

## Standard Operating Guidelines

# Code of Conduct Policy

### Remember:

OHSET events are high school athletic events; conduct is expected as such.

#### 1. Who Must Adhere?

- a. All athletes, their families, volunteers, and contractors associated with OHSET during the OHSET season, will comply with OHSET Code of Conduct standards.
- b. For the remainder of the document, these “affiliates” will be identified as “members.”

#### 2. Team Responsibilities

- a. Each team will have conduct expectations as a team meeting topic at the beginning of the season. Coaches and advisors will be sure all members know and understand the rules and expectations.
- b. Teams will formulate and document in writing any necessary additional rules, guidelines, or expectations
- c. Each team shall take reasonable measures to insure “members” associated with their team will conduct themselves according to this Code of Conduct.
- d. Each team will have on file with the district
  - i. Any written team rules
  - ii. School code of conduct policies

#### 3. District Responsibilities

- a. If violations occur and/or continue to occur, District officers may ask offenders to leave the event. OHSET meets function in rented facilities under our responsibility. Should the bleacher area be of “public domain” at your facility, then spectators may be remanded to that area. However, continued violations that place youth at risk in any way, can warrant a call to law enforcement to ask for the offender’s removal.
- b. Should a removal be necessary,
  - i. Never threaten what you are not willing to do
  - ii. work closely with team affiliates
  - iii. be polite, discrete, and respectful
  - iv. work in pairs, witnesses are critical
  - v. document (in writing) all incidences associated with the reason for removal

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- vi. be sure of the facts
- vii. be sure it's an appropriate response
- viii. when the decision is made, don't waiver – contact law enforcement if necessary

### 4. Who's Policy Takes Precedence?

- a. In the interest of athletes and their families, it is expected that each high school, the team representatives and OHSET work together to make sure discipline be carried out in the manner everyone expects.
- b. School Code of Conduct – Applied first.
  - i. Athletes shall comply with the written rules of their school district, pursue the prescribed course of study, respect the authority of the principal(s) or activity/athletic director, teachers, advisors, and coaches.
- c. OHSET – Applied when the School Code of Conduct does not apply.
  - i. Athletes shall comply with all team, district, and state rules and expected guidelines. When appropriate or if school policies don't apply, OHSET Code of Conduct will be utilized.
- d. OSAA and USEF will be consulted as a guideline if necessary

### 5. We Endorse and Promote the Following Values (included, but not limited to)

- a. A high ethical standard
- b. Strong leadership
- c. Teamwork
- d. Clear expectations and communication
- e. Accountability
- f. Life-long learning
- g. Recognition for excellence
- h. Community and family participation
- i. A safe learning environment
- j. A high standard of competition
- k. Quality sportsmanship
- l. Conduct becoming and flattering any school or organization

### 6. Misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Repeated failure to comply with rules, policies or directions of OHSET officials
- b. Failure to treat others with courtesy
- c. Profanity or abusive language
- d. Theft, damage or destruction of property
- e. Cheating
- f. Assaults or threats of harm to people or animals

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- g. Unlawful or inappropriate use of drugs or tobacco, including.
  - i. Athletes drinking any alcoholic beverage
  - ii. Athletes smoking cigarettes or using chewing tobacco
  - iii. Adults drinking alcohol outside their designated camping area
  - iv. Adults smoking outside of designated areas
- h. Illicit drugs of any kind
- i. Abuse or neglect of animals, including:
  - i. Excessive use of a whip, chain, spurs, or hands
  - ii. Striking an animal in the head
  - iii. Inhumane treatment of an animal, including ...
    - 1. Lack of feed or water
    - 2. Unclean conditions
- j. Cruelty. There are a variety of philosophies regarding cruelty. Some feel spurs and whips are cruel, others feel that putting horses in stalls is cruel, etc. We must do our best to keep our animals safe, content, and un-harmed. We must also remember, the world is about perception, so if what you are doing could be perceived as harmful to the less knowledgeable, an OHSET event is probably not the place for it.
  - i. You are an ambassador for the equine sport, OHSET, and equestrian youth
  - ii. Be certain what you are doing is not just safe for your horse, but it must also appear to not harm.
  - iii. Equine discipline is necessary and acceptable. Be smart, compassionate, respectful, immediate, and composed.
  - iv. Reported cruelty will be investigated rigorously

