



# LICENSEE HANDBOOK

WELCOME FROM HORSE RACING ALBERTA



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## **WELCOME MESSAGE**

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This document outlines what you can expect as a new participant to horse racing, and the expectations that Horse Racing Alberta and the racing industry have from you. You are receiving this guide as you have applied for a Horse Racing Alberta licence. All racing participants are licensed for two important reasons:

1. To protect everyone in the industry by creating a level playing field — and subjecting those who do not follow the rules to discipline.
2. To ensure the security of the barn area or “backstretch” of Alberta racetracks by restricting admittance to holders of a valid licence and signed-in guests. No public access is permitted.

As you open this booklet, you are choosing horse racing as your career, or, as a hobby. If you are an experienced licensee, the information in this book may be a useful reference and refresher. If you are applying for a licence for the first time, please read this guide carefully.

## **HORSE RACING ALBERTA (HRA) OVERVIEW**

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### **OUR HISTORY**

Horse Racing Alberta (HRA), is a private not-for-profit corporation that was established with the Alberta Government's proclamation of the Racing Corporation Act in 1996. HRA was established to lead a racing industry renewal and to manage industry self-regulation.

### **OUR MISSION**

“Horse Racing Alberta will lead and enable a healthy, vibrant and progressive racing industry to function in the province of Alberta with high integrity and self-regulated responsibility.”

### **THE GOALS**

- To govern, direct, control, regulate, manage, and promote horse racing in any or all of its forms.
- To protect the health, safety, and welfare of racehorses and, with respect to horse racing, the safety and welfare of racing participants and racing officials.
- To safeguard the interests of the general public in horse racing.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

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### WHAT WE EXPECT FROM YOU

A code of conduct is a defined set of principles, values, expectations, behaviours, and relationships that Horse Racing Alberta considers important and believes necessary for success.

Conduct is an individual's choice and our collective choices create a reputation for our sport and industry.

*Failure to practice a Code of Conduct jeopardizes integrity  
and the future of the industry.*

Horse Racing Alberta works with licensees to foster public trust, encourage respect for each other and the various cultures, and to ensure animal welfare is our priority. Failure to follow the rules and regulations will result in penalties.

Horse Racing Alberta's Rules Governing Horse Racing in Alberta includes rules for all racing participants.

We recommend all licensees go through the **Rules Governing Horse Racing in Alberta** which is available online at [www.thehorses.com](http://www.thehorses.com).

## CODE OF CONDUCT GUIDELINES

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### A person violates these rules who:

1. in the opinion of the judges/stewards board, conducts themselves in a manner prejudicial to the best interest of horse racing,
2. or does not comply with these or any other rules.

*Conduct prejudicial to the best interests of Horse Racing*

### A person violates these rules by:

- mistreating a horse in any manner;
- engaging in any corrupt, fraudulent or unethical act or practice in relation to a horse race or horse racing;
- attempting to enrich themselves or others or to gain an advantage through unfair, unlawful, or dishonest behaviour in connection with a horse race or horse racing;
- threatening or intimidating a racing official or racing participant or trying to do so;
- improperly influencing or attempting to influence a racing participant or racing official;
- giving or receiving offers or promises—directly or indirectly—any bribe, gift or gratuity, in any form, for the purpose of improperly influencing the result of a race or that which would tend to do so;
- making false or misleading statements about a racing official, racing participant or other person employed or engaged in horse racing;
- fighting or using profane or indecent language;
- not conducting themselves in a manner that is respectful of other people and showcasing horse racing in a positive way.
- refer to the rule 287 g in the **Rules Governing Horse Racing in Alberta** for specific violations.

## **LICENSING**

Before anyone participates in horse racing in Alberta, they must obtain the applicable Horse Racing Alberta licence from a Horse Racing Alberta licensing office. All participants must present proof of a current Horse Racing Alberta licence when entering a stable area or whenever requested to do so by Horse Racing Alberta or racetrack security.

- Standardbred participants must become a member of Standardbred Canada and the Alberta Standardbred Horse Association.
- Quarter Horse licence applicants must belong to the AQHRA.
- An Owner or Trainer who is licensed in thoroughbred racing at Alberta A tracks automatically becomes a member of the HBPA (Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association).
- An Owner or Trainer who is licensed in thoroughbred racing and races at Alberta B tracks becomes a member of ACTRA (Alberta Community Thoroughbred Racing Association).

