are ineligible for selection as Area Chair.

The Area Council shall vote on nominations submitted by the Area's nominating committee. In the event of a tie vote, the Area Chair shall cast the deciding nominating vote. The successful nominee shall be submitted to the Board of Governors of the USEA at the Annual Meeting that December.

### **Appointment and Term of the Area Chair**

The Area Chair is appointed by the USEA Board of Governors, having been nominated by the Area Council, and serves for a single three (3) - year term. The Area Chair shall be limited to one (3-year) term. Under special circumstances and with the approval of the Area Council and the Board of Governors, this may be extended one additional (3-year) term.

## **Duties of the Area Chair**

In cooperation with the USEA National Office the Area Chair will:

- Develop and recommend approval of an Area schedule for all registered and recognized USEA events that meet the needs of competitors and organizers alike.
- Act as communicational liaison with the national USEA office. Keep the USEA office informed of Area concerns, promptly responding to requests for information and maintaining records. Basically, you are coordinating the communication between the many different members of the Eventing community.
- Oversee all Area programs, such as Junior/Young Riders' and Adult riders', and serve as a voting member on all Area committees.
- Attend enough competitions to better understand organizers' and competitors' concerns and needs. The Area Chair will receive Technical Delegate reports on the Area competitions directly from Federation (USEF); however, due to a change of federation policy, comments by the technical delegate will not be displayed.
- Hold at least three meetings of the Area Council to coordinate the Area schedule of events and to discuss matters of importance to the Area.
- Hold at least one Area meeting each year to provide opportunities for communication between the Eventing population of the Area – competitors, organizers, Eventing professionals, and to facilitate Area continuity and activities. At this one general meeting of the Area should be an open business meeting disclosing the status of the area; retain minutes of this meeting.
- Promote USEA membership from members of local Eventing Associations (also known as EAs or CTAs), competitors who are non-members of the USEA, and others.
- Tabulate Area Level Awards and Points. The Chair will delegate a committee for award selection which includes perpetual and "keeper" trophies within the Area. Responsible for tabulation of Area championship points throughout the year, as required. Areas using the USEA Points Table may contact the USEA IT Department and request the pertinent reports.
- Supervise and develop fund-raising efforts in support of Area activities, including annual awards, newsletters, website, Junior/Young Riders'/Adult Riders' activities, and sponsorships.
- Develop an annual budget for the Area. May be chaired by the Treasurer or must include the Treasurer.

## **Competition Authority**

Unless the Area Chair is serving as a licensed official at an event, the Chair does not have the authority to enforce rules.

### **Area Council Executive Committee (optional)**

An Executive Committee of the Area Council could be named. The Executive Committee of the Area Council will be responsible for reviewing and resolving Area scheduling, and conflicts involving other Area Programs and decisions. The Executive Committee shall consist of the following personnel of the Area Council: Area Chair, Assistant Area Chair (if applicable), Area Treasurer, Area Board of Governors, Area Organizer Representative and Area USEA Professional Horseman Committee (PHC) Representative.

The Executive Committee shall establish mandates for action by a simple majority vote, in the event of a tie vote; the Area Chair shall cast the deciding vote.

The Executive Committee shall be consulted and vote on all Area Event Schedules, scheduling conflicts. It is also required that the Area Chair seek the guidance, advice, and mandate of the Executive Committee in ALL other decisions that involve disputes, such as Major Financials Decisions (Budgets, Expenditures), Area Junior/Young Riders' Program Decisions, Area Championships and Area Year-end Awards.

### **Assistant Area Chair (optional)**

If applicable, one or more Assistant Area Chairs may be appointed by area council to assist the Area Chair and to serve as Acting Chair in the absence of the Chair. The position of Assistant Area Chair is a good orientation position for the successor nominated to be Area Chair.

### **Treasurer**

The Area Chair must appoint an Area Treasurer to serve for minimum of a three (3) - year term with the approval of the USEA Administration & Financial Committee. The Treasurer will maintain the records and accounts of the Area administrative fund, and other accounts as needed. The Area Chair will ensure that the Area Treasurer complies with all USEA rules and regulations regarding the reporting of Area finances. The Treasurer will work closely with USEA office personnel regarding reports. The Treasurer will follow the Financial Guidelines established by the USEA Board of Governors (see appendix).

