

# Okotoks Agricultural Society

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Policies

*The Okotoks Agricultural Society*

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*(Revised March 13, 2025, SP/JU/KM)*

*(Reviewed and adopted by OAS Board of Directors – April 10, 2025)*

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- a. This manual has been developed to provide guidelines governing the activities of the Okotoks Agricultural Society.
- b. All Society policies are subject to change. The following policies are to provide a guideline for the Board of Directors and the membership and cannot predict or interpret every potentiality. Board of Directors and management has the right to take any action necessary to protect the Society and ensure the safety and enjoyment of Society members, their guests and the public.

**2. MISSION STATEMENT**

- a. A focal point in Southern Alberta, upholding our agricultural heritage and traditions and serving the needs of our community in a responsible and safe environment through education, programs and use of our facilities.

**3. OBJECTIVES**

- a. The Okotoks Agricultural Society will offer various activities such as community events, equine/cattle events, canine events, riding clubs, community youth programs, support of 4H and any other services or programs as dictated by the changing needs of our rural and urban community.

#### **4. BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

##### ***a. ORGANIZATION OF BOARD AND BOARD COMMITTEES***

- i. The Board must consist of no less than 9 members and may include the Past President in the board composition.

#### **5. COMMITTEES**

- a. Shall be chaired by a member of the Board
- b. May include members who are not on the Board
- c. Will receive written Terms of Reference from the Board which will include a definition of desired outcome and budgetary authorization and manpower allotment.
- d. Shall be appointed annually or as needed
- e. The Board will use ad hoc committees, as required from time to time for gathering information related to policy issues and outlining assorted options the Board has and the implications of optional course(s) of action.
- f. Ad hoc committees of the Board:
  - i. Shall be chaired by a member of the Board
  - ii. May include members who are not on the Board
  - iii. Will received written Terms of Reference from the Board which will include a definition of desired outcome and budgetary authorization and manpower allotment.
  - iv. Will be disbanded once they have completed the specific tasks assigned to them.

## **6. CODE OF CONDUCT**

- a. The Board expects of itself, staff and its members, ethical and professional conduct. The commitment includes proper use of authority and appropriate decorum in group and individual behaviour when acting as Board Members.
- b. Board Members will sign a confidentiality agreement at the beginning of each year.
- c. Board Members, Members and Staff must act with integrity with respect to the interests of the membership and the public.
- d. Board Members must avoid any conflict of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility. Any apparent conflict must be presented to the board and if necessary, the said Board Member will excuse themselves from the areas of conflict with respect to voting and/or any other discussions if necessary.
- e. There must be no self-dealing or any conduct of personal business or personal services between any directors and the Society, except as procedurally controlled to assure openness, competitive opportunity, and equal access to otherwise “inside” information.
- f. The directors must not use their positions to obtain for themselves, or for their family members, employment within the Society.
- g. Should a director be considered for employment with the Society, he/she must temporarily withdraw from Board deliberation, voting, and access to applicable Board information.
- h. Board Members may not attempt to exercise individual authority over the society except as explicitly set forth in Board policies.
- i. Board Members may not use Board information for their own direct benefit or advantage. This requires that the information be kept confidential whenever required in the best interests of the Society.
- j. Financial information, negotiation strategies or intimate personnel matters may not be disclosed, and shall be kept confidential. The proceedings of any meeting of the Board or any part of a meeting of the Board or of any committee thereof which is conducted “in camera”, including the minutes or any records, shall be kept in confidence by every

member of the Board, by the staff and by any member of any committee or other person invited or permitted to attend the meeting and be pursuant to the confidentiality agreement specified in part “b” as above.

- k. Board Members will deal with outside entities or individuals, with staff and with each other in a manner reflecting fair play, ethics and straightforward communication.
- l. Board Members will sign OAS’s Code of Conduct and Confidentiality Agreement
- m. A Board Member shall attend meetings regularly and participate on committees as required.
- n. Board members may not hold positions in any capacity concurrently with other Ag Societies.

