

**This is an amendment to 15.2.5 NMAC section 12 and 13, effective 01/13/2026.**

**15.2.5.12 HORSES INELIGIBLE:**

**A.** A horse shall be ineligible to enter in a race when:

(1) it is wholly or partially owned by a disqualified person or a horse is under the direct or indirect training or management of a disqualified person;

(2) it is wholly or partially owned by the spouse of a disqualified person or a horse is under the direct or indirect management of the spouse of a disqualified person, in such cases, it being presumed that the disqualified person and spouse constitute a single financial entity with respect to the horse, which presumption may be rebutted;

(3) its name appears on starter's list, stewards' list, veterinarian's list or paddock judge's list of any recognized regulatory organization unless the horse has qualified in a trial race for a final but either died or was injured and placed on the veterinarian's list prior to the running of the final race;

(4) it is a first-time starter and has not been approved to start by the starter;

(5) it is owned in whole or in part by an undisclosed person or interest;

(6) it lacks sufficient official published workouts or race past performance(s);

(7) it is subject to a lien which has not been approved by the stewards and filed with the

horsemen's bookkeeper;

(8) it is subject to a lease not filed with the stewards;

(9) it is not in sound racing condition;

(10) it has had a surgical neurectomy performed on a heel nerve, which has not been approved by the official veterinarian;

(11) it has been trachea tubed to artificially assist breathing;

(12) it has been blocked with alcohol or otherwise drugged or surgically denerved to

desensitize the nerves above the ankle;

(13) it has impaired eyesight in both eyes;

(14) it is barred or suspended in any recognized jurisdiction;

(15) it does not meet the eligibility conditions of the race;

(16) its owner or lessor is in arrears for any stakes fees, except with approval of the racing

secretary;

(17) it is by an unknown sire or out of an unknown mare.

**B.** A horse shall be ineligible to start when:

(1) it is the subject of a positive test for a prohibited substance in an official sample based on a final certificate of analysis received from the official laboratory during the period in which the adjudication process involving the violation is ongoing.

(a) In the event the horse is claimed in the race in which the horse allegedly ran with the prohibited substance, the new owner may enter the horse, unless the horse is ordered to go on the stewards' list pursuant to subparagraphs (a-e) of Paragraph (8) of Subsection C of 15.2.6.9 NMAC.

(b) Should the horse be claimed thereafter by the owner of the horse in the race in which there was a positive test for a prohibited substance, the horse shall not be allowed to enter unless the adjudication process involving the prior violation is complete.

(2) It is not stabled on the grounds of the association or present by the time established by the commission;

(3) its breed registration certificate is not on file with the racing secretary or horse identifier; unless the racing secretary has submitted the certificate to the appropriate breed registry for correction or in the case of thoroughbred horses foaled in 2018 or thereafter or quarter horses foaled in 2022 or thereafter, the horse does not have a digital tattoo; the stewards may waive this requirement if the information contained on the registration certificate is otherwise available; and the horse is otherwise correctly identified to the horse identifier's satisfaction;

(4) a quarter horse foaled before 2022 or a thoroughbred foaled before 2018, is not fully identified and tattooed on the inside of the upper lip, freeze brand or identified by any other method approved by the breed registry and commission; however, there may be extenuating circumstances where a horse will be eligible to start in a race without the tattoo as referenced above, as long as the horse identifier has written verification that the tattooing process has been initiated; if a thoroughbred foaled in 2018 or thereafter or a quarter horse foaled in 2022

or thereafter, is not microchipped with a unique microchip (ISO11784/11785), freeze brand or identified by any other method approved by the breed registry and commission;

(5) it has been fraudulently entered or raced in any jurisdiction under a different name, with an altered registration certificate, no lip tattoo, altered lip tattoo, altered or manipulated microchip (ISO11784/11785), or freeze brand;

(6) the stakes or entrance money for the horse has not been paid, in accordance with the conditions of the race;

(7) it has been entered in a stakes race and has subsequently been transferred with its engagements, unless the racing secretary has been notified of such prior to the start;

(8) it is not in sound racing condition;

(9) it has been blocked with alcohol or otherwise drugged or surgically denerved to desensitize the nerves above the ankle;

(10) it does not meet the eligibility conditions of the race;

(11) its owner(s), lessor(s) or trainer have not completed the licensing procedures required by the commission; or

(12) there is no current negative test certificate for equine infectious anemia on file with the racing office, as required by the commission.

