

# Canadian Pony Club



## BRANCH DC HANDBOOK

Handbook for District Commissioners in a Branch within the Canadian Pony Club organization.

[Abstract](#)



# CANADIAN PONY CLUB

## BRANCH DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS

HANDBOOK

**2023**

Loyalty

Character

Sportsmanship

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

All member Branches of the Canadian Pony Club have two things in common: a membership, however large or small, and a Branch Executive Committee composed of a District Commissioner, Assistant District Commissioner, Branch Treasurer and Branch Secretary. Beyond these, there are unlimited differences in programs, structure, facilities, parental involvement, and participation in Regional activities. Because of these differences, no two Branches can be the same, just as no two District Commissioners are the same.

The purpose of this Handbook is to provide basic guidance for a new (and sometimes not so new) District Commissioner in the Administration of a Pony Club program. Most of the information in the Handbook is equally applicable for the guidance of persons who take on responsibility at either the Branch or Regional level.

Other invaluable documents include the Canadian Pony Club Bylaws, the Canadian Pony Club Operations Manual & Policy Handbook, and your Regional Rules & Regulations. In addition, every member should have a copy of either the C/D Testing Procedures or the A/B Testing Procedures, depending on their level, and a copy of the Badge Program. All these documents may be downloaded for free from our web site – [www.canadianponyclub.org](http://www.canadianponyclub.org) or via the CPC Membership Portal (<https://canadianponyclub.org/admin/membership>) .

All members of your Branch must also be an individual or family member of the Equine Provincial Sports Organization for your province.

## 2 THE ROLE OF THE DISTRICT COMMISSIONER

The District Commissioner must be 21 years or over and not an active member.

No person who is substantially interested in letting out or selling horses and instructing in equitation for personal profit or otherwise earn an income from such matters shall be eligible for election as District Commissioner.

The District Commissioner (D.C.) is charged with the overseeing and control of the local Pony Club Branch. (See excerpts from the Bylaws contained in the Handbook.) The D.C. acts as a conduit of information, passing on current information, policy and rule changes from the Regional Committee and the National Organization to the membership and the Branch Executive Committee and passing the necessary enrolment, head fees and the needs of the membership back to the Region and National.

The D.C. is responsible to ensure that all Active and Horsemaster Members of the Branch belong to their Equine PSO by Jan.1 of each year.

The D.C. has ultimate responsibility for planning, guiding, and implementing the teaching program of the Branch. Included in this vital phase is the search for capable volunteers and/or qualified



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professional instructors. Other administrative duties include filling out and returning National and Regional testing forms on time, organizing testing for D and C candidates, seeing that teams are selected and entered for Regional competitions, and making sure that the Branch remains solvent. She/He must also seek out capable persons to assist with these responsibilities and activities within the Branch.

### **2.1 Qualities of a District Commissioner**

Being a District Commissioner means more than just doing the duties outlined above; the D.C. is the leader of the Branch and, as such, is looked to by members and parents as the individual who sets the attitude of the Branch. To lead a happy, productive Branch, the D.C. should develop an attitude and take certain steps which help to insure cooperation from the members and their parents.

#### **I. The D.C. must be fair.**

This is probably the most important quality the D.C. can have, regardless of the size or activity of the Branch or of the D.C.'s own expertise. It means:

- a) All phases of the Branch program should be equally available to all Branch members within their capabilities.
- b) The members should understand the basis for decisions which affect them and should be encouraged to question what they do not understand.
- c) Pony Clubbers must not be discriminated against based on their talent or mounts.

These factors, for better or for worse, do affect the individual's riding, but should never hinder his/her ability to learn, participate, and feel equally treated by the D.C., Instructors, Branch Executive Committee members, and/or peers.

#### **II. The D.C. must make materials available to the members.**

The activity and success of a Branch, regardless of its size, are totally dependent upon the members and parents knowing what is available to them, not only in the local Branch, but at the Regional and National levels as well.

#### **III. The D.C. should respect confidences and avoid gossiping.**

As to the latter, the D.C. should stop rumours (for rumours will arise), rather than start or add fuel to them.