## 7. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- a. Board Members must carry out duties in good faith with a reasonable degree of diligence, care and skill. If a Board Member is deemed to be negligent in carrying out his/her duties, then, given that, the Board has the right to make and enforce its own laws, the following guidelines will be followed.
  - (1) Offending directors may be censured by the Board President and or Vice President with a letter being sent to the Board member outlining the circumstances and corrective actions.
  - (2) Continued offence will result in a motion of censure being brought by the Board President and or Vice President. This motion may result in a voluntary withdrawal, or, upon a vote of the majority, the director shall be removed from all committee membership(s).
  - (3) Continued offence by a Board member will result in removal from office by a resolution as prescribed in the By-laws of the Association.
  - (4) In circumstances of an extreme nature, the offending Board member will be removed from office immediately.

- (5) In the event that an offending Board member has been removed from office, the individual is prohibited from seeking or holding a board or committee position for a period of five years.

***(6) GOVERNANCE PROCESS***

The governing style of the Board of Directors will focus on strategic leadership that will emphasize:

- a. The future rather than the past and the present.
- b. A clear distinction of the role of the Board of Directors and Staff
- c. Proactivity rather than reactivity
- d. In this spirit, the Board of Directors will:
  - i. Keep its major involvement to the long-term impact of the organization, and to the administrative and day to day operations.
  - ii. Enforce upon itself whatever discipline is needed to govern with excellence. The treatment of individual Board members with dignity and respect, respect of clarified roles and speaking with one voice.
  - iii. Be accountable to the membership for competent, conscientious and effective accomplishments and decisions. It will allow no Board member, officer, individual or committee of the Board to usurp this role or deter this discipline.
  - iv. Discipline will apply to attendance, any board member missing three meetings in a row and/or 30% of board meetings.
  - v. Systematically evaluate the achievements of the organization.

***(7) BOARD OF DIRECTORS PERFORMANCE REVIEW***

- a. The Board of Directors will set aside time to discuss and monitor the Board's own process. The responsibility for ensuring a balanced discussion will rest with the Board President.

***(8) BOARD OF DIRECTORS ORIENTATION***

- a. The purpose of orientation is to acquaint the new Board Member with the Okotoks Agricultural Society, the Board of Directors and the job of an individual Board Member. Orientation will include the following:
  - i. Orientation to the Association
  - ii. Ag Societies Act/Bylaws/Policies
  - iii. History of Organization
  - iv. Roles and Responsibilities
  - v. Key Issues and Challenges
  - vi. Conflict of Interest
  - vii. Decision Making Process
- b. The initial orientation should be done prior to the fourth meeting of the Board of Directors.

***(9) GENERAL MANAGEMENT***

- a. The Board is responsible for the management of day-to-day business and may chose to assign specific tasks and roles to the staff and volunteers as required.

***(10) FISCAL MANAGEMENT***

- a. At the start of each fiscal year, a projected operating and capital (if required) budget must be developed. The budget is to be prepared by the President, Vice President and Treasurer by the AGM of that same year.

The budget process will involve presentation to the board with subsequent approval.

- b. The Society will make its best efforts to not operate with a deficit budget.
- c. All cheques issued must have two signatures. Signing authorities shall include the President, the Vice President and Treasurer.
- d. Any purchases of more than \$1,500 that have not been included in the approved Annual Budget, will require the approval of the Board.
- e. The President, Vice President or Treasurer will have the ability to spend unbudgeted funds, if a decision cannot wait for the next Board meeting, only if there is an emergency, and must be disclosed as soon as possible to the Board via email and then discussed at the next board meeting.
- f. Expenses incurred by Board members or Staff shall be reimbursed subject to the provision of appropriate receipts and an approved expense report.

**(11) MEMBERSHIP**

- a. Membership is open to any person who completes the appropriate application form, waiver and makes the necessary fee payment.

**b. Categories of Membership**

- i. Single – an individual between the ages of 18 and 60 years old
- ii. Family – parents including a spouse/partner and their direct unmarried offspring, under 18 years of age all residing in the same household and includes those in post-secondary education under 25 years of age.
- iii. Senior - any individual 60 years of age or over
- iv. Student – any individual of any age that provides confirmation of student status

- v. Life - as nominated by the Board for individuals or organizations who have contributed to the activities and goals of the Society in an exemplary manner.

