

USLF MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT

"Look into the eyes of a Lipizzan and you will see 400 years of history."

– Dr. Max Dobretsberger, Piber, Austria

PREAMBLE

The United States Lipizzan Federation (USLF) protects and promotes one of earth's rarest breeds of horse, the Lipizzan. Once the Imperial horse of the Habsburg Monarchy who ruled much of Eastern Europe for four centuries until the onset of World War I, the Lipizzan comes to us in the 21st century virtually unchanged from the 16th century when the breed was developed. This careful Lipizzan breeding spans centuries of decisions to strictly adhere to the Baroque breed standard giving us the elegant, athletic, intelligent, brave, and physically powerful horse this organization conserves today. USLF members are the protectors of the breed standard¹ as much as of the horses themselves. This responsibility is far larger than is usually carried by horse owners and breeders because not only must we make excellent decisions for our horses today, we must also protect the work of breeders and owners centuries past that made this horse so ideal. Each Lipizzan has his past protectors and caretakers virtually standing beside him in his DNA, caretakers who have protected his ancestors sometimes with their own lives, through centuries of wars, plagues, and famines. USLF members are simply the latest protectors and caretakers to shoulder this responsibility. One cannot own a Lipizzan without deeply respecting this classical breed's history and striving to preserve the good work of centuries of benefactors. It is with this view of the roles and responsibilities of USLF members that the USLF establishes this Member Code of Conduct.

INTRODUCTION

In support of our mission to Preserve, Protect and Promote the Lipizzan breed, the United States Lipizzan Federation and its membership is committed to upholding the following Member Code of Conduct. This organization supports and adheres to the SafeSport Training program (U.S. Center for SafeSport Training, provided through the USEF) and may be referred to for guidelines and definitions. The USLF also respects the thoughtful efforts of other equine organizations, like the American Horse Council, who have put forward considered statements regarding the ethical care of horses and member representation. The USLF expects its members to be safe and respectful equestrians and owners, putting welfare, kindness, and safety of both the horse and rider first, requiring respectful and compassionate treatment of the horse, and abhorring abuse of any kind.

I MEMBERSHIP

Our membership is the backbone of the USLF. We are composed of a broadly based population located principally throughout North America, and while we are diverse in many ways, we are united in our commitment to our North American Herd. We respect the diversity of our membership and commit to appreciate our members both as individuals and as valued contributors to our common cause.

¹ Throughout this document, the term "breed standard" refers to the USLF's Breed Standard, found on the USLF website. The USLF Breed Standard is based on the Lipizzan International Federation's breed standard.

All members will be held to a high standard of open and respectful communication among ourselves as well as in public forums, USLF hosted social media – public and private, written and oral communication within the USLF organization, membership and Lipizzan community.

- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of USLF members and others at all times.
- As a member of the Lipizzan community, when posting on any social medial platform, use supportive, encouraging, constructive communication. Posting to either USLF public or members-only social media should be considered a *safe* place to pose an inquiry, open a topic for discussion or share a concern within the USLF membership.
 - Never use abusive or vulgar language, or make racial, ethnic or gender-related slurs or derogatory comments verbally or in writing within our membership and Lipizzan community. Harassing or bullying language or behavior will not be ignored or accepted.
 - Administrators for any social media or those hosting a meeting or event will remove posts or content that does not meet these standards.

II. PROMOTING LIPIZZANS

Promoting the Lipizzan breed is an important part of our mission. One of the highest value efforts our members offer is displaying their horses to the world. With hundreds of years of careful breeding, today's Lipizzans are incredibly athletic and talented, smart and willing. They have big hearts and form strong bonds with their people. They are courageous and they are able to excel at nearly any discipline. It is these characteristics that should be on display to the world.