#### **IV. The D.C. must be able to delegate responsibility.**

In a small Branch which participates in only a few activities, this quality is not as important as in a large, very active Branch, where it is a necessity. Delegation, simply stated, is the ability to get someone else



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to do the work, while the D.C. supervises. The D.C. must always supervise. There are five main sources for delegation:

- a) Divide responsibilities and/or duties with the Assistant District Commissioner.
- b) Form working committees with a chairman in charge.
- c) Encourage parents to participate.
- d) Involve older Pony Clubbers: A's, B's and older C2's can teach riding and stable management, organize activities, teams and otherwise lead by their example. All Pony Clubbers should expect to help in the day-to-day work, such as constructing and maintaining equipment, setting up for lessons and competitions, clearing trails, or raising money through such activities as garage sales, raffles, etc. Giving older Pony Club members responsibility and encouraging them to contribute, will often increase their enthusiasm for the Branch and their feeling that it belongs to them.
- e) Encourage "graduates" of Pony Club, regardless of the Stage they obtained, to keep in contact with Pony Club. Newly acquired skills other than those of riding can be of tremendous assistance.

### **V. The D.C. must be open to suggestion.**

The D.C. is the Branch decision maker by the dictates of his office. However, to maintain a sense of participation and morale, the D.C. should encourage members and parents to question, suggest, and discuss new ideas. The D.C. should be sensitive to the will of the Branch membership in terms of the program, calendar of activities, and the fact that the D.C.'s position is not a lifetime appointment.

### **VI. The D.C. should be visible.**

Although much of the administrative work can be done at home and responsibilities can be delegated, there is no substitute for going to activities. In addition to monitoring the progress of lessons, activities, etc., it encourages children and parents to talk to and get to know the D.C. It is also the best way to assess situations, separate fact from fiction, and increase the D.C.'s own knowledge. When a child or parent calls to criticize a testing or competition or to make a comment about a lesson, the D.C. will feel a lot more confident if she/he can say, "I know because I was there."

### **VII. The D.C. must be decisive.**

Final decision making, whether on scheduling an event or sending a candidate up for testing, rests squarely on the shoulders of the D.C. It is perhaps the unpleasant responsibility of the office, but it is vital to a successful, well run Pony Club. If, however, the D.C. can demonstrate the qualities outlined above, most decisions receive a high degree of acceptance.

### **VIII. The D.C. must be able to deal effectively with parents.**

Parents are invaluable; they do most of the less glamorous work, they foot 100% of the bills, and are even more concerned about their Pony Club member than the D.C. is. Therefore the D.C. should:



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- a) Listen to them and be honest with them.
- b) See that they are informed - (a Newsletter is a good way).
- c) Invite them to attend and observe all Pony Club activities.
- d) Encourage them to become active supporters and to help in any way they can: they can organize activities, help with the telephoning, assist at competitions and lessons, or enlist other volunteers who are not parents of Pony Clubbers, i.e., instructors, minor officials for events, etc. In dealing with parents, however, you should always remember that your decisions must represent the best interests of the Branch as a whole, and that:
  - an individual parent's concerns are not always the concerns of the Branch as a whole.
  - parent's assessments of situations will not always be the same as yours.

### **3 THE ASSISTANT DISTRICT COMMISSIONER**

Some Branches may find it convenient to divide the responsibilities of the District Commissioner with the Assistant District Commissioner (A.D.C.). It is with the D.C. that the ultimate responsibility for decision making control and direction of the Branch rests, even though the duties may be divided in any manner which the D.C. finds necessary or convenient. Quite often the A.D.C. is, in effect, a "D.C. in training" who will take over the Branch when the D.C. retires.

### **4 DEVELOPING A PONY CLUB CALENDAR**

No Pony Club Branch can be a success without careful advance planning. The first step in planning the Pony Club year is to obtain a large month at a glance appointment calendar. Activities can then be filled in on the appropriate dates. It is best to do this in pencil, because every Pony Club year is filled with date changes and additions.

A Region holds an Annual Meeting, which usually takes place prior to December 31st and all the Branches have held their required Annual Meetings. It is usually at this meeting that dates and locations for the following year are set, as all National Championships dates should be set by that time, and Regional activities can be scheduled in preparation for them. If your Branch has an inflexible date (traditional horse show, or CCTA event listed in the Omnibus Schedule, etc.), it should be mentioned at the Regional Meeting so that adjustments can be made, if possible, within the Region. However, the Branches' activities should be planned after the National and Regional dates have been set, because the local Branch activities are the most easily changed.

