

**Association of Farrier Trainers of
Canada**

Association des

Maréchaux-Ferrants Formateurs du Canada

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The Guiding Principles

Your clients are entitled to expect that you will:

- make horse welfare your first consideration in seeking to provide the most appropriate attention for horses committed to your care including due regard to a safe working environment
- ensure that all horses under your care are treated humanely and with respect
- maintain and continue to develop your professional knowledge and skills
- uphold the good reputation of the farriery profession
- recognise the limits of your professional competence
- be honest and trustworthy
- communicate openly with clients and be professional at all times
- foster and maintain a good relationship with your clients, earning their trust, respecting their views and protecting client confidentiality
- foster and endeavour to maintain good relationships with your professional colleagues
- respond promptly, fully and courteously to complaints and criticism
- understand and comply with your legal obligations

Duties and Responsibilities of Approved Training Farriers

This booklet describes the principles of good farriery practice, and standards of competence, care and conduct expected of you in all aspects of your professional work.

The Guide is split into three parts:

Part 1 – The specific responsibilities that you should strive to adhere to as a farrier

Part 2 – The guidelines to assist you with these responsibilities

Part 3 – The specific duties and responsibilities of apprentices

A profession is any type of work which needs special training or a particular skill, often one which is respected because it involves a particular level of education and qualification. The word 'professional' within the context of this Guide refers to all aspects of a farrier's craft and business dealings, in the widest context of the word. This booklet cannot, of necessity, cover everything, but is intended to set general standards.

PART ONE

The Responsibilities of a Farrier

This section sets out the specific responsibilities that Approved Training Farriers must strive to follow

Introduction

Rights and responsibilities go hand in hand. Accessibility, accountability and transparency are expected of every profession.

Your Responsibilities to Horses

A 'horse', in this context and throughout the Guide, includes pony, mule, donkey or other equine animal.

Farriers must:

- treat all horses humanely, with respect, and with welfare as the primary consideration
- maintain proper standards in all equipment, including mobile forges and business premises

Farriers must not cause any horse to suffer Intentionally by:

- carrying out any unnecessary action
- employing excessive restraint or discipline
- failing to advise the need to contact a Veterinary Surgeon when appropriate • neglect

Farriers are advised not to commence working with an animal if it is felt that the conditions (i.e. present temperament of the horse or present condition the horse is kept in) are unfavourable to a successful outcome or such that they may compromise their own, or others, health and safety.

Your Responsibilities in Relation to Your Professional Colleagues

It should be borne in mind that a good relationship between farriers and Veterinarians enhances the reputation of both professions and is in the best interests of animal welfare.

Approved Training Farriers should

- provide all relevant information promptly to colleagues taking over responsibility for a horse
- refer cases responsibly
- if advertising, do so in a professional manner
- observe professional standards in the conduct of their business

Approved Training Farriers should not:

- speak or write (including online) disparagingly about professional colleagues or their standard of work
- discourage a client from seeking a second opinion

Apprentices

Throughout their training, except when at college, apprentices work on behalf of their Approved Training Farrier (ATF) who is responsible for the quality of their work and their professional behaviour.

ATFs are expected to use proper judgement in deciding on the level of supervision appropriate.

This may be:

- **Direct, Continuous and Personal Supervision:** The ATF is standing over the apprentice or at least in the same room, forge or stable and observing the apprentice
- **Supervision:** The ATF is nearby, in the same premises and can be located quickly and easily.
- **Under Direction:** The ATF has discussed the shoeing plan prior to work being undertaken but is not present; the apprentice is working alone using his/her own initiative

Employers/Employees

Employees, including apprentices, should be treated in a fair and reasonable manner, without discrimination, and in accordance with their contracts of employment. ATF's must meet provincial employment standards. In Canada we have 14 Jurisdictions of labour standards, 13 provincial/territorial, 1 federal. Training farriers are expected/encouraged to uphold and maintain the labour standards as set out by each province's / territory's labour board and if there is an inter provincial / territorial practice they adhere to the federal labour standards.