### **Secretary (optional)**

The Area Chair is responsible for communication with the Eventing population of the Area. To do so efficiently it is suggested that the role of secretary be delegated to a person to provide tangible and accessible Eventing information to the USEA membership of the area for a recommended three (3) year term. There are many methods of communicating Eventing information: website, newsletter – print or electronic. Publish an Area newsletter on a regular schedule, to provide the membership with timely information and announcements, and to provide a credible basis for advertising sales. The appointed secretary of an area will be responsible for taking minutes for the one general Area meeting required by the USEA. These minutes will be made available to the Area, and to the National USEA office by request.



### **Junior/Young Riders' Program Coordinator**

The Area Chair shall appoint a Junior/Young Riders' Program Coordinator to oversee the Area's Junior/Young Riders' Program. This individual will be responsible for the following:

- Develop a program to encourage competition and development of junior and young riders at all levels.
- Develop clinics for current and future participants within the sport of Eventing.
- Develop programs for local or national sponsorship, as appropriate. In coordination with the finance committee, support or organize fund-raising.
- The Junior/Young Riders' Coordinator, as a member of the Area's council, will have the responsibility to administer such programs to achieve these goals for a recommended three (3) year term.
- As part of these responsibilities, it is recommended the Junior/Young Riders' Coordinator to acquire a committee of members, which are free of conflict, to foster the achievements of these goals. Recommend criteria for riders, coach, and manager selection, as appropriate. Accept Junior/Young Riders' applications for national and regional competitions and submit for approval by the Area Chair. It is the responsibility of the Area Chair to approve the details of their Area's Junior/Young Riders' Programs.

**NOTE:** In accordance with USEF Policy, all Area Junior and Young Rider Team Coaches must be ICP Certified to the level they shall be coaching: Level II for the CH-J\*\* and Level III for the CHY\*\*\*.

### **Adult Riders' Program Coordinator**

The Area Chair shall appoint an Adult Riders' Program Coordinator to oversee the Area's Adult Riders' Program. The individual will be responsible for the following:

- Coordinate a program to encourage competition and development of the adult riders at all levels.
- Develop clinics for current and future participants within the sport of Eventing.
- Develop programs for local or national sponsorship, as appropriate. In coordination with the finance committee, support or organize fund-raising.
- The Adult Riders' Coordinator, as a member of the Area's council, will have the responsibility to administer such programs to achieve these goals for a recommended three (3) - year term. As part of these responsibilities, it is recommended the Adult Riders' Coordinator to acquire a committee of members, which are free of conflict, to foster the achievements of these goals. Recommend criteria for riders, coach, and manager selection, as appropriate. Accept Adult Riders' applications for national and regional competitions and submit for approval by the Area Chair. It is the responsibility of the Area Chair to approve the details of their Area's Adult Riders' programs.

### **Event Organizers' Representative**

This Council Representative is by vote of an Area's Organizers. The Event Organizers' Representative is not an appointee of the Area Chair or Council. They are intended to act as liaison between an Area's Event Organizers and the USEA councils. They are also responsible for communicating with all Area Organizers with information from USEA pertaining to the concerns of Event Organizers. The Event Organizer Representative as a member of the Area's council, will have the responsibility to the Area Council for a recommended two (2) - year term as majority vote of the Area's USEA Event Organizers. USEA Areas of I, III, V, VII, IX will elect Organizer Representative even number years. USEA Areas of II, IV, VI, VIII, X will elect Organizer Representative on odd number years.

### **USEA Professional Horseman's Council Representative (optional)**

This Council Representative is approved by the Area Chair. This representative is intended to act as liaison between an Area's Eventing Professional and USEA. This person should share the concerns of an Area's PHC with the Area's Council. They are also responsible for communicating with an Area's Eventing Professionals any information and opportunities provided by USEA.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Area Chairs are representatives of the USEA and should always behave in conformity with the interest of the USEA. Considering their responsibility for scheduling and resolving disputes among events, Chairs should remain unbiased in Area disputes, including those between organizers and between organizers and the USEA and/or the USEF Eventing Sport Committee. Any suggestion of bias should, always, be avoided. Caution should be used when communicating on electronic bulletin boards, in newsprint, and other public forums. As representatives of the USEA, Area Chairs should refrain from public statements that are inconsistent with, or contradictory to, positions that the USEA has taken. Any questions or issues regarding public comment on matters relating to the USEA should be referred to the USEA Chief Executive Officer before comment is made.

### **AREA COMMITTEES**

THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES WITHIN AREA COMMITTEES HAVE PROVEN SUCCESSFUL IN MANY AREAS. VARIATIONS TO SUIT LOCAL CONDITIONS ARE ACCEPTABLE.

