

Overview

Racing Queensland implemented designated racing regions in response to the outbreak of COVID-19 to enable the continuation of racing in Queensland in a restricted capacity in accordance with strict bio-security measures to protect both racing industry participants and the broader community.

Designated racing regions and the associated race meeting protocols have been developed and regularly reviewed, considering all available information and advice from the Federal and State Governments, including directives issued by Queensland's Chief Health Officer.

All Queensland based trainers have been allocated a racing region and are restricted to racing and trialling greyhounds in their kennel at greyhound tracks in their allocated region.

All Queensland greyhound race clubs currently conduct race meetings and trial sessions on a patron-free basis. Greyhound race clubs conducting race meetings are required to meet the requirements of this protocol document and any additional instruction, direction or advice provided by RQ, as well as any requirements of the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission that may be imposed at a race meeting.

Greyhound race clubs may provide additional information specific to their venue to assist essential racing personnel in adhering to these protocols and all relevant requirements.

Greyhounds may transfer kennels between Queensland regions and may be transferred from inter-state but transportation protocols apply.

1. Queensland greyhound regions

The Queensland greyhound regions are:

- South Queensland (Albion Park, Ipswich Capalaba, and Bundaberg tracks)
- Central Queensland (Rockhampton track);
- North Queensland (Townsville track); and
- Greater Western (no licensed greyhounds tracks are located within this region of Queensland).

2. Race meeting attendance

Attendance at all Queensland greyhound racing meetings and trial sessions is restricted to essential racing personnel, outlined as follows:

a) Permitted essential racing personnel

- Licensed greyhound trainers with greyhounds engaged to race or stewards' trial at a race meeting, or to trial at a trial session;
- Licensed greyhound trainers or attendants specifically required to attend a race meeting or trial session, so as to enable a particular greyhound to race, e.g. by handling the greyhound, boxing the greyhound or catching the greyhound;
- Essential support personnel of trainers, such as persons required to assist trainers in commuting to race meetings or trial sessions at which they have greyhounds racing;
- Queensland Greyhound Racing Integrity Commission stewards and officials;
- RQ officials;

- Essential club employees and race meeting contractors, including vision and broadcast providers;
- Club officials and/or committee members carrying out a formal duty at the race meeting or trial session; and
- RQ accredited media as approved by Racing Queensland and the race club.

b) Not Permitted

General public and members of the race club are prohibited from attending the racecourse, given the race meetings are to be conducted patron-free.

c) Wagering, food and beverage

There are no on-course wagering facilities (including bookmakers) or commercial food and beverage services operating at the race meetings. Permitted essential racing personnel are able to bring modest levels of food and non-alcoholic beverages on course for personal consumption.

3. Temperature testing on arrival at race meetings

All permitted essential racing personnel attending a greyhound race meeting in Queensland will be subject to temperature check/s on arrival and prior to entry to the racecourse being allowed.

It is the responsibility of the race club to ensure only permitted essential racing personnel enter the racecourse and that all have passed the temperature testing process.

The testing process and requirements will be as outlined:

- Each person is tested upon arrival at the racecourse by an appointed officer;
- A verified test within the normal parameter (below 37.6) is required before the person can enter the racecourse;
- If a person records an elevated temperature, the person will be given the opportunity to have a further temperature test up to 15 minutes following the first test; and
- If the person's temperature remains elevated the person is not permitted to enter the racecourse. The person is required to leave the racecourse and should be advised to seek medical advice through 13HEALTH. A medical clearance to the satisfaction of the QRIC may be required before being permitted to attend a Queensland race meeting again.

To facilitate the temperature testing process, access to the race meeting should be via a single entry point.

4. People separation and hygiene at race meetings

All Queensland greyhound race clubs are required to implement satisfactory measures to ensure the principles of the directions issued by the relevant authorities regarding space and distancing are adhered to. This includes social distancing requirements of remaining 1.5m apart and avoiding physical contact, having no more than one person per four square metres in an indoor space, as well as regular handwashing, sanitisation and hygiene processes.

Race clubs should display in areas used by essential racing personnel relevant information sheets about COVID-19 and ways to reduce the spread of the virus.

