

General Rules for All Rodeo Competitors



All safety rules are to be observed during events.

1. A competitor may not compete if bleeding.
2. Rubber gloves are required for all simulated energized journeyman and apprentice events or as specified for each individual event. Rubber gloves may be inspected by the event staff prior to the start of each event. If rubber gloves are not required, work gloves shall be worn during the competition.
3. Safety glasses are required for all events.
4. Hard hats must be worn properly during all events.
5. Long-sleeved shirts are required. Sleeves can't be pushed or rolled up.
6. A random tool inspection may be conducted to check for safe condition and for any alterations to tools such as:
 - a. Tapered cuts on straps.
 - b. Tape on straps.
 - c. Filed buckles.
 - d. Fingers cut out of gloves.
 - e. Elongated holes in straps and belts.
 - f. Improper gaff length.
 - g. Unsafe handlines

If a judge discovers that tools and equipment are altered to be unsafe, 5 points will be deducted from the event that the competitor is competing in at the time the altered tool is discovered.
7. Competitors may ask the judge questions before the event begins, but not while judging, and it is his/her responsibility to do so. A maximum of 5 minutes to ask questions and layout tools will be given prior to the start of the event. Competitors must be completely prepared to start the event before the expiration of the 5-minute setup time (i.e. material laid out; climbing gear donned). Judges will provide the competitors with a 1-minute warning prior to setup time expiring.
8. Video footage will not be allowed to settle judging disputes.
9. One drone will be allowed per cooperative and there will be a schedule to take turns flying. Only one drone will be flown at a time.
10. Cheering is encouraged, but professional coaching from supporters outside individual event arenas will be controlled by immediately deducting 2 points to the competitor(s) followed by disqualification, if not stopped.
11. All tools shall be provided by the competitor(s) unless otherwise noted on the individual event specifications.
12. Battery powered tools are **NOT** allowed.

13. All permanent connections shall be wire brushed before completing connection, or as specified for each individual event.
14. All connections and hardware will be tightened to the appropriate torque rating using the proper tools (i.e. channel locks shall not be used to tighten nuts, etc.).
15. Time will start at the judge's signal.
16. Work gloves shall be worn when performing any work on the ground. A climber wearing his/ her climbing gear may assist the ground man while framing material during the event; However, gaff guards must be on gaffs.
17. Gaff guards must remain on climber's gaff when he/she is outside of the immediate work area (10 feet from the event pole).
18. Judging will continue until all materials are packed up and the event site is restored to the original condition.
19. It is mandatory for all Journeyman and Apprentice climbing events that the climbing competitors use personal fall protection systems. Fall protection systems shall be supplied by the competitor and be used in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications along with the use of a secondary work positioning strap or lanyard while transitioning around attachments on the pole. (**The use of two fall arrest devices will not be permitted**). While using the secondary positioning strap or lanyard the competitor shall not get into a position to allow for a free fall greater than 0.6 meters (2 feet).
20. Handlines must be used for all climbing events unless otherwise noted on each individual event. There must be one handline for every structure to be climbed. Handlines must meet the requirements stated in the 16th Edition of the APPA Safety Manual Section 507.19 that the handlines be constructed of a minimum ½ inch diameter rope. The handline must be hung on the structure prior to performing any work. It is required that the handline be railroaded to the ground prior to descending the pole. (**OX Blocks will NOT be allowed**)
21. Time for each event will begin with the judge's signal and the competitor is standing at arm's length from the pole. Or other specified by the judge. The fall arrest system will not be allowed to be attached to the pole prior to starting the event. Time stops when the last climber has both feet on the ground, unless otherwise noted on each individual event.
22. Competition eligibility requirements must be met.
 - a. a. All participants must be employed by an APPA member cooperative, municipal utility, joint action agency, or state/regional association.
 - b. b. A person is considered an apprentice for 4 years after he/she enters an apprentice program.

ADDITIONAL GENERAL RULES FOR ALL JOURNEYMAN EVENTS

1. NEC will supply and utilize a 10' x 10' (minimum) tarp to store tools and equipment on during the event (exception – Hurt Man Rescue).
2. All events will be simulated as de-energized and grounded. Leather work gloves will be used for all events.

3. On all simulated energized events, proper cover-up is required, NESC 2017 MAD.
4. On climbing events, both climbers must be back on the ground before the event will be considered complete, unless otherwise noted in the individual event.