[15.2.5.12 NMAC - Rp, 15 NMAC 2.5.12, 3/15/2001; A, 7/15/2002; A; 8/30/2007; A, 6/15/2009; A, 1/1/2014; A, 9/15/2016; A, 12/19/2019; A, 4/9/2024; A, 4/8/2025; A, 01/13/2026]

#### **15.2.5.13            RUNNING OF THE RACE:**

##### **A.            Equipment:**

(1) All riding crops are subject to inspection and approval by the stewards and the clerk of scales. This rule will become effective December 10, 2010.

(a) All riding crops shall have a shaft and a flap and will be allowed in flat racing including training. No riding crop shall weigh more than eight ounces nor exceed 30 inches in length, including the flap. No riding crop shall be used unless the shaft is a minimum of three-eighths inch in diameter; and the shaft contact area must be smooth, with no protrusions or raised surface and covered by shock absorbing material that gives a compression factor of at least one-millimeter throughout its circumference.

(b) The flap is the only allowable attachment to the shaft and must meet the following specifications. The length beyond the end of the shaft shall be a maximum of one inch with a ~~minimum~~ width of eight-one hundredths inch and a maximum of one and six-tenths inches. There shall be no reinforcements or additions beyond the end of the shaft. There shall be no binding within seven inches of the end of the shaft and the flap must include shock absorbing characteristics similar to those of the contact area of the shaft.

(2) No bridle shall exceed two pounds.

(3) Reins. No jockey, apprentice jockey, exercise person or any person mounted on a horse shall ride, breeze, exercise, gallop or workout a horse on the grounds of a facility under the jurisdiction of the commission unless the horse is equipped with a nylon rein or a safety rein. A safety rein is a rein with a wire or nylon cord stitched into the traditional leather rein during the manufacturing process and the safety cord is attached to the bit with a metal clasp.

(4) Toe grabs with a height greater than two millimeters worn on the front shoes of thoroughbred horses while racing are prohibited. The horse shall be scratched and the trainer may be subject to fine.

(5) A horse's tongue may be tied down with clean bandages, gauze or tongue strap.

(6) No licensee may add blinkers to a horse's equipment or discontinue their use without the prior approval of the starter, the paddock judge, and the stewards.

(7) No licensee may change any equipment used on a horse in its last race without approval of the paddock judge or stewards.

(8) Any licensed assistant starter and any licensee mounted on a horse or stable pony on the association grounds must wear a properly fastened New Mexico racing commission approved protective helmet and safety vest.

(a) The approved protective helmet and safety vest shall be worn when:

(i) racing, parading or warming up a horse prior to racing; or

(ii) jogging, training or exercising a horse at any time.

(b) The helmet worn must comply with one of the following minimum safety

standards or later revisions:

(i) American society for testing materials (ASTM 1163); or

(ii) UK standards (EN-1384 and PAS-015); or  
(iii) Australian/New Zealand standard (AS/NZ 3838).

(c) The safety vest worn by a jockey shall weigh no more than two pounds and must comply with one of the following minimum standards or later revisions:

- (i) British equestrian trade association (BETA):2000 level 1; or
- (ii) euro norm (EN) 13158:2000 1; or
- (iii) American society for testing and materials (ASTM) F2681-08 or F1937; or
- (iv) shoe and allied trade research association (SATRA) jockey vests document M6 Issue 3; or
- (v) Australian racing board (ARB) standard 1.1998.

(d) A safety helmet or safety vest shall not be altered in any manner nor shall the product marking be removed or defaced.

**B. Racing numbers:**

(1) Each horse shall carry a conspicuous saddle cloth number corresponding to the official number given that horse on the official program.

(2) In the case of a coupled entry that includes more than one horse, each horse in the entry shall carry the same number, with a different distinguishing letter following the number. As an example, two horses in the same entry shall appear in the official program as 1 and 1A.

(3) Each horse in the mutuel field shall carry a separate number or may carry the same number with a distinguishing letter following the number.

**C. Jockey requirements:**

(1) Jockeys shall report to the jockeys' quarters at the time designated by the association. Jockeys shall report their engagements and any overweight to the clerk of scales. Jockeys shall not leave the jockeys' quarters, except to ride in scheduled races, until all of their riding engagements of the day have been fulfilled except as approved by the stewards.