When participating in public and private events hosted by the USLF, its membership, or our affiliate organizations, competitive events, public or private equine presentations, the USLF standard holds our membership to:

- Operate within the rules of the equestrian sport you are participating in including national and international guidelines which govern the sport, the member associations and the affiliated clubs.
- Maintain a safe environment for the horses and participants of any activity you are hosting or attending.
- Refrain from any behavior that may bring the USLF, its member associations or affiliates into disrepute. Preserve and protect the standing and reputation of the USLF.
- Demonstrate a high degree of individual responsibility especially when dealing with persons under the age of 18 years, as your words and actions are an example. Be a positive role model and demonstrate the grace of good sportsmanship.
- Always respect and support the volunteer personnel and efforts that are present and operate in the USLF organization and other volunteer-based events and organizations.

III. BUSINESS PRACTICES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE USLF

The USLF is the only Lipizzan registry in the United States recognized by the Lipizzan International Federation. The USLF will follow the highest standards of professional conduct and will respect the privacy and rights of our members while conducting the organization's business.

- The USLF leadership promises to always operate this organization in a fiscally responsible manner consistent with our status as a non-profit organization and in accordance with our Bylaws.

- The leadership and operation of the USLF will always be open, transparent, and respectful of our members.
- Issues and questions brought to the USLF Board of Directors will be handled promptly with as much information and the fairest possible decision returned to the issuer.
- Our Alliance Partnership with the U.S. Equestrian Federation requires us to observe their sanctions and suspensions and we will absolutely do so. We also will act in accordance with SafeSport Training to report violations.

IV. BUSINESS PRACTICES OF USLF MEMBERS

Buying, Selling and Representation of Horses

While Lipizzan are not especially tall, they are quick of mind and spirit, bred to be athletic and sensitive to the rider's aids. They are a great prospect as an upper level dressage horse and once trained they are known to be one of the greatest schoolmasters in the world. Be honest, open and ethical when offering a horse for sale. Commit to putting the best interest of the horse first and to seeking the best match of horse and rider, as not all horses are appropriate for a novice. This attention to suitability speaks well of the integrity of our membership, the USLF, and the value we place on our horses.

- Sellers will initiate the transfer of registration rather than leaving this to the buyer because documentation and reporting a purchase or sale to the USLF Registry is an important part of conserving the North American Herd. This assures that at least the first owner (after the breeder) will begin a documentation trail that will support the horse into the future. Sellers should also consider including the cost of the transfer as part of the purchase price along with a 1-year membership to the USLF.
- The horse must be presented for a purchase exam and/or for the buyer's evaluation free of any performance or temperament altering medications or treatments. Any physical problems the seller is aware of with the horse must be disclosed to the buyer, regardless of whether a purchase exam is performed. Sellers will exercise due diligence in presenting a horse to a buyer and will be forthright and honest regarding any aspect of the horse.
- If the horse has been officially evaluated, the results of any and all evaluations must be completely disclosed to the buyer, including the evaluation scores.
- Members will promptly report all purchases, sales or changes in status of their Lipizzans to the USLF.
- The welfare, suitability, and best interests of the horse should be paramount in any transaction. Selling a horse for riding is different from selling a horse for breeding.
- Introduce a new buyer to the USLF and inform them of the member benefits: programs, websites, and social media groups for support and training that are available to members.

V BREEDING – THE FUTURE OF OUR LIPIZZANS

Responsible and informed breeding practices are the heart and the future for our Lipizzan herd. The USLF and its Breeders Committee are committed to providing infrastructure, support, education and guidance for our members based on scientifically established breeding and husbandry practices. Please observe the USLF's Breed Standard, presented on our website, USLipizzan.org.