PART TWO

The Guidelines

This section provides guidance in support of the responsibilities outlined in Part 1 and advice on good practice

Disclosure of Information

Client Confidentiality

The farrier/client relationship is founded on trust and in normal circumstances a farrier must not disclose to any third party any information about a client or their horse given by the client. This duty also extends to the farrier's employees. [See section 6a] The Data Protection Act 1998 gives anyone the right to be informed about certain personal data relating to themselves on payment of an administration charge.

Public Life and Interaction with the Media

Farriers can make a worthwhile contribution to the promotion of horse welfare and responsible ownership by taking part in public life, whether in national or local politics, community service, or involvement with the media (including press, television, radio or the internet).

When commenting to the media, farriers should endeavour to ensure that any statement is factually correct, distinguishing clearly between personal opinion or political belief and established facts. They should be careful not to express or imply that any personal view is shared by a professional body unless previously authorised to do so by that professional body.

Maintaining Practice Standards

The Premises

All fixed and mobile forges must be safe for staff, clients and horses. They must be adequately equipped for the services offered by the practice. [See section 20]

Insurance

Farriers are encouraged to have professional (business) indemnity insurance which must cover their professional activities.

Farriers are strongly encouraged to take public liability insurance appropriate to their needs, and employer's liability insurance where appropriate. **Apprentices acting as subcontractors must have appropriate workplace insurance.**

Keeping up to Date

Continuing Professional Development

Approved Training Farriers are expected to continue their professional education by keeping up to date with the general developments in farriery and to keep their knowledge and skills up to date throughout their working life.

It is mandatory for Approved Training Farriers to be an active member of a regional farrier association and participate in a minimum of 10 CPD hours each year.

ATF should encourage and facilitate participation of their apprentices in CPD programmes. Continuing professional development is generally viewed as positive and if CPD is to become

mandatory in the future, it is encouraged that, at this time, Farriers obtain their points for good practice.

New Farriers should seek support and assistance from experienced colleagues until they are confident of their own ability to provide a full professional service.

Farriers are encouraged to join professional and trade associations.

Relationship with Colleagues

Employees

AFTC requires that a contract of employment must be provided within two months of the start of employment, and employees should be advised in writing of any subsequent changes to their terms and conditions of employment. Where employees are apprentices, the employing ATF should provide a legally approved contract.

Taking Over Clients

Apprentice farriers will only provide service to horse owners or clients of the training farrier when written consent has been given by the ATF.

Serious Misconduct in a Professional Respect

ATF's act as role models and teachers in the field. ATF's should be mindful to always display best professional practice as much as possible.

The circumstances in which serious misconduct in a professional respect may be considered to have occurred are so varied that it is impossible to catalogue or even envisage them all.

Generally speaking, a minor breach of this Guide to Professional Conduct might well not amount to serious misconduct. Repeated minor breaches could well do so. However, a single, serious breach might also lead to such a finding.

The kind of behaviour which would almost certainly be regarded as serious misconduct would be that which severely compromises the welfare of a horse.

e.g. refusal to attend a horse which appears to be in distress as a result of a shoeing or trimming or working beyond one's own current knowledge and/or experience. Unethical Conduct

Unethical behaviour is essentially a departure from that standard of behaviour accepted as the norm among members of the profession.

Although serious misconduct in a professional respect may well be unethical, unethical behaviour may not necessarily be considered as serious misconduct unless there are repeated substantiated instances which may undermine the credibility of farriery as a skilled and ethical profession.

Professional Negligence

Professional negligence occurs when a Registered Farrier has failed to show a fair, reasonable and competent degree of skill when carrying out farriery and as a result of which damage has occurred. Such negligence might also be regarded as serious misconduct in a professional respect, especially if the failure seemed to be deliberate, gross or frequent. In either case, those with higher qualifications or who claim specialist status are expected to have correspondingly higher standards.

