

Michigan Interscholastic Horsemanship Association Standard Operating Procedure How to remove a Coach

The question “How do you remove a coach?” is often asked. The MIHA may remove a coach for misconduct after a full investigation and hearing in accordance with Articles XIV and XV of the MIHA Rule Book. The MIHA may also refuse to accept a coach’s registration based on prior misconduct or non-compliance with required filings. These are rare occurrence.

In general, the appointment and removal of a coach is a team matter. Below are the MIHA guidelines for removing a coach.

1) TALK WITH THE COACH FIRST. If you have a problem with a coach or a complaint about how the coach is handling the team, speak to the coach in person regarding the complaint. You may be able to agree upon a resolution which is satisfactory to all involved. Perhaps the coach will step down of his or her own accord. If a working relationship is still possible, perhaps you could join the coaching staff and take over the areas where the current coach is weak.

2) SCHOOL HAS RETAINED COACHING JURISDICTION. If you are unable to resolve the problem by speaking with the coach and want to proceed with the removal process, the first question is “Has the school retained jurisdiction over coaching appointments?” The MIHA is a vast organization with many different team setups. Some schools recognize the MIHA team as a school sport and retain control over coaching appointments. Some schools recognize the MIHA team as a school club. Some schools retain control over coaching appointments for clubs, some turn the control over to a parent-organization, and some turn the control over to the students themselves. If your school has retained JURISDICTION over coaching appointment, then you must direct your complaint to the school. You must go through whatever process the school has in place for coach removal.

3) TEAM CHARTER CONTROLS REMOVAL. Some teams have a charter, by-laws, or constitution (hereafter referred to as team charter) which govern the appointment and removal of the coach. If your team has a team charter, you must follow whatever procedure is in place for the appointment and removal of the coach. Most team charters contain a provision for voting in the coach by either parents or students. Decisions regarding coaching staff, made in accordance with the team charter, will generally be honored by the MIHA. A copy of the meeting minutes should be submitted to the District Chairman along with a coaches registration form.

4) FREE STANDING TEAM/ NO CHARTER. If 1) your school does not recognize your MIHA team (a free standing team), 2) your school does not retain control over coaching decisions, or 3) your team does not have a team charter or has a team charter silent on coaching selection, then you should take the following steps regarding a coaching change:

A) If after speaking with the current coach, you are unable to reach an agreement, then you can send a written complaint to the M.I.H.A. District Chairman governing your team. Your complaint should state why you feel the current coach should be removed, such as misconduct or short comings. Specific reasons are necessary. A general vague complaint is not conducive to resolving a coaching problem. You must also send a copy of the complaint to the current coach. The current coach is expected to give a written response to the allegations contained in your complaint to both you and the District Chairman. If the District Chairman finds misconduct, then the matter will be referred to the MIHA Executive Board for further investigation per Articles XIV and XV. If the District Chairman does not find misconduct, the complainant may continue with the coach removal process or the current coach will have the option of stepping down.

B) If the current coach does not step down, then the District Chairman will facilitate a team meeting at a neutral place. **All current team members** will be notified of and invited to attend the team meeting. After a discussion of the allegations and the coach's response, a vote to retain or dismiss the current coach will be taken at the meeting. If there is a team charter stating that the team is run by a parent organization, then the parents will vote. In all other instance, the team members will vote. The MIHA prefers that team members vote because 1) we believe in empowering our young people, 2) it is the riders who are most effected by the current coach's actions, faults, and abilities, and 3) often the parent(s) and coach have personality conflicts, while the rider(s) get along well with the coach. Only current members will be allowed to vote, excluding graduating seniors. That means current freshmen, sophomores, and juniors will vote. If the team is a junior team, then the voting members will be current sixth and seventh graders. The vote will be taken by secret ballot. The team may keep or dismiss the current coach. The team's decision will be final and will generally be upheld by the MIHA.

4) An appeal may be made to the MIHA Executive Board and/or Board of Directors by either side after the team meeting. The hearing will likely re-hash the events of the team meeting and the party's statements. The MIHA generally upholds the team's decision.