

# Equine Distance Riding Association (EDRA)

## General Rules – 2024

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1. Participants are responsible for knowing and following the rules governing EDRA events.
2. Distance Rides. These competitions are 25-100 miles in length and are reported in multiples of five-mile increments. Distances must be verified by GPS and tracks submitted to EDRA no later than two weeks prior to the event. In the event of a course change due to safety concerns, Rule 6, GPS submittals are required within one week after the event.
  - a) Start Time. Although the time allowed to complete a ride begins at the official ride start time established by the Ride Manager, participants may choose to leave within 30 minutes after the official start time.
  - b) Hold Time. Rides have planned stops, where equines will be examined by a veterinarian and are allowed to eat, drink and rest. The quantity and length of hold times are determined by the Ride Manager and Head Veterinarian and are announced in advance of the start. See Rule 19b) and 20a).
  - c) Finish Time – for distances of 25-45 miles. The participant's finish time is determined when the equine's heart rate (pulse) meets criteria (as outlined in Rule 19c). The equine's heart rate must meet criteria within 30 minutes of crossing the finish line or the participant is eliminated from the competition. The finish time determines a participant's placing, assuming all other equine wellness requirements are met. See Rules 8, 19f), and 20d).
  - d) Finish Time – for distances of 46-100 miles. The participant's finish time is determined when both the rider and equine cross the finish line. The equine's heart rate must meet criteria within 30 minutes of crossing the finish line or the participant is eliminated from the competition. The finish time determines a participant's placing, assuming all other equine wellness requirements are met. See Rules 8, 19f), and 20d).
  - e) Minimum Ride Time. There are no minimum ride times in EDRA events.
  - f) Maximum Ride Time. In order to successfully complete the ride, a participant must finish within the maximum allowed ride time, which includes all hold times. Rule 5 provides maximum ride times for various distances.
  - g) Recorded Ride Time. Ride results report the participant's time on the course (hours/minutes from start time to finish time) MINUS hold times. For example: On a 50 mile ride the maximum time allowed to complete the event is 12 hours, including holds of (for illustration) 90 minutes. If a rider finishes in exactly 12 hours and meets all veterinary and other event rules and requirements, the reported ride completion time is 10 hours, 30 minutes (12 hours minus 90 minutes of holds). Miles, completions, and points are accrued upon successful completion by an EDRA member and equine with an active EDRA Logbook and count toward the rider's and equine's lifetime miles and season awards. Placings are determined through Rule 19d), Veterinary Oversight.
3. Test Your Mettle Relays. The same distance requirements: start, finish, minimum and maximum ride time requirements outlined in Rule 2 also apply to relays. Relays do not usually require hold times and miles on relays may not always be reported in five-mile increments. The team's finish time is determined when the last relay member and equine cross the finish line. The equine must also meet pulse and other equine wellness requirements within the prescribed times, as is described for distances of 46-100 miles. For more details, see [Test Your Mettle Rules and Information, Appendix A.](#)

Points are not allocated for relay placings or completions. However, when the rider is an active EDRA member and/or the equine has an active EDRA Logbook, miles and completions from relays are recorded and reported on their record and count toward awards as outlined in the [Awards Description, Appendix E](#).

**Ride & Tie Events:** When a Ride & Tie of 25 or more miles is held at an EDRA endorsed event, an equine with an active EDRA Logbook successfully completing the event will have miles and completions added to their lifetime record, which will also apply toward equine lifetime awards. Because multiple riders use the equine during a Ride & Tie, miles and completions are not applied toward the rider's lifetime record. For more details, see the [Awards Descriptions, Appendix E](#). Ride & Tie Association rules apply and may be found on the association's website at <http://www.rideandtie.org/rules/>.