***c. Membership Fees***

- i. Membership fees are changed from time to time by the Board of Directors as outlined in the By-Laws
- ii. All membership fees are non-refundable.
  - 1. Memberships are pro-rated April 1<sup>st</sup> by 50% (**new memberships only**)
  - 2. Memberships are non-transferable

***d. Riding Passes***

- i. Riding Passes are available for riding during Members Open Riding times and are valid for the current Society fiscal year.
  - 1. Riding passes are pro-rated April 1<sup>st</sup> by 50% (**new riding passes only**)
  - 2. Riding passes are non-refundable
  - 3. Riding passes are non-transferable
- ii. If a Riding Pass has not been purchased a drop-in fee is required per horse based on the current OAS fee schedule and must be put into the drop box located at the side entrance of the indoor arena.

***(12) Termination/Suspension***

- a. As outlined in the Ag Societies By-Laws

***(13) Membership Rules and Regulations***

- a. It is the duty of the Board, staff and membership to know the rules herein, the posted arena rules and to cooperate with the Board and/or staff and the

membership in the enforcement of the rules to ensure a positive, fun and safe environment.

- b. If a member or their guests do not comply with the rules, disciplinary action including loss of membership and/or riding pass and its privileges may occur.

***i. General Rules***

1. No person shall use the Arena or other facilities without holding a valid, current membership in the Society.
2. No person shall use the Arena or facilities without signing a waiver.
3. No person shall use the Arena or facilities for the purpose of income generation without signing a rental agreement and paying for said rental.
4. All members must sign in before open riding.
5. You must have a valid riding pass or pay a drop-in fee (drop in fees are per horse and per current fee schedule)
6. You must be a member to participate in OAS programs and clinics when applicable.
7. Giving or receiving of any type of riding/horsemanship instructions is prohibited during members open riding.
8. A member **MUST** get permission from each and every rider to use or to continue to use obstacles/props of any kind during members open riding.
9. As soon as there are 5 riders and horses in the arena at any given time during members open riding, all obstacles **MUST** be removed immediately regardless of any previous permission being given.

10. Cell phones must be on silent or vibrate mode while in the indoor or the outdoor arena.
11. The arena schedules will be published on the website.  
However, where a discrepancy occurs, the calendar will supersede.
12. The indoor and the outdoor arena are always designated as non-smoking facilities.
13. The consumption of alcohol and use of cannabis are NOT allowed in the facility. In the case of alcohol, and where the event has been approved by the Board, the appropriate AGLC liquor licenses must be obtained.
14. During members open riding:
  - a) All dogs brought into the facility must always be on a leash and under the control of the handler.
  - b) No dogs allowed in the lobby (concession area). Service dogs are exempt from this rule.
  - c) No dogs are permitted in the sand areas of any arena on the OAS premises.
  - d) The OAS is not responsible for dogs left unattended in personal vehicles or trailers.
15. It is the responsibility of all users to ensure that all horse manure is placed into the manure barrels during or upon completion of riding, including parking areas.
16. If you need to stop riding your horse, please move to the centre of a circle.
17. Slower traffic rides to the inside and off the rail.

18. No more than 10 riders in the arena at any given time during members open riding.
19. There may be outdoor stalls available for an additional cost, clean up is to be done by the user within 24 hours of use. Should you decide, you would like to use a stall, please obtain permission for the board of directors in advance. Stalls may not always be available – please obtain permission prior to use.
20. Comments, questions, concerns and directions must be made to the board and not directed to the staff.
21. Tack and your personal belongings are not covered under the OAS insurance, please obtain your own insurance.
22. Horses must be tied in the horse hitching area when not in use. No unattended horses in the arena. Horses are not to be tied in the sand area of the arena. Horses are not allowed to roll or to run loose in the arena.
23. Do not tamper with any part of the arena, the horse pens or the facility at any time, or in any manner without expressed written consent of the Board. Do not adjust the thermostat or turn on the fans.
24. Advise immediately of any injuries, damage, safety concerns, accidents and health concerns.
25. Members may not handle any horse other than their own or the horse they lease at any time, unless they have prior permission to do so.
26. No children under the age of 12 years are allowed near the cattle handling areas inside or outside at any time.

