INT-PR-101

COVID-19 RACETRACK ACCESS AND OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE

Approved by:	Date of Approval	
EMT	20/03/2020	
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Revision Number	Date Effective	Revision Description
0	20 March 2020	New Edition
1	27 March 2020	Added information regarding temperature testing and infection control. Added Club Hygiene Checklist to appendix.
2	31 March 2020	Added information in section 11 regarding lollies and treats. Updated declaration.
3	08 April 2020	Section 5 - Added regionalisation, driver colours. Section 6 –Return of declaration forms Section 9 – updated social distancing guidelines
4	14 April 2020	Section 6 – issue of wrist bands added Section 11 – no tea and coffee stations
5	26 May 2020	Section 5 – reduction of regions from 6 to 3 Section 11 – takeaway food
6	29 May 2020	Section 11 – Added: Dining services – restaurants and bistros
7	10 July 2020	General revision to reflect new process and guidelines. Updated wording to reflect Government recommendation to wear face masks where you cannot social distance.
8	17 July 2020	Updated wording to reflect government request that all Victorians should wear masks. Added link to COVID-19 reporting form.
9	23 July 2020	Updated regarding mandatory wearing of masks.
10	5 Aug 2020	Updated section 8 Restrictions, updated racing regions and worker's permit. Added section on COVID Safe plan and added items to social distancing section.
11	12 Aug 2020	Updated sections - 5 Procedures/masks evidence of medical condition, 6 Declaration to include email address. 15 Media
12	01 Sep 2020	Section 6 – Declarations and wrist bands
13	28 Sep 2020	Face covering altered to face masks, based on Government direction. Stages to COVID Normal added to section 12.1.
14	17 Nov 2020	General review and update 'racing colours' and Food and dining section
15	25 Nov 202	Updated – masks not required outdoors and section 12.1, 12.2 &14, Added 12.3
16	07 Dec 2020	Updated – masks must be carried & only required to be worn where social distancing cannot be maintained. Update section 12 in relation to hospitality
17	16/12/2020	Altered limitation on stable hands, updated S12 – BBQ, Updated S12.3 Gaming Updated 12.1 & 12.3 in relation to owners
18	31/12/2020	Updated – Face masks to be worn when indoors.
19	12/01/2021	S12.3 – general update of section with specific update to - Children must not attend the stalls, even if a registered owner
20	18/01/2021	Updated – masks must be carried & only required to be worn where social distancing cannot be maintained.
21	04/02/2021	Updated – refer to government directives related to wearing face masks indoors. Phasing out of paper declarations.
22	12/03/2021	Updated – children and spectators permitted in the racing area.
23	25/03/2021	Phasing out of the Infectious Disease Declaration
24	27/05/2021	Update to various sections in relation to mask wearing, temperature testing, lockdowns
25	04/06/2021	General review and update, update section 13
26	12/08/2021	Update- must check-in using HRV QR code as well as Services Victoria, Reintroduction of stable hand limit
27	16/08/2021	Changed all 'must login with both QR Codes' to 'stable hands only'. Added detail relating to the wearing of masks by drivers.

28	20/09/2021	General revision. Added details of Lawful Exemption – Masks, food vouchers
29	18/10/2021	Added vaccination information
30	1/11/2021	General Revision and update, removal of broken links, updated references, updated owners, sponsors and spectators
31	26/11/2021	Update to vaccination information, general revision and removal of obsolete references
32	16/12/2021	Updated to reflect vaccination status change to only those over 18. Changed references to Directions to (Pandemic) Orders.
33	4/3/2022	Update media section to align with current practice

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1. PURPOSE

Harness Racing Victoria ("HRV") is committed to ensuring that the safety of HRV employees, visitors, contractors and licensed participants is our core priority.

This Procedure aims to eliminate or otherwise minimise risks associated with the spread of COVID-19 within the Harness Racing industry and the wider community.

This commitment is demonstrated by the implementation of procedures to ensure that infection control processes and restrictions are followed, requirements for isolation are met and in so far as possible racing operations are maintained.

HRV recognises the need to provide opportunities for participants to continue to earn a living and maintain care of their horses as well as their own health. For this reason, HRV may exercise discretion in terms of scheduling of race meetings, including times and locations. All participants are requested to exercise judgement in terms of the duration of their attendance at a track.