4. **[Reciprocity Agreements](#).** When EDRA and other distance riding organizations share common goals and establish a formal relationship through a reciprocity agreement, completions, miles and/or points from their collective distance competitions may be accepted by both organizations. Details for each active reciprocity agreement can be found in [Appendix J](#). Both the reciprocity agreement, and an individual's membership in EDRA must be active, and all conditions outlined in the agreement must be met in order for the benefits of reciprocity to be provided.
5. **[Maximum Ride Times](#).** The chart below provides the maximum ride times in hours and minutes, including hold times.

Ride Length (Miles)	Maximum Time (Hours : Minutes)
25	6:00
30	7:12
35	8:23
40	9:35
45	10:48
50	12:00
55	13:15
60	14:30
65	15:30
70	16:45
75	18:00
80	19:15
85	20:30
90	21:30
95	22:45
100	24:00

6. Course Requirements. Mileage for rides must be verified by electronic GPS sources within 5% of the requested endorsed distance. EDRA will provide technical support for verifying ride mileages.

Ride Managers may amend the course for emergencies and/or safety reasons. In the event the course is modified after the endorsement submittal, Rule 2, a new submittal is required. Any course change that takes place the day before, or the day of the event, requires dialogue and consensus between the Ride Manager and Steward.

In the event course mileage no longer meets the 5% of endorsed distance requirement (e.g., as a result of a change for safety purposes on the day of the event), the Ride Manager will notify participants of the mileage length and maximum ride time permitted as soon as practical and the course submittal may be submitted after-the-fact. Additionally, the Ride Manager and Steward may cancel rides, if at any point they collectively feel conditions become unsafe.

The course includes vetting areas determined by the Ride Manager, which typically include space for veterinarians to perform pre-ride, during-ride, post-ride, and Best in Class exams. Timers, pulse takers and other competition services are often located in close proximity.

7. Venue Requirements. Ride managers have discretion in certain aspects of ride requirements. This may include but is not limited to: conditions laid out in ride permits (e.g., the feeding of weed-free hay), matters pertaining to equine safety (e.g., specific horse containment – prohibiting more than one equine per pen, or requiring hoof protection due to rocky conditions), matters pertaining to human safety or liability insurance requirements (e.g., requiring some form of headstall or halter with reins for all participants). The Ride Manager is encouraged but is not required to communicate these requirements in ride flyers. Participants should contact ride managers in advance of the event, if they have interest in a specific area.
8. Completion Requirements. To achieve a completion from an endorsed ride, competitors must follow the designated course and equine participants must pass inspections by a designated veterinarian before, during, and after the ride. Additionally, the pair must complete the course within the designated maximum time allowed.
9. Completion Only. EDRA rides award placings to participants that have successfully completed the designated course. Note: “Completion Only” will be awarded (no placing) if the Ride Manager and Steward jointly determine that for a specific reason (documented in the Steward’s Ride Report), the rider completed the equivalent course, but not in the designated manner.
10. Best in Class. EDRA distance rides must provide judging for Best in Class (BC). If no equines are deemed to be eligible, the veterinarian responsible for judging may elect to not award BC. The judging is typically performed by the Head Veterinarian, unless specifically delegated to another veterinarian. E.g., if a family member of the Head Veterinarian is competing in the event, the Head Veterinarian is required to delegate the responsibility to another ride veterinarian for the distance in which the Head Veterinarian’s family member is competing, unless no other veterinarian is available. The purpose of this delegation is to prevent any suspicion of a potential conflict of interest. The BC judging process is covered in [Appendix I](#). The Head Veterinarian may also delegate the responsibility to another ride veterinarian for educational and experience purposes but should mentor and be available to assist as needed.
11. Points per Mile. Points for eligible competitions are earned as follows:
- 25 – 45 mile events accumulate 1.0 point per mile
  - 46 – 74 mile events accumulate 1.5 points per mile
  - 75 – 95 mile events accumulate 2.0 points per mile
  - 96 – 100 mile events accumulate 2.5 points per mile

12. **Bonus Points.** Additional points are awarded for top ten finishers (vertical axis) using the multipliers for the pertinent number of starters (horizontal axis) on the chart below:

