

CONSULTATION NOTICE – RULES OF RACING

Code of Racing	Thoroughbred
Rule	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>AR 79 – Horses with bleeding;</i> 2. <i>AR 84 – Pregnant horses;</i> 3. <i>AR 87 – Horses that have had an intra-synovial injection (and AR 2 (Dictionary) definition of “Intra-synovial injection”);</i> 4. <i>AR 88B – Horses returning from extended layoffs, injuries, etc, together with associated Code of Practice (COP) – Horses that have not started for 12+ months.</i>
Description	Refer below
Authorised for Consultation	April 20, 2026
Consultation Closes	May 15, 2026
Submissions to	policies@racingqueensland.com.au

Further to the consultation notice published on June 6, 2025, Racing Queensland (**RQ**) has been advised that Racing Australia (**RA**) has approved the following amendments to the Australian Rules of Racing, with a proposed commencement date of June 1, 2026:

1. *AR 79 – Horses with bleeding;*
2. *AR 84 – Pregnant horses;*
3. *AR 87 – Horses that have had an intra-synovial injection (and AR 2 (Dictionary) definition of “Intra-synovial injection”); and*
4. *Code of Practice (COP) – Horses that have not started for 12+ months.*

RQ notes these rules were the subject of earlier consultation from June 6, 2025, to June 27, 2025. Since the close of that consultation, however, RA has made and approved further amendments to *AR 84 – Pregnant Horses* and *AR 88B – Horses returning from extended layoffs, injuries, etc*, to address minor drafting inconsistencies. These further amendments are shown in attached Annexure (highlighted in **yellow**).

Before considering these further amendments for adoption in Queensland, RQ invites stakeholders and interested parties to review the further amendments and provide feedback in accordance with the consultation details set out above.

ANNEXURE

1. AR 79 - Horses with bleeding

In AR 79 (Horses with bleeding) which deals with horses which, in the opinion of Stewards, have had an attack of bleeding (i.e. the appearance of blood at both nostrils), the qualifications in subrule (4)(b) for a horse's return to starting in a race, after the mandatory stand down period of 3 months, are:

- (i) a gallop of at least 1,000 metres; or
- (ii) an official trial or jump-out:

in the presence, and to the satisfaction of a Steward.

Whereas, in subrule (8) of AR 79, which deals with a horse that displays blood at one nostril, the qualifications for return to starting in a race only provides for a satisfactory gallop of at least 1,000 metres in the presence of a Steward.

To deal with this inconsistency, the following amendments are proposed to AR 79(8):

AR 79 Horses with bleeding

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- (8) Unless the Stewards are satisfied that the presence of blood referred to in subrule (7) is attributable to external trauma, then before racing again the horse is required to:
- (a) undergo a ~~satisfactory~~ gallop of at least 1,000 metres; or
 - (b) participate in an official trial or jump-out;
- in the presence, and to the satisfaction of a Steward.

2. AR84 - Pregnant horses

Following extensive consultation with the IFHA's Horse Welfare Committee, as well as with the International Group of Specialist Regulatory Veterinarians and the International Thoroughbred Breeders' Federation, the IFHA has endorsed new guidelines to assist racing authorities address when mares and fillies are required to stop racing after falling pregnant and when they are permitted to return to racing after foaling.

Accordingly, AR 84 (Pregnant Horses) is proposed to be amended for consistency with these new guidelines. In addition, it is proposed that the reference to "mare or filly" in AR 84 should be replaced with "female horse", particularly having regard for the definition of broodmare which means - "a female horse used to produce foals."

AR 84 Pregnant horses

- (1) If a ~~mare or filly~~ female horse is pregnant:



- (a) the **female** horse is ineligible for; and
 - (b) a person must not enter or start the **female** horse in, any race, official trial, jump-out or trackwork after day 120 ~~of its pregnancy~~ from the date of the female horse's last known cover.
- (2) A trainer must provide written notification to the Stewards as soon as practicable of:
- (a) the pregnancy of a ~~mare or filly~~ female horse in that trainer's charge; and
 - (b) the date of the last **service known cover** of that ~~mare or filly~~ female horse.
- (3) A pregnant female horse:
- (a) that is no longer confirmed pregnant prior to the normal term of gestation, or
 - (b) whose pregnancy goes to the normal term of gestation but does not result in a live foal, may return to training or racing upon examination by a veterinarian and acceptance of a satisfactory veterinary clearance.
- (4) A female horse that has delivered a live foal:
- (a) is not permitted to be trained for a period of not less than 240 days from the date of the delivery of a live foal and upon acceptance of a satisfactory veterinary clearance; and
 - (b) is not permitted to start in any race, official trial or jump out for a period of not less than 12 months from the date of the delivery of a live foal and upon acceptance of a satisfactory veterinary clearance.