## **OWNERS**

An Owner at the racetrack is a person who owns a horse registered to race. Owners must have a licensed trainer and the horse's registration papers must be on file with the Race Secretary. Ownership can be obtained through breeding, purchasing, or claiming of a race horse.

### **Selecting a Trainer**

The selection of a trainer is an important decision. A list of public trainers can be made available to you from the racetrack. Arrange a meeting with a potential trainer and express your expectations. A good open line of communication is important to reduce future misunderstandings. Different trainers are comfortable with varying amounts of owner involvement.

### **General Financial Responsibility**

Financial responsibility is taken very seriously and the consequences of unpaid bills may result in suspension. If the judges/stewards board is satisfied that a racing participant has failed to meet financial obligations with respect to racing activities, the judges or stewards may:

- suspend your licence and/or
- refuse entries to races

Once you have a reasonable understanding of your financial responsibilities with your trainer, a written contract outlining all necessary details should be made and signed by both parties.

### **Rules of Owner Betting**

(1) Subject to subsection (2), neither the licensed owner of a horse entered in a horse race, nor their authorized agent, trainer, groom, jockey, driver of the horse, nor an employee of any of them may:

- (a) bet,
- (b) ask or encourage anyone to bet on their behalf, or
- (c) have or own a pari-mutuel ticket, on another horse participating in the same horse race.

(2) Subsection (1) does not prevent a bet placed by or on behalf of a person named in that subsection if:

- (a) the bet is placed in a feature as defined in the Pari-Mutuel Betting Supervision Regulations (Canada), as amended from time to time, and
- (b) the total money bet on combinations in which the person's horse is chosen to finish 1st is at least equal to the total bet on combinations that choose another person's horse to finish 1st.

## **WAYS TO BUY A HORSE**

### **Claiming**

Claiming races are a way of classifying horses so that they race at levels in which they are competitive. The purpose of claiming is to avoid a superior horse from dominating horse races at a certain level and so have an unfair advantage. Claiming prevents an unfair advantage by moving horses to different stables for the purpose of enhancing horse racing in the jurisdiction in which the horse is claimed.

**A horse claimed in Alberta for a purpose other than live horse racing in Alberta, violates the spirit and intent of the claiming rules and weakens the Alberta racing industry.**

Horses that participate in claiming races are eligible to be claimed for the price identified on the official racing program. Any registered owner in good standing is eligible to claim a horse.

## **Open Claiming**

Should you decide that you are going to claim your first horse, the licence category applicable to you is Owner, Open Claim. Following your application your trainer must obtain a claiming certificate from the stewards/judges. This certificate is to satisfy the stewards/judges that if you successfully claim a horse, someone with experience will be available to pick up your horse and that it will be in a stall at the racetrack.

## **Horseperson's Account**

You must open an account with the horseperson's bookkeeper and deposit cash or a certified cheque in the amount sufficient to cover the claiming price and extra fees. You must obtain a credit note from the horseperson's bookkeeper reflecting the total of your account the day you wish to claim.

## **Authorization**

You may authorize your trainer to claim the horse on your behalf, or you may complete the form yourself.

Either way, the claim blank and envelope must be completed correctly, the claiming certificate enclosed, and the envelope sealed.

### **Limit discussion about claiming**

- Licensed owners and authorized agents must not discuss with any person, other than their trainer, any matter relating to the claiming of a particular horse.
- Trainers must not discuss a proposed claim with any person other than the licensed owner making the claim or the owner's authorized agent.
- All horses in claiming races are offered for sale, however not everyone reacts positively when their horse is claimed. Avoid any contact with the parties affected as much as possible, and if you must, be polite and professional.



## **Horse Sales**

Industry partners conduct annual horse sales. These sales catalogue pedigrees of horses and the accomplishments of their dam and sire. Prior to purchasing a yearling you will want to contact one of the following organizations:

### **Alberta Quarter Horse Racing Association -**

[www.aqhra.ca](http://www.aqhra.ca), email [aqhra@shaw.ca](mailto:aqhra@shaw.ca) or call (403) 381-8167.