27. No children under the age of 12 years are allowed in the hitching areas unsupervised.
28. Helmets are mandatory for all riders 12 years of age and under. Helmets are recommended for all riders.
29. Horses, canine and cattle must be in good health. Any animals that show symptoms or are diagnosed with a communicable disease/virus are not allowed on the premises. Please notify the Board if your horse has been at the facility and is later diagnosed with an ailment that could affect others.
30. OAS recommends that you have your horse vaccinated, however, we do not require you to vaccinate as we are not veterinarians, and not all horses are safe to vaccinate. Best practice is to address this issue with your veterinarian.

**(14) FACILITY ALLOCATION**

The objectives for facility allocation are to meet the needs of the membership while continuing to operate the facilities in a cost effective and financially sustainable manner.

**a. Maintenance**

- i. Daily or as required and at the discretion of the Board, scheduled maintenance will take place in the riding arena

**b. OAS Sponsored Programs**

- i. Activities open to members only, when noted as “member only” on the information sheet or online. The Board at its discretion may open a program to the public.

**c. Members Open Riding**

- i. The Board will maximize the amount of Members Open Riding time to the best of its ability. Due to facility rentals and Society

events, there is no guarantee that members open riding can occur each day.

***d. Event Contract***

- i. Facility rentals require a rental agreement and or contract, general waiver and must provide a copy of the renter's liability insurance coverage covering the amount of no less than 2 million dollars per occurrence.
- ii. A security deposit of 50% may be required at time of booking.
- iii. Proof of insurance naming the Okotoks Agricultural Society as an added third party insured for the duration of the event must be completed and provided no less than 1 week prior to the event.
- iv. A maintenance/cleaning fee may be charged on each day of rental.

***e. Cancellation Policy***

- i. The OAS shall have the right to cancel the renter's activity/event for failure to provide "Proof of Insurance".
- ii. The OAS has the right to cancel a renter's activity/event should there be a catastrophic event that renders the facility dangerous or impossible for the activity/event use to occur. Efforts will be undertaken to reschedule the renter's activity/event when said circumstances have been deemed safe to proceed to do so.
- iii. A deposit is non-refundable, unless there is a catastrophic event that makes it impossible or dangerous for the event or facility use to occur. OAS does not allow any activities in -20 degrees Celsius for horses and no activities in -15 degrees Celsius for cattle.
- iv. A deposit is non-refundable if the booking is cancelled within 14 days of the activity/event rental.

**(15) OPERATIONS**

- a. All areas of the facility shall be operated in a manner consistent with safe working practices of the Alberta Labour Laws, The Alberta Agricultural Society's Act, Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission, Alberta Health Region, MD of Foothills #31, and the SPCA.
- b. All machinery will only be operated by individuals sanctioned by the Board. Renters, users, members and others are not permitted to use any OAS equipment without permission of the Board of Directors.

**c. Indoor Riding/Outdoor Arenas**

- i. Indoor and Outdoor Riding Arenas are available for open member riding as per the calendar on the OAS website.

**d. Stall Rental Policy**

- i. All stalls must be reserved through the Board and held with a credit card or full payment in advance via e transfer.
- ii. If the reservation is cancelled less than 24 hours prior to the date of arrival, the full amount of the reservation will be charged to the credit card.
- iii. Stall rentals are priced on our fee schedule
- iv. Stall will be pre-bedded
- v. Extra shavings may be available at an additional cost as per the fee schedule
- vi. There will be a cleaning fee charged to the credit card if rented stalls are not stripped clean as per the fee schedule

**(16) Alcohol & Cannabis**

- a. Alcohol and cannabis are not sanctioned at the Okotoks Agricultural Society

- b. **Exception:** The Society or a Renter may undertake a special event/fundraiser/function where appropriate permits and licenses are in place for said event. Insurance for liquor service must be purchased for each individual event and be approved by the Board.

**(17) Food & Beverage**

- a. Food and Beverage will be the sole right of the Society. No “for sale” food or beverage will be allowed on the property without consent of the Board.

**(18) Advertising**

- a. Newsletter: The Society may publish a newsletter for members at its discretion from time to time.
- b. No unauthorized use of the Society logo or letterhead shall be made by any individual.
- c. A website will be maintained for the benefit of members, renters, staff and the Board. The site will have a calendar/schedule on it and will be maintained and updated by the Board at the earliest convenience.