NUMBER OF STARTERS	11+	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
1 <sup>st</sup> place	3.0	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.4	2.2	2.0	1.8	1.5	1.0
2 <sup>nd</sup> place	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.2	2.1	1.9	1.7	1.5	1.3	1.0	
3 <sup>rd</sup> place	2.2	2.1	2.0	1.9	1.8	1.6	1.4	1.2	1.0		
4 <sup>th</sup> place	2.0	1.9	1.8	1.7	1.6	1.4	1.2	1.0			
5 <sup>th</sup> place	1.8	1.7	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.2	1.0				
6 <sup>th</sup> place	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.0					
7 <sup>th</sup> place	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.0						
8 <sup>th</sup> place	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.0							
9 <sup>th</sup> place	1.2	1.1	1.0								
10 <sup>th</sup> place	1.1	1.0									
11 <sup>th</sup> place or higher	1.0										

13. **Membership.** Dues must be paid to the EDRA Treasurer/Membership Secretary in full, prior to accumulating ride miles or points for the ride season and are not eligible for refund. The membership year and ride season follow the calendar year and run from January 1 through December 31. In the event an individual joins the club after the ride season has started, retroactive miles, completions and/or points may be issued retroactively for 30 days from the date of joining. See additional details in the Logbook Protocols, Appendix B.

EDRA offers two categories of members. Adult members are those who are 18 years of age and older. Youth members are those who are under 18 years of age. Age is determined as of January 1 in the year in which the individual is riding.

Lifetime or annual memberships are available for Adults and only annual memberships are available for Youth.

On or before October 15 of each year, the Board establishes the fee structure for the upcoming calendar year. If no action is taken by the Board within the prescribed period, the existing fee structure remains in place. [Appendix K, Membership Fee Structure](#), reflects the current pricing policy.

14. **Weight Classes.** Upon joining or renewing their EDRA membership, or prior to the first ride in a calendar year, adult riders have the option to declare a weight classification (I, II, III defined below) and are eligible for year-end weight class awards. Weight includes rider and tack.
- Weight Class I: up to 170 lbs.
  - Weight Class II: 171-200 lbs.
  - Weight Class III: 201+ lbs.
15. **Youth Riders.** Participants who are under 18 years of age as of January 1 in the year in which they are riding, are classified as Youth Riders, and must be accompanied by adult rider(s) during the competition. EDRA's [Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies, Appendix H](#), must be followed.

Youth Riders between the ages of 14 and 17 may ride unaccompanied if the following steps are taken and only after approval is officially granted by the EDRA Vice President:

- Documentation is provided by the parent/legal guardian to the EDRA Vice President 14 or more days in advance of the desired effective date. The documentation must reflect and indicate:
  - The Youth has completed 500 miles or more, at comparable distance competitions of at least 50 miles in distance; and
  - The parent/legal guardian consents that the EDRA provision, requiring Youth be accompanied by an adult, need not be followed for their child.
  - Recommendation(s) from at least one past sponsor of the child who can provide input on whether or not they feel the child has the experience and aptitude to take on the responsibilities of making decisions in the best interest of the equine's well-being during the course of a competition.
- The Vice President reviews and verifies the provided information meets the age and experience requirements and contacts and discusses the recommendation(s) with past sponsor(s).
- The Vice President communicates approval or denial of the request to the parent/legal guardian. If approved, the Vice President issues an effective date that the child becomes eligible to ride unaccompanied to both the parent/legal guardian and affected EDRA volunteers.

Once granted, the child's status will be designated as Unaccompanied Youth. The child will be treated as a competitor in the Adult Division and must declare a Weight Class. The child will remain in this classification thereafter and cannot revert back to the general Youth Rider category, except in the event of disciplinary action.

