

# **Mason-Dixon Miniature Horse Association Bylaws** **and General Rules**

(Amended and passed March 2016)

## **Constitution**

### *ARTICLE I*

#### **Section 1. TITLE**

This Association shall be known as the “Mason-Dixon Miniature Horse Association, Incorporated” or “MDMHA” and shall at all times be operated as a nonprofit incorporated association in accordance with the laws of the States of Maryland and Pennsylvania.

**Section 2A. OBJECTIVE** The purpose(s) of the Association shall be to:

- (a) Coordinate show dates,
- (b) Promote and/or conduct Miniature Horse shows, clinics, and events, and (c) Regulate any and all matters such as may pertain to the MDMHA.

#### **Section 2B. MISSION STATEMENT**

MDMHA’s mission statement is to educate the public about Miniature Horses by providing the highest standard of health and safety for our horses, as well as creating a family atmosphere that all members can enjoy.

#### **Section 3. PLACE OF BUSINESS**

The area in which this club operates will be anywhere within the boundaries of Maryland and Pennsylvania. The club will hold a spring and a fall bi-annual general meeting unless otherwise notified by the Secretary. The President or Executive Committee may call a special meeting at any time; members will receive notice via email, verbally, or in writing at least 1 week in advance.

### *ARTICLE II Section*

#### **1.**

This Association is open to organizational groups or individuals sponsoring Miniature Horse shows, clinics, and events.

#### **Section 2.**

Membership in the Association is a privilege, not a right. Application for membership shall be made on forms and by fees and procedures prescribed from time to time by the Association. Membership, or application thereof, may be terminated or rejected by the **Executive Committee** (*defined by the Officers and Board of Directors of MDMHA*) for cause detrimental to the interest of the Association, its programs, policies, objectives, and harmonious relationships to its members. All members must be eighteen (18) years of age to vote in any MDMHA election or decision-making process.

#### **Section 3.**



Application for membership in the Association shall be filed with the Association Secretary. The Executive Committee will set the dues. Annual fee(s) to be paid for each membership are as follows:

Type	Renewal Membership	New Membership
Individual	\$10.00	\$15.00
Family	\$20.00	\$25.00

This fee shall be due and payable at the beginning of each calendar year (January 1) and must be paid in full by February 15 for the membership to stay current. Family must be immediate or resident members of the home. Notice to the member of fees payable shall be sent to the member at the last known address not less than 30 days prior to the end of the calendar year, which is December 31. When the membership becomes delinquent, paying the current dues can reinstate the membership. A \$5.00 late fee will be assessed to all late membership renewals. Annual membership is not transferable. A return check fee of \$30.00 per check will be assessed to any membership for nonsufficient funds of any returned check(s) and a possible suspension of check writing privileges may be enforced for repeat offenders.

**Section 4.**

All Officers must attend board meetings, unless prior notification is given to the Executive Committee. If any vacancies occur during the year, the Executive Committee will fill the vacancy.

**ARTICLE III Section**

**1.**

In the event the Association should fail to meet the obligation of its bylaws, all money will be turned over by check to a horse rescue organization.

**Section 2.**

The Executive Committee must approve dissolution of the Association in writing.

**Section 3.**

All assets will be held for 30 days after notification of the Association and individual members of the proposed dissolution of the Association pending rebuttal by any member, organization, or individual.

**ARTICLE IV**

**Section 1.**

Bylaws are subject to amendment, deletions, or additions at the beginning of each calendar year after the new Executive Board has been voted in. The following steps constitute the amendment process:

- (a) Proposed amendments shall be submitted verbally or in writing to the Secretary before the Annual Executive Board Meeting, which will be held any time prior to the first (spring) bi-annual General Club Meeting. The Executive Committee will review and consider all proposals at the Annual Executive Board Meeting and maintains the authority to decline or disapprove of any



proposed amendments that may be considered unreasonable, detrimental, or discriminatory to MDMHA and its members.