(2) A jockey who has not fulfilled all riding engagements, who desires to leave the jockeys' quarters, must first receive the permission of the stewards and must be accompanied by an association security guard.

(3) Except as otherwise provided by this subsection, a jockey engaged for a certain race or for a specified time may not fail or refuse to abide by the engagement agreement, unless excused by the stewards. Failure to fulfill riding engagements may result in disciplinary action.

(4) A jockey may be excused by the stewards from fulfilling the jockey's riding engagement if the jockey believes the horse he or she is to ride is unsafe, or the racecourse he or she is to ride on is unsafe, or the jockey is ill or injured, or other extenuating circumstances. No jockey may take off a mount for reasons of safety without first mounting and taking that horse to the track and/or commission veterinarian unless that horse is unruly in the paddock. In that event a jockey's fee is not earned.

(5) Any jockey unseated or thrown from their mount in the saddling paddock, during the parade to post, while being loaded in the starting gate, during the race, or after the race, may be required by the stewards to be examined by the paramedic, doctor or registered nurse before being allowed to ride. Refusal to be examined or receive medical treatment may be grounds for the stewards to take the rider off their mount for that race and any other races on that day. In the event the jockey is injured or unable to ride they shall be required to provide a doctor's medical release before they are allowed to resume participation in racing or training.

(6) The stewards may require a jockey who is excused from fulfilling a riding engagement, because of illness or injury, to pass a physical examination conducted by a licensed physician not employed by the association before resuming race riding.

(7) While in the jockeys' quarters, jockeys shall have no contact or communication with any person outside the jockeys' quarters other than commission personnel and officials, an owner or trainer for whom the jockey is riding or a representative of the regular news media, except with the permission of the stewards. Any communication permitted by the stewards may be conducted only in the presence of the clerk of scales or other person designated by the stewards.

(8) Jockeys shall be weighed out for their respective mounts by the clerk of scales not more than 30 minutes before post time for each race.

(9) A jockey's fee shall be considered earned when the jockey is weighed out by the clerk of scales. In the event an owner or trainer elects to remove a jockey from his or her mount after naming a rider at the time of draw, the stewards may require a double jockey fee to be paid. The fee to be paid is equal to that earned by

the jockey who rode the horse. The fee shall not be considered earned when a jockey(s), of their own free will, take themselves off their mounts, where injury to the horse or rider is not involved. Any conditions or considerations not covered by the above rule shall be at the discretion of the stewards. All jockey protests must be filed prior to the race.

(10) A jockey's fee shall include any extra monies added to the purse.

(11) Only valets employed by the association shall assist jockeys in weighing out.

(12) A jockey's weight shall include their clothing, boots, saddle and its attachments and any other equipment except the whip, bridle, bit or reins, safety helmet, safety vest, blinkers, goggles and number cloth. Upon the stewards' approval, jockeys may be allowed up to three pounds more than published and announced weights to account for inclement weather clothing and equipment when weighing in.

(13) Five pounds is the limit of overweight any horse is permitted to carry.

(14) Once jockeys have fulfilled their riding engagements for the day and have left the jockeys' quarters, they shall not be re-admitted to the jockeys' quarters until after the entire racing program for that day has been completed, except with permission of the stewards.

**D. Paddock to post:**

(1) Each horse shall carry the full weight assigned for that race from the paddock to the starting post, and shall parade past the stewards' stand, unless excused by the stewards. The post parade shall not exceed 12 minutes, unless otherwise ordered by the stewards. It shall be the duty of the stewards to ensure that the horses arrive at the starting gate as near to post time as possible.

(2) In the post parade, all pony persons, or trainers who pony horses, must wear upper body apparel in accordance with the policy of the commission.

(3) After the horses enter the track, no jockey may dismount nor entrust his horse to the care of an attendant unless, because of accident occurring to the jockey, the horse or the equipment, and with the prior consent of the starter. During any delay during which a jockey is permitted to dismount, all other jockeys may dismount and their horses may be attended by others. After the horses enter the track, only the jockey, an assistant starter, the official veterinarian, the racing veterinarian or an outrider or pony rider may touch the horse before the start of the race.

(4) If a jockey is seriously injured on the way to the post, the horse may be returned to the paddock and a replacement jockey obtained.

