



## Equine Welfare Committee Policies

### ASHBA Policy Statement for the Equine Welfare Committee

The Equine Welfare Committee identifies state and national organizations as part of a rescue referral program for membership; evaluates and appraises the Board regarding proposed legislation (positive or negative) affecting the Saddlebred industry; seeks to affiliate the ASHBA with prominent industry groups (i.e., the AHC); and recommends ways that the ASHBA can be more proactive regarding equine health and welfare issues.

### Role

The committee serves as an information portal for the Saddlebred. While rescue is a part of equine welfare, the committee is **not** a rescue organization. The committee is designated as “rescue neutral,” and no member may be a current member of an equine rescue Board of Directors, nor a principal in an Equine Rescue. Members may be previously affiliated with equine rescues throughout the country.

The committee follows the policy set for them by the Board. The Chair further acts as a liaison or appoints a liaison to work with other entities as designated by the committee or the Board.

Given the declining numbers within the Saddlebred breed, the role of the committee is of more importance than ever. The committee seeks to protect and advocate the breed, while searching for avenues to promote both the breed and public perception of the breed, as well as increase ownership of the breed.

### Equine Welfare Committee Policies

Given the governing policy from the ASHBA, the committee further defines their role and policies as follows:

Identifies state and national organizations as part of a rescue referral program for membership.

1. Identified organizations shall be listed on the committee page(s) of the ASHBA web site and will be available for referral upon call-in to the ASHBA office. These include:
  - a. Global Federation
  - b. Unwanted Horse Coalition
  - c. Appropriate State level clearing houses for bonafide rescues as identified and approved by the committee.
  - d. Previous Bruce Hanson Grant recipients. It is the policy of the committee (and the ASHBA) to not recommend specific rescue organizations. Bruce Hanson Grant recipients are listed, but with no recommendation attached in keeping with the “rescue neutral” policy of the committee.
2. The committee (and ASHBA) will assist members and the general public who may call the ASHBA office regarding incidents of Saddlebred neglect and/or abuse in:
  - a. Identifying the issue, and
  - b. Referring callers to resources.
3. Referrals will be made to the appropriate resources, which may include legal entities or local rescues.
4. The committee shall be responsible for developing a checklist for ASHBA personnel to use when fielding calls regarding alleged neglect or abuse.

Evaluates and appraises the Board regarding proposed legislation (positive or negative) affecting the Saddlebred industry.

1. The committee seeks to place the ASHBA as an industry leader in being proactive in developing solutions for equine welfare issues, whether real or perceived. As such, the committee may bring to the attention of the Board welfare issues which may affect the breed before they become legislated.

Seeks to affiliate the ASHBA with prominent industry groups (i.e., the AHC)

1. The Chair of the committee will be the liaison or will appoint a liaison to other organizations as necessary.
2. As with any good business, the committee will collaborate as a part of cross-functional teams within the ASHBA to recommend and review any proposed rule changes or issues affecting equine welfare, (i.e., if the Rules Committee is considering changes to rules regarding the horse and treatment of the horse, the committee will act in a consultative role)
3. The committee will also cooperate with the UPHA in identifying and targeting areas of equine welfare; specifically, the 80% of the breed that do not currently have show records.

Recommends ways that the ASHBA can be more proactive regarding equine health and welfare issues:

1. Works with the ASHBA Marketing committee to promote the American Saddlebred as a trotting breed.
2. Recommends and reviews rule changes for the ASHBA and Registry as they pertain to equine welfare issues.
3. The committee along with the Registry partner to ensure the integrity of registration and transfer of registration for **all** American Saddlebred and Half American Saddlebred horses.
4. Promotes the usage of Home for Life via the ASHBA web site, and by specifically including program information and a checkbox for Home for Life on every transfer form, thus making Home for Life available for every registered Saddlebred at the time of transfer, wherever it may occur in the chain of ownership during a registered Saddlebred's lifetime.
5. Makes Home for Life available in the following methods:
  - a. At the time of transfer on the transfer form
  - b. Online for all currently and formerly owned horses of any recorded owner, unless said owner has been convicted of animal cruelty
  - c. Upon petition to the committee for horses that have not been recorded under the person's name.

Usage of funds:

The committee is not a budgeted committee for the ASHBA. As such, any funds available to the committee are provided solely by donations and fund raising. Bruce Hanson, an early advocate for equine welfare provided the seed money for the Committee to assist organizations and rescues in the following manner:

1. **The Bruce Hanson Grant:** This grant is available to eligible 501c(3) rescue organizations. It supplies a grant up to \$1,000 and may be applied for every other year. For details, please refer to the Bruce Hanson Grant application.
2. **Seizures and Legal Surrenders.** As the committee is **not** a rescue organization, it cannot step in and directly assist unless there is **a seizure by a legal entity** (i.e. Animal Control or the local police department) or in the case where committee works with a rescue organization or Power of Attorney in a direct **legal surrender**. When a seizure or surrender has occurred, the organization receiving the animals, whether they are 501c(3) or not, may apply for emergency funding.

Requirements for assistance for a Legal Surrender:

- Submit a copy of the Power of Attorney, if one is in place. If the person surrendering is the recorded owner, then no Power of Attorney is required.
- Proof from 501c(3) Equine Rescue Organization of the surrender. (It could be a sales receipt or other document that states the horses are being surrendered.)
- Standard 501c(3) Equine Rescue Organization paperwork submitted if not already on file with ASHBA.
- Horse Registration certificates if in the possession of the power of attorney or names of all registered horses.
- Proof of the surrender ownership — if the horses are not registered or if the surrender is not in the chain of registration.

The committee has set a maximum funding limit that has been approved by the Board of Directors. This funding is available on an emergency basis at the direction of the Chair, with the committee being immediately informed. Any funds over and above the maximum funding limit must be approved by committee and the ASHBA Board of Directors.

Emergency bills may then be applied against this balance with anything exceeding the maximum to be the responsibility of the rescuing organization. Such funds will then be paid directly to the vendor (i.e. vet, horseshoer, etc.) upon receipt of a bill by the ASHBA. Funds will not be paid to the rescuing organization.

Items which qualify for emergency funding include, but are not limited to:

- i. Veterinary bills
- ii. Horseshoeing
- iii. Feed
- iv. DNA testing by the ASR to prove parentage

Should the bills not exceed the maximum set by the committee, all unused funds shall revert to the committee fund for future use.

3. **Emergency Funding.** Funds *may* be available to eligible 501c(3) organizations on an emergency basis and outside of the Bruce Hanson grant cycle. Emergencies are considered a one-time event per episode and are not intended as a portion of regular fund raising by the 501c(3) organization.