

GREYHOUND RACING VICTORIA

Attending and Training Greyhounds

Booklet 12 – The Public Trainer



Greyhound Racing Victoria
Attendant and Trainer Education Pack

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Date Published 2019

This is the twelfth in a series of booklets that support you in attending and training racing greyhounds.

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Booklet 2: Greyhound Basics

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Requirements for a Public Trainer

A Public Trainer is someone who is allowed to train greyhounds that they don't own. A Public Trainer may have a small kennel of greyhounds or have a large commercial facility.



If you are training greyhounds for other people, there are some different requirements that you must meet compared to an Owner-Trainer. Stepping into the public training arena means you will probably have staff to manage, and extra administrative requirements that go with running such an operation. You will also have the added complexity of caring for a number of greyhounds, including greyhounds that you do not own.

Both you and the greyhound's owner have particular roles and responsibilities as industry participants. Therefore, an important part of your role will be to communicate effectively with owners, keeping them up to date with their greyhound's progress and collaborating in important decisions. This will include

planning for unanticipated situations such as responding to an injury at the race track or at your kennel, an illness or an emergency situation. Collaboration will also be important during a greyhound's preparation for and participation in a racing career, including the retirement phase.

While some responsibilities such as retirement are the responsibility of the owner, your knowledge will be important in making decisions for a particular greyhound.

It cannot be underestimated how important it is that you and the owner are clear on what your role is, the activities you will be delivering, and the costs associated with these activities. This will be discussed further in this Unit.

12.1 Administrative requirements for public trainers

Booklets 1 and 2 discuss the regulatory environment in which you operate. This includes the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (DAA) and the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986* (POCTAA). It also addresses the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* which addresses the planning requirements for keeping racing greyhounds on your property.

The minimum accepted standards for participants in accommodating, managing and caring for racing greyhounds are provided for under a DAA Code of Practice.

The current Code sets out the minimum accepted standards for participants in the greyhound industry and you are expected

to meet these standards. It is an important document and covers a range of areas including:

- staffing requirements;
- operation of your greyhound establishment;
- record keeping;
- nutrition;
- health care;
- exercise;
- setting up and managing a facility;
- the sale and transfer of greyhounds.

These are addressed in further detail in the new Code with additional content in relation to breeding, training, enrichment, socialisation and handling.

The new Code fully considers the whole greyhound lifecycle and highlights the importance of keeping good records.

These records relate to:

- a) the operation of the establishment, particularly when you have staff; and
- b) the greyhounds themselves, particularly in terms of monitoring their movement in and out of your property and comprehensive health care and veterinary histories.

It is important to be organised. You will find that working through the development of an Establishment and Health Management Plan (EHMP) under the new Code will assist you in managing your establishment and the greyhounds within it.

Establishment and Health Management Plans (EHMP)

An EHMP needs to be approved by a veterinarian. Given that you are likely to have multiple greyhounds, the EHMP must include protocols for matters such as:

- assessing new greyhounds before admission into establishment;
- quarantine arrangements and movement into, within and beyond the establishment;
- exercise, environment enrichment and socialization programs;
- health management including vaccination and parasite programs;
- responding to an outbreak of infectious disease;
- plans for maintaining hygiene, disinfection and disease prevention including pest management;
- staff induction processes;
- emergency management planning.

Staffing

Under both the existing and new Codes, the proprietor or person in charge of a greyhound facility is responsible for the overall management and conduct of the establishment and for the welfare of the greyhounds kennelled there.

Responsibilities include:

- supervision of staff and training or employing experienced people handling and managing the greyhounds;
- supervising the daily feeding, watering and inspection of all greyhounds;
- record keeping;
- maintaining overall level of hygiene in the establishment;
- notifying owners or their authorised representatives when a greyhound is observed to be ailing or injured;
- planning for emergencies.

A written agreement must also be in place with on-call veterinarians to provide prompt access to emergency veterinary care.

Under the new Code you will also be expected to ensure have in place a minimum number of suitable qualified or experienced people to care for the greyhounds at your establishment.

Managing staff

Smaller training facilities may only have a few greyhounds in work at any one time, but if you build up your greyhound numbers, you will eventually come to the point where you are going to require assistance in your establishment.