#### **Area Nominating Committee**

An Area will appoint a committee to nominate and to recommend an Area Chair for approval by the USEA Board of Governors. This Nominating Committee of an Area may also be utilized to find and to appoint other members of an Area Council. They may also be used in the selection process for the competition teams of the Junior/Young Riders' and Adult Riders' programs. The committee should consist of three to five members who are representative of the Area and may include members of the Area Council. The members of an Area nominating committee are ineligible for selection for the position for which they are selecting.

The Area Council shall vote on nominations submitted by the Area's nominating committee. In the event of a tie vote, the Area Chair shall cast the deciding nominating vote.

### **Educational Committee (optional)**

This committee is responsible for the development and the support of the educational opportunities within an Area. This groups' main objective is to communication with the Area's council and Area's membership of the educational opportunities provided for the membership. Junior/Young Riders' and Adult Riders' Clinics and Camps information should be made available to the membership of an Area. Also, the Instruction Certification Program (ICP) should be utilized as an educational resource of Eventing.

### **Area Awards Committee**

The Chair may delegate a committee for award selection which includes perpetual and "keeper" trophies within the Area. Responsible for tabulation of Area championship points throughout the year, as required. Areas using the USEA Points Table may contact the USEA IT Department and request the pertinent reports.

### **Annual Meeting**

The Area Chair will delegate a committee to coordinate dates, locations, and educational programs for the Area Annual meeting, including an awards banquet, if possible. Event colleges, seminars, and clinics should be included as applicable. There should also be smaller committee meetings to be held in conjunction with the Area Annual Meeting to discuss Area concerns. One such example should be an organizers' meeting held to discuss Area problems and event scheduling.

## **COMPETITIONS AND AWARDS**

The Chair and Council are tasked with tabulating Area Level Awards and Points. The Chair will delegate a committee for award selection which includes perpetual and "keeper" trophies within the Area. Responsible for tabulation of Area championship points throughout the year, as required. Areas using the USEA Points Table may contact the USEA IT Department and request the pertinent reports. An important part of this awards program is the development an Area Championship.

### **Area Championships**

Annual Area Championships are held at the beginner novice, novice, training, preliminary, intermediate and advanced levels. An intro or starter level may also be offered. Area Championship Divisions should be held at regular scheduled events, preferably between September 1 and November 30, although the actual dates are at the Area's discretion. Championships may be rotated among eligible horse trials when practical, and provide competition consistent with a championship, or Areas may select one competition venue as the long-term host of the Championships.

### **General Guidelines**

The following guidelines apply to all Area Championships:

- All Area Championship competitors must be current USEA members.
- All qualifying competitions must be USEA registered horse trials or three-day events.
- All divisions must have five or more starters to count as a qualifying competition.
- No horse may compete in more than one championship in a given Area during the same calendar year. This restriction does not include the AEC or any national championship.
- Beginner Novice divisions will not count as qualifiers for the Novice division.
- List all qualifying competitions on the entry form.

### **Championship Divisions**

It is at the discretion of each Area to determine eligibility requirements for their Area Championships.

- Whether competitors must reside in the area where the championship is held. Residence is determined by USEA membership, including the declared area.
- Qualifying competitions in Area, or from any Area.
- Placing to qualify, e.g., first through fourth in one event, etc.
- The qualifying period.

These requirements and specifications must be published on the Area's website. The Area website addresses are located on the USEA website.

### **Area Year- End High Point Rider/Horse Awards**

Area High Point Awards will vary from Area to Area. Awarding points to the first five places in each competition, in descending value (i.e., 1st Place = 5 points, 2nd Place = 4 points, 5<sup>th</sup> Place = 1 point), is one example.

Some Areas may award higher points to the divisions with larger numbers of entries, like the USEA National Novice and Training Awards point system. The point system criteria should be published in the Area's newsletter or website.

## **SCHEDULING OF EVENTS**

### **The Area Schedule**

The Area schedule is perhaps the single most important job the Area Chair will perform. To avoid disputes, and to provide greater representation in the matter of such importance, the Area Chair shall convene the Area Council for discussion regarding the Area schedule. The Area Chair, in collaboration with the Organizer Representative, will coordinate an Area-wide scheduling meeting that includes organizers, trainers, and upper-level riders. The proper spacing of Area horse trials is imperative in the preparation of horse and rider for inter and intra Area horse trials and FEI competitions. The Area Chair and/or Organizer Representative will work in conjunction with surrounding Areas in attempt to create a regional Eventing calendar.