- (b) Approved proposed amendments will be put in writing and submitted via email or regular mail to each current voting member or member household at least 2 weeks prior to the first (spring) General Club Meeting.
- (c) Proposed amendments will be voted on at the first (spring) bi-annual General Club Meeting by current members (in good standing with MDMHA) who are present at the meeting. Amendments will be passed by 2/3 vote of the attending members, and no proxy or absentee voting will be permitted.

## **Bylaws**

### **ARTICLE I**

#### **Section 1.**

The Officers shall be elected at the second (fall) bi-annual General Club Meeting by current members (in good standing with MDMHA). Self-nomination forms will be distributed to all eligible members via mail at least 1 month prior to elections to recruit nominees for all Officer and five (5) Board of Directors Member positions. All nomination forms will be returned to the Secretary by the designated deadline. Proxy or absentee voting will not be permitted for elections, therefore members must attend the General Club Meeting and Elections to vote. Potential Officers and Board of Directors Members must be in good standing with MDMHA for no less than 90 days and must be 21 years of age or older.

#### **Section 2.**

The Executive Committee will consist of all current elected Officers and the Board of Directors, with office terms that run January 1 to December 31 of the elected calendar year. All Officer, Board of Directors, Committee Member, and appointed Director or Coordinator positions are nonmonetary compensation positions. All individuals who are elected, appointed, or hold volunteer positions are expected to perform their designated duties outlined in their position(s) to the best of their ability.

#### **Section 3.**

Special meetings of the Executive Committee shall be held whenever called by the direction of the President.

#### **Section 4.**

The Executive Committee has the right to take any disciplinary action against any participants who have cast aspersions on any member of this Association at previous Miniature Horse shows, clinics, or events of the organization, of any association, or have unpaid debts to this Association, upon approval by the Officers.

#### **Section 5.**

The Executive Committee may recommend dismissal or removal of an Officer,



Board of Directors Member, Committee Member, Director, or Coordinator whenever in its (the Executive Committee) judgment the best interests of the club would be served thereby. Specific reason(s) for such action are (but not limited to) the following:

- (a) Inadequate or lack of performance of designated duties outlined in a designated position, or failure to attend designated meetings as outlined in a designated position,
- (b) Any actions, statements, or involvement of activities that may be inappropriate, detrimental, or cause conflict of interest toward MDMHA, its members, or the Executive Committee,
- (c) Felony or misdemeanor conviction of a crime in a court of law.

The said individual(s) shall be asked by the Executive Committee to explain or justify their actions, statements, or involvement. After explanation is given, the Executive Committee will determine what course of action will be taken regarding the situation of the said individual(s). In the event the said individual is unwilling or unable to explain or justify the situation, he/she shall be asked by the Executive Committee to resign. If the individual fails to submit a resignation, the Executive Committee shall notify said individual in writing of the removal of the individual from his/her designated position.

## **ARTICLE II**

All Officer and Board of Directors positions are elected seats. However, the Fundraiser Director, Media Coordinator, Website and Social Networking Coordinator, and Banquet Coordinator are volunteer positions and will remain filled until the individual resigns from his/her position. In the event of any vacancy in the volunteer positions, the Executive Committee will accept any volunteer nominees for consideration, and then choose a nominee to fill the vacancy who best qualifies for the said position based on the individual's experience and qualifications.

### **Section 1. PRESIDENT**

The President shall be Chief Executive Officer of the Association and shall preside at meetings. He/She shall see that the bylaws, rules, and regulations of the Association are enforced and shall perform all other duties that may be prescribed from time to time. He/She shall appoint all committees except as provided in the bylaws.

### **Section 2. VICE PRESIDENT**

In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall have powers and shall perform duties of the President.

### **Section 3. SECRETARY**

The Secretary shall keep the minutes of all membership meetings, confirm show information, advise on conflicting dates, accept and maintain membership records, mail meeting minutes/newsletters to members, and be responsible for general club record keeping.



#### **Section 4. TREASURER**

The Treasurer shall receive and deposit all monies of the Association. The money will be disbursed only upon an itemized statement or receipt. He/She shall account for all of the same by itemized statements in detail at each meeting of the members.