The activities of a Branch should be planned to be educational as well as fun, and scheduling can make a great difference. Consider weather patterns, and the fact that Pony Clubbers, their mounts, and their parents need one or two months of relative inactivity every so often to recuperate. Unmounted



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programs such as Quizzes, films, horse management clinics, and field trips can be scheduled when the weather is too cold for comfortable riding.

Winter is a good time to work on the non-riding portions of the badge program and to prepare for written tests.

Looking at the calendar when only the National and Regional dates are filled in provides an outline for the schedule of the Branch. For instance, if the Branch is hoping to send a team to a Rally, the D.C. can plan learning sessions a couple of months before on horse conditioning, so that Pony Clubbers will have time to make up a suitable schedule. Inter-Branch activities or competitions can be scheduled as a training or team selection device. They also provide a respite and change from the usual instruction, allowing the Pony Clubber to apply and demonstrate learned skills and techniques.

### **4.1 A Sample Pony Club Branch Schedule**

Here are some suggestions for activities which might take place over the Pony Club year.

#### **JANUARY**

1. Prepare newsletter. Include Regional activities, their dates, and locations for the entire summer.
2. Make sure all your members are aware of their level requirement and that each have copies of their requirement sheets. These are found in the D/C and A/B Testing Procedures.
3. Check your membership list for anyone ready to try their 'B2' or 'B'. If you have candidates, contact the Regional Testing Representative for their application forms and information on testing fees. Deadline for 'B' and 'B2' applications and fees to be submitted to you is February 1st. In some Regions, this includes C2 as well.
4. If you have HA or RA candidates, make sure they know the location and time for the written exam. The date for this exam is set by the National Testing Chairman and is usually in late January or early February. Consult your Regional Testing Chairman.
5. DC and ADC should attend all Regional Meetings. Some Regions hold them monthly, others 3 or 4 times a year.

#### **FEBRUARY**

1. Prepare Newsletter.
2. Contact knowledgeable Pony Clubbers to teach Quiz practices.
3. Make up reading assignments and questions with quiz coaches, for use in quiz practices. Ask for volunteers to host practices if necessary.



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4. Usually a 'B' hopeful clinic is set up for the spring to assist those trying their 'B' tests. Details are available early in the new year. Make sure your candidates are kept informed.
5. Start thinking about which members will be candidates for spring 'C' and 'D' testing. All candidates must fill in the appropriate testing applications.
6. Instruction clinics are frequently organized early in the year. The purpose is to give assistance to new instructors, and to bring experienced instructors up to date on the latest information from the National Testing Committee. All instructors, Branch officials, interested parents and Pony Clubbers are all welcome to attend.
7. The Inter Pacific Exchange is held every two years (2003, 2005, 2007, etc.) and you should watch for notices and applications. Candidates for the Exchange should be at least a B, over seventeen years old with a high degree of maturity.
8. Choose teams for the Regional Quiz, often held in March or April. This is often done by holding a Branch Quiz and sending the winners. You are allowed to up grade for the Quiz. If you do not have any B's, you may send a team of your better C's to compete at the B level, or you may fill out your C team with D's. You are not allowed to down grade.
9. Watch for Quiz date and location.
10. Each Branch should be prepared to send at least two adults to the Quiz to assist with supervising, marking, scoring, etc.
11. Forward 'B' and 'B2' applications and fees to your Regional Testing Chairman by February 15th.

### **MARCH**

1. Prepare newsletter.
2. B and B2 candidates may be writing their written test this month. Keep them informed of the time and place.
3. Plan and schedule testing dates for C's and D's for spring.
4. Arrange scheduling and clearing with landowners, the locations of instruction and meets.
5. Attend Regional Quiz if it is held in March.

### **APRIL**

1. Prepare newsletter. Include C and D testing dates if scheduled.
2. Attend Regional Quiz if it is held in April.



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3. Prepare for spring C and D testing. The aim should be to have all C and D testing completed in May and June for the spring testing, and in September and October for the fall testing. Some branches only hold one test a year, often in July or August.
4. Contact the necessary number of examiners (Regional C and D Examiners List). Arrangements should allow one examiner for no more than 3 or 4 candidates.
5. It is the responsibility of the Branch to pay C and D Examiners something toward mileage costs. Check with the Regional Testing Representative to ascertain the current fee schedule in effect in your Region. Alternative arrangements may be made between Branches. Some Branches charge a modest fee to cover the cost of testing, and others absorb the cost out of general funds. This is at the discretion of the Branches.
6. Check with the Prince Philip Games coach about games practices. Include information in your newsletter.
7. Contact instructors and set up days for mounted lessons to start as soon as weather permits.
8. Tetrathlon practices should start in earnest. Remember that some Tetrathlon activities (shooting and swimming) can be carried out all winter.
9. Remind Pony Clubbers of any need to have COGGINS TESTS done. Also remind members of the necessity of getting all shots updated, including West Nile. These are not requirements for Pony Club (yet) but may be required by the facility your ride out of. Don't forget to encourage your members to have their horses on a regular worming program.