As part of the disciplinary process, Unaccompanied Youth status may be revoked for future competitions if behavior or actions of the Unaccompanied Youth reflect poor judgement in the care and well-being of their equine or are in violation of other EDRA rules. Should the privilege of riding unaccompanied be revoked, the child's status will be communicated to both parent/legal guardian and affected EDRA volunteers.

Children in the Unaccompanied Youth category will be treated as Adult members for Distance Rides, Relays, BC judging, and award calculation purposes. Membership fees and other EDRA benefits and programs (e.g., EDRA in Motion and eligibility for ride entry fee discounts through the Mary & Anna Memorial Youth Fund) remain intact and the child is treated as if s/he remained in the general Youth Rider division.

**16. Welfare of the Rider.** EDRA is committed to the health and well-being of its athletes – rider safety is far more important than any competitive outcome.

Riders are required to wear a helmet at all times when mounted at the ride site or on the course.

Additionally, because head trauma may adversely affect decision-making, the Ride Manager and Steward have the authority to issue a Rider Option pull if they believe a rider may have sustained a concussion. The process to be used in making the decision is addressed in [Appendix G, Concussion Protocol](#). At the determination of the Ride Manager and Steward, a refund of ride entry may be awarded.

As a way of monitoring the well-being of participants, if a rider decides to withdraw from the competition for any reason, they are required to notify the ride manager or other member of the ride management team. Additionally, their equine is to be examined by a ride veterinarian at the time of the withdrawal.

17. Logbooks. In order to collect and record mileage and points for equines, each equine owned by an EDRA member will be issued a Logbook upon request. Without a Logbook, the equine is not eligible for applicable awards. See [Logbook Protocols, Appendix B](#).
18. Equine Age Requirements. Equine participants must be a minimum of five years old (60 months) to enter 25-74 mile events and seven years (84 months) or older to participate in 75-100 mile events. Age is determined by using the actual date of birth when known, the date of birth recorded on applicable registration papers, or determination by the Head Veterinarian when no formal records can be presented and/or when there is concern about an equine's age.
19. Welfare of the Equine.
- a) All equines will be presented to a ride veterinarian for examination:
    - 1. Prior to the ride,
    - 2. At predetermined holds with veterinary exams during the competition (aka vet checks, vet exams),
    - 3. Anytime the rider decides to withdraw from the ride, and/or
    - 4. After completing the course, irrespective of meeting the maximum time allowed requirement.

The equine will be evaluated using metabolic and mechanical criteria (outlined below). Information will be recorded on ride exam cards during the course of the event and upon completion, summarized in the equine's EDRA Logbook, if applicable.
  - b) All rides include mandatory vet checks with hold times determined by the Ride Manager and Head Veterinarian, considering course difficulty, weather, and other factors.
  - c) A pulse criterion of 60 beats or lower per minute (bpm) must be reached within 30 minutes of arriving at all vet checks and within 30 minutes of crossing the finish line. At the discretion of the Head Veterinarian, a completion pulse criterion of 64 bpm is allowed, when announced in advance of the start of an event.
  - d) An equine body score determined by a ride veterinarian at the pre-ride exam, must be between 3-8 in order for the equine to be eligible to enter an event.
  - e) Equines must be presented to a veterinarian for mid-ride vet checks and must meet all veterinarian criteria within 60 minutes of the equine's examination, unless the veterinarian requires a shorter duration.
  - f) Equines must be presented to a veterinarian for completion exams within 60 minutes of their finish time and the equine must again meet the pulse criteria, along with all other evaluation factors. See Rules 2c) and 2d) for the definitions of finish time.
  - g) Evaluation of metabolic factors may include but is not limited to pulse, respiration, cardiac recovery, and temperature.
  - h) Evaluation of mechanical factors includes but is not limited to gait analysis and body observation. Gait analysis will be conducted at a trot or equivalent, straight out and back. Gait aberrations such as consistent shortness of stride, stiffness, as well as consistent observable lameness at any gait are reasons for elimination from the event.
  - i) Body evaluation consists of, but is not limited to, examination for wounds or observable consistent pain and sensitivity anywhere on the limbs and body. The degree and nature of such factors should be noted on the vet card.
  - j) If a veterinarian determines factors listed above are serious enough to limit the equine's ability to carry on without further damage, this will result in the elimination of the participant from the

event and the appropriate pull code, Rule 20g), will be designated on the participant's ride card.

