

General Rules and Regulations **of the Howard County Fair**

We are thrilled to welcome you to the Howard County Fair. Please visit the fair's website <https://howardcountyfairmd.com> for more information about the fair schedule, including when certain exhibits and activities open. For specific questions that are not covered by these rules regarding competitions, please contact the superintendent for the competition. For all other questions not covered by these rules, please email info@HowardCountyFairMD.com.

1. RULES (GENERALLY)

1.01. Applicability

A. These rules apply to all persons at the Howard County Fair (the “**Fair**”), including (but not limited to) any exhibitor, spectator, parent of exhibitor, breeder, vendor, volunteer, attendee, visitor, and patron.

B. The Competition Rules and Regulations below and the competition-specific rules located on the Fair's website also apply to all exhibitors.

1.02. **Interpretation and Promulgation of Rules.** The Board of Directors (“**Board**”) of the Howard County Fair Association reserves the right to interpret all rules and regulations, make new rules and regulations as needed, and resolve any situation which may arise, and it is not restricted by the lack of or omission of a specific rule or regulation.

1.03. Enforcement

A. The Board reserves the right to exclude from the Howard County Fairgrounds, including the parking areas and all Fair property, (the “**Fairgrounds**”) any person (including any exhibitor, spectator, parent of exhibitor, vendor, and admission-paying patron) who is, in any manner, disruptive or exhibits inappropriate behavior that would disturb the public or be detrimental to the atmosphere of the Howard County Fair. Such behavior shall include, but not be limited to, any public cursing, abusive or belligerent language, or any language or conduct which causes others to feel threatened at any time with respect to any activity conducted on the Fairgrounds.

B. In addition to the foregoing, the Board may determine sanctions for violations in its sole and absolute discretion. ALL VIOLATORS WILL BE IMMEDIATELY ESCORTED FROM THE PREMISES. The Board may delegate such authority and discretion to its President, any officer of the Board, or any other Board-selected designee. Sanctions may include (but are not limited to) a temporary or permanent ban from participation in current or future events (whether or not such events are sanctioned by the Board, third-party exhibitors, or vendors). By way of example, the Board may prohibit participation by individual persons who violate this policy from participating in exhibitions, classes or shows. In the event a person who has paid admission to the Fairgrounds is asked to leave the premises, such admission shall be refunded upon the person leaving the premises.

1.04. **Entries.** By virtue of entering, exhibitors hereby acknowledge having read the rules of the Howard County Fair and the department(s) (4-H, FFA, and Open) they are entering. All 4-H and FFA live animal exhibitors also acknowledge that they have read and will abide by the University of Maryland Extension 4-H Code of Ethics located at: <https://extension.umd.edu/sites/extension.umd.edu/files/2021-04/Maryland%204-H%20Code%20of%20Animal%20Science-2018.pdf>. Furthermore, exhibitors agree to follow such rules and understand that failure to do so may result in penalties up to and including being banned from the Fairgrounds. Exhibitors accept that all decisions made as a result of not following the rules by the Board or their designee are final.

2. **FAIR AND FAIRGROUNDS RULES**

2.01. **Admission, Open, and Close.** The gate is open to the general public Saturday to Saturday from 8:00 AM until 10:00 PM. After 10:00 PM admission will close, and all patrons must leave by 11:00 PM. Opening and closing times for specific exhibits, buildings, and entertainment inside of the gates vary and may change—please consult the fair schedule, website, and social media for details. Admission fees are as follows:

- A. Parking is FREE outside of the gates
- B. Children 12 years old and younger: FREE admission as long as an adult accompanies them
- C. Ages 13 – 61 years old: \$10.00
- D. Ages 62 and older: \$5.00
- E. Season Passes (all ages): \$40

2.02. **Pets.** No animals are permitted on the Fairgrounds except 1. Service animals trained to perform disability related tasks for someone with a physical or mental disability, if the service animal is required because of a disability of the person they are with, and 2. Animals being exhibited. Emotional support, comfort, or therapy animals are not permitted on the Fairgrounds under any circumstances. All permitted animals may be restricted from certain areas (including, but not limited to, the animal barns) and during certain times to ensure the health and safety of others at the fair or in the event the animal is disruptive. All permitted animals must be properly leashed or tethered.

