

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Standard	12/1/2024	1/31/2024	

Rule Change Intent

In order to decrease the barriers to entry for the sport, this change allows flexibility in the type of carriage used for each phase of competition. The change also encourages the use of grooms on carriage for safety measures.

Proponent Details	Contact Information
Driving	Anna Brooks Thomas abthomas@usef.org

Linked Rules	Comments
--------------	----------

Committee Actions

## DC930 Outside assistance

### 1. Definition

Any physical intervention by a third party, not riding on the carriage, whether solicited or not, with the object of facilitating the task of the athlete or helping their horses, is considered to be outside assistance.

### 2. Prohibited outside assistance

#### 2.1 Dressage and Cones:

2.1.1 Any athlete who has received physical outside assistance may be eliminated by the Ground Jury.

2.1.2 ~~In Dressage, grooms must remain seated in their proper positions between entering and leaving the arena, they are not permitted to handle the reins or the whip (will incur 20 penalties). For Dressage, grooms are not allowed to speak or indicate the course to the athlete (will incur 10 penalties). However, the groom may handle the reins, whip, and brake without penalty provided the carriage remains stationary.~~ ***In Dressage, grooms must remain seated in their proper positions between entering and leaving the arena, they are not permitted to handle the reins or the whip (will incur 20 penalties). For Dressage, grooms are not allowed to speak or indicate the course to the athlete (will incur 10 penalties). However, the groom may handle the reins, whip, and brake without penalty provided the carriage remains stationary. When using a Marathon carriage, the groom may stand during dressage provided they do not influence the direction of the carriage. Grooms must remain in the same stationary position throughout the test.***

#### 2.1.3 Exceptions:

- a. If the bell has been rung by the President of the Jury and the athlete has failed to hear the bell, the groom may advise the athlete that the bell has been rung.
- b. In the Beginner and Training divisions at Short Format Driving Events, verbal outside assistance is allowed in any competition phase, including Dressage. The groom or an outside assistant standing by the arena may call out the dressage test for Beginner and Training level classes without any penalty. Electronic communication equipment may also be used as long as only one earphone is used at a time while on the carriage.

2.1.4 Athletes and grooms may not use any form of electronic communication equipment during Dressage and Cones, subject to elimination. See 930.2.1.3.b for an exception for the Beginner and Training divisions at Short Format Driving Events.

2.1.5 Para Driving Athletes from nominated profiles may compete with the whip held or used by groom, and/or the groom holding the finger loop but must have this noted on the FEI Masterlist or their Federation dispensation following classification evaluation.

2.1.6 Grooms of Para Driving Athletes must sit so that they can help in case of need. The Technical Delegate has the right to disapprove the position of the groom on the vehicle.

#### 2.2 Marathon:

2.2.1 Obstacle observers, ground observers, time keepers, or any other officials may not give directions, advice, or information to the athlete, while they are on the course in Marathon, in order to assist them. Exceptions: see DC930.3.

2.2.2 Any athlete who has received physical outside assistance by a third party not riding on the carriage will be eliminated by the Ground Jury. Exemption for turnouts without a groom "any capable person" may assist, act as penalty for groom down.

2.3 Penalties: see DC953.

### 3. Permitted assistance

The following are considered to be permitted outside assistance:

Assistance during the halt and in neutral zones between sections.

Assistance to avoid accidents.

Assistance to horses as a result of an accident inside an obstacle, providing the grooms are dismounted.

Assistance by the groom whereby a horse is led through an obstacle by the bridle ends of the reins while harnessed to the carriage in either Marathon or Cones, will incur 20 penalties for the assistance, in addition to the penalties for dismount.

For Intermediate, Preliminary, Training, and Beginner turnouts without a groom on the carriage, should groom assistance be needed, the athlete may stop and ask for such assistance from any capable person, who may then act as groom rendering the necessary help, and the turnout shall be penalized with the penalty for groom down.