



**The American Council of Spotted Asses,
Inc. (ACOSA)
Corporation By-Laws**

Revised 2015



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Article I. ACOSA Mission

ACOSA's mission is the promotion and preservation of the Spotted Ass (donkey/burro) and Spotted Half-Ass (mule/hybrid). ACOSA fulfills its mission by continuously maintaining a breed registry, periodic on-line and written education, and annually at least one national, public event.

ACOSA has been continuously incorporated from its original filing in Montana on August 7, 1969, with a transfer to Missouri on 11/4/1991. ACOSA shall at all times be operated and conducted as a nonprofit corporation in accordance with the laws of the State of Missouri.

ACOSA's slogan is "put color in your life", its official copyrighted website is www.spottedass.com, its email is acosa@spottedass.com, and its registered trademark seal is:



Article II. Organizational Governance

Section 2.01 Organization

ACOSA supports transparency of its nonprofit operations by making these bylaws, meeting minutes, financial statement, and registry statistics available annually to members.

ACOSA is managed by the Board of Directors and Officers listed on the current year incorporation charter.

ACOSA rules in this document apply to all directors, officers, members, and approved shows.

Section 2.02 ACOSA Membership

ACOSA membership is open to any US or international person, even if they do not have an animal eligible for ACOSA registration.

Annual membership is \$20 for US destinations, and \$35 (payable in US funds) for international destinations, and is required to register animals. A five-year membership is available to US destinations for \$90, and to foreign destinations for \$155.

Section 2.03 ACOSA Registrations

To qualify for registration, the owner must be a current, paid member of ACOSA. To qualify for registration, the animal (of any size as described by ACOSA's mission) must have at least two spots, visible on a photograph, behind the throatlatch and above the legs. Every owner and breeder must abide by the American Donkey and Mule Society (ADMS) code of ethics.

ACOSA registration fees are \$15 per animal for new registrations and \$10 for transfers. At ACOSA's discretion, a verbal confirmation of show eligibility to a show management official after completed application, photos, and fees are received by ACOSA require an additional \$35.

Article III. ACOSA Show Rules

Section 3.01 Show Approval

Any show may include ACOSA classes with approval by ACOSA prior to entries being accepted. In lieu of a show approval fee, the show must include “ACOSA” on any ribbons or awards. A list of classes to be offered will be submitted to ACOSA at the time approval is sought. Show management will be furnished with a copy of the current show rules and agrees to abide by these rules. Show management will furnish placing for classes to ACOSA within 10 days following the show.

An ACOSA show or class may be judged by any individual who holds a current card with at least one recognized donkey or mule organization, such as ADMS, NASMA, or NMDA. Judges must be familiar with, and be prepared to, judge classes in accordance with these ACOSA rules.

Section 3.02 ACOSA Entries

ACOSA shows or classes are only open to animals registered with ACOSA. Any animal competing in ACOSA classes that are determined to be ineligible for entry through an inquiry by show management or ACOSA official will forfeit any prizes awarded and be subject to disqualification from the show.

Entry forms must be completely filled out and signed by the exhibitor/owner. The name of the animal on the entry form must be written exactly as it appears on the ACOSA registration certificate. ACOSA registration numbers must be included on the entry form and a copy of the registration certificate submitted with the entry form. Owners are responsible for correctly measuring their animals to ensure appropriate classes are entered. Show management may measure animals at their discretion. No consideration is given for shod or unshod animals with regard to height measurement.

Section 3.03 Definitions

Juniors are defined by any exhibitor under the age of 18 as of January 1 of the current year. A junior is not permitted to show or be in control of a jack at any time at the show grounds. Juniors may show in all junior designated and open classes, and may show in both donkey and mule classes.

Seniors are exhibitors who are 18 years or older on January 1st of the current year. **Novice** are inexperienced adult (senior) handlers. **Green** are open to animals of any age that have never been shown in bridle, handled by seniors. Green animals may be shown in this class for two (calendar) years.

