



DRESSAGE YELLOW WARNING CARD – Q & A



Effective from 1/1/17 Yellow Warning Cards have been introduced for Dressage. Refer to Dressage Rule 1.5.1 (from 1/1/19) which states the following:

A Yellow Warning Card may be imposed on the parties concerned or the Person Responsible (PR) for the following:

- a) *abuse of horse (an action or omission involving the mistreatment of a horse). Any incidents considered to be serious Abuse of the Horse may be better dealt with through the formal Protest procedure as outlined in Dressage Rule 1.3.1. However, it is possible to both issue a yellow warning card and pursue formal protest procedure*
- b) *abuse of an Official (including abusive or bullying behaviour directed to an Official and conduct directed toward an Official that denigrates the Official)*
- c) *failure to follow a direction of an Official relating to compliance with these rules*
- d) *serious infringements involving Abuse of horse, Abuse of an Official or failure to follow a direction relating to compliance with these Rules must incur a Yellow Warning Card, unless lodged as a formal protest and subject to EA General Regulations (see above)*
- e) *FEI, National-accredited Stewards, EA Technical Delegates, FEI-accredited Judges and EA National Judge Educators have the authority to issue a Yellow Warning Card to a PR when officiating at an Event. They can be given either by hand or any other suitable means and will state the reason for the penalty. Note that Rule 1.3.2 also provides for elimination by the Chief Judge of a competition for Abusive Riding of a Horse*
- f) *following a meeting with the party concerned at the event Yellow Warning Cards may be issued on the day and when being awarded by an EA or FEI Official should ideally be delivered personally to the party concerned together with an explanation as to why it is being issued and the possible consequences of any further offences being committed. If after reasonable efforts the party concerned cannot be notified during the period of the event that they have received a Yellow Warning Card, they must be notified within 24 hours of the event*
- g) *in the case of riders under the age of 18 years, a Parent/Guardian must be present when the rider is issued with the Yellow Warning Card*
- h) *where a rider receives two or more Yellow Warning Cards within a 12 month period for the same offence the SDA will prepare a report for referral to the EA Branch for consideration under the Disciplinary Bylaws/General Regulations*
- i) *Yellow Warning Cards received at both International and National events will be taken into account*
- j) *the EA Official will advise their State Branch and State Dressage Committee of the issue of ALL Yellow Warning Cards and the reasons for the issue within 48 hours of the event*
- k) *the State Branch shall as soon as possible advise the National Office, who will arrange for the Yellow Warning Card issue to be entered into a National Database and will place the notice on the EA National website*
- l) *the name of the official giving the Yellow Card, their jurisdiction at the event and the name of the party concerned should be listed on the National Database, along with the reason for the decision*
- m) *a Yellow Warning Card is a warning not a penalty and as such there is no Appeal against the issuing of a Yellow Warning Card*

The following questions have been posed and answers provided by the EADC to assist Officials in relation to the issuing of Yellow Warning Cards.

- Q1 Who is eligible to issue a Yellow Warning Card?**
A As per Dressage Rule 1.5.1(b):
FEI Stewards EA Stewards EA Technical Delegates
FEI Judges EA Judge Educators
- Q2 Is an FEI PE Judge included under FEI Judges above as an eligible Official to issue a Yellow Warning Card?**
A Yes.
- Q3 Can an FEI Official who is not a Dressage judge, e.g. an FEI Eventing Official, issue a Yellow Warning Card at a Dressage event?**
A Yes - see Dressage Rule 1.5.1 (b) if they are officiating at the event on the day.
- Q4 Can an FEI official who is authorised to issue a Yellow Warning Card but who is **not** officiating on the day at the event do so?**
A No. Only an eligible official who is officiating at the event on the day can issue a Yellow Warning Card. An eligible Official who is a spectator should, if they see something that concerns them, report it to the Official officiating on the day, or if one is not available, in the form of a protest as per Dressage Rule 1.3.1.
- Q5 Should an eligible Official have a printed Yellow Warning Card available at every event where they are officiating?**
A Yes- preferably, but they are also available from the EA website and can be printed off by the OC if necessary.
- Q6 For what instances can a Yellow Warning Card be issued?**
A **Abuse of the horse** - e.g. excessive use of the whip/ spurs/ hands/ over riding anywhere on the grounds, excessive use of hyper flexion.
Abuse of an Official - e.g. failure to follow a request of an Official e.g. to loosen an excessively tight noseband, arguing vehemently with an official to the point of abuse.
Failure to follow a direction of an Official e.g. failure to loosen a tight noseband, failure to cease riding the horse, failure to cease the excessive use of hands, whip or spurs.
- Q7 Should an eligible Official issue a warning in the first instance before issuing a Yellow Warning Card**
A This depends on the seriousness of the situation, but this would be a good approach – ‘if you do not cease this behaviour now, I have no option but to issue a Yellow Warning Card’. If the issue is considered to be serious abuse of a horse, the approach should be first of all to seek a stop to the abuse, then advise the party concerned that the incident is both reportable under Dressage Rule 1.3.1 and also subject to the issuing of a Yellow Warning Card.
- Q8 What type of offence warrants a Yellow Warning Card as opposed to a protest being lodged?**
A They are similar and it is up to the circumstances on the day, but a protest does take some time to prepare in writing within the prescribed period and can take time to finalise through due process. A Yellow Warning Card is more a way of dealing with and settling a situation immediately - it acts like a warning and will be publicly available for scrutiny. Note that any person can submit a formal protest.
- Q9 Can a Yellow Warning card be issued to a rider competing in a test for excessive use of hands, whip or spurs?**
A Yes – the rider should be eliminated in any case as per Dressage Rules 1.3, 1.3.2, and Annex E.

- Q10 After issuing a Yellow Warning Card what information is to be provided to the EA State Branch?**
- A** The same information that is entered on to the Yellow Warning Card should be forwarded to the CEO of the EA State Branch Office – date of abuse, event and location, name of the person responsible, brief details of the offence with a copy of the card. These details will be forwarded to the NF for publication under Warnings and Yellow Warning Cards for the Discipline.
- Q11 Dressage Rule 1.5.1(h) refers to a 12-month period – when does the 12-month period start?**
- A** The 12 month period commences from the date of the first offence (when the first Yellow Warning Card was issued).
- Q12 To whom does a ‘non authorised official’ (i.e. not an FEI Judge, FEI Steward/EA Steward, TD or JE) who witnesses abuse report?**
- A** Only an authorised person can issue a Yellow Warning Card. A ‘non-authorized person’ would need to comply with the Protest Provisions in Dressage Rule 1.3.1 or see 1.5.1(b).
- Q13 As per other sports’ protocol, will the Yellow Warning Card be issued in a public way, perhaps as a deterrent to other riders?**
- A** Yes – it will be published on the EA website.
- Q14 Scenario - an Official who is eligible to issue a Yellow Warning Card, is judging a test during which the rider displays abusive riding. The judge stops the test and warns the rider that if this continues they will be eliminated. At a later date the same judge is judging the same rider and the same abusive riding is evident.**
- Would the judge have to stop the test and give the rider a warning as happened previously or could the judge immediately eliminate the rider and issue a Yellow Warning Card?**
- A** Elimination plus a Yellow Warning Card could be the process to follow.
- Q15 Can there be legal appeals to the issuing of a Yellow Warning Card?**
- A** No. There is no process for an appeal against a Yellow Warning Card as it is a warning, not a penalty.