

**Classification and Rating Administration Rules**  
As revised, effective April 1, 2007

**REFERENCE TABLE OF CHANGES TO THE CARA RULES**

**“The Rating Board does not determine the content that may be included in motion pictures by filmmakers, nor does it evaluate the quality or social value of motion pictures. By issuing a rating, it seeks to inform parents of the level of certain content in a motion picture (violence, sex, drugs, language, thematic material, adult activities, etc.) that parents may deem inappropriate for viewing by their children. It is not CARA’s purpose to prescribe socially-appropriate values or to suggest any evolution of the values held by American parents, but instead to reflect, as sensitively as possible, the current values of the majority of American parents, so that parents benefit from and feel fairly informed by the ratings system.”**

**—from the Introduction to the revised CARA Rules**

<b>Enhanced Transparency and Outreach</b>	
Open and transparent dissemination of revised and more comprehensive CARA Rules, including posting of the Rules on the MPAA and NATO websites.	
Continuing and formalized education of raters.	<b>Article I.D.</b> —The Chairperson of CARA will develop and maintain a curriculum of relevant materials for the initial training of Raters and for periodic review with them of the standards applied by the majority of American parents to determine the motion picture content suitable for viewing by their children.
Publication of the names of the CARA Chairperson and Senior Raters, but continuing the anonymity of other raters to shield against improper influence.	<b>Article I.E.</b> —The identities of the Chairperson of CARA and of the Senior Raters will be disclosed to the public and to producers and distributors who submit motion pictures for rating by CARA. The identity of the other Raters will not be disclosed, to protect them from being subject to pressure from members of the public and producers and distributors of motion pictures with respect to the rating of individual motion pictures.
Clarifying that proposals to revise the Rules may be made by anyone.	<b>Article V.C.</b> — Proposals to revise these Rules must be made to the CEO of the MPAA and the President of NATO. Any participant in the rating system or member of the public may make such proposals. The CEO of the MPAA and the President of NATO may make such revisions to these Rules as they jointly agree are appropriate and may provide guidance on the interpretation of these Rules.

## Enhanced Information to Parents—The Heart of Our Mission

More detailed descriptions of the ratings and the kind of content that triggers specific ratings.

### Article II.Sec.3—Rating Classifications

A. Ratings and rating reasons issued by CARA are intended to be used by parents to assist them in determining whether the motion picture is appropriate for their children to see and whether their children should be accompanied while seeing the motion picture. In rating a motion picture, the Rating Board evaluates each motion picture in its entirety and considers those aspects of the motion picture that most parents would consider in determining whether that motion picture is suitable for viewing by their children, including mature themes, language, depictions of violence, nudity, sensuality, depictions of sexual activity, adult activities (*i.e.* activities that adults, but not minors, may engage in legally), and drug use.

B. CARA assigns a rating to each motion picture. CARA assigns the rating the Rating Board believes would best reflect the opinion of most American parents about the suitability of that motion picture for viewing by their children. When CARA assigns a rating, it also provides rating reasons for that rating in order to better inform parents of the elements of the motion picture that caused the motion picture to be given that rating.

C. CARA assigns one of the following ratings, with the following meanings, to each picture:

(1) G - General Audiences. All Ages Admitted.

A G-rated motion picture contains nothing in theme, language, nudity, sex, violence or other matters that, in the view of the Rating Board, would offend parents whose younger children view the motion picture. The G rating is not a “certificate of approval,” nor does it signify a “children’s” motion picture. Some snippets of language may go beyond polite conversation but they are common everyday expressions. No stronger words are present in G-rated motion pictures. Depictions of violence are minimal. No nudity, sex scenes or drug use are present in the motion picture.

(2) PG - Parental Guidance Suggested. Some Material May Not Be Suitable For Children.

A PG-rated motion picture should be investigated by parents before they let their younger children attend. The PG rating indicates that parents may consider some material unsuitable for their children, and parents should make that decision. The more mature themes in some PG-rated motion pictures may call for parental guidance. There may be minimal profanity and some depictions of violence or brief nudity. But these elements are not deemed so intense as to require that parents be strongly cautioned beyond the suggestion of parental guidance. There is no drug use content in a PG-rated motion picture.