(5) After passing the stewards' stand in parade, the horses may break formation and proceed to the post in any manner unless otherwise directed by the stewards. Once at the post, the horses shall be started without unnecessary delay.

(6) In case of accident to a jockey or their mount or equipment, the stewards or the starter may permit the jockey to dismount and the horse to be cared for during the delay, and may permit all jockeys to dismount and all horses to be attended to during the delay.

(7) If a jockey is thrown on the way from the paddock to the post, the horse must be remounted, returned to the point where the jockey was thrown and then proceed over the route of the parade to the post. The horse must carry its assigned weight from paddock to post and from post to finish.

(8) If a horse leaves the course while moving from paddock to post, the horse shall be returned to the course at the nearest practical point to that at which it left the course, and shall complete its parade to the post from the point at which it left the course unless ordered scratched by the stewards.

(9) No person shall willfully delay the arrival of a horse at the post.

(10) The starter shall load horses into the starting gate in any order deemed necessary to ensure a safe and fair start. An appointed representative may tail the horse with the starter's consent. In case of an emergency, the starter may grant approval for a horse to be tailed. In any case, the stewards shall be notified of who is tailing horses.

**E. Post to finish:**

(1) The start.

(a) The starter is responsible for assuring that each participant receives a fair start.

(b) If, when the starter dispatches the field, any door at the front of the starting gate stalls should not open properly due to a mechanical failure or malfunction or should any action by any starting personnel directly cause a horse to receive an unfair start, the stewards may declare such a horse a non-starter.

(c) Should a horse, not scratched prior to the start, not be in the starting gate stall thereby causing it to be left when the field is dispatched by the starter, the horse shall be declared a non-starter by the stewards.

(d) Should an accident or malfunction of the starting gate, or other unforeseeable event compromise the fairness of the race or the safety of race participants, the stewards may declare individual horses to be non-starters, excluding individual horses from all pari-mutuel pools or declare a "no contest" and refund all wagers except as otherwise provided in the rules involving multi-race wagers.

(2) Interference, jostling or striking.

(a) A jockey shall not ride carelessly or willfully so as to permit their mount to interfere with, impede or intimidate any other horse in the race.

(b) No jockey shall carelessly or willfully jostle, strike or touch another jockey or another jockey's horse or equipment. It shall be the discretion of the stewards to determine if the jostle, strike or touch had an effect on the outcome of the race and warrants a disqualification.

(c) No jockey shall unnecessarily cause their horse to shorten its stride so as to give the appearance of having suffered a foul.

(3) Maintaining a straight course.

(a) When the way is clear in a race, a horse may be ridden to any part of the course, but if any horse swerves, or is ridden to either side, so as to interfere with, impede or intimidate any other horse, it is a foul.

(b) The offending horse may be disqualified, if in the opinion of the stewards, the foul altered the finish of the race, regardless of whether the foul was accidental, willful or the result of careless riding.

(c) If the stewards determine the foul was intentional, or due to careless riding, they may fine or suspend the guilty jockey.

(d) In a straightaway race, every horse must maintain position as nearly as possible in the lane in which it starts. If a horse is ridden, drifts or swerves out of its lane in such a manner that it interferes with, impedes or intimidates another horse, it is a foul and may result in the disqualification of the offending horse.

(4) Disqualification.

(a) When the stewards determine that a horse shall be disqualified for interference, they may place the offending horse behind such horse as in their judgment it interfered with, or they may place it last.

(b) If a horse is disqualified for a foul, any horse or horses with which it is coupled as an entry may also be disqualified.

(c) When a horse is disqualified for interference in a time trial race, it shall receive the time of the horse it is placed behind plus one-hundredth of a second penalty or more exact measurement if photo finish equipment permits, and shall be eligible to qualify for the finals or consolations of the race on the basis of the assigned time.

(d) The stewards may determine that a horse shall be unplaced for the purpose of purse distribution and trial qualification.

(e) In determining the extent of disqualification, the stewards in their discretion may: declare null and void a track record set or equaled by a disqualified horse, or any horses coupled with it as an entry; affirm the placing judges' order of finish and suspend or fine a jockey if, in the stewards' opinion, the foul riding did not affect the order of finish; disqualify the offending horse and not penalize a jockey if in the stewards' opinion the interference to another horse in a race was not the result of an intentional foul or careless riding on the part of a jockey.