INFRACTIONS: 2-, 5-, AND 10-POINT DEDUCTIONS

2-point deduction

1. Lose hardhat.
 2. Wearing a hard hat backwards.
 3. Not wearing safety glasses.
 4. Improper cover up – i.e. no rubber in reach, fall, or slip zone.
 5. Twisted hand line operation.
 6. Dropping tools, materials, or equipment.
 7. Cutout with loss of control on the pole.
 8. Hot-dogging¹.
 9. There must be one gaff in the pole at all times when climbing the pole.
 10. Handline operation when a climber is repositioning on the pole.
 11. Performing work on any structure prior to hanging hand line.
 12. Not using handline, bucket, or material bag for sending materials up and down the poles.
 13. Failure to railroad handline prior to descending pole.
 14. Misuse of tools.
 15. Misuse of insulating cover-up.
 16. Not wearing a long-sleeved shirt. Sleeves can't be pushed or rolled up.
 17. Injuries or cuts, which result in bleeding.
 18. Loss of control.
 19. Not wearing OSHA approved Line worker's climbing belt.
 20. Poor housekeeping².
 21. Exceeding the mean time to complete events.
 22. Groundman not wearing work gloves.
 23. Climbers not wearing work gloves (when rubber gloves are not required) to perform work on the ground.
 24. Fall arrest system not used within manufacturer's guidelines and/or not keeping system adjusted properly.
 25. Hanging tools on phase conductors, neutrals, crossarms or safety straps.
 26. Failure to maintain minimum approach distances as described by NESC2017.
 27. Failure to follow event rotation schedule, unless instructed to do so by Master Judge. This includes checking in for events and staying in line. Only 1 hour is permitted for lunch and 30 minutes between events.
 28. Being late for an event.
 29. Professional coaching from outside the event arena.
 30. Others as determined by individual event descriptions
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¹ Hot dogging is defined as a line worker “being out of control.” Examples: both gaffs out of the pole at the same time, drop steps, excessive uncontrolled speed.

² Poor housekeeping is defined as not keeping the work area in an organized manner. Examples: All tools and materials on tarp; Leaving tools and materials in a manner that would cause a safety hazard

5-point deduction

1. Continuing to work inside legal clearances after minimum approach distance has been violated.
2. Altering tools and equipment that renders them unsafe.

10-point deduction

1. Accidental contact with phases [with any equipment other than approved live line tools].
2. Working opposite energized phases at the same time.
3. Two-line workers who share the same pole will be penalized if the second line worker starts climbing before the first line worker is in working position.
4. Climber not wearing rubber gloves (in events where they are required) ground to ground.
5. Cut-out and fall to ground. (Climber’s feet are approx. 6’ from ground level prior to fall).
6. Ascending or descending the pole while other climbers are repositioning/transitioning, working, or if the handline is being operated.
7. Others as determined by individual event descriptions.

DISQUALIFICATION

1. Violating the Code of Conduct.
2. Unprofessional behavior.
3. Practicing on the rodeo event poles prior to the rodeo.
4. Intentional sabotage or tampering with materials, tools, or equipment on the rodeo field.
5. Protests need to be made by competitors only. No help from the spectators or others.
6. Coaching from supporters outside the arena that does not stop after the first warning (automatic 2-point deduction penalty).
7. Failure to attempt an event.

CONTESTING A CALL

Although we try to avoid any contested calls, there may be a time when the competitor feels the need to contest a deduction. The journeyman team or apprentice must be the one to contest the call. Help from spectators or others in a contested call situation will result in the team or apprentice being disqualified. No team or apprentice will be allowed to protest against another team or apprentice.

If a competitor wishes to contest a call, he/she must take his/her grievance to the chief event judge who will have been pointed out by the greeter for the event. The competitor must make his/her grievance known to the chief event judge *before* leaving the event area.

The drop-dead time is defined as the time at which the competitor(s) must stop and re-set the event.

2026 6th Annual Coastal Bend Lineman Rodeo Code of Conduct



The 6th Annual Coastal Bend Lineman Rodeo is first and foremost a demonstration of safe work practices and a training exercise.

As a Rodeo Participant, I understand that I must follow these rules to stay in good standing:

1. **Respect** the Rodeo, compete fairly and follow the rules and regulations.
2. **Show** respect for the authority of the Rodeo judges.
3. **Demonstrate** good sportsmanship before, during and after events.
4. **Help** observers understand the lineman's philosophy on safe work practices so that they can watch and enjoy the Rodeo.
5. **Be** courteous to other teams and treat all competitors, coaches, judges, greeters, auditors, volunteers, and others with respect.
6. **Respect** the privilege of the use of public facilities.
7. **Refrain** from the use of drugs, alcohol, and abusive language/gestures during the competition.
8. **Always** represent your cooperative in a professional manner. Any infractions – regardless of when they occur – will be reported back to your supervisor.

Thank you for participating in the 2026 6th Annual Coastal Bend Lineman Rodeo.