### **MAY**

1. Prepare newsletter. Include a report on the activities at the Canadian Pony Club Annual Meeting. Be sure to include any new information or opportunities that would be of interest to Pony Clubbers. Include dates of mounted meets and practices. Encourage your members to visit the P.C. web site frequently. This site offers lots of information on up coming events and shows results of National Competitions.
2. C and D testing. Read your Testing Procedures and have testing facilities ready. Have your Regional C/D Testing Representative or a responsible adult (NOT a parent of a candidate if possible) on the site to deal with any problems and questions, and to make sure that the examiner(s) has everything that is required. The adult should be familiar with the testing procedures.
3. Attend C and D test days scheduled and B tests at which you have candidates.
4. Forward results of tests to your C/D Regional Testing Representative as soon as possible following the tests.



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5. Prince Philip Games practices should be well under way. Check your rules for competitors age limits, size of pony, dress regulations, tack, etc.
6. Attend P.P.G. competitions if scheduled.
7. Arrange and schedule Rally competition practices and try outs.
8. Start thinking about a summer working rally or a summer camp.
9. Make sure candidates are informed of the location and date of the Regional C2, B & B2 Test.
10. Make sure candidates are informed of the date and location of the Regional Testing Prep and Evaluation Clinic for C2 – A candidates.

### JUNE

1. Prepare Newsletter.
2. Tetrathlon Regional competitions are often held in late June or July. Watch for details. Review the Tetrathlon rules with competitors; all the information that is required is there.
3. Send entries with cheques to cover entry fees for the Regional Rally and the Regional Tetrathlon by the required deadlines.
4. Select Regional Tetrathlon competitors.
5. Regional Rally try outs and practices are under way. Some Regions hold C Rallies and D Rallies, some Regions hold combined Rallies for D's, C's and A/B's. Don't forget that Captains and Helpers are very important members of the teams. Study the Rally rules with the competitors. Note details of the Rally announcement. Each Branch participating in the Rally is required to select and send a chaperone.
6. Select Regional Rally Teams or Individuals. Attend P.P.G.'s and Tetrathlons as scheduled.
7. Each Rally team will be assigned a stall for each horse and a tack room for which the team is entirely responsible. Make sure they have sufficient equipment to organize an efficient Tack Room. Don't forget tools such as hammer, nails, screwdriver, wire pinchers, etc. to set up the tack room.
8. Arrange for a Stable Management Day to prepare your Rally competitors.
9. A work weekend to prepare property for the Rally may be organized. Each Branch is responsible for sending at least 2 adults to help.
10. Continue scheduling and clearing with facility or landowners, locations for instruction and meets.



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### **JULY**

1. Prepare Newsletter.
2. Attend Rally, Tetrathlon or P.P.G.'s as scheduled.
3. Plans for the Regional Rally should be completed by July 1st. The team(s) that represent the Region at the National/Zone Rally will be chosen from the winners of the Regional Rally.
4. Prince Philip Games run offs and Regional finals are held in July, and the winning team(s) will represent the Region at the Zone Championships held in mid August.
5. Tetrathlon winners at the Regionals will represent the Region at the National Tetrathlon Boy's and Girl's Championship usually held in August.
6. If any Pony Clubbers or P.P.G. team from your Branch are going to a National Championship, assist in all preparation as needed. Assure that proper transportation and chaperones, if required, have been arranged. Pay necessary entry fees.
7. Continue scheduling and supervising mounted instruction.
8. HA and RA Testing will be held, either in your Region or a neighbouring region. If your Branch has a candidate, plan to attend.
9. Encourage as many members as possible to attend Camp if your Region hosts one.