(5) Horses shall be ridden out: All horses shall be ridden out in every race. A jockey shall not ease up or coast to the finish, without adequate cause, even if the horse has no apparent chance to win prize money.

(6) No electrical, mechanical or other expedient object or device utilized to increase or retard the speed of a horse, other than the riding crop approved by the stewards, shall be possessed by anyone or applied by anyone to the horse at any time on the grounds of the association during the meet, whether in a race or otherwise.

(7) Use of riding crops.

(a) Although the use of a riding crop is not required, any jockey who uses a riding crop during a race shall do so only in a manner consistent with exerting his or her best efforts to win.

(b) In all races where a jockey will ride without a riding crop, an announcement of such fact shall be made over the public address system.

(c) Riding crops shall not be used on two-year-old horses before March 1 of each year.

(d) The position of the riding crop should always be at or below helmet level of the jockey.

(e) The riding crop shall only be used for safety, correction and encouragement.

(8) Indiscriminate use of the whip is prohibited including whipping a horse: on the head, flanks or on any other part of its body other than the shoulders or hind quarters except when necessary to control a horse; during the post parade or after the finish of the race except when necessary to control the horse; excessively or brutally causing welts or breaks in the skin; when the horse is clearly out of the race or has obtained its maximum placing; persistently even though the horse is showing no response under the riding crop; or striking another rider or horse.

(a) After the race, the horses will be subject to inspection by a racing or official veterinarian looking for cuts, welts or bruises in the skin. Any adverse findings shall be reported to the stewards.

(9) Excessive use of the crop includes:

(a) Riders cannot use the riding crop more than three times in succession during a race, excluding showing or waiving the crop.

(b) Riders cannot use the crop more than three times in succession without giving the horse a chance to respond before using the crop again.

(c) The horse has cuts, welts or breaks in the skin.

(d) The giving of instructions by any licensee that if obeyed would lead to a violation of this rule may result in disciplinary action also being taken against the licensee who gave such instructions.

(10) Returning after the finish.

(a) After a race has been run, the jockey shall ride promptly to the finish line, dismount and report to the clerk of scales to be weighed in. Jockeys shall weigh in with all pieces of equipment with which they weighed out.

(b) If a jockey is prevented from riding to the finish line because of an accident or illness to the jockey or the horse, the jockey may walk or be transported to the scales, or may be excused from weighing in by the stewards.

(11) Unsaddling. No person shall assist a jockey with unsaddling except with permission of the stewards and no one shall place a covering over a horse before it is unsaddled.

(12) Weighing in.

(a) A jockey shall weigh in at no less than the same weight at which he or she weighed out, and if under that weight by more than two pounds and after consideration of mitigating circumstances by the board of stewards, his or her mount may be disqualified from any portion of the purse money.

(b) In the event of such disqualification, all monies wagered on the horse shall be refunded unless the race has been declared official.

(c) If any jockey weighs in at more than three pounds over the proper or declared weight, the jockey may be fined, suspended or ruled off by the stewards, having due regard for any excess weight caused by rain or mud. The case shall be reported to the commission for such action, as it may deem proper.

(d) Upon approval of the stewards, the jockeys may be allowed up to three pounds more than published and announced weights to account for inclement weather clothing and equipment when weighing in.

(e) The post-race weight of jockeys includes any sweat, dirt and mud that have accumulated on the jockey, jockey's clothing and jockey's safety equipment. This accounts for additional weight, depending on specific equipment, as well as weather, track and racing conditions.

(13) Dead heats.

(a) When a race results in a dead heat, the dead heat shall not be run off, owners shall divide except where division would conflict with the conditions of the races.

(b) When two horses run a dead heat for first place, all purses or prizes to which first and second horses would have been entitled shall be divided equally between them; and this applies in dividing all purses or prizes whatever the number of horses running a dead heat and whatever places for which the dead heat is run.

(c) In a dead heat for first place, each horse involved shall be deemed a winner and liable to penalty for the amount it shall receive.

(d) When a dead heat is run for second place and an objection is made to the winner of the race, and sustained, the horses, which ran a dead heat, shall be deemed to have run a dead heat for first place.

(e) If the dividing owners cannot agree as to which of them is to have a cup or other prize, which cannot be divided, the question shall be determined by lot by the stewards.

(f) On a dead heat for a match, the match is off for pari-mutuel payoffs and mutuels are refunded.

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