



Criteria for Federation-Recognized Affiliate Associations *Updated September 16, 2024*

In addition to requirements that the USEF Board of Directors may adopt from time to time, below enumerates the minimum criteria for consideration as and continuation as a Recognized Affiliate. These requirements are subject to amendment by the USEF Board of Directors:

Governance

- 501(c)(3) organization with purpose directly related to the relevant breed or discipline and development of growth of sport, and maintain recognition of tax-exempt status by IRS and in good standing at all times.
- Provide USEF with a copy of audited financials and federal tax return annually, no later than 8 months following close of fiscal year. Copy must be sent to generalcounsel@usef.org
- Maintain good standing at all times with Secretary of State where organization is incorporated
- Govern and operate organization with integrity at all times, ensuring a commitment to decision-making free of conflicts of interest and transparency with its Board of Directors regarding matters critical to governance such as regular financial reporting
- Comply with and be bound by all applicable USEF Bylaws, USEF Board of Directors' actions, and USEF Rules and policies including, but not limited to, all athlete safeguarding requirements imposed by Congress, the U.S. Center for SafeSport, and USEF.
- Actively promote the USEF Safe Sport Policy, including the Minor Athlete Abuse and Prevention Policies, as amended from time to time, and best practices, and promote reporting requirements and platforms.
- Recognize and enforce USEF ineligibility list, including bans and suspensions. This includes those ineligible due to SafeSport Training deficiencies and return to play.
- Recommend Recognized Affiliate members to the appropriate USEF Committees and Councils, when applicable, who are well suited to serve in the particular role.
- Adhere to the USEF Non-Discrimination Policy
- Adopt, publish on Recognized Affiliate website, and enforce the following policies for Recognized Affiliate members, Board of Directors, officers, employees, volunteers, and contractors who provide substantial services to Recognized Affiliate. Each policy must include how to report concerns as well as a process for investigating and resolving complaints under the relevant policy:
 - Code of Conduct
 - Code of Ethics
 - Conflict of Interest
 - Whistleblower & Anti-Retaliation Policy
- Provide the following information to USEF no later than February 1 each year: a) total number of Recognized Affiliate members for the prior competition year; b) total number of Recognized Affiliate registered or recorded horses for the prior competition year; c) total number of Recognized Affiliate licensed or certified officials who do not hold a USEF license; d) total number of Recognized Affiliate non-Federation recognized, sanctioned, or other competitions that are relied upon by the Recognized Affiliate for any purpose.
- Maintain good standing with USEF
- Pay required dues

USEF Recognized Affiliate Criteria

- Promote the valuable relationship between USEF and Recognized Affiliate by having a prominent USEF presence on Recognized Affiliate website, including specific membership benefit information and resources provided by USEF
- Refrain from interfering in the business operations of USEF
- Refrain from affiliating with or recognizing any national organization for the breeds and disciplines that USEF governs, other than the ones recognized by USEF as a Recognized Affiliate, unless an agreement with USEF is reached concerning the scope of said affiliation.
- Ensure all elections and appointments to USEF committees and councils do not contravene USEF Bylaws, policies, and procedures.

Clean Sport, Safety, and Welfare

- Work in partnership with USEF to promote equine and human Clean Sport
- Work with USEF to adopt and develop programs to improve equine and human welfare
- Work in partnership with USEF to promote horse health and welfare
- Adopt, uphold, and enforce all horse welfare policies
- Exemplify no tolerance for horse abuse ***unethical treatment of horses*** or improper training practices

USEF Safe Sport Requirements:

- Adopt a safeguarding policy that applies to all affiliate activities for individuals not under USEF jurisdiction. Such policy must meet the requirements in USEF's SafeSport Policy and include:
 - Prohibit sexual, physical, and emotional misconduct
 - Limit one-on-one interactions between individuals 18 years of age and older and minor participants
 - Child abuse prevention training for all individuals 18 years of age and older who has regular contact with minor participants
 - Published mandatory reporting policy
 - Anti-Retaliation policy
 - Process for resolving complaints under the policy
- By no later than February 1 each year, document compliance with USEF's Safe Sport Policy requirements regarding SafeSport Training for all Recognized Affiliate adult staff, Board members, and other adult members authorized by or approved by Recognized Affiliate to have regular contact with or authority over athletes
- Recognize and enforce all interim measures, suspensions, and bans imposed by the U.S. Center for Safe Sport, USEF, or the FEI, regardless of sport designation of the individual found in violation.
- ***Ensure that any equestrian organization with which Recognized Affiliate is associated prohibits participation in the organization or activities of the organization by anyone on the U.S. Center for SafeSport, USEF, or FEI suspension or banned lists.***
- Ensure that any competition with which Recognized Affiliate is associated prohibits participation by anyone on the U.S. Center for SafeSport, ~~or~~ USEF, ***or FEI*** suspension or banned lists. Such individuals must be prohibited from entry on the grounds and made to leave if they enter, except individuals on the medical suspension list who may be present on the grounds but prohibited from participating. This includes any competitions that Recognized Affiliate recognizes results for purposes of point accumulation, award programs, or qualification, or any competition that Recognized Affiliate associates its programs or brand with, in any way.
- Work in partnership with USEF to promote safeguarding in sport.

USEF Recognized Affiliate Criteria

Rules

- Relevant USEF and Recognized Affiliate committees meet annually to share and discuss potential rule changes affecting the breed/discipline.
- Recognize and agree that USEF retains sole authority over the official interpretation of USEF rules.
- ***Recognize and agree that the responsibility for enforcement of any Affiliate membership or Affiliate horse registration/recording requirements included within the USEF rulebook lies solely with the Affiliate.***

Intellectual Property

- ***Agree to refrain from unauthorized uses of intellectual property owned by USEF, FEI, USOPC, or an athlete's NIL.***
 - ***For example, the USOPC holds trademark rights to Olympic-related words and symbols, including the terminology "Team USA" so its use in any manner is unauthorized unless specifically permitted by the USOPC.***

Competitions

- Work with USEF to increase the number of USEF and/or joint USEF/ Recognized Affiliate licensed competitions including multiple levels of the sport at each competition. Collaborate on co-branded message promoting licensing/recognizing for both organizations, if applicable.
- Work with USEF to increase participation in the Recognized Affiliate breed or discipline

Communications

- Work with USEF to maintain open lines of communication between both organizations. The Parties agree to promptly resolve any disagreements to the best of their ability.
- ***Follow USEF policies and guidelines regarding communications involving Olympic and Paralympic Games, PanAm and Parapan Games, FEI Championships and Named Events, and USEF Championships and Named Events.***

Sport Growth and Participation

- Work together with USEF to promote, support, and administer, among other things, growth in competitions, participation, and education.

Educating Officials

- Either develop and manage all education and continuing education for national judges licensed by USEF, in a manner consistent with an agreed-upon outline of mutual duties/responsibilities; or acknowledge and agree that Recognized Affiliate does not administer licensed official education and will not separately license officials.
- ~~Ensure the utilization of USEF licensed officials for Recognized Affiliate's competitions, including but not limited to judges licensed in the applicable Recognized Affiliate and other competitions with which Recognized Affiliate is associated.~~