### **AUGUST**

1. Prepare newsletter. Include up coming calendar of events for the fall season.
2. HA and RA tests are usually held in July and August. Plan to attend if you have a candidate.
3. Prepare for fall C and D testing if you have candidates. The aim should be to have all C and D testing completed in September and October for the fall testing.
4. International P.P.G., Tetrathlon and Rally competitions are regularly held. Watch for details and selection methods for these events for the next year.

### **SEPTEMBER**

1. Prepare newsletter. Include dates and places of any scheduled tests.
2. Talk to the Regional Testing Representative if you think you might have 'A' and/or 'HA' candidates for next year, in order to get appropriate applications in on time.
3. Attend any tests scheduled for this month.
4. 'C' and 'D' testing continues.



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5. Materials from National such as Branch Report forms and Membership List forms are mailed or e- mailed to the Branches in September. Make a list of everything you need to complete the Branch Report. Retiring D.C.'s, please act on them!
6. Introduce your Branch members to hunting if possible. If there is not a Hunt close by, a mock hunt or paper chase can be a lot of fun.
7. This is a good time of the year for trail rides and other fun events now that a busy summer has passed.

### **OCTOBER**

1. Prepare newsletter. Stress Membership renewal. Include information of your annual banquet or other event, the date, the place, and its costs, etc.
2. Select date and location of your Annual Branch meeting (November is suggested). Alert the secretary to send out notices at least two weeks in advance.
3. Arrange agenda for the Annual Branch meeting. You may want to include a film or a guest speaker.
4. Alert the nominating committee to line up candidates for the Branch Executive Committee, District Commissioner, Assistant District Commissioner and other offices.
5. Alert the treasurer to balance the books and prepare financial statements.
6. Begin planning details of your annual banquet or awards night.
7. Arrange for locations for unmounted meets in homes if your Branch is small, or in a hall, church basement, school, etc. if you have a large membership.

### **NOVEMBER**

1. Prepare newsletter.
2. If a special program or activity (such as caroling, ski party, hay ride, etc.) is planned at an unmounted meeting in November or December, call appropriate people and check on arrangements.
3. Bring current records up to date, including attendance, testing levels of your members, new members, etc.
4. Your Branch must hold elections for a new Branch Executive Committee, a D.C. and an A.D.C., unless everyone is back in by acclamation! The Canadian Pony Club Bylaws state that a Branch Annual Meeting will be the last one prior to December 31st. It is necessary to hold the Branch Annual Meeting before the Regional Annual Meeting, in order that the Region will have Head



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Fees and the most up to date Branch reports and Membership Lists to submit to National by January 1st.

5. Collect dues for the coming year from all your new and continuing members. It is a good idea to send bills out to the children (parents) for their annual dues, as this money will be required to pay the head fees. Don't forget to have the members fill out their PSO membership forms at the same time and give the form and fee to you so that you can submit them altogether to the PSO. This is the best and fastest method, although there are other alternatives.
6. The Branch report, which includes your new executive and your "head fees", and your Membership list are due to your Regional Chairman or Regional Membership Secretary by November 30th. Fill out Branch Report Forms and Branch Membership Lists in triplicate. Keep one copy of each for your own records. Submit two copies of each, plus a copy of each membership/risk form, together with a cheque for Regional and National Head Fees to your Regional Chairman or Regional Membership Secretary.
7. Get e-mail addresses for all members. Ideally, having your volunteers fill out and forward the Associate Membership to your Regional Membership Chair to track their involvement in CPC.
8. Meet with Branch Secretary and Branch Treasurer to complete Branch report.
9. Assess your supplies: forms, rules, pins, etc. and order for the new season if necessary.
10. Check with social chairman re: facilities and plans for annual banquet or awards night.
11. Arrange for thank you cards, a small gift for instructors or retiring officers. Notes of thanks are very important.
12. Attend your Regional Annual Meeting. Bring along members of your executive and a new calendar.

### **DECEMBER**

1. Prepare newsletter. Include dates of Quiz practices if you have scheduled them for January or February.
2. Plan your winter schedule of lectures, demonstrations, etc. to prepare your members for spring testing.
3. Check with instruction chairman about programs for unmounted meets for the remainder of the unmounted season. See that speakers and films and other resources are secured well in advance.
4. Perhaps parents would like a get together without the children! Plan a social event for parents only.



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5. Catch your breath after a long and hectic year!