2.03. **Prohibited (generally).**

A. The following activities are prohibited on the Fairgrounds, including in the parking area: Demonstrations, protests, soliciting, illegal or unlawful activity, distribution of printed material/flyers/advertisements, possession of alcoholic beverages or controlled substances, and possession of marijuana (including by-products and devices used to consume marijuana products).

B. Drones are not permitted on or over the Fairgrounds (including the parking lot) except as specifically permitted by the Board.

C. No person may illegally or unlawfully carry, possess, or transport any firearms on the Fairgrounds. Open carry is prohibited. Possession of other weapons or objects that might be used as a weapon is prohibited.

D. No person is permitted to operate, promote, solicit clients for, or conduct commercial business or operate as a vendor at the Fairgrounds without written permission and agreement from the Howard County Fair Association.

2.04. **Vehicles.**

A. All motorized vehicles (including cars, trucks, golf carts, gators, ATV's) and operators need to be authorized by the Board, and any operator must have a valid driver's license. No such vehicle (including golf carts, gators, and ATV's) can be parked inside the gates on the Fairgrounds without having a parking permit visible from the outside at all times the vehicle is on the Fairgrounds.

B. One parking permit will be issued to each family exhibiting livestock. Additional parking permits cannot be purchased. 4-H will distribute parking passes to 4-H and FFA exhibitors and other parking passes will be coordinated by the Board.

C. No cars, trucks, trailers or campers shall be parked in areas other than those designated. NO PARKING BEHIND THE SWINE BARN AT THE DOCK AT ANY TIME DURING THE FAIR. There will be NO PARKING on Midway Boulevard or Hamilton Way or their fringes between 9 am and Midnight.

D. Vehicles in violation will immediately lose their parking permit and may be towed at the owner's sole expense.

2.05. **Liability.**

A. All persons enter the Fairgrounds at their own risk, and neither the Howard County Fair Association nor the Board assume any liability regarding injury or damage.

B. The Howard County Fair Association and the Board are not responsible for lost or stolen items.

C. Parents/Guardians are responsible for the supervision of all minors.

2.06. **Sale and Exhibition.** The Howard County Fair Association, Inc., does not own any of the exhibits presented at the Howard County Fair. All exhibits, including animals, are privately owned. The sale of livestock at the animal Livestock Auction are private sales between the buyer and seller. The Howard County Fair Association, Inc., does not assume liability for any private sale. Discussions about the private sale of an exhibit will not take place in front of the general public trying to view the exhibits on display.

A. **Private Sale:** Exhibitors may sell at private sale anything they have on exhibit but pick-up/delivery must occur after the exhibit (livestock or otherwise) has been dismissed. An exhibit cannot be removed from the Fairgrounds before it is dismissed. If pick-up is occurring on the Fairgrounds during the fair, the person picking up must still pay fair admission.

B. **Events.** Notwithstanding the foregoing, exhibitors may not conduct an auction or sales event at the fairgrounds.

2.07. **Video Surveillance.** The Board may, but it not required to, use video surveillance on the Fairgrounds (including parking areas, the midway, exhibition buildings, livestock barns, and other areas of the fairgrounds).

3. **COMPETITION AND COMPETITOR RULES**

3.01. **Applicability.**

A. In addition to each exhibitor, the Howard County Fair Association may apply these rules to any other exhibitor, spectator, parent of exhibitor, breeder, vendor, volunteer, attendee, visitor, and patron.

B. All exhibitors and competitors must review additional rules and regulations, found on the Fair website, that are specific to certain exhibitions or events. This includes additional rules for indoor exhibits/contests/activities, open and 4-H/FFA livestock and dairy, small animal, open and 4-H/FFA horses and ponies, garden/fruit and vegetable, wool/fleece/fiber, home arts, honey and beeswax, farm crops, junior showmanship, fair scholarship, and other activities, exhibits, or events.

3.02. **Admission.** One Season Pass will be given to exhibitors by the Superintendents for every \$15 of advance paid entry fees only for animals presented (brought to the Fair), up to a maximum of five season passes. All other exhibitors must purchase a pass or pay admission at the main gate. 4-H and FFA passes may be purchased through the 4-H Office or FFA teacher.