The core objective of this procedure is to provide defined guidelines that set out the procedures and steps to follow to manage the impact of current COVID-19 pandemic on the industry. Including:

- Monitoring expert advice as the situation develops by utilising reputable information sources, such as the Department of Health and Human Services.
- Providing information to participants and employees in a regular and timely manner to keep them updated
- Monitoring access by essential personnel and participants to race meetings
- Permitting spectators in line with government restrictions

- Providing and maintaining a working environment that is safe and without risk to health so far as is reasonably practicable
- Reviewing infection control policies, procedures and practices to ensure they are effective and being followed
- Liaising with and monitoring the health of employees and others who may have:
  - contracted COVID-19
  - been exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19
  - been required to self-isolate

This procedure is also supported by the Coronavirus Response Plan.

It is important to note that due to the progress of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and the frequently changing situation, aspects of the procedure are subject to change based on circumstances and at the discretion of the Crisis Management Team (CMT).

2. SCOPE

This procedure applies to all race day officials, employees, clubs and participants.

3. DEFINITIONS

COVID-19 (Coronavirus) is a respiratory illness caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Most people infected with the virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. However, some will become seriously ill and require medical attention. Older people and those with underlying medical conditions like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, or cancer are more likely to develop serious illness. Anyone can get sick with COVID-19 and become seriously ill or die at any age. The virus can spread from an infected person's mouth or nose in small liquid particles when they cough, sneeze, speak, sing or breathe. These particles range from larger respiratory droplets to smaller aerosols. Strategies to prevent illness and transmission include staying 1.5 metres from others, wearing masks, washing hands,

using an alcohol-based rub frequently, staying home when unwell. Vaccination and treatments against COVID-19 are available.

Essential personnel are those personnel without whom a race meeting cannot proceed. Essential personnel includes, but is not limited to; participants, stewards, judges, starters, mobile driver, photo-finish operator, clerk of course, track attendant, curator, ambulance officials, camera operators, gate attendant, club officials, numbers attendant, vets, ambulance officials, security and approved media. Various other operational or support staff such as track workers and food & beverage attendants may be added to this list at the discretion of club management, based on their requirements for services.

Face Covering may be defined as a mask made from paper or textile, designed or made to be worn over the nose and mouth to protect the wearer. A face covering may also include scarf bandana or face shield. Government orders state that face coverings are not permitted and fitted masks must be worn.

Pandemic is used to describe an epidemic that affects the whole population across every continent. A pandemic occurs when:

- A new subtype of virus emerges in humans to which most people have not been previously exposed and are therefore, highly susceptible
- The virus causes serious disease in humans (especially the elderly, infants and people suffering with respiratory illnesses)
- The virus is easily and rapidly spread between humans, infecting large numbers of people worldwide and causing many deaths

Participants – are defined as those persons who hold a participant's license, such as drivers and trainers

Race meeting for the purposes of this procedure a race meeting also includes a trial meeting.

Self-isolation is a period of time where a person does not go to public places including work, school, childcare, university or public gatherings. Only people who usually live with the isolated person should be in the home. Do not see visitors.

World Health Organisation

The World Health Organisation (WHO) is a specialised agency of the United Nations that is concerned with world public **health**. It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. The WHO is a member of the United Nations Development Group. Visit the WHO website.

4. RESPONSIBILITY

HRV personnel, licensed participants, club officials and other interested parties should familiarise themselves with this procedure and ensure appropriate due diligence is exercised in carrying out their required responsibilities.

5. PROCEDURES FOR RACE-TRACK ACCESS DURING COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS) PANDEMIC

Harness Racing Victoria implements any required restrictions regarding access to race meetings in line with Victorian Government orders or restrictions

The following measures have been put in place:

- Participants will be required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 in line with the government Pandemic Orders:
- At least one hour prior to a race or trial meeting, to ensure adequate ventilation and airflow, air conditioning (where available) must be turned on or alternatively windows must be opened.
- Social distancing – avoid shaking hands, stay 1.5 metres away from others.
- Good hygiene practices, regularly washing and sanitising of hands.
- Where possible, a vacant stall will be left between each trainer's horses.

- Only drivers engaged for the meeting will be permitted in the driver's room.
- HRV reserves the right to temperature test at race meetings, based on any prevailing circumstances, including but not limited to; government advice, the number of COVID-19 cases, community transmission and lockdown events. Where temperature testing is in force entry will be denied to those with a temperature of 37.6 or higher.
- In lockdown situations, dependent upon government orders, essential persons may be required to carry a worker permit. Where this is required, it is the responsibility of the essential person or their employer to issue the worker permit. When travelling to races and trials, participants must carry identification (e.g. driver's licence) and HRV registration card. It is also recommended that they have access to the form guide to verify their engagement.
- During periods of lockdown, members of the public are not permitted to attend race meetings. Outside of lockdown periods, members of the public will be permitted in line with government orders.