It may be that you have family members assist you, or people who are interested in learning the industry, but often it will mean hiring staff to assist with the day to day running of your training facility.

As discussed in **Booklet 5**, you will need to ensure that your workplace is safe, and that you meet all safety requirements. Any job working with animals has some level of unpredictability, but you are required to minimise the risks to staff as much as possible.

The right people for the job - finding staff

If you are going to employ people as kennel hands, you will need to develop a job description for each person outlining what is expected from them and give clear and concise instructions as to what you would like them to do. Getting good help can be difficult, and you will need to supervise your staff to ensure that each task is completed to the standard that you expect. When selecting staff, you should be looking for people who are good with animals and who are not rough or frightening to the greyhounds.

Each employee should be clear on the

hours they are expected to work, safety requirements associated with each task, and what each task involves. You will have to demonstrate and supervise each task until you are confident they are able to do it properly.

Running a small business is not easy, and it is important that you are aware of any relevant rules or legislation. If you are paying people to help you, then you will need to talk to your accountant about taxation, GST, and superannuation requirements of your business. Getting good advice and taking the time to do things properly will save you time and resources in the long term. If you are not sure what to do, there are good, general resources to assist businesses at <http://www.business.vic.gov.au/>.



Record keeping

Record keeping is an important requirement for any greyhound operation and you must maintain and keep records for a minimum of five years.

The relevant Code details the record keeping requirements for both:

- your establishment; and
- each greyhound.

Under the new Code, an emphasis is placed on maintaining a complete health care and veterinary history for each

greyhound and ensuring that each greyhound at your establishment is easily identifiable and linked to their Greyhound Record. You will also need to record information when a greyhound first arrives into your care. This might include matters such as any specific medical, dietary, bathing and grooming requirements that will inform day to day management or details of leads, collars or belongings that are accompany a particular greyhound. As was referred to earlier, the new Code places a particular focus on being able to track the movement of a greyhound to and from your establishment.

As a trainer, you will also be recording information to support the development pathway of the greyhounds under your care. This might include information such as trial times, race times, races run and results, along with any emerging issues. Apart from assisting you in monitoring progress of the greyhound, this will assist you in providing feedback to the owner.

Under the new Code some of the key elements of the **record keeping** that are important to maintain include:

- when a greyhound is sold, given away and/or moved from the establishment;
- a copy of the veterinarian's general health certificate for greyhounds sold, transferred or given away to a new owner;
- a copy of literature provided to a new owner when sold or given away to a member of the public;
- up to date staff details including their contact details, experience and/or qualifications and participant registration number if applicable; and
- all records relating to the purchase acquisition or movement of greyhounds into the establishment, including the contact details of the

previous owner and person in charge.

Under the new Code some of the key elements of a **greyhound record** that are important to maintain include:

- identification information such as name, earbrand, microchip number, dam and sire, birth date and owner details;
- a complete health care and veterinary history comprising information such as vaccination records, parasite control programs, oral supplement and injected substances administered, and any injuries and their treatment.

Each individual greyhound kennel and pen must clearly display a unique identifier that links to the greyhound record. This can be a kennel name and does not need to be the race name.

Refer to the new Code for the full set of requirements.

12.2 The importance of communication and the Owner - Trainer relationship

As a public trainer you will be required to keep an owner up to date with the progress of their greyhound(s), speak to staff, veterinarians, track officials and stewards, attend prize presentations, and possibly be interviewed by the media. How you present yourself, and how you speak will reflect not only on yourself, but also on your skills as a trainer.

Making sure that you maintain good written records will go a long way to helping you answer questions, and it is a good idea to also document important conversations so that you can refer back

to them if necessary at a later stage.

A good working relationship with the owner(s) of the greyhounds that you are training cannot be under-estimated.

Different owners will be interested in different things. Some will follow their greyhounds' progress closely and may want to discuss things such as trial times, or proposed racing schedules with you; while others might just want to know when the greyhound is next engaged to race.

It is important that you are honest about their greyhound's performance and discuss any concerns you have when they are first detected. This way the owner can make informed decisions about the greyhound's future management and care.