3.03. **Entries.** The following are general rules only. Please consult the species and event specific rules regarding entries on the Howard County Fair website (<https://howardcountyfairmd.com/>). The Board reserves the right to resolve conflicts in rules and update or promulgate new rules as needed. No exhibits will be accepted unless it qualifies to be exhibited in a competition or class, and all group entries must be pre-entered. Space will be allocated only for animals and livestock actually brought to the Fair, not the number entered.

A. **Exhibitor Number.** Before entering any exhibit, each exhibitor must obtain an Exhibitor Number, as all records are kept by those numbers. Address labels are helpful. Use that same Exhibitor # for ALL exhibits.

- i. All Open Class Indoor exhibitors will receive a number at the front of the Home Arts Building, if they do not enter on-line.
- ii. All 4-H Exhibitors must get a number at the 4-H Office before the Fair starts.
- iii. All animals entered for competition will be entered by numbers, and the names of exhibitors will not be attached until after the awards have been made.

B. **Entry Schedule.**

- i. **Livestock, Dairy, Rabbit, and Poultry (4-H, FFA, and Open Class)** entries open online June 1st and are due by July 1st. Entries cannot be made after July 1st. Please consult the relevant rules and regulations for your species for details at: <https://howardcountyfairmd.com>.
- ii. **Home Arts, Farm Crops, Fruits & Vegetables, Honey & Beeswax, and Wool and Fleece** exhibitors can pre-enter online from July 2nd until July 20th at <https://howardcountyfairmd.com>. After the pre-entry deadline, entries can be made directly at the fair. Please consult each department's rules at <https://howardcountyfairmd.com> to determine when and where entries at the fair can be made. There will be no exceptions for late entries.
- iii. **All others:** please consult <https://howardcountyfairmd.com>.

C. **Entry Fees.** There will be no refund for entry fees for animal entries accepted but not brought to the Fairgrounds. Please consult the species-specific rules for the entry fees for that species.

D. **Damage.** The Howard County Fair is not responsible for damage to any entries.

E. **Return/Rejection of Entries.** The Howard County Fair Association reserves the right to return entry forms and entry fees for any entry, livestock or otherwise. The Board has provided guidelines to each Superintendent for the purpose of limiting entries if entries exceed space available. Entries may also be prohibited if they are not keeping with the atmosphere and purpose of the Howard County Fair.

3.04. **Animal Health.**

A. The Board may reject or dismiss any animals that, in the Board's (or its designees) sole discretion pursuant to evaluation processes established by the Board, do not meet (or are likely not to meet) health standards required by law (including the Maryland Department of Agriculture), by animal husbandry best practices, or standards set by the Board itself, including, but not limited, to standards designed to promote the health, safety, or comfort of the animals and persons at the fair or to ensure equitable and responsible exhibition. The Board's decision on animal rejection or dismissal is final.

B. Upon arrival, entries must be checked in by the department head or species superintendent, as applicable. Registration papers for animals will be checked by the Department Superintendent and tattoos must match. All animals must be registered with their respective breed association to compete as that breed. An Official Health Certificate (see MDA Health Regulations) of an entry must be obtained from the State Veterinarian and presented to the Department Superintendent along with the Self-Certification Form.

3.05. **Arrival.** Hamilton Way will be closed to traffic from 3:00 pm to 10:00 pm on the first Saturday for the Jersey Show. No animals may be unloaded on the road during that time.

3.06. **Equipment:** Aisles in all barns must be kept clear for wheelchairs and strollers (no hoses, cords, chairs, tables, or other items). All feed and tack must be in front of the animals in feed alleys (for Cattle barns) or in designated pens (for Sheep, Goat, and Swine barns). Please consult rules for each species.

3.07. **Premiums.**

A. Premiums will be paid only on the record shown by the Judges sheets. The possession of a ribbon or card is not sufficient evidence for the payment of premiums.

B. Premiums will be paid on closing Saturday after 8:00 pm, unless otherwise announced, and on Sunday from 10 am to 2:00 pm. Premiums not picked up will be mailed within 30 days. Complete address must be on entry form to receive check.

C. No exhibitor may receive more than two money awards in any one class or lot.

D. Protest against any awards in any Department must be made in writing. All protests will be considered by the Management. Premiums on protested articles will be withheld until a decision is made. Certain protests are required to be made within 24 hours of the incident--please consult the event-specific rules for details at <https://howardcountyfairmd.com>.