### **Preparation of Event Calendar**

The Area Chair, along with the Organizers Representative, will prepare a coordinated schedule of registered events within their Area annually. The schedule must then be submitted for final approval by the Area Council. Scheduling should begin at least 14 months in advance of a competition year. It is necessary for the USEA National Office to maintain a provisional calendar for members of the association. Area calendars are to be prepared and submitted in writing to the USEA National Office, attention the Director of Competitions, no later than November 15<sup>th</sup> for the subsequent year that will begin in 13 months.

US Equestrian will communicate to the USEA office within 30 days of receipt, changes to dates, additions to levels on existing dates, or new/additional events. Upon receipt to the USEA, all modifications will be forwarded to organizers (through their organizer representative) and area chairs. Organizers are responsible for submitting any objection directly to the Area Chair by the return date on the "Competition Comment Form" that will accompany the notification. The Area Chair is responsible for forwarding all completed forms from the organizers to the Area Council. The Area Chair is responsible to return all the completed forms from the organizers and the Area Council's recommendation to the USEA Director of Competitions, no later than the return date on the applicable form. The return dates on each "Competition Comment Form" will be strictly enforced. Unsubmitted forms are considered an approval of the modification. For the complete application process and timelines, refer to USEF GR-3 of the General Regulations.

### **Inter-Area Event Calendar Scheduling**

While scheduling the Eventing calendar of an Area, the interplay and coordination of scheduling has become increasingly important in the progression and development of the event horse and rider across the Areas of the USEA. Therefore, an Area Chair will work in conjunction with other Area Chairs to develop the best working Event Calendar for the benefit of the participants in the sport. This cooperative should include the Area Chair, Organizers' Representative and Event Professionals from the Areas. This cooperative should meet annually, preferably at the USEA Annual Meeting.

### **USEF Calendar Working Group and Eventing Sport Committee**

The USEF Calendar Working Group is the first Federation committee to review modifications and the overall calendar. The CWG will provide recommendations and advice to the Eventing Sport Committee on all matters pertaining to the eventing calendar. The Eventing Sport Committee will review all recommendations and forward their comments to the USEF CEO and the Federation's Competitions Department, who will issue a final decision.

## **Application Procedure for all Events Without Mileage Conflicts –**

Below is an excerpt of GR-3 of the USEF General Regulations – Competition Licensing Applications, timeline for new competition applications or modification requests. For the complete rules pertaining to competition licensing and the procedure for mileage conflicts, refer to the USEF Rulebook, GR3 Competition Licensed Competitions located on [www.usef.org](http://www.usef.org).

1. All competitions must submit a competition application or a request for a modification to an existing competition or license, to the Federation no more than 240 calendar days prior to the start of the competition.
2. Within 30 calendar days of receiving a new competition application or request for a modification to an existing competition the USEA will be notified.
3. Within 60 calendar days from receipt, the USEA will provide the Federation with its recommendation.
4. Within 30 calendar days of receiving USEA's recommendation the Eventing Sport Committee will make their recommendation to the Federation's CEO.
5. Within 15 calendar days of receiving recommendation from the ESC, the Federation's CEO, or his designee, will convene the Competitions Department to review all materials submitted with the competition application, and to and provide a decision on the application.
6. Within 7 calendar days of the decision, the Federation's Competitions Department will issue a decision letter to the applicant.

## **Event Evaluations**

Event Evaluation Forms are received from competitors after each competition. The forms are for the Chair and the organizers, and do not need to be forwarded to the USEA office.

After most of the forms have been received, they may be summarized and the summaries sent to the organizers, or the entire packet of evaluations may be forwarded to the organizers. Names may be redacted, if requested by the respondent.

The Event Evaluations provide valuable feedback on how the operation of an event is perceived. Compiling and summarizing the returned forms may distinguish trends and problems from personal complaints.

Organizers should be encouraged to place blank evaluation forms in competitors' packets to encourage responses.

## **Area Change Policy**

For a state's organizers or members to have their standing as a member of a certain area reviewed, that request would be made in writing to the Chair of the Area Affairs Committee. The Chair would review the issue and make a request for input from all the bordering areas and review participation results. The issue will then be discussed by all areas and a report and recommendation will be made by the Area Affairs Chair to the Board of Governors for a vote.