- k) An equine meeting time and course requirements, equine examination criteria and the veterinarian's evaluation that the equine is able to carry on, is deemed as having successfully completed the competition.
- l) If treatment of an equine is required during the course of the competition, it must be done under the supervision of a veterinarian, noted in the Logbook and vet card, and performed at the rider's expense. Additionally, in the event of medical treatment or an equine fatality, a report by the treating veterinarian will be turned into EDRA with ride results.
- m) Any equine that presents clear danger to other equines and/or humans may be disqualified or forbidden to enter the event and asked to leave the ride site premises.

## 20. Veterinary Oversight.

- a) All EDRA rides will have a designated Head Veterinarian. The following criteria and responsibilities apply to this position:
  - The individual is a licensed Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, DVM, or
  - Has been a licensed Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, DVM and left practice in good standing (e.g., is no longer actively practicing and/or may be retired), or
  - Passed either the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination (November 2000 and later) or the National Board Examination and Clinical Competency Examination (pre-November 2000), or the Educational Commission on Foreign Veterinary Graduates (other countries), and
  - Has participated as a ride veterinarian at a minimum of three 50 mile or longer distance competitions, with at least two of those experiences at an EDRA event. If compliance with this requirement would impose an undue hardship, a veterinarian with non-EDRA experience or fewer rides may be appointed as Head Veterinarian provided the veterinarian attests to the Ride Manager that they have reviewed and will adhere to the EDRA rules and that the EDRA Board provides its approval.
  - Set final criteria for ride (hold times and pulse criteria) after consulting with the Ride Manager on course difficulty and weather conditions.
  - Provides guidance to other ride veterinarians to help ensure judging consistency.
  - Is responsible for Best in Class examinations unless specifically designated to another veterinarian. (The Head Veterinarian shall delegate the responsibility to another ride veterinarian for the applicable distance, if a family member is participating in the competition, unless no other veterinarian is available.)
  - Is responsible for overseeing and conducting random drug sampling, if needed.
- b) EDRA rides will have a designated treatment veterinarian on site from the time of pre-ride examinations until two hours after the last rider has returned to camp off the course. This veterinarian must be licensed to practice within the state in which the event takes place and will provide and be able to administer fluids, IV supplies, and drugs most likely to be utilized at a distance riding event. A Ride Manager may petition the EDRA Board of Directors for an exemption from this rule by submitting an alternate plan.
- c) EDRA rides may have additional ride veterinarians, as determined necessary by the Ride Manager. A ride veterinarian:
  - Is a licensed Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, DVM, or
  - Has been a licensed Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, DVM and left practice in good standing (e.g., is no longer actively practicing and/or may be retired), or



- Passed either the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination (November 2000 and later) or the National Board Examination and Clinical Competency Examination (pre-November 2000), or the Educational Commission on Foreign Veterinary Graduates (other countries).

- d) EDRA rides will have established pulse criteria as well as “ability to carry on” criteria, see details in Welfare of the Equine, Rule 19). Placings in distances between 25-45 miles are determined according to the participant’s finish time (the time the equine met the established pulse criteria after crossing the finish line) and requires all other equine wellness criteria is met. Placings in distances 46-100 miles are determined according to when the equine and rider cross the finish line and requires all other equine pulse and wellness criteria is met.
- e) Ties are not recognized.
- f) The Head Veterinarian or his/her designee is responsible for conducting Best in Class examinations following the [Best in Class Judging Protocol, Appendix I](#).
- g) When eliminated due to an issue with the equine, as covered in Rule 19, pull codes will be noted on the vet card and signed by a ride veterinarian. Pull code options are as follows:
  - **L:** Lameness/gait aberration
  - **M:** Metabolic
  - **B:** Body Condition
  - **OT:** Overtime
  - **RO:** Rider Option (when the equine is examined by a ride veterinarian and has been judged to have the “ability to carry on,” but the rider is withdrawn due to a possible concussion, or the rider chooses not to continue in the competition for any reason)