5.1 Masks

Masks should be carried and worn in circumstances where physical distancing is not possible as they play an important role in infection control. They should also be worn if directed to do so by Stewards or Club Officials.

Mask wearing rules are subject to changes in government pandemic orders and HRV will respond to these changes by sending messages to industry participants and updating information on thetrots.com.au. Face masks must be worn in accordance with Government directives. For current directives, please refer to DH face masks.

6. ENTRY TO RACING VENUES

Effective 11.59pm Friday 22 April, check-in using a QR code is no longer required. Clubs are no longer obligated to check the vaccination status of patrons or participants entering the racetrack, nor to ensure that a COVID Marshal is engaged to verify check-in and vaccination.

- It is still a condition of entry to racetracks that all persons over the age of 18 years are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 under the Pandemic (Workplace) Order and the HRV Participant COVID-19 Vaccination Compliance Policy and Procedure.
- Entry must be denied to any person
  - Exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms. Club Officials and gate attendants should follow the procedures for dealing with a suspected case of COVID-19 as per the club's COVIDSafe Plan.
  - Who cannot provide evidence of vaccination status to Stewards or Club Officials where they have been requested to do in the event that there is reason to believe that the person is not vaccinated.

  In these circumstances, Stewards must be informed immediately to attend the entry point and follow the procedures in section 7 *Scratching Horses*.

- HRV reserves the right to restrict the number of stable hands to one per trainer at a meeting or trial. Exceptions may be made where a Trainer has three or more horses engaged in a race meeting or trial in which case a maximum number of only two stable hands may attend in company with that trainer. Permission can be obtained by stewards for an additional stable hand, however that is dependent on the number of horses engaged at that race meeting. Penalties may apply for breaches of this direction.

7. SCRATCHING HORSES

Horses may be scratched before 8.30am on the day of a race meeting as per normal procedures and when a participant is unwell and would not be granted entry.

Security Guards and Gate attendants must advise Stewards immediately when a participant will not be permitted entry due to displaying symptoms of COVID-19.

Scratching penalties will be waived in the current circumstances where horses are scratched due to the trainer, driver or other licensed person being unwell. Stewards will be responsible for advising all relevant parties that the scratching has occurred. All horse scratchings remain at the discretion of Stewards.

8. RESTRICTIONS

Government Pandemic Orders under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 are in force. Information regarding these orders and related restrictions will be communicated via Media updates as they are subject to change. There are strict penalties for breaches of these conditions.

Based on government recommendations or pandemic orders, HRV reserves the right to introduce, reintroduce, suspend or discontinue any measures deemed necessary to abide by their obligations under the Orders and to protect the harness racing industry. These measures could include, but are not, limited to:

- Use of a QR code to check-in,
- Checking vaccination status,
- Counting the number of people entering a venue, building or room,
- Displaying density quotient signage in each room or area
- Directing participants to leave the race meeting as soon as their obligations are completed
- Establishment of external barn areas,
- Rotating and counting occupancy in the stalls,
- Limiting race fields and number of races.

9. SOCIAL DISTANCING STRATEGIES

Social distancing measures that have been advised by Federal and State Governments and Health Departments must be followed. The current measures must be practised by Clubs during race and trial meetings:

- Abiding by social distancing guidelines and ensure 1.5 metres between persons attending racetracks. Where this is not considered reasonably practicable to perform the task, the period of time in which people are together must be restricted to the shortest amount of time necessary and PPE must be worn.
- Use floor marking and signage in areas where queuing may be expected.
- Ensuring that in rooms or areas where seating and furniture are used that they are set up to comply with social distancing requirements.
- Encouraging the use of masks, where social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Establishing contact-free systems for product delivery and payment for goods and services.
- Where possible, HRV have instituted a vacant stall being left between different trainer's horses to avoid close contact amongst human participants.
- Where required by government orders, indoor gatherings may be limited to the maximum allowable as per the density quotient. When required by orders, signs must be displayed in each indoor room to clearly define the maximum number of persons allowed (this includes at the entrance of the room as well as inside the room). HRV has provided each club with details of the maximum number of persons permitted in each room.

It is important to note that in the existing changing environment surrounding COVID-19, the above social distancing and mass gathering requirements may change. Should this be the case, Government directives will take precedence over the above processes.

10. COVID SAFE PLAN

HRV and each club must establish and maintain a COVID Safe Plan.

The COVID Safe Plan details the implementation and management of:

- Hygiene and cleaning requirements,
- Training,
- Physical distancing and limits on workplace attendance,
- Record keeping,
- Response to suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19.