## **AREA FUNDRAISING**

USEA AREAS AND USEA PROGRAMS ARE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEMPT TO RAISE FUNDS TO SUPPORT LOCAL OR NATIONAL PROGRAMS AND MAY DO SO THROUGH A VARIETY OF MECHANISMS AS IDENTIFIED BELOW: **(This policy is subject to regular updates).**

### **Solicitation**

USEA Areas or Programs may solicit donors or sponsors to provide funds or materials for the use of the USEA or its Programs. Regarding donors, it is important to understand how contributions may be directed to a specific fund or program and the situations under which contributions may be restricted for a specific purpose. For sponsorships, it is important to recognize that the USEA should approach sponsorship opportunities as a professional organization and to that end the USEA has established certain guidelines for pursuing sponsorship opportunities. Please consult the USEA Donation and Sponsorship Policy for more details.

As a non-profit, members can solicit donors or sponsors in fundraising activities but are not allowed to receive monetary compensation for doing so. If an Area wishes to engage the services of a fundraising organization on a paid basis, this solicitor must be licensed for non-profit fund-raising and the arrangement must be approved by the CEO of the USEA.

### **Auctions**

It is permissible to raise funds by conducting an auction online or in person. In an auction setting the person or entity that provided the item for auction will receive a donation letter for the value of the item while the purchaser will not normally receive a donation letter unless the purchase price clearly exceeds the value of the item purchased.

### **Programs or Events**

USEA Areas or Programs may operate programs or events through which the proceeds benefit the Area or a specific Program. Common examples of such activities include camps, clinics, and competitions or tests. In each case the participant fee is not considered a donation. Individuals or entities that donate or sponsor a portion of the expenses may be given a donation letter.

### **Affinity and Rewards Programs**

Businesses that sell products or services to USEA members may offer 'affinity' or 'rewards' programs that provide a percentage of sales generated to members to the association as a donation or sponsorship. While it is acceptable for USEA Areas and Area Programs to enter such arrangements, they should follow the intent of the policy guidelines for sponsorships regarding the size and scope of the arrangement.



### **Individual Fundraising Goals**

USEA Areas or Programs may establish fundraising goals for individual participants in certain programs. A common use of this type of fundraising activity is found in the USEA's Junior/Young Riders' program – where team participants are given individual goals for fundraising to support team activities. Participants may be given credit for achievement of these goals. However, the contributions made by others during the fundraising activities must follow the policies of the USEA. This means, for example, that a donation may be made to an Area's Junior/Young Riders' program, but it cannot be held in account for an individual competitor. At the same time, the individual obtaining the donation or contribution may be given credit and recognition toward achievement of their fundraising goal if that credit is reasonable with respect to the level of fundraising achieved.

To be considered reasonable, any fundraising credit or recognition must adhere to the following:

- The credit should not exceed 30% of the value of the fundraising effort,
- The credit may be used only to offset participant fees in the current year for which the area or program charges a fee (e.g., clinics, camps, etc.),
- The credit may not be used retroactively, and
- The credit, if unused, expires at the end of the current fiscal year.

*A note on Raffles: The use of Raffles as a fundraising mechanism for USEA programs is discouraged because raffles are usually subject to gaming laws at county, state and federal levels and require a license from those respective agencies to operate the raffle. The nature of our sport makes it likely that any raffle will involve activities in multiple states. That said, raffles may be used as a fundraising activity if a) it is operated entirely in one state, b) it is operated and licensed in accordance with all state and county gaming laws, and c) the activity has been approved in writing by the CEO of the USEA. As the USEA must obtain a federal license for all raffles operating under the USEA umbrella during a given year, Areas must plan well in advance, obtain the necessary licenses, and submit them to the CEO of the USEA allowing sufficient time for a national license to be issued prior to the raffles taking place.*

### **Fundraising Expense Reimbursements**

USEA Areas and the national office staff will endeavor to provide helpful ideas and support for USEA Area fundraising efforts through personal contact, online contact, and newsletters. However, fundraising and the costs associated with fundraising efforts and events are entirely the responsibility of an Area or Area program. USEA will not reimburse an Area for any event costs, postage, or other expenses, except in extraordinary circumstances as approved in writing in advance for a specified amount by the CEO.

## **LEGAL INFORMATION**

THE UNITED STATES EVENTING ASSOCIATION, INC., IS INCORPORATED IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS AS AN EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION.

### **Tax-Exempt Status**

The USEA is a non-profit tax-exempt, tax-deductible organization, pursuant to Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations made to the USEA are tax-deductible to the extent provided by Federal law. A donation may be deducted as a charitable contribution, subject to IRS guidelines, or, if the donor is a business or commercial entity, as an advertising or public relations expense.

In some states, the tax-exempt status of the USEA will also exempt purchases made by the Area administrative account from state sales taxes. Contact the national office to see if exempt status has been obtained for your state.

