



Understanding the HCBC Membership Confirmation Process

August 2010

The Pony Club insurance provides coverage for Pony Club office holders, volunteers, and others while working on behalf of the Pony Club. It is a condition of the CPC insurance that all Active and Affiliate members who live in British Columbia be members of the HCBC. If those members are not HCBC members and are involved in an incident, even indirectly, the CPC insurance is not obligated to respond. The branch and all volunteers, office holders, or others must then rely on their personal insurance coverage which may or may not respond. It is to protect those office holders, volunteers, and instructors that we insist that all members must be able to *prove* that they are HCBC members.

The usual standard of proof at any horse show would be to show an HCBC membership card. Both the Pony Club and the HCBC realize that this is not practical for us due to the delays involved with processing, printing, and mailing membership cards. The HCBC has been extremely cooperative in making membership application forms available at the start of September, allowing DC's to be their agents for accepting memberships, and making several other procedure changes to enable us to verify HCBC memberships quickly and without the need for a card.

If a member has an HCBC card, a copy of the card can be given to the branch as proof. If not, we have other ways to obtain proof:

- The HCBC will notify the national office when they process a Pony Club application which is processed through the branch and is properly identified as a Pony Club application.
- The national office has online access to the HCBC's membership database and can check to see if someone is a member at any time.

Both the branch and the region involved are notified by email whenever the national office gets confirmation of HCBC memberships. Note that the national office can only check for confirmation of HCBC membership after they have received the registrations of the members for the current year. If you have not renewed your Pony Club membership or if either the branch or region does not send in the registration promptly, we will not ask for confirmation of HCBC membership.

There are 2 basic ways to apply for an HCBC membership or renewal, first using a paper application and second using the HCBC's online registration system.

Regardless of which way a person applies for HCBC membership, **by far** the best way to be sure that confirmation can be done quickly is to submit both the HCBC and CPC applications early. When the confirmation procedures were set up, it was recognized that the HCBC office often has a backlog of applications near year end (approx Nov 15-Dec 31). Delays in processing applications can be several weeks. If applications are sent in before Nov 1, the delays are usually under a week. In order to help with this, the HCBC now make both new member and renewal applications available by Sept 1.

Applying on Paper:

Although anyone can send in their HCBC applications individually, the HCBC has agreed that branch DC's can be HCBC agents for the purpose of accepting membership applications and fees. There are several benefits to applying in this way, particularly for new HCBC members.

If HCBC memberships are submitted to the branch, they become effective immediately and the member can participate in activities at the branch level right away. If sent in directly to the HCBC, the membership is not effective until received by the HCBC and participation in branch activities can only

begin after **proof** of the HCBC membership is received. During the HCBC's busy season, this could result in a delay of several weeks before the member is allowed to participate. A copy of an HCBC card or confirmation of membership directly from the HCBC is required before participation is allowed at regional or national activities.

Submitting through the branch also has the benefit that when the applications arrive at the HCBC office, they are more easily recognized as being Pony Club applications and it is far more likely that the national office will immediately get confirmation of the HCBC memberships.

In November, the HCBC sends out preprinted renewal forms to past members. If you are renewing your membership in Sept or Oct, you can use the blank application form. However in Nov and later, please use the preprinted form. That will result in faster processing and fewer errors. If you use a blank form for a renewal, PLEASE make sure that you enter your old HCBC number. Not doing so can result in confusion due to being issued a different number.

There is a 30 day limit for allowing participation in branch activities based on giving an HCBC application to the branch. After that time, either a card or confirmation from the HCBC is needed. During the HCBC's busy season, the delays could possibly be longer than 30 days and may result in the Pony Club member becoming not in good standing. *Avoid this by applying early!*

Applying online:

The HCBC has a complete online registration system which handles everything from filling out the application to confirming your credit card payment to actually entering your information in the membership database. As a result, our national office is able to confirm online applications paid by credit card the following day.

If your HCBC application is made at the same time as or before your Pony Club application, the national office will not have your registration and will not check for confirmation. In that case, you can use the email that you received from the online registration system as proof of membership for participation in branch activities. A copy of an HCBC card or confirmation of membership directly from the HCBC is required before participation is allowed at regional or national activities.

Applying online is the preferred method for both new members and renewals in British Columbia. It is not only much faster but also is less work for the HCBC office.

When applying online, PLEASE make sure that you enter your old HCBC number. Not doing so can result in confusion due to being issued a different number.

Checking for Confirmations:

The national office will check the HCBC's online database for confirmations approximately once a week. We will not repeatedly check the database for those who delay getting HCBC memberships for long periods. If check for confirmation is unsuccessful, the national office is not obliged to check for that member's confirmation again until after they are notified by the branch that the HCBC application has actually been sent. The national office will wait an appropriate time after being notified before checking confirmations again. The time will vary depending on the application backlog and the type of application (online, through branch, or individual).

Please **do not contact the HCBC directly** to try getting confirmation. In most cases that will not get results any faster and it means the HCBC staff spend time on the phone instead of processing applications.