#### **Section 5. BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Board of Directors will take any suggestions, complaints, compliments, etc., and share them with the Officers at the Executive Committee meetings. Board Members should participate with Officers in all aspects of MDMHA business and share in decision-making.

#### **Section 6. FUNDRAISER DIRECTOR**

The Fundraiser Director shall oversee club fundraisers and reports to the President and Treasurer regarding fundraising issues and money.

#### **Section 7. MEDIA COORDINATOR**

The Media Coordinator works with the Secretary regarding advertising, promotion, and publication issues for MDMHA.

#### **Section 8. WEBSITE AND SOCIAL NETWORKING COORDINATOR**

The Website and Social Networking Coordinator oversees and maintains the club's website and Facebook page.

#### **Section 9. BANQUET COORDINATOR**

The Banquet Coordinator oversees and organizes the Year End Awards Banquet details by delegating duties to volunteers, selecting the menu, coordinating raffles and the Silent Auction, and any or all things pertaining to this event.

### **Show Regulations and General Show Rules**

#### *SHOW REGULATIONS*

#### **Rule A. SHOW COMMITTEE (defined as Show Manager, Show Secretary, Points Director, Ring Crew Director, and 3 additional Committee Members)**

The Show Committee shall govern and has the authority to amend any Show Regulations and General Show Rules at any given time. This also includes the authority to change, delete, and/or add classes, and to oversee all show classes and ensure show rules of the Association are adhered to. In the event any questions arise that cannot be resolved by the use of MDMHA rules, the committee will revert to the AMHR rules and regulations, with all matters being reported to the President.

The Show Manager, Show Secretary, Points Director, and Ring Crew Director will be appointed by the Executive Committee after the second (fall) bi-annual General Club Meeting and Elections. The 3 additional Show Committee seats will be self-nominated and voted in at the same meeting.

#### **Section 1. SHOW MANAGER**

The Show Manager shall oversee and manage all shows and the show booth,



recruit judges with input from the Show Committee, design and post patterns and courses, provide equipment for patterns and courses, and collaborate with other Show Committee members regarding show matters and situations.

**Section 2. SHOW SECRETARY**

The Show Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining show forms and records, providing all forms to exhibitors, announcing duties, overseeing all entry forms and necessary paperwork provided by exhibitors, coordinating and overseeing MDMHA's Wall of Fame (WOF) Points Incentive Program, and collaborating with other Show Committee members regarding show matters and situations.

**Section 3. POINTS DIRECTOR**

The Points Director will be responsible for keeping and updating all show points and records of point signups. Point discrepancies are to be directed to the Points Director. The Points Director also maintains and coordinates PTHA OCAP paperwork each show season.

**Section 4. RING CREW DIRECTOR**

The Ring Crew Director assists the Show Manager in overseeing that classes run smoothly and efficiently, directs judge's cards to the Show Booth after each class, oversees setup and removal of all equipment used in patterned classes and courses, and directs distribution of appropriate ribbons to exhibitors after judged classes.

**Section 5. SHOW COMMITTEE MEMBER (3 seats)**

Show Committee Members shall assist and participate in decision-making, voting, and all aspects of Show Committee duties and/or other designated duties that may be requested by the Show Manager, Show Secretary, Points Director, or Ring Crew Director.

**Rule B. COGGINS TESTS**

A copy of a current Coggins test MUST accompany each horse on the show grounds the day of the said show or event per Maryland State Law unless it is a foal under the age of six (6) months and is accompanied by its dam with proof of her current Coggins.

**Rule C. REGISTRATION OF YEAR END POINTS**

Applicants for registration of year end points must be a MDMHA member at the time of registration. A registration fee of \$10.00 per horse/exhibitor combination will entitle them to points in all pointed classes and a permanent number. (The member who signs the horse up for points must exhibit the horse.) Once the horse/exhibitor combination is signed up for year end points, he/she must exhibit in the designated pointed class(es) at all MDMHA shows that show season in order to qualify for year end points in the given class(es). **Refer to Rule D for substitution policy.** Points will be posted on the MDMHA website and at each show. It is the exhibitor's responsibility to check his/her point standing.