### **IRS Forms/ W-9**

An Internal Revenue Service Form W-9 must be submitted for each individual or company, not incorporated, who has received payment for services between January 1st and December 31st of the preceding year. This information must be received at the national office by January 15th, and must include the following:

1. Name, address, and social security or identification number.
2. Amount of payment.

The forms will be consolidated at the national office for preparation of IRS Form 1099.

### **USEA Logo**

The logo of the USEA is a registered trademark and must be used only for recognized activities of the USEA. For example, the logo must not be used on prize lists or entry forms for events that are not registered with the USEA, or on personal stationery. If you discover improper use of the logo, please notify the USEA office immediately, including a sample if possible.

### **Area Logo**

Each Area may create their own logo, as well as for their Area programs. Areas may not use copyrighted logos, such as the USEA logo, in their Area and Area program logos. For additional questions regarding branding, please reach out to the marketing department at the USEA.

### **USEA Official Stationery**

The official stationery of the USEA, with the logo and the USEA office address must be used only for business conducted on behalf of the USEA organization or the Area. The stationery must not be used for personal correspondence.

### **USEA Privacy Policy on Member's Mailing Addresses**

USEA's sponsors are an integral part of the Eventing community. For that reason, the USEA shares mailing addresses with certain equestrian sponsors as part of their sponsorship commitment. The USEA does not share member mailing addresses with non-equestrian vendors. The USEA does not share, sell, or trade member email addresses or telephone numbers.

USEA Area and Area Programs may send out emails on behalf of sponsors after approving the content but may NOT provide sponsors with email or mailing addresses of members.

## APPENDIX I – GUIDE OVERVIEWS – AREA CHAIR YEARLY PLANNER

### **December 1**

Start of the Administrative and Fiscal Year.

### **December -1<sup>st</sup>/2nd Week**

USEA Annual Meeting.

### **January – 1st Monday**

Annual Year-End Financial Report Due.

### **January**

USEF Annual Meeting.

### **January**

Suggested Month for Area Annual Meeting.

### **January 15**

IRS Forms /W-9 Due at National Office.

### **February**

Youth Team Challenge Area Declaration

### **February 28**

Dates/Sites/Qualifying Period for Area Championships Due – Current Year.

### **May – 1st Monday**

Semi-Annual Financial Report Due.

### **May**

USEA Board of Governors Meeting.

### **August 1**

Area Financial Budget Due.

### **August**

USEA Board of Governors Meeting.

### **September/November**

Area Championships\*

*\*Fall dates are preferred, but not mandated.*

### **November**

Youth Team Challenge Finals

### **November 15**

Fiscal Report.

Area Provisional Calendar due for next upcoming year (next upcoming calendar is 13 months from November).

## APPENDIX II – FINANCIAL POLICIES

### USEA Policy for National and Area Scholarships

U.S. Treasury Regulations require 501(c)(3) organizations, like USEA, to follow certain procedures and guidelines when conferring scholarships. The USEA and its Areas are required to comply with these established procedures to ensure the continuation of the nonprofit, tax exempt status.

The procedures set forth below must be followed when establishing and conferring scholarships. These procedures apply regardless of whether a program is established at the National, Area or Program level.

1. All established procedures and criteria related to the USEA mission must be followed for the award of scholarships and scholarships must be related to the USEA's mission.

2. All proposals for scholarship programs must receive the prior written approval of the USEA Board of Governors or its designee. No scholarships may be conferred upon or inure to the benefit of a member or relative of:

- a. the USEA staff, Board of Governors or Committee Chairs or Co-Chairs; or
- b. a member of any Area Council of the USEA (their relatives are eligible if the member in question is completely removed from the process of identifying the scholarship recipients in accordance with Section 3 below).

3. All proposals must include, at a minimum:

- a. A description of the process used to publicize the scholarships to the potential applicants/nominees.
- b. The criteria to be used in determining the eligibility and selection of the scholarship recipients.
- c. The overall number of funds being dedicated to the scholarships and the anticipated number of scholarships and amounts to be given to each scholarship winner.
- d. The decision-making body for the scholarship and the method for ensuring ongoing impartiality; and,
- e. A process for verifying that the funds were used for their intended purpose (e.g., expecting documentation to show that educational scholarships were used for the intended educational purpose).

4. Only impartial decision-makers can confer the scholarships to avoid unresolved conflicts of interest. For purposes of these scholarships, impartial decision-makers shall mean those individuals who have no monetary, business, family, or significant personal connection in any way to a potential recipient.