Remember, these are just suggestions. Each Branch operates on their own schedule as does each Region. Keep in touch with your Regional Chair and try to attend all Regional Meetings. There is always a huge amount of information exchanged at these meetings, not all of which will be reflected in the minutes.

## 5 RECORD KEEPING

Depending on how busy the D.C. is and how large and active the club is, record keeping can be invaluable to the D.C. Usually, D.C.'s who are methodical, organized people will keep records as a matter of course and will rarely need to refer to them. The rest of us who are by nature disorganized, harried, forgetful and up to our ears in Pony Club activities tend to neglect record keeping and are the ones for whom records are the most useful. Train yourself to do at least minimal record keeping.

1. Get a couple of large cardboard cartons or, if the Branch is either solvent or lucky, buy or obtain a two-drawer filing cabinet.
2. Obtain a stock of file folders.

Use one box or drawer for Branch records and the other for National and Regional files. In one box or drawer keep the following:

1. A folder on Financial Records. This will hold the treasurer's reports over the years. If you are also the treasurer, you may want to keep the club books, receipts, cancelled cheques, etc. here.
2. Membership. This should include a sheet for each member which contains his name, address, phone number, his parents' names, the date of his joining your Branch and the dates upon which she/he obtained each of his ratings. Keep a copy of the signed Risk Form for each child. It can also include any health information you feel is pertinent to his participation in Pony Club sponsored activities. This is very useful in assessing whether she/he is ready to be re-rated within the Branch, and when you are asked to recommend candidates for B, B2, HA and A ratings. Test sheets can be copies, with one copy sent to the candidate, and the other retained in his file.
3. Attendance and Participation. Make out a master sheet with the names of all Pony Clubbers listed alphabetically down one side with their age and, if you like, their current rating. Across the top, list the meetings and lessons scheduled, and simply check off the child's attendance or absence at each. If you feel creative, you can develop your own shorthand to record whether she/he worked at a lesson, taught, gave a demonstration or whatever. Make an identical sheet out for participation in Pony Club activities, such as one day rallies, games, shows, vaulting clinics, field trips, etc. Again, your own shorthand can explain whether she/he was a team member, an enthusiastic supporter, a coach, etc. This will give you an excellent overview of



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how active your Branch is and how many Pony Clubbers are taking advantage of your program. It doesn't take long to keep these records once you get the system set up (on a rainy afternoon in January), and it will be very helpful to you when you are asked to say a few words about your Branch activities, write your "story" for the annual report, or have to choose candidates for awards at your awards banquet.

4. Correspondence. Copies of letters you have written and those written to you.
5. Minutes of Branch Executive Committee meetings and Regional meetings.
6. In addition, you may want files such as Insurance. Hold Harmless agreements, Special Event insurance forms, etc., Newsletter (for copies of the regular Branch newsletter), Forms (for extra D and C test sheets, dressage tests, membership sheets, etc.) and perhaps a file for each of your Branch activities (such as Horse Shows, Horse Trials, Mock Hunts and so forth) which will help you or future D.C.'s set up the next one.

In the second box or drawer, keep a file for each National Committee and Regional, Inter-Regional or Championship competitions in which your Branch participates. Mail from the National Office on a particular subject can be filed here (after being read!) for future reference and to remind you of current rule changes, etc. A file on "Working Student", "Exchanges", or "Instructors" will enable you to take advantage of these programs. The competition folders can store past programs, rule changes and current information about Regional competitions. A "Reports to National" file is a good place to keep copies of annual Branch report sheets. "A and B Test Information" can keep you abreast of rules relating to testing and allow you to store forms to be filled out for these tests. As you start keeping records, you will soon sort out for yourself what kind of categories are the most useful for your own purposes. In fact, you may find yourself obtaining a third large box to hold the overflow of club stationary, stencils, pencils, staplers, rating certificates, advertisements from ribbon companies, etc., ad infinitum.

A note on confidentiality: Pony Club files should be utilitarian and open to the Branch Executive Committee and other interested people except for membership files. An individual's file should be available to him and his parents at any time, but never to anyone else.

Encourage Pony Clubbers to track all of their participation and testing accomplishments in their CPC Passport. Each new member receives one when they join.