- The USLF strongly suggests that stallions not be used for breeding until the age of 4 and mares until the age of 5, to protect our horses that mature more slowly than other breeds.
- Breeders are encouraged to obtain and observe the Breeders Committee's recommendations for appropriate pairings. The pairing of horses with common ancestors in the first 3 generations is not recommended and should be avoided.
- In the case of conformation, function follows form. Understanding conformation leads to better decisions of suitability of a breeding partner versus suitability for a chosen discipline. Choosing a horse for breeding is different from choosing a horse for riding.
- The USLF strongly suggests having Lipizzans evaluated by a USLF-approved evaluator and observing experts' recommendations for deciding to breed and for selecting a mate to address any conformation issues so that offspring produced have the best chance of being as close to the breed standard as possible. All Lipizzans should be evaluated at least once through the USLF's breed evaluation events. The strengths and weaknesses of conformations and temperaments must be considered through the eyes of independent experts. Those considering breeding should certainly avoid an animal with any genetic-based abnormalities noted in the veterinarian's report that is included in every evaluation.
- Breeders will promptly report all foals and any sales, and will annually submit their stallion reports, to the USLF office.

VI PROTECTION – THE ETHICS OF THE LIPIZZAN PARTNERSHIP

The Lipizzan horse is a living gift of history. As owners, breeders and caretakers of these horses we recognize the significance of the love and devotion that has carried these horses for nearly 500 years and placed them in our care. They have been ridden into war - they have been the spoils of war - they have been hostages of war. They have brought men of war to reach across the lines of war to save them.

Animal Abuse or Neglect

• The abuse or neglect of *any animal* by a USLF member, whether in a public or private setting, will not be condoned or ignored by the USLF. Confirmed incidents will be directed to appropriate authorities and membership in the USLF may be revoked. (See Bylaws Article II Sections 4 and 5) The welfare and protection of our Lipizzan horses is stated in our Mission. We are committed to seeing that every Lipizzan horse (purebred or XL) shall at all times be treated humanely and with dignity, respect and compassion.

• The membership of owners or riders whose abusive behavior has been confirmed either by Board decision or by the proceedings of legal authorities will be immediately terminated.

• When legal authorities are not involved, or not yet involved, owners or riders who are alleged to have abused any animal will be requested by the Board to explain their actions in writing. Those who observed and reported the abuse must also give written details to the Board. The Board will review all materials, perform any necessary research to ascertain actual events, make its final decision regarding membership, and notify all parties.

Member Misconduct

- The USLF is required to terminate the membership of any member who is sanctioned for violations by the U. S. Equestrian Federation not only because we are so required by our USEF Alliance Partnership but because such sanctions indicate abuses serious enough for the USEF to take action.

- Any violation of SafeSport practices will be grounds for immediate termination of membership.

- The USLF will also monitor members who have received warnings or yellow cards from the USDF or any other national equestrian organization within whose jurisdiction members have been competing and research incidents if necessary. Repeated warnings may be grounds for termination of membership.

VII. INFRINGEMENT OR DISREGARD OF THE USLF MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT

- Questions, concerns or code violations should be reported to the USLF Board of Directors in writing.

- The USLF Board of Directors will move to resolve conflicts fairly and promptly by hearing all parties involved. Discussion may also be held via private social media meeting or presentation if requested.

- Members whose membership is revoked may request the return of the unused portion of their annual membership fee.

USLF MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT

Summary

PREAMBLE

The United States Lipizzan Federation (USLF) preserves one of earth's rarest breeds of horse, the Lipizzan. Careful Lipizzan breeding spans centuries of decisions to strictly adhere to the Baroque breed standard giving us the elegant, athletic, intelligent, brave, and physically powerful horse this organization conserves today. USLF members are the protectors of the breed standard as much as of the horses themselves; not only must we make excellent decisions for our horses today, we must also protect the work of breeders and owners centuries past that made this horse so ideal. We are simply the latest protectors and caretakers to shoulder this responsibility. It is with this view of the roles and responsibilities of USLF members that the USLF establishes this Member Code of Conduct.

INTRODUCTION

- Our Mission: Preserve, Protect and Promote the Lipizzan breed
- Support and adhere to the SafeSport Training
- Ethically care for our horses and preserve the Lipizzan breed standard and the history it represents.
- Be safe and respectful equestrians and owners, put welfare, kindness, and safety of both the horse and rider first.
- Abhor abuse of any kind to any person or animal.