5. Scholarship programs may provide awards to individuals only after complying with the requirements of paragraphs 2 and 3 above, and only on the following grounds:

- a. Individuals who have a demonstrated financial need after verification of the financial need or
- b. Individuals who have been identified as benefiting from a specified educational activity in accordance with USEA's mission that the scholarship will fund; or,
- c. Individuals who are selected in a blind drawing in which the individual does not purchase a chance to participate in such drawing and entry is based on an objective set of criteria. Criteria which reward or promote outcomes or behaviors that run counter to the USEA's objectives and goals will not be approved, such as "most elimination, most falls, etc."

6. Area scholarships may not exceed \$250 per recipient and an aggregate of no more than 10 scholarships per Area may be awarded annually. A recipient may not receive more than one scholarship in any given year (in total) and following receipt of the scholarship will be ineligible to receive a scholarship from the Area for the following year.

7. Rebates to members given in accordance with the Area Financial Guidelines shall not be considered Scholarships for purposes of these Procedures.

8. Each Area or program that establishes a scholarship program of any kind will be required to file an annual report containing information requested by the USEA relating to the operation of these scholarship programs.

## **TEAM COMPETITION EXPENSES**

The activity of fielding teams in eventing competitions is consistent with the educational and promotional objectives of the USEA. In general, the teams in these competitions represent an Area or a combination of Areas in a team environment. It is expected that the USEA Area shall provide a portion of the overall expense of fielding this representative team. In any case where the Area fields a team for competition the following guidelines should be used. For purposes of this discussion a 'Team Competition' is defined as any competition where either a team or individuals compete as representatives of the Area or of an Area Program and a portion or all expenses are funded by the Area or its Programs.

### **• Establish a Competition Budget**

A key element for successfully setting expectations as to which, if any, expenses that the Area or its Programs will provide for team expenses is the establishment of a budget for each team competition. Estimated expenses for planned team competitions should be included in the Area's annual budget when approved by the Area Council and submitted to the USEA. A more specific budget should be prepared for each team competition by the program coordinator and submitted to the Area Council for approval at least two months prior to the competition. This budget should – at minimum – identify the anticipated expenses by line item and in total together with the portion for which the Area and its Programs will provide funding. Where possible, the budget should be built on a per competitor basis so that there is some understanding of funding commitments based on an anticipated number of competitors on the team.

- **Identify Sources of Funding**

The Competition Budget should identify the sources of funding for the Area's portion of anticipated expenses. In general, sources of funding include team sponsorships, current Program reserves, Program fundraising activities, and Area Local Fund reserves. The Competition Budget should outline the expected level of funds from each source that will be provided for the activity.

- **Obtain Area Council Approval**

Approval of the Area Council is necessary to commit Area or Area Program funds to a specific competition. At least 3 months prior to the competition the Area Council shall approve the level of funding for the competition. This approval may be as requested, more than requested, or less than requested. Such approval may be conditional (e.g., approval of the use of \$1 of Area Local Funds if \$1 of Area Program funds is used/raised) or unconditional (e.g., approval of the use of \$1 of Area Program reserves for this competition). The level of Area Council approval is the limit of funds that are committed by the Area for this competition. In the event fundraising activities exceed expectations such proceeds may be, but are not required to be, provided to cover team expenses.

- **Conduct Fundraising Activities**

In the likely situation that the Competition Budget is based on a certain level of fundraising, the Area and its Programs should engage in fundraising activities in accordance with USEA guidelines to achieve the goals set out for the competition.

- **Manage Team Competition Expenses**

Any expenses associated with Team Competitions will be reimbursed and/or provided in accordance with the USEA Expense Reimbursement Guidelines or the commitment made by the Area Council to fund the Team Competition. Program Coordinators, participants, grooms, officials and parents should be knowledgeable about allowable and reimbursable expenses prior to the Competition. All activities which will be provided by the Area, or its Programs should be billed directly to the Area or submitted on an Expense Report as provided elsewhere in the Financial Guidelines. It is expected that competition expenses are reasonable for the level of competition at the activity.

- **Expenses not covered by the Area**

Any expenses of the Team Competition that are not provided by the Area and its Programs shall be borne by the participants in the Competition. These expenses should be paid directly by the participants as opposed to paid by the Area then seeking reimbursement by the participants.

Remember, the objective of having a Team Competition is to learn more about the sport of eventing and competing in a team environment. It is important for the USEA and its Areas to participate in these activities – and it is also important to establish a clear understanding as to which expenses can be provided by the Area and which will remain with the participants.