PART THREE

Apprentice Farriers

Duties and Responsibilities of Apprentices

Apprentices need to be prepared for life as a professional in a public-facing role with responsibilities for equine welfare. Being fit to practise is a fundamental requirement of any professional. Fitness to practise is not just about achieving academic qualifications; it is about being of good character, being responsible and being worthy of the trust and confidence of the public and your peers.

Apprentice farriers found not fit to practise may face sanctions, including potential removal from the apprentice program. Approved Training Farriers (ATFs) and training providers have a responsibility to address any potential fitness to practise concerns in their students. This is necessary because apprentices are the future of the profession, and they will work with equines and encounter the public during the course of their training.

Principles of Behaviour for Apprentices

It is not possible to provide an exhaustive list of behaviours expected of an Apprentice Farrier; this guide sets out broad principles and example behaviours expected of apprentices in the context of three key areas – people, private and student life, and practice.

Although Apprentices are not yet qualified as farriers you should familiarise yourself with the *Code of Professional Conduct* (the Code) and aim to follow its guiding principles.

People

You will encounter a range of people during your education and training. Maintaining relationships is vital and will require effective communication skills and teamwork. Apprentices are expected to always display the best professional practice. Being responsible and respectful to both ATF and clients is of paramount importance to be successful as an apprentice.

Private and Student life

Fitness to practise encompasses not only your professional competence and practical skills, but also the way in which you conduct yourself outside the professional environment; this includes your private life and student life.

The *Code* states that farriers should uphold the good reputation of farriery. As an Apprentice Farrier you should also always uphold the reputation of the profession and consider how your behaviour and conduct could affect the trust that the public places in the farriery profession.

Remember: wherever you are, you are representing the farriery profession, your ATF and your professional associations.

Practice

There are some important conditions:

- Acts of apprentice farriery can only be conducted under the direction, supervision or direct, continuous and personal supervision of an ATF
- The ATF is the employer
- The farriery is conducted in the course of the Apprentice Farrier's training

"Direction" means that the ATF instructs the Apprentice Farrier as to the task to be performed but is not necessarily present.

"Supervision" means that the ATF is present on the premises and can respond to a request for assistance if needed.

"Direct, continuous and personal supervision" means that the ATF is present and giving the Apprentice Farrier his or her undivided personal attention.

Failure to comply with these conditions may have wider implications for animal welfare.

Compliance is, therefore, paramount to demonstrating that you are fit to practise.

In addition, you must respect that in delegating acts of farriery to you, your qualified ATF retains responsibility for your actions during business hours and in interactions with ATF clients., and your ATF may be held to account for their decisions.

Use of Social Media

"Social media" is the term used to describe websites and online applications that encourage social interaction between users and content creators.

Examples include media sites that allow public posts and comments (e.g. Twitter), content sharing sites (e.g. YouTube, Instagram and Flickr), professional and social networking sites (e.g. LinkedIn and Facebook), internet forums, discussion boards, blogs and instant messaging.

It is recognised that social media is likely to form part of everyday student life. Such media can be valuable communication tools and can enhance your personal and academic life. However, the use of social media is not without risk, and you should be mindful of the consequences that may arise from its misuse.

Please carefully consider protecting your privacy when using social media; it should be remembered that online information can readily be accessed by others and that once it is published online, the information can be difficult, if not impossible to remove. In addition, others may comment on the information or circulate or copy to others. It is therefore sensible to assume that everything shared online will be there permanently and that content uploaded anonymously can, in many cases, be traced back to the original author.

Reminder

The Guiding Principles at the beginning of this booklet, are intended to provide an overview to skilled professional conduct.

- Farrier's specific responsibilities are given in Part 1 and guidelines have then been set out in Part 2 to assist you.
- Apprentice's specific responsibilities are given in Part 3.
- One potential criterion for assessing whether serious professional misconduct has occurred is to ask whether the act done or not done, falls below the standards which might reasonably be expected of a competent and experienced farrier.