Permitted essential racing personnel at Queensland race meetings are required to uphold social distancing principles where at all possible. Personal actions to assist include:

- Exercising an industry first approach to COVID-19 free racing by ensuring that you do not attend race meetings or a trial session where you are unwell or displaying any symptoms that are associated with COVID-19.

- Making the necessary arrangements in the event that you are unable to attend a race meeting or trail session with your greyhounds because you are unwell or displaying any symptoms that are associated with COVID-19. This may include organising and authorising for your greyhounds to be taken to, and handled at, a race meeting.
- Covering coughs and sneezes with an elbow or a tissue;
- Disposing of tissues properly;
- Washing hands often with soap and water or alcohol based sanitisers, including before and after eating, after going to the toilet, and after using shared equipment such as racing rugs;
- Cleaning and sanitising frequently used objects such as mobiles, keys and wallets;
- Keeping a distance of 1.5m between oneself and other people whenever possible – including in pre-kenneling, kenneling, race parading, boxing and catching of greyhounds;
- Minimising physical contact, especially with people at higher risk such as older people and people with existing health conditions; and
- Supporting social distancing enhancements introduced by QRIC, RQ, and Club officials at race meetings.

5. Older racing participant advice

The Federal Government has advised that COVID-19 has more serious impacts on people over 70 years of age and those with existing health conditions or comorbidities.

National Cabinet's strong advice continues to be self-isolation at home to the maximum extent practicable for Australians who are:

- Over 70 years of age; or
- Over 60 years of age and have existing health conditions or comorbidities.

Given the Federal Government's health advice, RQ encourages participants who meet the aforementioned criteria to consider their ongoing attendance at all Queensland race meetings and trial sessions and other training facilities during the current COVID-19 conditions.

Whilst this is not currently a mandatory requirement, it is strongly advised.

6. Away from race meeting and trial session considerations

All permitted essential racing personnel are encouraged to consider their obligations to Queensland greyhound racing whenever possible.

Social distancing, in line with the requirements of the Queensland Government, should be practised at all times, including during the training of greyhounds and in other social interaction. Good hygiene and sanitisation standards should be applied where at all possible.

No person should attend race meetings if they are feeling unwell or displaying symptoms of COVID-19.

Other healthcare considerations – including flu immunisation – should be considered. RQ also supports and encourages essential racing personnel to consider use of the COVIDSafe app.

7. Kennel transfers within Queensland and inter-state

RQ currently permits conditional greyhound movement across designated regions for the purposes of racing, subject to the conditions below:

Queensland region-to-region kennel transfers

- Greyhounds are permitted to transfer between kennels from one Queensland region to another, however greyhounds transferring between regions must be transported between regions with an “Approved Canine Transportation Business”. An “Approved Canine Transportation Business” is a canine transportation business, which has sought and been granted approval by Racing Queensland to transport greyhounds within Queensland; and
- The connections of a greyhound transferring from one region to another must undertake all kennel transfer administrative advice, as required by the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission.

Inter-state kennel transfers

- Where Government regulations allow, greyhounds will be permitted to transfer from an inter-state kennel to a Queensland kennel, however greyhounds transferring from inter-state must be transported with an “Approved Canine Transportation Business”. An “Approved Canine Transportation Business” is a canine transportation business which has sought and been granted approval by Racing Queensland to transport greyhounds within Queensland; and
- The connections of a greyhound transferring from inter-state to a Queensland kennel must undertake all kennel transfer administrative advice, as required by their home state controlling body or bodies and the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission.

Transportation protocols

- Prior to and upon completion of a transportation journey, the “Approved Canine Transportation Business” must ensure the vehicle is thoroughly cleaned and disinfected to minimize any risk of COVID-19 transmission;
- “Approved Canine Transportation Business” drivers and/or assistants are to make prior arrangements with any drop off points and are not to access licensed premises when transporting and delivering greyhounds (unless otherwise approved by QRIC Stewards);
- Any gear used by the “Approved Canine Transportation Business” on one greyhound to another, must be sanitised between each use.