21. Drug Rules. Drugs and Medications for Equines: For details on medications and prohibited treatment practices which may not be used in advance of or during competitions, please see [Appendix C, Drug and Medication Rule](#), and [Appendix D, Drug Sampling Protocol](#), which also describes how the random drug testing process will be managed at EDRA events. The Head Veterinarian is responsible for overseeing the following of these rules, as well as conducting the random drug sampling protocol.

22. Ride Stewards (Steward). The Ride Steward Coordinator will assign an EDRA Steward to each EDRA endorsed ride to address and manage conflicts, as well as support and advise the Ride Manager on other rules-related issues that may arise.

23. Ride Entry Refusal. Ride Managers may refuse entry with due cause. If this action is taken, it must be reported to the Steward and included in the Steward’s ride report.

24. Sportsmanship. Individuals at an EDRA event shall demonstrate ethical and sportsmanlike behavior, whether rider, volunteer, rider crew, observer.

25. Discipline. Appropriate behavior that promotes safety, fairness and good sportsmanship is expected at EDRA events. The Steward, Ride Manager and fellow EDRA members are expected to support other riders by exhibiting these qualities. As a guide, please see [Discipline Matrix, Appendix F](#).

26. Conflict Resolution. 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:



- 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 to set up a meeting for resolution. Again, refusal to attend will result in a six-month suspension.
- 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.
- Principle parties must initiate a solution through the Conflict Resolution committee within 14 days of the meeting with the Steward.

27. Awards Program. The intent of EDRA's Award Program is to recognize and celebrate achievements requiring significant effort by both rider and equine while encouraging the humane treatment of equine participants and supporting their longevity in our sport. EDRA promotes the competitive aspects of distance riding and defines "compete" as an ardent desire to succeed. We recognize and support members who may have a wide variety of competitive goals – whether they prepare their equine partner to out-perform other participants or enable their equine partner to complete distances – ride-after-ride, year-after-year. A number of awards follow a calendar year cycle (January 1 through December 31), but some cover lifetime achievements for the rider and equine. For information on the various aspects of recognition, see [Awards Descriptions, Appendix E.](#)

28. Mentor Program. The EDRA Mentor Program is designed to provide riders of all levels with the opportunity to teach as well as learn from others' experiences. The EDRA Mentor program will:

- Connect members with limited or no distance riding experience to an experienced mentor.
- Connect members who want to participate in the Mentor program with mentors or mentees.
- Recruit mentors.

29. Service Program. The EDRA Service Program is designed to maximize educational opportunities for members and provide service to the distance riding community.

- EDRA members are strongly encouraged to participate in some type of service experience during the ride season.
- Riders with limited or no distance riding experience should contact the Service Coordinator to assist them in selecting their first service experience. EDRA members are asked to report their service experiences to the EDRA Service Coordinator for recognition and educational purposes.

#### **Opportunities at rides**

- Manage a ride
- Help mark/maintain trail
- Help unmark trail
- Work at finish line (e.g., timer, ride secretary)
- Work in pulse area (taking pulse)
- Scribe for vet
- Help with mapping trail before ride
- Assist Ride Manager

#### **Other Opportunities**

- Serve on an EDRA Committee
- Organize, present, or assist with an educational clinic
- Mentor other EDRA members through the mentor program
- Prepare an educational article for the website
- Make an educational webinar for the website
- Provide other ideas for member volunteers
- Connect members with limited or no distance riding experience to an experienced mentor
- Connect members who want to participate in the Mentor program with mentors or mentees
- Recruit mentors