### **Alberta Standardbred Horse Association -**

[www.asha.ab.ca](http://www.asha.ab.ca), email [admin@asha.ca](mailto:admin@asha.ca) or call 403-263-7765.

### **Canadian Thoroughbred Horse Society -**

[www.cthsalta.com](http://www.cthsalta.com), email [cthsweb@cthsalta.com](mailto:cthsweb@cthsalta.com) or call 403-229-3609.

## **TRAINERS**

All Trainers must pass a written and practical examination, other than those who come from an equal jurisdiction. This provides the judges, stewards, owners, and betting public proof you are capable of training a race horse. Remember, capability does not substitute for ethics or conduct.

## **Animal Welfare**

Trainer responsibility begins with the horses placed in your care. Failure to meet proper conditioning, nutritional requirements, and health requirements would result in disciplinary action. A horse's stall is their home and security and they must never be abused or beaten. If there is confirmation of abuse of any horse, the Trainer will face fines, suspensions, or both.

## **Trainer's Responsibility to Owner**

Trainers are responsible to any owners who engage their services. You must be forthright and honest in your billing practices, discussing the health of an owner's horse, and their potential.

## **Trainer's Responsibility to Staff**

Trainers are responsible and accountable for fair working conditions for their employees. Staff must be paid on a consistent and agreed upon basis. Proper deductions must be taken for tax purposes. Prior to hiring, Trainers must communicate the rate of pay and hours expected to new hires. Trainers must give their staff the training necessary to be safe and successful in the workplace. Trainers must make sure their staff is licensed appropriately and included on their work-list in the office.

## **Trainer's Responsibility to the Public**

Our industry revolves around the public as we are in the entertainment industry. Every effort must be made to ensure our horses race as consistently as possible.

## **Drug Testing Program**

Trainers are responsible for the results obtained by test inspectors.

## **Condition and Performance of Horses**

Trainers are each responsible for the condition and consistent performance of race horses in their charge.

In addition, trainers are responsible for the results of the analysis of samples from any horse in their charge whether or not the results of the analysis were caused or contributed to by a third party, and whether or not the trainer was aware of the activities of the third party.

*We all have a responsibility to be ambassadors  
of horse racing*

- We all have to constantly be ambassadors for the sport of horse racing and promote the sport to our best ability. Negativity and poor sportsmanship do much to undermine the sport and discourage participants. You are in the public eye before, during, and after races and your actions and statements impact the image of horse racing and eventually your living.
- Don't publicly complain about track conditions, your horse's start, another participant, or your jockey or driver. Talk to your trainer afterward privately, and take your complaints to your association.
- You may feel you were unfairly fouled in a race with no change in order, or no objection was lodged. Ask your Trainer to arrange a time with the judges or stewards to review the replay with them. Part of their job is to explain the decisions they make.
- The use of profane language is unnecessary. Be mindful to present yourself in a professional manner at all times.

## **PUBLIC PERCEPTION**

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### **PROFESSIONALISM**

Your personal conduct is extremely important. You are not only in the eye of the public, but you have the opportunity to entice others into the industry. It is difficult for judges and stewards to impress upon the backstretch personnel the importance of professionalism if the Trainers do not demonstrate or require it of their staff.

### **RACE DAY PADDOCK**

All your clothing should be neat and clean, especially on race day when races are simulcast and you are in the public eye. A professional is neat in appearance. Be sure to meet or even exceed the requirements of your stable's dress code.

### **MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS**

If you are fortunate enough to have a stakes horse, you may very well be asked to participate in media functions. Attending press conferences, receptions, and giving interviews is highly important to promote racing. You should make every effort to be as cooperative as possible.

## **RACETRACK ATTIRE**

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Horsemen at the racetrack are expected to meet safety requirements and the level of professionalism expected by the industry. This requires horsemen and women to dress and conduct themselves in a manner acceptable to work and meet safety requirements when working around horses.

As at any racetrack, the trainers and stable personnel are an important and highly visible component of our on-track product. Your neat and uniform appearance is important as it often forms the first impression for our on-track crowd as well as millions of simulcast viewers throughout North America.