(3) PG-13 - Parents Strongly Cautioned. Some Material May Be Inappropriate For Children Under 13.

A PG-13 rating is a sterner warning to parents to determine whether their children under age 13

	<p>should view the motion picture, as some material might not be suited for them. A PG-13 motion picture may go beyond the PG rating in theme, violence, nudity, sensuality, language, adult activities or other elements, but does not reach the restricted R category. The theme of the motion picture by itself will not result in a rating greater than PG-13, although depictions of activities related to a mature theme may result in a restricted rating for the motion picture. Any drug use will initially require at least a PG-13 rating. More than brief nudity will require at least a PG-13 rating, but such nudity in a PG-13 rated motion picture generally will not be sexually oriented. There may be some depictions of violence in a PG-13 movie, but generally not realistic, intense, extreme or persistent violence. A motion picture's single use of one of the harsher sexually-derived words, though only as an expletive, initially requires at least a PG-13 rating. More than one such expletive requires an R rating, as must even one of those words used in a sexual context. The Rating Board nevertheless may rate such a motion picture PG-13 if, based on a special vote by a two-thirds majority, the Raters feel that most American parents would believe that a PG-13 rating is appropriate because of the context or manner in which the words are used or because the use of those words in the motion picture is inconspicuous.</p>
<p><b><u>Terrified Tots.</u></b> An additional advisory concerning young children in the description of the R rating: “Generally, it is not appropriate for parents to bring their young children with them to R-rated motion pictures.”</p>	<p><b>Art. II, Sec. 3(C)(4)</b></p> <p>(4) R - Restricted. Children Under 17 Require Accompanying Parent or Adult Guardian. An R-rated motion picture contains adult material. An R-rated motion picture may include adult themes, adult activity, hard language, intense or persistent violence, sexually-oriented nudity, drug abuse or other elements, so that parents are counseled to take this rating very seriously. Children under 17 are not allowed to attend R-rated motion pictures unaccompanied by a parent or adult guardian. Parents are strongly urged to find out more about R-rated motion pictures in determining their suitability for their children. Generally, it is not appropriate for parents to bring their young children with them to R-rated motion pictures.</p>
<p><b><u>Revitalizing the NC-17.</u></b> Additional language in the description of the NC-17 rating to eliminate any notion that NC-17 constitutes a negative judgment (as part of our continuing and critical effort to ensure a viable NC-17 rating and avoid undue pressure on the R rating).</p>	<p><b>Art. II, Sec. 3(C)(5)</b></p> <p>(5) NC-17 - No One 17 and Under Admitted. An NC-17 rated motion picture is one that most parents would consider patently too adult for their children 17 and under. No children will be admitted. NC-17 does not mean “obscene” or “pornographic” in the common or legal meaning of those words, and should not be construed as a negative judgment in any sense. The rating simply signals that the content is appropriate only for an adult audience. An NC-17 rating can be based on violence, sex, aberrational behavior, drug abuse or any other element that most parents would consider too strong and therefore off-limits for viewing by their children.</p>
<p><b><u>Adult Activities as Factors in Ratings.</u></b> “Adult activities”—activities that are legal for adults but not for children—can be a factor in the determination of a rating, though we are still reviewing how to make that determination in practice</p>	<p><b>Art. II, Sec. 3(A)</b></p> <p>Ratings and rating reasons issued by CARA are intended to be used by parents to assist them in determining whether the motion picture is appropriate for their children to see and whether their children should be accompanied while seeing the motion picture. In rating a motion picture, the Rating Board evaluates each motion picture in its entirety and considers those aspects of the motion picture that most parents would consider in determining whether that motion picture is suitable for viewing by their children, including mature themes, language, depictions of violence, nudity, sensuality, depictions of sexual activity, adult activities (<i>i.e.</i> activities that adults, but not minors, may engage in legally), and drug use.</p>

