



Pony Club Australia Inc

ABN 95090080265

and

Riding for the Disabled Association of Australia Limited

ACN 11 64 085 87

Exemption Application Guidelines and Terms of Reference

1. Background

Equestrian sport and recreation is becoming increasingly popular particularly amongst children of all ages. Pony Club provides a safe and enjoyable learning environment for this activity.

Children with a disability also gain a sense of freedom and achievement from equestrian activities. Some will begin their riding career with organizations such as Riding for the Disabled and as they become more proficient, will integrate into mainstream organizations such as Pony Club.

Some rules and regulations prevent people with a disability being able to participate and compete on a level playing field. The purpose of the Pony Club Australia (PCA) – Riding for the Disabled Association of Australia Limited (RDAA) Exemption system is to address this issue in a fair and equitable manner for all. The exemption system upholds the values of fair play, safety for the rider and safety for the horse.

2. Membership of the Exemption Committee

The Exemption Committee is a State committee representing relevant Pony Club Association and RDAA and shall comprise the following:-

- Relevant Zone Rep or nominated member from the applicant's Zone
- A physiotherapist associated with RDAA
- An accredited RDAA coach with valid Pony Club experience

3. Purpose of the Exemption Committee

The committee has been established to oversee the decision making process for the exemption to Pony Club rules and to ensure the rights of the rider with a disability are protected. All information provided is reviewed for relevance to the request.

4. Principles

The following principles will be applied:

- Social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights will be considered in all aspects of the exemption process.
- Riders with a disability will be treated with respect
- All information will be treated confidentially at all times

5. Roles and responsibilities of the Exemption Committee

The role of the Exemption Committee is to consider each application in respect of the rider's disability and its effect on their ability to perform under the current Pony Club Association/RDAA rules. Equity for riders with a disability and fairness of competition for all competitors are paramount.

Each application is considered on its merit based on the information provided.

Exemption can only be provided to allow the rider to participate in Pony Club rallies, activities and competitions run under relevant State/Territory Pony Club Association Rules or RDAA Rules.

The exemption committee will be responsible for the following tasks:-

- Develop the terms of reference and work within these.
- Review each application and approve or not approve.
- Seek additional information if required and observe riders if needed prior to making a decision.
- To advise the rider of on any modifications/recommendations required to approve the application.
- In the case of an application not being approved, reasons will be provided by the committee and communicated to the rider for such a decision.
- Notify the relevant Pony Club Association State/Territory Office and RDAA of the decision.
- Ensure all records of riders granted/not granted exemption held by Pony Club Association State/Territory Office and RDAA are correct.
- Liaise with the Pony Club Association State/Territory Office annually regarding riders who hold exemption cards.

A chairperson of the committee is appointed by mutual agreement.

- Role of the Chairperson:-
 - Liaise with RDAA regarding issues pertaining to exemption
 - Liaise with Pony Club Association State/Territory Office regarding issues pertaining to exemption
 - Liaise with committee members regarding individual applications
 - Liaise with the rider if required
 - Inform Pony Club Association State/Territory Office and RDAA of the decision regarding each application as determined by the committee
 - Maintain a record of communication amongst committee members
 - Maintain a data base of all exemptions approved
- The role of the Coaching Director or State/Territory appointed personnel:-
 - Accept enquiries from riders and clubs regarding exemption
 - Receive applications and check all details are completed
 - Fax applications with other relevant information to committee members
 - Liaise with chairperson regarding final decision
 - Prepare exemption card and e-mail to chairperson to be checked and signed.
 - Send PCA/RDAA Exemption Card to rider with letter
 - Maintain list of exempted riders
 - File applications with a copy of the card
 - Notify riders when renewals are required (every two years)

6. Decision making and quorum

The Exemption Committee:-

- will seek to support the resolution of issues in an open and collaborative manner
- will work towards achieving consensus from members on decisions made by the group. In the event of a contested decision advice may be sought from those outside of the committee eg medical experts or those with a sound knowledge of pony club competition.
- All attempts will be made to ensure a decision is arrived at within six weeks of each member receiving the application. The rider should be notified of the decision within two months of application
- Riders wishing to appeal or discuss the decision are encouraged to contact their State or Territory Pony Club Association who will manage the issue as per their Grievance Policy

7. Location

As the Exemption Committee comprises members located around each State/Territory, communication is carried out by e-mail for the most part.

8. Accountabilities

The Exemption Committee is accountable to Pony Club Association State/Territory Office and RDAA

9. Process

Riders who have restricted inclusion in competition or participation as a direct result of their condition (disability) have the opportunity to apply for an exemption from a rule/s providing the exemption does not give them an unfair advantage over their competitor. The application is made in the following way.

1. The rider requests a *Pony Club Australia Application for Exemption* form from the Pony Club Association State/Territory Office.
2. The document is completed and submitted with medical evidence and the administration fee for consideration
3. The Coaching Director or State/Territory appointed personnel forwards a copy to each member of the *Exemption Committee*
4. The *Exemption Committee* considers the application and if more evidence is required, may request some video footage or a practical viewing of the rider on their horse.
5. If the application is accepted an exemption card (valid for 2 years) is prepared and sent to the rider with a letter of explanation to be forwarded to organizing committees of competitions, Pony Club DC etc to clarify the use of the exemption card on behalf of the applicant.
6. If the applicant is unsuccessful with their request they may make one appeal via their State or Territory Pony Club Association as per the Pony Club Grievance process.