**(19) Social Media:**

- a. This policy governs the publication of and commentary on social media by the membership, staff and Board members of Okotoks Agricultural Society. For the purposes of this policy, social media means any facility for online publication and commentary, including without limitation blogs, wiki's, social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and any others. This policy is in addition to and complements any existing or future policies regarding the use of technology, computers, e-mail and the internet.
- b. Before engaging in work related social media, staff must obtain the permission of the Board.
- c. Publication and commentary on social media carry similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary.

**i. Setting up Social Media**

1. Social media identities, logon ID's and usernames may not use Okotoks Agricultural Society's name without prior written approval from the Board.

**ii. Confidential and Sensitive Information**

1. The publication of confidential information relating to the Okotoks Agricultural Society is prohibited. Confidential information includes things such as unpublished details about our Society, details of current projects, financial information, research, and anything else we deem confidential or sensitive.

**iii. Respect copyright laws**

1. Show proper respect for the laws governing copyrights. Use of copyrighted material and brands owned by the Okotoks Agricultural Society is prohibited with prior consent from the board.

**iv. Respect your audience, Okotoks Agricultural Society, the Board of directors, members, staff and renters/users.**

1. The publication of or verbal communication of information that is contradictory or in conflict with the Okotoks Agricultural Society website, values and objectives must be done so in a respectful and thoughtful manner. This includes not only the obvious (no ethnic slurs, offensive comments, defamatory comments, personal insults, obscenity, etc.) but also proper consideration of privacy and of topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory - such as politics and religion. Make it clear that the views and opinions expressed are yours alone and do not represent the official views of Okotoks Agricultural Society.

**v. Protect Okotoks Agricultural Society Board of directors, members, staff, renters/users, customers, members, business partners and suppliers.**

1. Customers, partners, members, staff, Board of directors, renters/users or suppliers, should not be cited or obviously referenced without their approval. Never identify those

listed above, by name without permission and never discuss confidential details of a customer, partners, members, staff renters/users or suppliers' engagement. It is acceptable to discuss general details so long as the information provided does not violate any non-disclosure agreements that may be in place.

**vi. Controversial Issues**

1. Misrepresentations made about Okotoks Agricultural Society must be brought to the Board's attention immediately. Make sure what you are saying is factually correct and adheres to all Society policies.

**vii. Disclaimers**

1. Wherever practical, you must use a disclaimer saying that while you work for, are a member of, rent from or use the facility at Okotoks Agricultural Society, anything you publish is your personal opinion, and not necessarily the opinions of Okotoks Agricultural Society.

**viii. Enforcement**

1. Policy violations will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination and or member withdrawal for cause.

**(20) Privacy**

- a. Okotoks Agricultural Society respects your right to privacy. As a member of our organization, we may collect personal information you knowingly give us when completing a variety of forms and documents for the Okotoks Agricultural Society.
- b. We may also collect information from non-members regarding demographics and other information to aid in our securing grants and other support from various government agencies.
- c. Information We collect;
  - i. Okotoks Agricultural Society collects personal information such as name, address and e-mail address, phone number and other details

when you knowingly provide it to us through the membership form or other forms/documents.

- ii. We do not sell nor disclose individually identifiable information obtained to anyone outside of Okotoks Agricultural Society. The only exceptions to this rule are the following:
  - 1. It is required by law
  - 2. Disclosure is necessary to protect the safety of members, visitors, Board, staff or property.
  - 3. On a combined basis for statistical information required to secure grants and other support from government agencies.
- d. Personal information you voluntarily supply when securing a membership is not shared for use outside of Okotoks Agricultural Society. This information is Okotoks Agricultural Society proprietary data and is not available to any outside company in this personalized form. Should any changes be made in the way we use personally identifiable information, Okotoks Agricultural Society will contact you via e-mail notifying you of this change and give you the opportunity to choose to opt out of such use.
- e. For any concerns about Privacy, please send an e-mail to:  
[okotoksagsociety@gmail.com](mailto:okotoksagsociety@gmail.com).

**(21) ANIMAL MANAGEMENT**

- a. The OAS will ensure that all animals which are kept on the premises are treated in a manner consistent with the Animal Protection Act and the Stable Keepers Act.
- b. During winter months, in the event the temperature drops to below -20 degrees Celsius, the Society will not permit the use of the facilities.