<p><b><u>Rating Reasons.</u></b> The revised Rules now contain specific mention of rating reasons, the purpose for assigning such reasons, and the procedure for doing so.</p> <p>Not a new rule – but an important codification of existing practice and a further instance of transparency.</p>	<p><b>Art. II, Sec. 2(G)</b></p> <p>Every motion picture assigned a rating of PG, PG-13, R or NC-17 by the Rating Board also is assigned “rating reasons.” These rating reasons help guide parents on the type of content that resulted in the motion picture being assigned that rating; modifiers indicate the type and intensity of specific elements in the movie. The rating reasons are not an exhaustive list of the type of content in the motion picture but reflect only the type of content in the motion picture that is strong enough to merit the rating category assigned to the motion picture. (<i>E.g.</i>, a motion picture rated R with rating reasons only for “sexual content” also may include language, depictions of violence or other rating relevant elements, but only at a PG-13 or lower level.) The rating reasons for each rated motion picture are determined by the Chairperson of CARA or the Senior Rater, in conjunction with the Raters who viewed the motion picture, based on the elements of the motion picture identified in the ballots of the Raters who viewed the motion picture as elements that caused the motion picture to receive that rating.</p>
<p><b>Enhanced Appellate Procedures</b></p>	
<p>Specifying minimum qualifications for Appeals Board members, and provisions for additional types of Appeals Board members and observers.</p>	<p><b>Art. IV, Sec. 1(A)(5)-(8)</b></p> <p>(5) The MPAA and NATO may establish minimum qualifications for experience and job responsibilities for the representatives that may be designated to the Appeals Board by each their member companies.</p> <p>(6) The CEO of the Independent Film &amp; Television Alliance ("IFTA") or his/her representative.</p> <p>(7) Up to four employees of independent producers or distributors of motion pictures, each of whom will be designated periodically by agreement of the CEO of the MPAA and the President of NATO (provided that such independent producer or distributor agrees in writing to submit all of its motion pictures for rating by CARA and to release those motion pictures for exhibition only with their CARA rating).</p> <p>(8) Up to four individuals not affiliated with a motion picture producer, distributor or exhibitor, designated periodically by agreement of the CEO of the MPAA and the President of NATO, each of whom is knowledgeable about: the standards generally applied by American parents for determining the suitability of motion pictures for viewing by their children; and, the appropriateness of various types of content for viewing by children.</p>
<p>Rotating terms for Appeals Board members.</p>	<p><b>Art. IV, Sec. 1(C)</b></p> <p>Each member of the Appeals Board will be appointed for a term of three (3) years and may be appointed for no more than two (2) consecutive full terms of three years each. Representatives of MPAA and NATO members will serve staggered terms, so that the term of one of its three representatives ends each year. . . .</p>