Donkey **sizes** are consistent with the ADMS definition: miniature 36" or less, standard jennets 36.01"-53.99", standard jacks/geldings 36.01"-55.99", mammoth jennets 54" and over, mammoth jacks/geldings 56" and over. Mule/hybrid sizes: miniature 50" or less, saddle mule/hybrids 50.01" and over. In mixed donkey-mule/hybrid classes, donkey sizes will preside if size is applicable.

Section 3.04 Conduct

Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated. Contestants exhibiting unsportsmanlike conduct will be excused from competition and asked to leave the show. An unruly animal may be excused from the ring if the judge determines it to be at risk to the safety of others in the ring. Any form of cruelty or inhumane treatment of an animal in the show ring or on the show grounds will not be tolerated. Anyone found to be handling an animal in a cruel or inhumane manner will be excused from competition and asked to leave the show grounds, with all show premiums forfeited. Anyone who exhibits disrespectful behavior towards the judge in the ring, including but not limited to protesting placing will forfeit all entry fees submitted and premiums received and not be permitted to participate in any additional classes at the show.

Failure to pay entry fees, stall rent, camping fees, etc. will result in the offender not being allowed to participate in any ACOSA show, class, or service until the fees are paid. Protests of rules violations or show management must be submitted in writing to an ACOSA official or show management within 48 hours of the completion of the show. A fee of \$100 must accompany the written protest and is not refundable regardless of outcome.

Section 3.05 General attire

All handlers, including grooms, must be suitably attired for the class entered, under penalty by the judge. All junior exhibitors entering riding and driving classes must wear safety headgear. No shorts, sandals, open-toed shoes, t-shirts, tank tops, floppy hats, or ball caps are allowed except in Costume Classes. Clothing with logos or any form of advertising of farm, ranch, or any other business is not permitted except in a class designated as “commercial”. The judge may authorize deviation if the temperatures are outside 55-90°F.

For halter and in-hand performance, any Western or English attire that is appropriate for the respective class, or conservative dress according to the style of the present day, such as: (gentlemen) coat or jacket, and (ladies) conservative dress, tailored suit, or slacks. Unless otherwise specified, hats and gloves are required. Footwear should be sturdy and provide good footing.

Section 3.06 Equipment

For all classes, the equipment must be of sufficient strength, in good repair, clean, properly fitted to the animal, and appropriate to the class entered. The equipment must allow the handler to control the animal and to perform any patterns the judge may require such as picking up the hind foot, ground tying the animal, or stopping on command.

Halter and in-hand performance classes require a halter and lead of the same material as the halter (leather/synthetic), with a throatlatch and style customary for the type of animal being

shown. Jennets or mares may accompany foals in halter classes, with a second handler (one handler per animal) and coordinating equipment.

Jacks must wear appropriate headgear: stallion bridle or halter with stud chain, throatlatch, and be under control at all times on the show grounds by a senior exhibitor.

Animals may be shown shod or barefoot in any class. Hooves should be trimmed to match pastern angle (natural hoof). Hoof trimming and shoeing must comply with the USDA Horse Protection regulations. Judges must disqualify lame or tender footed animals.

Section 3.07 ACOSA classes.

The purpose of ACOSA classes is to judge the animal's color, conformation excellence, and genetic potential to perform the work for which he was bred, based upon the evaluation and analysis of visible attributes. The visual appeal of the pattern and color of the animal's coat combined with the overall balance, form, and structure, coordination of action, and disposition are all considerations, with the emphasis being on color. Judged: 65% color and 35% conformation, soundness, way of going, and performance.

An ACOSA-sponsored show may offer qualifying classes by size, age, sex, and/or donkey/hybrid. An ACOSA-sponsored national show offers a minimum of four "ACOSA Championship" classes, following qualifying classes as needed to limit entries, for each of jennet, gelding, jack, and mule/hybrid, where each class is open to all ages and sizes.

A regional or local show offering at least one ACOSA class will be open to all ages and sizes, with jacks separated from jennets where possible.