3. AR 87 – Horses that have had an intra-synovial injection (and AR 2 – Dictionary)

Due to the inherent risks associated with the administration of injections into intra-synovial cavities (joints, tendon sheaths and others), AR87 (Horses that have had an intra-articular injection) is proposed to be broadened to incorporate injections into all synovial cavities, including joints and tendon sheaths.

For similar reasons based on concerns for horse welfare and racing safety, it is proposed that intra-synovial injections should be restricted to being performed by registered veterinary surgeons for diagnostic or treatment purposes.

Accordingly, the following new definition for 'intra-synovial injection' and amendments to AR 87 are proposed.

AR 2 Dictionary

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Intra-synovial injection (and variations of that term) means the insertion of a hypodermic needle into a joint, tendon sheath or other synovial cavity of a horse.

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AR 87 Horses that have had an ~~intra-articular~~ intra-synovial injection

- (1) If a horse has been subjected to an ~~intra-articular~~ intra-synovial injection:
 - (a) the horse is ineligible for; and
 - (b) a trainer must not enter or start the horse in,



any race, official trial, or jump-out for 8 clear days following midnight on the day of the administration.

- (2) If a horse has been subjected to, or the Stewards reasonably suspect a horse has been subjected to, an ~~intra-articular~~ [intra-synovial](#) injection at any time during the 8 clear days prior to the day of a race, official trial, or jump-out, the Stewards may order the scratching of the horse from the relevant event.
- (3) If a horse has been nominated and/or entered for a race, official trial, or jump-out, a person must not:
- (a) administer;
 - (b) cause to be administered;
 - (c) attempt to administer; or
 - (d) be party to the administration of,
- an ~~intra-articular~~ [intra-synovial](#) injection to the horse at any time within 8 clear days of the race, official trial, or jump-out.

Note: By way of example, if a horse was subjected to an ~~intra-articular~~ [intra-synovial](#) injection at any time on a Monday (1st day of the month), the horse would be ineligible to race, trial or jump-out until the Wednesday of the following week (10th day of the month).

- (4) [A person must not perform an intra-synovial injection on a horse unless he or she is a qualified veterinary surgeon.](#)
- (5) [For the purposes of this rule, it is not necessary to establish whether any substance was injected, or the nature of any substance injected.](#)

4. AR 88B – Horses returning from extended layoffs, injuries, etc and Code of Practice (COP) - Horses that have not started for 12+ months

Under the Code of Practice (COP) – Horses that have not started for 12+ months, where a horse has not raced for 12 months or longer, a satisfactory veterinary clearance must be obtained, and the horse must trial satisfactorily before being granted permission to nominate for a race.

Following studies that have identified an increased risk of musculoskeletal injury in horses that have their first start at an older age, the current COP for horses that have not started for 12+ months is proposed to be amended to include unraced 5YO and older horses, as follows:

AR 88B Horses returning from extended layoffs, injuries etc.

- (1) Where a horse has not participated in a race for 12 months or more, [or the horse is aged five years or older and has not started in a race.](#) the trainer and any other person in charge of the horse must comply with the Racing Australia Code of Practice: Horses that have not started for 12+ months (as amended from time to time) in respect of any future running of the horse in a race, official trial or jump-out.

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CODE OF PRACTICE

HORSES THAT HAVE NOT STARTED FOR 12+ MONTHS

Policy

Where a horse has not raced for 12 months or longer, [or the horse is aged five years or older and has not started in a race.](#) a satisfactory veterinary clearance must be obtained and the horse must trial satisfactorily before being granted permission to nominate for a race.



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Protocols

1. Veterinary clearance before trialing

The trainer of a horse that:

- (i) has not raced for 12 months or longer, or
- (ii) is aged five years or older and has not started in a race,

must produce to the Stewards a veterinary clearance as well as any other information, examination or report they require, from a qualified veterinary surgeon indicating that the horse is suitable to resume trialing and racing. Details of any injury or medical condition which might have caused the prolonged break from training or racing must be provided with the veterinary clearance.

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