3.08. **Incidents.** All incident reports must be submitted in writing to the Howard County Fair Office within 48 hours of the incident occurring. Said incident reports must include the name and contact information of the individual(s) making the report, a brief explanation of the incident in question and must be signed. This rule will not prevent the Board from reviewing incidents as necessary to ensure the safety, harmony, and protection of the Howard County Fair, its guests and the Howard County Fair Association.

3.09. **Wash Racks.** Washing of animals must occur in designated areas. All hoses attached to wash rack must have working nozzles.

3.10. **Tie-Outs.** Animals may be taken to tie-outs at 8:30 pm. Tie outs are for 4-H/FFA animals. Tie out space for Open Class will be in the designated space as available. The route to tie out will be designated.

4. **ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND CARE**

The following is a list of standards and requirements for all animals brought to the Howard County Fair.

4.01. Misrepresentation of ownership, age, or identity of animal, or any facts relating thereto is prohibited. Documentation regarding the same must be presented if requested by a fair official.

Exhibitors must provide appropriate animal health certificates upon request of fair, event or animal officials.

4.02. Animals which are presented to competition, events and/or activities shall not be administered drugs or performance enhancing supplements, other than in consultation with fair officials. At any time after an animal arrives on the Fairgrounds, a licensed veterinarian must administer or, in consultation with fair officials, direct the administration of any treatments involving the use of drugs and/or medications.

4.03. Drenching, any form of forced consumption, or the use of any tool that is generally used for drenching, whether or not it is actually used for drenching at the particular time, is prohibited, except when performed or directed by a licensed veterinarian or fair official for the sole purpose of protecting the health of the animal. Fair officials may assume that this rule is being, has been, or will be violated if such a tool is discovered in a person's possession.

4.04. Event authorities are authorized to obtain any specimens of urine, saliva, blood, hair, tissue, or other substance from an animal to be used for testing purposes including, but not limited to, drugs or identification. It is presumed that the sample of urine, saliva, blood or other substance tested by the approved laboratory to which it is sent is the one taken from the animal in question, its integrity is preserved, and all procedures of said collection and preservation, transfer to the laboratory and analysis of the sample are correct and accurate and the report received from the laboratory pertains to the sample taken from the animal in question and correctly reflects the condition of the animal at the time the sample was taken, with the burden on the owner to prove otherwise at any review in regard to the matter. If the laboratory report on the chemical analysis of saliva, urine, blood, hair, tissue or other sample, taken from an animal, indicates the presence of forbidden drugs or medication, this shall be prima facie evidence such substance has been administered to the animal either internally or externally.

4.05. Any surgical procedure, injection of any foreign substance or drug, forced consumption of a substance, or the external application of any substance (irritant, counter-irritant, or similar substance) which could affect the animal's performance or alter its natural contour, conformation, or appearance, is prohibited, except external applications of substances to the hoofs or horns of animals which affect appearance only, substances expressly permitted by the general rules or the rules of the specific contest, and surgical procedures performed by a duly licensed veterinarian for the sole purpose of protecting the health of the animal (which still may result in the disqualification of the animal for contest purposes).

4.06. Using ice, ice packs, cold packs, or cold compresses, internally or externally, other than those prescribed to relieve heat stress or a medical condition as diagnosed by a duly licensed veterinarian or fair official for the sole purpose of protecting the health of the animal, is prohibited.

4.07. The use of showing and/or handling practices or devices such as striking animals to cause swelling, using electrical devices, or other similar practices, are not acceptable and are prohibited.

4.08. All judges, fair and event officials and volunteers shall be treated with courtesy, cooperation, and respect, and no person shall direct abusive or threatening conduct toward them

or toward exhibitors or others participating in the activity. In addition, direct criticism or interference with a judge, fair, show or event official, exhibitor, breed representative, or volunteers before, during, or after an event or other activity is prohibited.

4.09. No one shall violate these rules or conspire with another person or persons to intentionally violate these rules or knowingly contribute or cooperate with another person or persons either by affirmative action or inaction to violate these rules.

4.10. The application of these rules provides for absolute responsibility for an animal's condition to the exhibitor and owner whether or not he or she was actually instrumental in or had actual knowledge of the treatment of the animal in contravention of these rules.