Compliance with safety attire promotes an attitude of professionalism that is apparent not only to fellow horsepeople, but also to our owners and visitors from the racehorse industry. Helmets, flak jackets, and proper footwear are examples.

Proper attire is required whenever you are in the public view, including the paddock, grandstand, and winner's circle. Numbered bibs are required to be worn in the flat racing paddock. Safe footwear is required when handling or being around the horses - no open-toed shoes, flip-flops, or sandals.

The public is often watching horses train in the morning. Make sure you are practicing all of your professional requirements at all times.

## **HEALTH & SAFETY**

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Staff at Alberta tracks are covered by private insurance or WCB. To meet insurance requirements, it is important for accidents and injuries to be reported.

### **SAFETY GUIDELINES**

Follow safety guidelines put in place by your employer and track. Familiarize yourself with locations of fire extinguishers, first-aid kits, and security. If there is a serious accident, dial 911.

### **WORKPLACE SECURITY**

Security is the hub of any racetrack. Familiarize yourself with their location and phone contacts.

## **ACCIDENT REPORTING**

Report all accidents and injuries to your employer or supervisor. If you have an accident serious enough to see a doctor, a WCB incident form must be filled out.

## **DRUG FREE WORKPLACE**

All licensees may be asked to provide a breath analysis or body fluid sample to a designated HRA official. The use of illegal drugs is prohibited and any use or abuse of alcohol will not be tolerated.

## **ACCIDENT OCCURRENCE INSTRUCTIONS**

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Protocol from track to track may be a bit different from below, but here are some basic guidelines:

### **Dial 911**

1. State your name.
2. Describe your location and that of the accident or incident.
3. Describe the reason you are calling (i.e. groom got kicked by a horse).
4. Inform the operator of the number of victims.
5. Describe, as much as possible, the nature of the injuries.
6. Inform the operator of the services you require (i.e. Ambulance).
7. Stay on the line until the operator advises (s)he no longer needs you.
8. Return to the victim if it is safe to do so.
9. Do not transport patient to hospital or clinic in private vehicles.
10. Call the security number at the track and inform them emergency vehicles are coming onto the property.

*Fire Safety is everyone's responsibility*

It makes good horse sense to plan for a fire emergency and take steps to protect your barns, stables and racetrack from fire.

- Know the locations of fire extinguishers.
- Call out “fire”
- Call 911
- Try to extinguish
- If fire is out of control, leave the building immediately

Smoking rules are strictly enforced. Smoking in and around the barn area and combustibles cause the most catastrophic consequences resulting from careless behavior. Obey the smoking regulations, if for no other reason than the safety of the horses.

- No smoking
- Minimize obstacles
- Locate fire extinguishers
- Turn off or unplug appliances when you leave

## RESOURCES

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**Drug and alcohol policy** – Horse Racing Alberta is committed to the safety, well-being and dignity of racing participants and to the welfare of its horsepeople, as well as, by extension, the horse racing industry and the public. If a person expressly discloses and seeks assistance for a substance addiction or dependency through HRA, HRA can refer the horseperson to a family assistance program or similar program.

**HRA Backstretch Foundation** is a not-for-profit group of backstretch volunteers who work together to help fellow backstretch workers at racetracks all over Alberta. They provide assistance to jockeys, grooms, exercise riders, trainers, drivers, and others who make their living at the racetrack. For more information please see the Manager of Backstretch Development.

- **Horse Racing Alberta** - 780.415.5432 or toll free 1.888.553.7223
- **Alberta Quarter Horse Racing Association** - 403-381-8167
- **Alberta Standardbred Horse Association** - 403-263-7765
- **Canadian Thoroughbred Horse Society** - 403-229-3609
- **Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association** - 403-860-2215
- **Olds College Racetrack Programs** - 403-556-4740 or toll free 1-800- 661-6537

## CONTACT LIST

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CONTACT	PHONE #	EMAIL
Racing Manager		
Assistant Manager		
Race Secretary		
Stable Gate		
Track Superintendent		
Security		
Stewards/Judges		
HRA Office		
Racing Association		