Article IV. Governing Body

Section 4.01 Board of Directors

Board members will be elected by the members at the annual meeting. Each will serve two years, with an additional year for the “Past President”. There is no limit to the number of terms. All Board members except the “Past President” may vote on Board issues, as well as any member ballot (including election of board members). Board issues include, but are not limited to, these by-laws, the annual meeting past minutes and upcoming agendas, ACOSA business and related fees, and show/member ethical issues or protests. The board meeting will consist of a call to order, approval of old minutes, treasurer’s report, secretary’s report, old business, new business, adjournment. Other than the Agent, the Directors may be residents of any US state or territory, and conduct their business at the place convenient to the group. One of the Directors will serve as the corporation Agent; this person must be a resident of the state of Missouri. Each Board Member is encouraged to facilitate an ACOSA class or event at a local or regional show annually.

Section 4.02 President

Also an officer of the corporation, the President manages ACOSA legality and overall operations. Oversees all functions and fills in where needed. Coordinates annual Board and member meetings, as well as the national show(s). Prepares “president’s message” for each hardcopy and electronic newsletter, and solicits member feedback. May appoint temporary Board members in the event of emergency position evacuation. Ensures all corporation, member, and website information is current and compliant with all legal and ACOSA policies and deadlines. Voted by members in even years for two-year term, plus an additional year without Board voting privileges as “Past President”.

Section 4.03 Vice-President

Manages ACOSA promotion. Assists in preparing the hardcopy and electronic newsletters. Ensures ACOSA ads and web references are up-to-date. Provides educational information for the website, shows, and new members, such as on-line photo albums, social media, and an ACOSA educational brochure. Voted by members in odd years for two-year term.

Section 4.04 Webmaster

Manages ACOSA preservation. Designs and manages the website and electronic databases. Oversees the registry, membership, and breeders databases and operations. Prepares annual statistics related to these activities. Voted by members in odd years for two-year term.

Section 4.05 Secretary

Primarily an officer of the corporation, the Secretary is ACOSA's historian. Minimally, records minutes for annual meeting(s) and submits the annual corporate documents. Also maintains historically significant information for the promotional and preservation aspects of ACOSA. Voted by members in even years for two-year term.

Section 4.06 Treasurer

Manages ACOSA finances. Oversees the store operations (sales and purchasing). Manages all income and expenses, and ensures corporate compliance with federal and state tax laws. Prepares annual financial statements. Voted by members in even years for two-year term.

Article V. Governance & Management Policies

Section 5.01 Compensation and commitment

All ACOSA Board of Directors and members are volunteers; there is no executive compensation. Each member of the Board can reasonably be expected to provide 20-100 hours annually.

Section 5.02 Ethics

The ACOSA Board of Directors are required to disclose any conflict of interest annually in writing, itemizing any known financial interest that the individual has in any business entity that transacts business with ACOSA.

ACOSA's code of ethics directs all members to support a strong culture of legal compliance and ethical integrity in all ACOSA transactions. Further, it directs members who own or handle registered animals to do so at all times with humane treatment and excellence in breed standards. The Board of Directors encourages confidential reporting of any suspected financial impropriety, misuse of resources, inhumane handling, or irresponsible breeding and sales.

Section 5.03 Disclosure

ACOSA records its governance decisions in minutes to the Board Member and General Member meetings, to be held annually at the national event. Proposed changes must be submitted by calendar year-end, to provide communication to the members at least 60 days prior to the annual meeting for vote, decision, and/or adoption.

ACOSA publishes the current organizational documents to its members annually (by-laws and financial statement). ACOSA maintains document history in an electronic drop-box accessible to the Board of Directors, as well as all current year documents in

progress (newsletter, etc.). ACOSA currently keeps both paper and locally electronic registry records, and will develop a plan to archive this in the electronic drop-box. It is not currently the policy to destroy any finalized paper or electronic documents, finalized meaning “not in draft form for review”.

Article VI. Financial Management

Section 6.01 Income and investments

ACOSA does not maintain investments.

ACOSA uses the income from the registry, membership, and store items as the fundraising tools for supporting the educational offerings of the Spotlight newsletter and website, as well as the registry and incorporation expenses.

Section 6.02 Financial statements

ACOSA financial statements for the prior calendar year will be compiled and publicized to the Board of Directors and members annually. The Missouri Department of Revenue Request for Tax Clearance will be submitted for approval annually to support the corresponding annual Missouri nonprofit registration report of ACOSA.