### 7. When a Violation Occurs

- a. Code of conduct violations will incite discrete investigation and appropriate disciplinary actions.
  - i. Verbal Warnings – Authority discretion and common sense are expected and necessary
    - 1. While certain violations will carry immediate significant disciplinary action, verbal warnings, in some cases, may be an acceptable first step. However, even minor violations and verbal warnings should be documented. Repeated minor violations add up to a serious code of conduct issue.
- b. Investigation
  - i. This is a simple exploration of facts.
    - 1. It may be done by team or school officials or by district or state OHSET officials.
    - 2. Investigations should be done by the appropriate affiliate in the highest leadership role, i.e.: Head Coach, Principal, District Chair, etc.

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- ii. This will depend on the infraction, the event, and the potential disciplinary action. All information should be gathered quickly using individual contact and should include written documentation of the steps taken as well as a general statement of the discussion. Once the facts are as clear as possible.
- c. Follow the school's written policy if appropriate. If the school's policy is not appropriate or is unavailable,
  - i. Clarify that the infraction is an OHSET Code of Conduct violation, then apply an appropriate disciplinary action. If action is taken by a team, please keep the District chair "in the loop." They need to know in case future infractions occur. In the same light, should a district impose disciplinary action, the state chair should be notified.
- d. Written documentation is required! Including:
  - i. What the infraction was
  - ii. Who was involved (all parties, including witnesses)
  - iii. What action was taken
  - iv. What the consequences are if it happens again
  - v. Who was notified
  - vi. A written statement that describes, what, when where incident happened and what the future consequences of another violation will be. It should be signed by the athlete, the authority figure, and the parent. Copies may be shared with all.

### 8. Appropriate disciplinary action

- a. This is a difficult and challenging task. No single violation will have circumstances exactly like another. Common sense, composure, and unemotional well thought-out actions must prevail. A general plan might look like this, but will depend on the "scale" and "degree" of the violation. For example, theft of district or team funds will not have the same action plan as an athlete who lost their temper and acted inappropriately.
- b. First Violations may include one or more of the following:
  - i. Plan of action for improvement
  - ii. Apology letter
  - iii. Loss of points for athlete or team
  - iv. DQ for athlete or team from a class or a meet
  - v. Suspension from a meet
- c. Second Violations may include one or more of the following:
  - i. DQ for athlete or team from a class or a meet
  - ii. Apology letter
  - iii. Suspension from a meet
  - iv. Expulsion from OHSET
- d. Third Violations may include one or more of the following:

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- i. DQ for athlete or team from a class or meet
  - ii. Suspension from one or more meets
  - iii. Expulsion from OHSET
- e. It is recommended that actions which include or are similar to removing of points or disqualification, when considered, be discussed with the District Chair. Actions that include suspension or expulsion, when considered, should be discussed with the District Chair and the State Chair to maintain equitable standards and an outside perspective. If the State Chair is unavailable, the State Vice Chair or Rules Chair is an appropriate contact.
- f. Any law violation will be reported to the governing authority. For examples, minors drinking alcohol, the local police will be contacted. Theft of funds will be turned over to local law enforcement.

### 9. Reinstatement

- a. First Violation
  - i. An OHSET member may be reinstated if all disciplinary actions have been met and appropriate people in authority positions (principal, coach, district chair, etc.) agree.
- b. Multiple Violations
  - i. An OHSET member may be reinstated ONLY if the following occurs...
    1. Written request for reinstatement delivered to the district chair
    2. Documented evidence of behavior change AND an understanding and willingness to follow all rules, guidelines, directions, etc.
    3. The School, Team, Executive Board (officers) of the District and the State Board all agree an additional chance has been earned.
    4. Finally, a 2/3 majority vote of approval by the State Board is required for reinstatement.