**Any questions regarding area financial policies, please contact the USEA Accounting Department:** Email: [accounting@useventing.com](mailto:accounting@useventing.com)

## **APPENDIX III – CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY**

The members of the Board of Governors, principal officers, and members of task forces and committees (collectively, 'Leaders') with Board-delegated powers owe duties of care, loyalty, and obedience to the USEA (the, 'Association'). Leaders` include USEA appointees at the Area as well as the national level (including without limitation Area Chairmen, Area Treasurers, Young Rider and Adult Rider Coordinators and committee members, and members of Area Councils) and can also include paid personnel as well as volunteers.

One aspect of fulfilling those duties is to identify and resolve actual and apparent conflicts of interest. A conflict of interest is any impediment to being loyal to the Association. This includes situations where a Leader has a conflicting interest in or allegiance to another entity or individual (e.g., having a financial interest directly, or through a family member, in a transaction with the Association or affected by the Association's actions or lack of action) and situations where the Leader performs compensated services for an entity or individual whose activities are regulated in any way by the Association (e.g., a Governor working on the scheduling of a group's event and then rendering paid services for that group).

In the event of a conflict of interest, the Leader must disclose such conflict to the Board, Committee, Task Force, Area Council or other USEA group with whom the Leader works (the 'Relevant Group') at the time the conflict situation arises. The remaining members of the Relevant Group without any conflict in the matter shall determine the extent to which the conflicted Leader may participate in any discussion, and whether that Leader may vote on the matter.

If there is uncertainty as to whether a conflict exists, the Leader and/or other members of the Relevant Group are encouraged to consult the CEO and/or the chairman of the Legal Committee to seek clarification.

If at any time a Relevant Group has reasonable cause to believe a Leader working with it has failed to disclose or to resolve actual or possible conflicts of interest, after providing an opportunity to explain the alleged failure and making any further investigation as warranted in the circumstances, such failure shall be reported to the Association's Board of Governors, and the Governors without any conflict in the matter may take appropriate disciplinary and/or corrective action.

## **APPENDIX IV – OTHER SUPPORT DOCUMENTS**

- **Financial Support Documents**
- **Example of Thank You Letters**
- **Example of Sponsorship Letter**

## **APPENDIX V –**

### **U.S. EVENTING ASSOCIATION INTERMEDIATE SANCTIONS COMPLIANCE POLICY**

Under the ‘Intermediate Sanctions’ federal tax law, Directors (i.e. Governors) of 501(c)(3) organizations are not permitted to knowingly provide an organizational, ‘insider’ with any ‘excess benefit.’ An “insider” is any Governor, principal officer, Board committee member, or other person who was in a position within the past five years to exercise substantial influence over the affairs of the Association and includes that person’s family members. In the context of the USEA, insiders will include appointees at the Area level as well as the national level (including without limitation Area Chairmen, Area Treasurers, Young Rider and Adult Rider Coordinators/ Committee Members, and Area Council Members, as well as their family (members), and includes paid personnel as well as volunteers. An excess benefit is to be the provision of more than fair market value.

If a Governor knowingly provides an insider with an excess benefit, the IRS can impose a 10% tax (up to \$20,000) upon any Governors who knowingly approve such an improper transaction and a tax of 25% (increasing to 200% if the benefit was not voluntarily returned!) upon the insider who receives the excess benefit. Governors are jointly and severally liable, meaning any one director can be held liable for it all.

To help fulfill the requirements of the federal Intermediate sanctions tax law, it is the policy of the Association, before doing business with any insider, to: Have a committee of Governors unrelated to and not subject to the control of the Insider, review and approve the decision.

Have the committee comparison shop, to help ensure that its decision is comparable to transactions by similarly situated organizations, whether taxable or tax exempt, regarding such factors as comparability of positions, geographic location of the organization, independent salary surveys; and create contemporaneous documentation of how the committee made its decision.

At the Area Level, the procedures specified in paragraphs (1) through (3) above shall be carried out by a committee of the Area Council that is unrelated to and not subject to the control of the insider. Such committee shall then report and document their deliberations and findings to the Vice President of Area Affairs, who shall then report to the Board of Governors.

### **U.S. EVENTING ASSOCIATION COMPENSATION ARRANGEMENTS POLICY**

In establishing an award of compensation for any Board member, or for establishing the level of award or compensation of any Leader, member, staff, or other personnel in excess of \$50,000, the Association shall:

- 1) Approve and document the date and terms of all compensation arrangements in advance of paying such compensation.
- 2) Record in writing the decision made by each Board member: and,
- 3) Use compensation information from similarly situated organizations and salary surveys and note the source of such information.