For example, if a greyhound is not eating well and has been losing some weight, this should be communicated with the owner at the earliest opportunity. You could then discuss your plans for investigating the situation with them such as through organising a veterinary examination and keeping them up to date with the findings and progress. This way the owner knows what you are trying to achieve and how the greyhound is progressing. If you didn't communicate that their greyhound was off its food with them, and they came past to visit the greyhound without knowing there was any problem, or that you were trying to fix it, they could be quite horrified to see their prize greyhound looking thin and unwell when they thought it was fine. Remember, word of mouth is your best advertisement.

A Training Agreement can reflect the nature of this relationship, and the roles

and responsibilities of each party. By having a signed, written agreement at the outset, it is possible to prevent any confusion that might end up as a major disagreement. You can even draft a standard form that simply gets filled in with the owner and greyhound's details and has space for both parties to sign.

It is strongly recommended that you have a written and signed Training Agreement for each greyhound that you train.

Training Agreements

There are a number of ways that a trainer gets paid for training greyhounds for other people.

One method is a 'percentage' of stake money. Most trainers use a 50:50 agreement, meaning the owner and the trainer each get half of the money the greyhound wins. With this method there is generally no training fee, so it is up to the trainer to ensure that they have good dogs that will win races, otherwise they may not get suitable rewards for their efforts. It is important that both the owner and the trainer are clear about who is responsible for what costs. As a guide, the trainer will usually be responsible for feeding, training and transport costs. The owner will usually be responsible for any veterinary costs. If the greyhound wins a race, the trainer and owner split the stake money, but any trophies are generally given to the owners.

The other option is for the trainer to charge the owner a 'training fee'. This means that the trainer will get paid a fee regardless of whether the dog races, wins or loses. The training fee generally also includes a percentage of the dog's prize money as well, but generally less than the 50% in the previous type agreement.

It is important that you and the greyhound's connections are clear about exactly what is included and what is not.

A template Training Agreement is provided at:
<https://greyhoundcare.grv.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Greyhound-Owner-Trainer-Agreement.pdf>

Greyhound Owner and Trainer Agreement

This template Agreement has been prepared by Greyhound Racing Victoria (GRV) for use by Owners and Trainers to address common legal matters that arise in relation to the keeping and racing of greyhounds. GRV is not providing legal advice and does not warrant that the template Agreement is free of defects or is fit for any specific purpose.

This document will not suit all arrangements. You should carefully consider your needs, and whether this document is a suitable starting point. You should also carefully consider the notes in this template, and adapt the template as necessary. You may wish to seek advice from a lawyer about whether this template meets your needs, and you may wish to have the document reviewed by a lawyer prior to finalising it. The template is designed to be read in consideration of the Rules of Greyhound Racing and any other relevant legislation or policy issued from time to time, which can be found at <http://www.grv.org.au>.

When you have finished adapting the template, remember to delete notes and check the document numbering and cross-referencing.

1. Contract details

This Agreement is made between:

Owner	Name:
	Phone:
	E-mail:

Trainer	Name:
	Phone:

Some of the elements to consider putting into a Training Agreement include:

- the training fee (if any);
- the percentage of prize money to be paid to each party;
- when payment is expected and what happens if payment is not received by the due date;
- circumstances in which additional payments and decisions by the trainer and/or owner may be required from time to time such as:
 - what happens if a greyhound is injured during training or racing;
 - when spelling might be required;
 - what can the trainer do and what are the limitations in the event of an emergency situation where treatment (including euthanasia) or

movement of an animal may be required;

- what are the cost limitations;
- what situations must the trainer report to the owner, for example in the event of an illness, injury or behavioural issue requiring treatment concerning the trainer;
- rights and obligations of the trainer and the owner;
- any specific requests such as seeking two greyhounds be housed together;
- responsibility for costs associated with things such as transport, veterinary care, feeding and other professional services;
- how are the two parties going to communicate;
- how the Agreement is terminated.

Greyhound Racing Victoria

46-50 Chetwynd Street,
West Melbourne VIC 3003
Ph: 03 8329 1100
Fax: 03 8329 1000
Email: admin@grv.org.au
Web: www.grv.org.au