Points are as follows:

Place	Points
1st	6



2nd	5
3rd	4
4th	3
5th	2
6th	1

**Rule D.      SUBSTITUTION**

In the event a MDMHA member signed up for year end points and is unable to exhibit or show the designated horse because of unforeseen circumstances due to illness, injury, surgery, or a family emergency (birth, death, etc.), unlimited substitution will be permitted. The substitute does NOT have to be a MDMHA member. However, substitutes must be age appropriate—youth substitutes for youth, and adult substitutes for adult. The show booth must be notified BEFORE the substitute enters the FIRST ASSIGNED CLASS with the designated horse in order to make the appropriate paperwork changes.

NO POINTED SUBSTITUTIONS WILL BE PERMITTED AT ANY TIME UNLESS IT IS FOR THE REASON(S) LISTED ABOVE. If there is a pointed exhibitor change during the show season for another reason (other than listed above), POINTS ARE NONTRANSFERABLE. This rule does not apply to non-pointed exhibitors/horses. EXCEPTION: If a pointed exhibitor has more than one horse in a Grand/Reserve Halter class and requires an additional handler, the Substitution Rule does not apply.

**Rule E.      EQUIPMENT AND ATTIRE**

Clothing and person must be neat and clean. Suitable clothing includes: short- or long-sleeved dress shirts, long pants, and boots. Jackets/blazers are optional. ABSOLUTELY NO tank/thin strapped or halter tops, t-shirts, shorts, open-toed shoes/sandals, or flip-flops. Running shoes or sneakers are acceptable in classes in which the exhibitor has to run. Showmanship classes require a hat, gloves, blazer/jacket, and boots.

Requirements for driving classes are as follows:

- (1) Boots, wraps, etc., of any description are prohibited.
- (2) Driving whips are required and must be carried in hand in all adult, youth, and open driving classes (pleasure, driving obstacle, ground driving, etc.). Whips must be of suitable style and the tip of the lash must not reach past the shoulder of the horse.
- (3) All pleasure driving vehicles must be of the two-wheeled type.
- (4) Harness in driving classes must be of the light type with breast collars. No full hames are allowed. Round or square blinders are permissible. Side or overchecks are required. When shown, the horse must have blinders and the check must be hooked. No other appliances may be used on a driving horse other than the harness (e.g., no fly nets on the ears, face, or body).

**Rule F.      EXHIBITORS**

Youth exhibitors must be at least six (6) years of age to show in Halter or



Performance classes. Youth divisions include: Division A – ages 6 to 12 years, and Division B – ages 13 to 17 years. Lead Line participants may be any age, but must weigh 70 lbs or less. Exhibitors must be eighteen (18) years of age by January 1 of the current year to show in adult classes.

### **Rule G.      PROTEST**

A protest may be made to the Show Committee by an exhibitor or parent of a youth exhibitor for any violation of the rules of the Association. A protest must be:

- (1) Made within one (1) hour of the alleged violation by one individual with a \$50.00 deposit given to the Association President.
- (2) A Show Protest Form must be completed by the Protester at the same time the \$50.00 deposit is given. Failure to complete and submit the form within 1 hour of alleged violation along with a \$50.00 deposit will result in immediate dismissal of the protest.
- (3) Once the Protest Form and \$50.00 deposit is submitted, the Protest will be announced and all ribbons and prize money must be returned to the Show Manager until the Protest has been resolved. If the judge's decision is sustained, the deposit money shall be forfeited to the Association.
- (4) The Judge's decision is final unless it is alleged to be in violation of the rules. The soundness of the horse, when determined by the Judge, cannot be protested unless a veterinarian is present.

### **Rule H.      TIES**

Ties for year end awards and divisions at each show will be left up to the decision of the Show Committee.

