



GVHS ANIMAL WELFARE CONCERN REPORTING PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this process is to provide a structured, fair, respectful, and timely method for reporting and reviewing animal welfare concerns involving Gypsy Vanner Horse Society (GVHS) members, exhibitors, GVHS registered horses or activities associated with the GVHS community.

The Animal Welfare and Unsportsmanlike Conduct Committee (AWUCC) is established to privately and fairly evaluate complaints and reports involving potential violations of GVHS animal welfare standards as outlined in the GVHS Rulebook, including Section D.1 and Appendix A.. The Committee may conduct investigations and provide recommendations to the appropriate GVHS committees or Board of Directors regarding potential disciplinary action or other corrective measures.

Reports may involve incidents occurring:

- At GVHS sanctioned events
- At non-sanctioned events
- At private facilities or farms
- During transportation or training
- Through online or social media activity
- In any setting involving conduct subject to GVHS rules, policies, or membership standards

GVHS reserves the right to investigate conduct that may negatively impact horse welfare, the integrity of the organization, or the reputation of the breed community, regardless of whether the conduct occurred at a sanctioned event.

The Committee will only take official action when a formal complaint has been received.

ANIMAL WELFARE CONCERN REPORTING PROCESS

Immediate Welfare Concerns

1. Any immediate animal welfare concern that poses a risk to the health, safety, or wellbeing of a horse should be reported immediately to:
 - At a GVHS Sanctioned Event:
 - Show Management

- The Steward or licensed official
 - The Show Veterinarian (if available)
 - A GVHS representative onsite
 - Other location:
 - Appropriate local authorities (animal control, police, etc)
 - Local veterinarian
2. Immediate intervention may occur when necessary to protect the welfare of the horse.

Formal Animal Welfare Report

1. The reporting individual must submit:

- A completed GVHS Animal Welfare Concern Report Form
- Supporting documentation and evidence, including witness statements, photographs, videos, veterinary statements, screenshots, or other relevant materials

2. Animal welfare concerns may include, but are not limited to:

- Abuse or mistreatment of a horse
- Excessive or inappropriate discipline
- Unsafe training or handling practices
- Neglect or failure to provide appropriate care
- Dangerous equipment use
- Violations of GVHS animal welfare rules or humane treatment standards
- Conduct prohibited under GVHS Rulebook Section D.1 or Appendix A

3. Reports may involve actions by:

- GVHS members
- Exhibitors
- Trainers
- Owners
- Agents
- Family members or guests
- Other individuals participating in activities involving GVHS horses or members

Animal welfare concerns may be reported regardless of whether the incident occurred at a GVHS sanctioned event.

4. The report will be reviewed by the Animal Welfare and Unsportsmanlike Conduct Committee and served on the respondent when appropriate

5. The respondent will have thirty (30) days to submit a written response and supporting documentation.

INVESTIGATION AND RESOLUTIONS

Preliminary Review

6. The Committee may conduct a preliminary review to determine:

- Whether the complaint falls within the authority of the Committee
- Whether sufficient evidence exists to proceed
- Whether emergency or interim action is necessary to protect animal welfare

Formal Investigation and Resolution

8. The Animal Welfare and Unsportsmanlike Conduct Committee may:

- Review documents and evidence
- Verify witness statements
- Consult with veterinarians, show officials, or GVHS representatives
- Conduct recorded video conferences or interviews
- Review veterinary or medical documentation
- Determine whether a formal hearing is necessary

9. Within sixty (60) days of completing its investigation or hearing, the Committee will issue a recommendation to the appropriate GVHS authority or committee.

10. A Final Decision will be issued within thirty (30) days following the recommendation.

Possible Actions

Depending on the severity of the violation, recommendations or disciplinary actions may include:

- Educational or corrective action
- Warning or reprimand
- Probation
- Suspension of membership or privileges
- Removal from competition grounds
- Referral of law enforcement or animal control authorities when required

APPEALS

Any party who disagrees with the Final Decision may appeal to the GVHS Board of Directors.

- Appeals must be filed within thirty (30) days
- Appeals are based on the existing record
- New evidence will only be considered for good cause or extraordinary circumstances

The Board of Directors will review the matter and issue a Final Appeal Decision within sixty (60) days.

Following the appeal review, the decision of the Board of Directors shall be final.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All reports, investigations, and proceedings are confidential. Parties involved are expected to refrain from public discussion of ongoing matters while the process is active. GVHS may disclose information when necessary to protect horse welfare, comply with legal obligations, or enforce GVHS rules and policies.



GVHS ANIMAL WELFARE CONCERN REPORT FORM

This form is to be used when animal welfare concerns involving a GVHS registered horse.

1. The form must be completed in full and signed. Incomplete forms may be returned by the committee.
2. Supporting documentation should be included.
3. The completed form and documentation should be emailed to: GVHS, gvhs@vanners.org
4. There is no filing fee required for this reporting process.

SECTION 1 — REPORTING INDIVIDUAL INFORMATION

Name: _____

Address: _____

City _____ State/Province _____ Postal Code _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

GVHS Membership Type _____

SECTION 2 — RESPONDENT INFORMATION

Name of person(s) involved _____

Relationship to GVHS (member, exhibitor, guest, official, etc.) _____

SECTION 3 — HORSE INFORMATION

Horse Name _____ Registration # (if known) _____

Owner _____ Trainer/Handler _____

SECTION 4 — INCIDENT INFORMATION

Did the incident occur at a GVHS sanctioned event? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes:

Name of GVHS sanctioned event _____

Date(s) of incident(s) _____

Location of incident(s) _____

If no:

Location of incident(s) _____

Date(s) of incident(s) _____

Describe the setting or circumstances of the incident: _____

SECTION 5 — DESCRIPTION OF WELFARE CONCERN

Describe the conduct or incident being reported. *Attach additional pages and supporting documentation as necessary.*

What GVHS rule do you feel was violated by the conduct or incident? (*See GVHS Rulebook Section D.1 and Appendix A*): _____

SECTION 6 — SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

List all documents or evidence included with this report.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

SECTION 7 — WITNESSES

List any witnesses to the incident(s). *(Include contact information if available)*

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

SECTION 8 — REQUESTED ACTION OR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

What outcome or resolution are you requesting?

SECTION 9 — ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND AGREEMENT

Please read and initial each statement.

____ I understand the GVHS Animal Welfare Concern reporting process.

____ I understand the respondent may have the opportunity to respond to this report and will have thirty (30) days to respond.

____ I understand the Committee may conduct interviews or hearings as part of the investigation.

____ I understand that the Committee may issue recommendations regarding disciplinary action or other remedies.

____ I understand that I may be asked to provide additional information or documentation.

____ I understand that this reporting process is confidential, and I agree to refrain from discussing the matter publicly while the process is ongoing.

____ I certify that the information provided in this report is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

SIGNATURE

Signature _____

Printed Name _____

Date _____