<p>Allowing emeritus members of the Appeals Board to participate in appeals for which a quorum cannot otherwise be obtained.</p>	<p><b>Art. IV, Sec. 1(C)</b></p> <p>... At the discretion of the Chairperson of the Appeals Board, emeritus members of the Appeals Board may serve on the appeal of individual motion pictures if the current representatives of the MPAA or NATO member they represent are not available and their participation is necessary to meet the quorum requirements for an appeal.</p>
<p>Describing conflicts of interest and requirement of recusal by any appeals board member confronting such a conflict of interest.</p>	<p><b>Art. IV, Sec. 2(B)</b></p> <p>No member of the Appeals Board may participate in any aspect of the appeal of the rating of a motion picture in which the member or any legal entity with which he or she is associated, or any affiliate of such an entity, has any interest. If a member of the Appeals Board is or becomes aware of any matter that could materially affect his or her independent judgment or scrupulous adherence to these Rules with respect to a particular appeal, the member must decline to participate in such appeal.</p>
<p>Defining the meaning of “clearly erroneous”—the standard by which an appeals panel may overturn the decision of the ratings board.</p>	<p><b>Art. IV, Sec. 2(D)</b></p> <p>The Appeals Board will consider whether the majority of American parents would believe that a less restrictive rating should have been assigned to the motion picture. Members of the Appeals Board may vote to overturn the rating of the motion picture only if they believe that the rating assigned by the Rating Board was clearly erroneous, meaning that the Appeals Board member concludes that the rating assigned by the Rating Board clearly is inconsistent with the established standards for that rating.</p> <p>– <i>see also</i> <b>Art. IV, Sec. 4(R)</b></p>
<p>Prohibiting frivolous appeals and providing for possible sanctions for abuse of the appeals process.</p>	<p><b>Art. IV, Sec. 2(F)</b></p> <p>An appeal may not be filed which (1) the Appellant knows is frivolous or lacks a substantial basis under these Rules; or (2) is intended to generate publicity for the motion picture rather than to assert a legitimate dispute with the rating assigned by the Rating Board. In the event of a violation of this rule, the Chairperson of the Appeals Board may apply appropriate sanctions to ensure the fairness and integrity of the appeals process.</p>
<p>Allowing waiver of appeal deadlines <i>only</i> when the delay is caused by circumstances beyond the control of the appellant or appellant’s agents.</p>	<p><b>Art. IV, Sec. 3(B)</b></p> <p>An appeal from a rating certified by CARA must be instituted: 1) not more than twenty-five business days after the date on which the rating is certified by CARA; and, 2) not less than twenty-five business days before the initial public exhibition or distribution of that version of the motion picture in the United States. The Chairperson of the Appeals Board may grant a waiver of these deadlines only when the inability to comply with these deadlines is due to circumstances beyond the control of the Appellant or its agents.</p>

<p>Allowing appeals in a different location with the consent of all parties.</p>	<p><b>Art. IV, Sec. 3(G)</b></p> <p>Appeals generally are held at an appropriate screening facility in the Los Angeles metropolitan area. However, the Chairperson of the Appeals Board, with the consent of the parties, may schedule an appeal to be held at a different location or in a different manner.</p>
<p>Allowing reference to other films during appeals as arguable “precedents,” provided that a cautionary statement is read at the appeal to avoid misleading use of different films.</p>	<p><b>Art. IV, Sec. 4(N)</b></p> <p>The parties’ statements may refer to similar content in any other motion picture that received a CARA rating, provided that Appeals Board members will be instructed as follows upon the occurrence of such comparative reference to other motion pictures:</p> <p>Each motion picture is unique and should be evaluated as a whole and the content of that motion picture should be analyzed in context. While comparisons to other motion pictures may prove helpful to evaluation of the rating being appealed, Appeals Board members are cautioned that such comparisons may be misleading and should therefore be disregarded if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An Appeals Board member has not seen the entire referenced motion picture, or lacks sufficient recollection of the entire motion picture to form a judgment on its rating;</li> <li>The content of the referenced motion picture, taken as a whole, was not comparable to the content of the motion picture on appeal;</li> <li>The content at issue may have occurred in a differently rated, or unrated, version of the referenced motion picture;</li> <li>The values of a majority of American parents about the content that is appropriate for their children may fairly be said to have changed since the rating of the referenced motion picture; or,</li> <li>Other circumstances indicate that comparison to the other motion picture is unreliable or misleading.</li> </ul> <p>An Appellant that intends to refer in support of its appeal to content in any other rated motion picture must advise the Chairperson of the Appeals Board of the titles of those other motion pictures not less than three (3) business days prior to the appeal. The Chairperson of CARA must advise the Chairperson of the Appeals Board of the titles of any other motion picture the Chairperson of CARA intends to refer to in support of the rating not less than two (2) business days prior to the rating appeal. The Chairperson of the Appeals Board will communicate those lists of titles to the parties prior to the appeal.</p>
<p>Allowing advisory statements to MPAA &amp; NATO by an Appeals Board where the appeal raises issues that suggest modification or reinterpretation of the Rules.</p>	<p><b>Art. IV, Sec. 4(V)</b></p> <p>The Appeals Board may request the Chairperson of the Appeal to advise the CEO of the MPAA and the President of NATO that particular issues arising in the appeal suggest the need for a more specific interpretation, or re-interpretation, of these Rules.</p>