10.1 CONTACT TRACING DIARY

HRV recommends that licensed participants and staff maintain a contact tracing diary that records interactions with others.

The contact tracing diary should record the following:

- Location
- Date
- Time
- Names and contact details (phone number or email address) of those you have come in contact with. (where this information is known) Refer to close-contacts for more information A variety of methods may be used to record movements and contacts. Examples may include; email calendar, a contact tracing app, a manual diary or notebook.

11. INFECTION CONTROL MEASURES

One of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) is by the regular and thorough washing of hands. The recommended duration for hand washing is at least 20 seconds, using soap and warm water. Where available, sanitisers can be used as an adjunct to the handwashing process. Sanitisers are not an alternative to hand washing.

Spread of the virus can occur when you contact surfaces that have the virus on them. The virus is then ingested by touching your face, particularly your mouth, nose and eyes. Surfaces should be cleaned with a disinfectant solution on a regular basis (at least twice daily), using a single use cloth. This is particularly important for high touch surfaces, such as tables, door handles and light-switches.

Clubs must ensure that they provide access to hand washing facilities and display a selection of Government issued hygiene posters in washrooms and other suitable areas of the venue. Please refer to appendix 1 for website links. Or follow this link to thetrots.

The virus also spreads when droplets are inhaled as a result of a person coughing or sneezing. Employees and participants are reminded to practise 'cough etiquette' by sneezing and coughing into a tissue or their flexed elbow. It is important to dispose of tissues in the rubbish bin and to wash hands after coughing and sneezing.

12. FOOD AND PERSONAL ITEMS

There may be restrictions on regular food service provisions and cash handling.

The following should **NOT** occur:

- Self-service, such as buffets or open trays of sandwiches.

Where clubs wish to provide **takeaway** food service:

- All food must be packaged in single-use containers, bags, boxes, clingwrap or other suitable disposable packaging.
- Where cutlery is required, it should be disposable and handed to customers on request (no baskets or trays for self-collection)
- Barbeques are permitted provided there is no self-service.
- The Club must encourage the use of contactless payment methods via the use of EFTPOS facilities.
- Clubs should provide hand sanitiser for customer use.
- EFTPOS machines, counter tops and other surfaces must be regularly cleaned and sanitised.
- Social distancing must be maintained at all times, including;
    1) Physical distance of 1.5 metres must be maintained between people at all times. The floor area around the service counter should be marked at 1.5m intervals by tape crosses on the floor

2) People should be encouraged to move to outdoor areas once they have eaten their food and tables should be wiped with sanitiser. (Seating areas will not be provided in lockdown conditions where government directives have specified that only takeaway food is provided.)
3) Where possible, there should be separate entries and exits.
4) Staff in kitchen and servery areas must maintain social distancing wherever possible.
5) If the current orders require, the limits on the number of people allowed in a room at any one time must be adhered to in accordance with the signage displayed.

- To limit queueing, clubs are encouraged to implement pre-ordering arrangements which may be based on an electronic or paper-based system.
- Menu selections should be quick to prepare to avoid extended preparation time on site.
- Food items should be selected by the customer and handed to them by the server (customers should not be able to touch food items, even when wrapped)
- The number of staff should be limited to the minimum required to complete tasks, preferably one to two persons.
- Servers must hold a Food Handling Certificate.
- Servers must wash hands frequently and use hand sanitiser.
- Servers must wear gloves when handling ready to eat foods.
- Food handlers must wear face masks when required by government directives.
- Servers should not fall into any of the vulnerable categories (over 70 years old, over 65 with a chronic medical condition, indigenous and over 50, with a chronic medical condition)

Suitable foods include:

- Hot chips in bags or buckets
- Other fried foods, such as dim sims and potato cakes
- Pastry items such as pies, pasties, sausage rolls and quiches
- Burger or schnitzel rolls

- Combination meals e.g. burger and chips packaged in a box or container
- Pre-wrapped sandwiches, rolls, cakes and biscuits
- Pre-packaged confectionary items eg chocolate bars
- Packaged salad
- Fruit
- Tea and coffee served in a takeaway cup
- Bottled water, soft drinks and juices

Clubs that have the capacity to provide a wider range of food items, especially healthy choices or more substantial meals are encouraged to do so.

Lolly jars or treat baskets should be discontinued at this time unless items are individually wrapped.

Social distancing protocols must be maintained in food service areas.

12.1. DINING SERVICES – RESTAURANTS AND BISTROS

Food businesses must operate under strict conditions. Restaurants and bistros will not operate when government restrictions, such as lockdowns are in force.