## ***GENERAL SHOW RULES***

MDMHA is a family club and our goal is to provide a fun, safe, and enjoyable atmosphere. Any violations of the General Show Rules or any misconduct on the show grounds by any person shall result in immediate dismissal from the grounds by order of the President, Judge, or Show Manager. Inappropriate behavior such as foul or abusive language, heckling, terrorist threats, or physical abuse toward the Judge, an exhibitor, a horse, or a MDMHA member will not be tolerated. Violators may receive a warning, suspension, or revocation of show or club privileges. If the individual is a MDMHA member, membership privileges may be revoked and further disciplinary action may be taken, which will be determined by the Executive Committee.

1. The Judge's decision is final. In the event of a protest or complaint about a judge's decision, the Show Manager must be informed ASAP. Exhibitors or spectators should NOT approach the judge. The Show Manager will offer a formal protest or resolve the complaint pending the circumstances of the situation. The Show Manager may seek assistance/guidance from the Show Committee in order to resolve the situation in a fair and timely manner. If an exhibitor or





spectator does not follow protocol and approaches a judge unauthorized, MDMHA reserves the right to forfeit any points belonging to the horse/exhibitor in the class being questioned or protested, and a formal written warning notification will be given to the offender.

2. At shows, six ribbons will be given in all classes.
3. Performance ties will be at the Judge's discretion.
4. Protective ASTM/SEI-approved headgear must be worn by exhibitors seventeen (17) years of age or younger in Driving classes.
5. All dogs must be on a leash.
6. Absolutely no gas/charcoal grills or open fires permitted on the show grounds per Thurmont Riding Club, MDMHA, and club insurance rules.
7. All hay and manure must be scattered and spread before leaving. Please pick up and dispose of your trash.
8. No horse shall be tied to any tree or fence railing.
9. The driveway entrance to the show grounds may not be used for parking. All other areas are open for parking except coned-off areas.
10. Exhibitors with special needs or who are physically challenged and wish to show are more than welcome provided you are able to meet the gate call. Please inform the Ring Steward before the class you wish to show. The Judge will take this into consideration when judging the class. The Executive Committee is committed to giving each exhibitor a fair chance to show his/her horse.
11. Exhibitors must be thirteen (13) years of age or older to exhibit/show a stallion.
12. Use of MDMHA jumps or obstacle equipment for warm-up or personal use is prohibited. There will be no practice or warm-up allowed in the ring once a pattern and equipment is set. Exhibitors are allowed to bring their own equipment to practice with prior to their class outside the ring in an area that does not interfere with traffic flow or incoming/outgoing classes.
13. In the event of a tie for a Hi-Point Day End Award, a coin toss will be done by the Show Manager with the Judge presiding.
14. No alcohol or illegal drugs permitted on show grounds.
15. No yelling or distractive type of behavior from the rail. Parents – please keep children off the rail while classes are in the ring. Children must be supervised at all times.
16. All shelter canopies, tents, or free-standing equipment **MUST** be secured properly. *MDMHA will not be responsible for damages or injuries that may occur from unsecured equipment.*
17. No distribution or solicitation of materials, flyers, or advertisements without the consent of the Club President and/or Show Manager.
18. MDMHA may revert to the AMHR rule book if questions/situations cannot be resolved by the MDMHA rules.
19. Refunds will only be given in the event of a sick or injured exhibitor or horse, or if MDMHA cancels the class.
20. **PLEASE VERIFY YOUR HORSE/EXHIBITOR NUMBER BEFORE ENTERING THE RING.** The number must be displayed in a manner easy for the Judge to read (on your back). Repeat offenders who fail to comply will be verbally warned by the Show Manager.



*Mason-Dixon Miniature Horse Association Bylaws and General Rules, March 2016*

21. Open checks will be kept for exhibitors during the show day; if you want to add a class, please notify the Show Booth at least one class prior to the desired class. Checks must be filled out before leaving the show grounds on show day. The Show Booth will not be held responsible for any checks not completed. Refunds will not be given once you sign up for a class and then decide to scratch. See refund policy above.