I. MEMBERSHIP

- Use open, respectful communications with all people on all platforms in all media at all times.
- **Never use abusive or vulgar language, or make racial, ethnic or gender-related slurs or derogatory comments verbally or in writing.**
- Harassing or bullying language or behavior will not be ignored or accepted.
- Administrators for any social media or those hosting a meeting or event will remove posts or content that does not meet this standard.

II. PROMOTING LIPIZZANS

- Obey the rules of your sport, member associations, and clubs.
- **Maintain a safe environment for the horses and participants of any activity you are hosting or attending.**
- Be responsible, especially when dealing with persons under the age of 18 years, be a positive role model.
- Always respect and support volunteer personnel and their efforts.
- Preserve and protect the standing and reputation of the USLF.

III. BUSINESS PRACTICES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE USLF

- **The USLF will follow the highest standards of professional conduct and will respect the privacy and rights of our members while conducting the organization's business.**
- **The USLF will observe all U.S. Equestrian Federations sanctions and suspensions.**
- **The USLF will act in accordance with SafeSport Training to report violations.**

- The USLF leadership will always operate in a fiscally responsible manner in accordance with our Bylaws.
- The leadership and operation of the USLF will always be open, transparent, and respectful of our members.

IV. BUSINESS PRACTICES OF USLF MEMBERS

- **Be honest, open and ethical when offering a horse for sale and put the horse's best interest first.**
- **Present the horse free of any performance or temperament altering medications or treatments. Be forthright and honest regarding all aspects of the horse.**
- **If the horse has been officially evaluated, disclose the results completely including the evaluation scores.**
- **Initiate the transfer of registration rather than leaving this to the buyer.**
- **Promptly report all purchases, sales or changes in status of your Lipizzan to the USLF.**
- **Inform the buyer of the USLF's member benefits, programs, websites and social media sites.**

V. RESPONSIBLE BREEDING - The USLF and its Breeders Committee are committed to providing infrastructure, support, education and guidance for our members based on scientifically established breeding and husbandry practices.

- **Stallions should not be used for breeding until the age of 4 and mares until the age of 5.**
- **The pairing of horses with common ancestors in the first 3 generations is strongly discouraged.**
- **Obtain and consider an approved evaluator's recommendation for selecting a mate to address any conformation issues so that offspring are as close to the breed standard as possible.**
- **Have your Lipizzan evaluated at least once through the USLF's breed evaluation events.**
- **Breeders will promptly report new foals, any sales, and will annually submit their stallion reports to the USLF office.**

VI. PROTECTION

Animal Abuse or Neglect

- **The abuse or neglect of any animal by a USLF member, whether in a public or private setting, will not be tolerated. Confirmed incidents will be directed to appropriate authorities and membership in the USLF may be revoked. (See Bylaws Article II Sections 4 and 5)**
- **The membership of owners or riders whose abusive behavior has been confirmed either by Board decision or by the proceedings of legal authorities will be immediately terminated.**
- **When legal authorities are not involved, owners or riders who are alleged to have abused any animal will be requested by the Board to explain their actions. (See Bylaws Article II Sections 4 and 5 for procedures.)**

Member Misconduct

- **The USLF will terminate the membership of any member who is sanctioned for violations by the U. S. Equestrian Federation and/or SafeSport violations.**
- **The USLF will also monitor members who have received warnings or yellow cards from the USDF or any other national equestrian organization. Repeated warnings may be grounds for termination of membership.**

VII. INFRINGEMENT OR DISREGARD OF THE MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT

- Members should promptly report any concerns or code violations to the USLF Board of Directors.
- The USLF Board of Directors will hear all involved parties and resolve conflicts fairly and promptly.
- Members whose membership is terminated may request the return of the unused portion of their annual membership dues.