Where a club regularly operates dining facilities, such as a bistro, they must operate in accordance with restrictions placed on hospitality businesses. Information can be accessed HERE

12.2 GAMING ROOMS

NOTE: Gaming rooms shall not operate when Government restrictions, such as lockdowns are in force.

There are no longer capacity limits in gaming areas, but it is recommended that patrons should practise social distancing where possible. Some suggestions to assist with social distancing include moving or rearranging machines so that they are 1.5 metres apart or perspex dividers between machines.

12.3 OWNERS, SPONSORS & SPECTATORS (INCLUDING CHILDREN)

NOTE: Owners, sponsors and spectators will not be permitted at racetracks when Government restrictions, such as lockdowns are in force.

Where Owners, sponsors and spectators are permitted to attend racetracks, HRV and Country Clubs reserve the right to implement separation between essential personnel and Owners, sponsors and spectators, based on government orders or public health advice at the time. These rules may vary dependent on the prevailing COVID-19 situation and current government orders. Where owners and spectators wish to attend the public areas, they should check the booking requirements for the club at Venues - Harness Racing Victoria (thetrots.com.au) Pre-booking is recommended to ensure that they secure a seat in dining areas.

13. SELF-ISOLATION AND COVID-19 TEST REPORTING

All licensed participants and employees are requested to refrain from attending race meetings when they or a member of their household or family are unwell, even if the illness may not be COVID-19 (Coronavirus). Entry to race meetings will be denied to those people presenting with symptoms.

Persons who are symptomatic and have had a COVID-19 test should isolate until their test results are known. Employees and participants who have had a COVID-19 test should complete the COVID-19-reporting form.

It is expected that all licensed participants follow the COVID-19 checklist if they have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or been advised or suspect that they may have had contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19.

Where outbreaks have occurred, there may be various restrictions placed on interstate travel, especially from those areas classified as 'hot-spots'. Participants should familiarise themselves with the information at travel-permit-system and service.vic.gov.au/border-permit

Interstate participants may refer to the COVID19-restriction-checker which provides information for all Australian states and territories.

14. PRESENTATIONS

Social distancing initiatives should be employed during presentations, such as;

- Trophy table separating the presenter and the person receiving the award.
- Recipient collecting their trophy from the table.

Presentation or acceptance speeches may be made.

15. MEDIA

15.1 Interviews

Where possible, interviewers and interviewees should endeavour to practise social distancing whilst the interview is in progress. If this is not possible, the shortest amount of time possible and the most distance achievable between people should be the aim.

Media interviews may also be conducted by telephone or other suitable electronic means.

15.2 Photographs

When posing for photographs, subjects should try to maintain social distancing except for those from the same household.

15.3 Social Media

All participants, staff and volunteers must carefully consider any social media content they intend to post.

- Does it follow Government Guidelines and HRV protocols?
- Could the content put the industry at risk?

- Are the photographs appropriate?

If there is any doubt regarding the appropriateness of an image, do not post to social media. Questions regarding the appropriateness of an image should be directed to HRV's Media and Communications Manager.

16. INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Regular updates will be provided by HRV:

- thetrots.com.au;
- Via social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter; and
- Media releases.

The following is a list of useful resources:

- Department of Health and Human Services
- Australian Government Department of Health
- The World Health Organisation

Travel information can be accessed via the smart traveler website

Health Direct hotline 1800 022 222

Coronavirus Health Information Line 1800 020 080

It is important to source information from Australian based websites, rather than rely on advice from overseas.

If additional support is required:

Type of Service	Provider	Contact details
EAP / IAP	Benestar	1300 360 364 www.benestar.com
General Information	Beyond Blue	1300 224 636
	Heads Ups	Headsup.org.au
Counselling Services	Lifeline	13 11 14
	Griefline	1300 845 745
	Suicide Call back service	1300 659 467
	Men's helpline	1300 789 978
Welfare benefits	Centrelink	www.centrelink.gov.au

17. RECORDS

Documents used to manage issues related to COVID-19 (Coronavirus) as prescribed by this procedure will be produced in a format that allows tracking for verification and review purposes.

18. REVIEW

This procedure will be subject to review by the executive management team on an as-needed basis during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

19. RELATED DOCUMENTS

This procedure should be read in conjunction with:

- HRV Business Continuity Plan and LRC-PR-101 HRV COVID-19 Procedures
- INT-PR-102 Infectious disease management guidelines for Clubs conducting trials

20. REFERENCES

- Department of Health
- Australian Government Department of Health
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008