## **6 TIPS FOR A NEW DISTRICT COMMISSIONER**

You have accepted certain concrete duties that must be done. You have also accepted certain moral obligations. More detailed information is included in this handbook, but just for starters, the following tips might help:



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- Approach the job with enthusiasm. Knowledge is not essential. Being a "horse person" is not absolutely necessary, but it certainly can be an asset. (Or a liability, if you enjoy lots of free time to ride!) Remember always to be properly turned out.
- Keep your sense of humour; it will be vital to your sanity.
- Read all your Pony Club materials, follow instructions carefully, share all information with Pony Club members, instructors, parents; they can be a big help in making sure you follow instructions.
- Set up a filing system since most of what you receive will become important. You will have the only copy. This is, after all, a National Organization and it cannot survive if your dog eats the member record cards!
- Communicate with Pony Club members, instructors, parents, and the Regional Chairman. A newsletter is a necessity, but it cannot replace your willingness to be in touch with each family. Most problems can be solved or averted with good communication; and a long cord on your kitchen or workshop phone will allow you to clean tack, the silver, cook, or fix the lawn mower while you listen to the heartbeat of your Pony Club.
- It is assumed you enjoy all types of young people and are interested in their becoming responsible adults through Pony Club programs. Every potential member will be welcome, regardless of degree of talent of horse or rider. Your Pony Club program will help each achieve a goal. You also enjoy a challenge, and will learn to like adults, even Pony Club parents. This becomes easy when you remember that you have a fast bond; you both really care about the child involved.
- You will appoint charming, cooperative, willing people on your committees. You will be flexible and willing to compromise. Your idea might be perfect, but its time may not have come. You will try to get as many fathers involved as possible.
- You will make final decisions on everything. That is your job. Pony Clubs have not become known for their ability to "float". Set ground rules in the beginning for approving candidates for testing and teams. Consult with the Pony Clubbers first, on almost everything. They can teach you a lot!
- Now, after you have read all your Pony Club material, talked with past leaders, other Pony Club or knowledgeable horse people, and the Pony Club members, take a look at your members. What are their needs? What programs are needed to meet the requirements of the testing levels? What special activities would be suitable? What type of instruction is needed? What are your resources?



# CANADIAN PONY CLUB

## BRANCH DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS

HANDBOOK

**2023**

Loyalty

Character

Sportsmanship

- Select a planning committee. Set up a goal for the year, with some fun, social activities to include parents. Work up a weekly, or monthly, program to meet the goal. Determine the number, and job description, of the committees and instructors you will need. Make a list of who would be good in each job. Sign them up for the year, if possible. (By using the resources of other qualified people for clinics, ratings and shows, you will be a more effective administrator and get fewer angry phone calls.)
- Your job can be expensive, with postage, telephone, and transportation. Don't be a martyr. Estimate costs and ask your Branch to plan for these expenses.
- And so, you have a plan. You have people to help you. A newsletter will go out monthly, or quarterly, announcing the plans to each Pony Club family. E-mail is really more dependable than handing out information to the Pony Club member, but mail and phone calls may also be required.
- Expect to be on hand for Pony Club meetings, no matter who is in charge. Expect to participate in Regional activities. Expect to attend testing, workshops, etc. **THE ONLY WAY YOU CAN BE SURE ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED IS IF YOU WERE THERE.** Assume responsibilities for hosting Regional activities.
- As new Pony Club material and information arrives, you will read it carefully, follow instructions, and file it. Make special announcements, when needed, to everyone by e-mail or telephone.
- Check with your Regional Chairman whenever you have a question. He/she is the one to help you interpret CPC policy, along with a great many other problems that might come up.
- As D.C. you can make new friends, learn new skills, and never be bored. But when you no longer enjoy the job, let go. Allow someone else the privilege. Remember Pony Club is meant to be fun, and you are the one who makes it fun for your Pony Club members.

## 7 KEY CPC DOCUMENTATION

Be sure to review the CPC Operations Manual, CPC Bylaws as well as all Discipline and Testing Guidelines, Rules, etc. to ensure you can properly educate your members prior to participating in those events.

## 8 SUPPLIES, BADGES AND NATIONAL OFFICE

Supplies and badges can be purchased via the CPC Online Store. HINT: There is typically a badge sale in October of each year so a good time to stock up on badges for the upcoming year.

<https://canadianponyclub.org/shop-online>



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The main CPC Website is also a key source for all documentation as would your Regional web site be.  
CPC Web site is [Welcome | Canadian Pony Club](#).

National Administrator [info@canadiaponyclub.org](mailto:info@canadiaponyclub.org)