
HPBA SUITCASING & OUTBOARDING POLICY

With full support from the Hearth, Patio, & Barbecue Association Board of Directors, HPBA has adopted a formal policy forbidding suitcasing and outboarding at the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Expo (HPBExpo) to protect the investment of HPBExpo exhibitors and sponsors, and the overall integrity of the show. HPBExpo is the premier live industry marketplace for indoor and outdoor living.

This policy protects the investment of HPBExpo exhibitors and sponsors, and their success at the HPBExpo. As such, the **HPBA Suitcasing & Outboarding Policy** is strictly enforced with the help of onsite security, the Suitcasing Prevention Team, board members, staff members, fellow exhibitors, and attendees.

Suppliers, manufacturers, or providers of business services (Associate members/non-members) who engage in suitcasing or outboarding gain unethical access to show attendees. These actions diminish the size and diffuse the quality of the audience available to exhibitors and sponsors. HPBExpo exhibitors and sponsors have dedicated money and resources to ethically participate in the HPBExpo.

HPBA prohibits solicitation, “suitcasing,” or “outboarding” by suppliers, manufacturers, or providers of business services (Associate members/non-members) who conduct business at or in conjunction with HPBExpo without an HPBExpo exhibit or threshold HPBExpo sponsorship.

Unethical Badge Sharing: It is unethical to register or give a badge to anyone *other than* your company personnel. Violation of this policy will result in penalty fees equal to the total potential revenue loss determined by HPBA Show Management.

WHAT ARE SUITCASING & OUTBOARDING?

“Suitcasing” and “Outboarding” are unethical practices in which suppliers, manufacturers, or providers of business services (Associate members/non-members) conduct, transact, or promote business at or in conjunction with the HPBExpo without having an HPBExpo exhibit or threshold sponsorship.

“Suitcasing” refers to non-exhibiting/non-sponsoring companies, stakeholders, or individuals who attend the trade show as attendees and solicit business in trade show aisles, session rooms, hotel lobbies, or any other nearby or shared areas.

“Outboarding” refers to non-exhibiting/non-sponsoring companies, stakeholders, or individuals that host meetings, events, demos, etc., outside of the exhibit hall, such as in hospitality suites, restaurants, or public places near the HPBExpo, and invite registered attendees to leave the Expo to attend their events.

In summary, companies and individuals participating in these unethical activities take advantage of centralized HPBExpo attendees by holding parasitic events without material contributions to the primary

event (HPBExpo). By doing so, these companies and individuals harm the success of the primary event and its invested stakeholders.

SUITCASING & OUTBOARDING EXAMPLES

Show Management recognizes that violations may also be commercial activity conducted from a hotel guest room or hospitality suite, a restaurant, a club, or any other place of assembly. For this policy's purposes, violations may occur at venues other than the exhibition floor and other HPBExpo program-related events.

Show Management must be informed of any hospitality suite, reception, training, or event held with or adjacent to HPBExpo event dates. Written approval by Show Management must be received prior to the event. Use the [ancillary event form](#) to submit any events you wish to hold in conjunction with HPBExpo.

[SUBMIT YOUR EVENT FOR APPROVAL](#)

ATTENDEE POLICY

To qualify as an Expo attendee, one must represent buying entities, retailers/dealers, chimney sweeps/installers/maintenance, distributors, manufacturer representatives or non-profits. Manufacturer Representatives must not represent non-exhibiting manufacturers or their products and must register with an exhibiting company. All suppliers, manufacturers, and suppliers of business services (Associate members and non-members) are eligible for exhibitor badges only to participate at HPBExpo. Please note that while all Expo attendees are invited to the HPBExpo, any attendee who is observed to be soliciting business in the aisles or other public spaces, or another company's booth will be asked to leave immediately.

- Individuals representing non-exhibiting companies may not engage in sales activities in any official event space (such as breakout session rooms or in the Expo) or any surrounding public hotel space, including hotel lobbies and restaurants. No use of the Expo or common space for this purpose will be permitted.
- Individuals/companies may not display or advertise products or services outside of an official exhibit space at Expo where exhibits are present.
- Individuals/companies may not alter official HPBExpo badges, lend their badges to colleagues, or register individuals as company representatives to extend a complimentary registration or discount.
- The use of deceptive or false registration credentials and/or unethical methods to obtain information and/or gain an advantage over a competitor may result in the expulsion of the individual from the HPBExpo and future HPBExpo events.

HPBA asks that attendees not interact with individuals engaging in suitcasing or outboarding activities.

WHAT CAN YOU DO

If you suspect a violation of the policy regarding suitcasing or outboarding at the Expo, take swift action to report it. Complaints may be filed confidentially.

- **Before the Show:** If you feel there is a reasonable risk of a problem involving suitcasing or outboarding, notify Show Management prior to arrival by emailing expo@hpba.org.
- **Onsite:** If you suspect another company of suitcasing or outboarding, report this to HPBExpo Registration, and someone from Show Management will be called to address it.

[SUBMIT VIOLATION TO MANAGEMENT](#)

WHAT SHOW MANAGEMENT WILL DO

The Suitcasing Prevention Team

Show Management has created a Suitcasing Prevention Team that includes industry leaders and volunteers along with security personnel who will be in place from the start of the Expo to the conclusion of the Expo. This team will respond to all complaints regarding suitcasing or outboarding.

The Suitcasing Prevention Team will have the following responsibilities:

- Review complaints concerning suitcasing.
- Take appropriate action, including removal from the Show floor.
- Levy penalties for violations, up to and including, suspension from participation in future Expos.

If the Suitcasing Prevention Team determines that a complaint is valid, the party/company may incur penalties for violation.

PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION

- Offenders will be escorted off the premises.
- Security and/or law enforcement will be enlisted, as necessary.
- Repeat offenders will be banned from attending future HPBA events.
- Offenders can face monetary and other penalties as deemed necessary by the HPBA Show Management.