Racing Industry’s Ability to Safely Operate During COVID-19 Crisis

The National HBPA in conjunction with horsemen and racing officials has put together these guidelines using existing successful protocols of tracks successfully operating and racing spectator free during the COVID-19 crisis. This document is intended as a resource for horsemen, race track operators or governing bodies and these recommendations do not replace clinical recommendations of health and veterinary authorities. These guidelines may evolve as they are implemented into practice and as we receive feedback. Finally, these guidelines were developed based on best practice protocols and procedures currently being utilized. Local factors should be taken into account if utilized with full understanding that these guidelines are informational and do not represent any assurance that the suggested action is all that is necessary or the optimum approach for a particular track. While the NHBPA wants to promote safe, healthy, live racing, it recognizes the rapidly changing health environment and must disclaim any liability for use of these guidelines.

Recommended Coronavirus Policies for Maintaining Spectator Free Racing

- **Establish a Staff Directory** of all contacts for key personnel which can be accessible with cell phone numbers and emails. Also include the current management chain of command with names of key personnel;
- **Establish a list of all on-track and nearby off-track medical facilities**;
- **Definitions of Essential personnel** – employees who are considered responsible for basic minimum services and who are required to work when state services are temporarily reduced due to hazardous conditions. **Non-essential personnel** – employees who are not responsible for basic minimum services when state services are temporarily reduced due to hazardous conditions.
- Essential personnel may include racing officials as designated by the state, safety staff (ambulance drivers, track maintenance crew,) outriders, pony crew, starting-gate operators and specialized janitorial staff to sanitize the facility. Essential personnel involved with the care, training and racing of horses includes grooms, hotwalkers, exercise riders, trainers and their assistants, jockeys, blacksmiths, veterinarians, horse dentists, equine message therapists. Essential personnel licensed by the commission to ensure horse racing is held in compliance with state statutes and regulations include but is not limited to stewards, placing judges, official chart-caller, photo-finish operator, clocker and clerk of scales.
- To limit exposure and prevent the spread of germs and disease, **NO VISITORS/GUESTS** will be allowed to access the Backside, Racetrack, Track Apron, Paddock or Jockeys Room. Non-essential personnel are prohibited on the grounds;
- Only licensed and credentialed essential personnel will be granted access to the Backside, Racetrack, Track Apron, Paddock or Jockeys Room;
- Non-essential personnel should be prohibited, including all public service employees (including but not limited to food service, wagering tellers, ushers, admission staff).
- Develop a security team whose members oversee all access control procedures, monitoring and reporting requirements and ensure all suspected of confirmed cases of COVID-19 infection are properly communicated and documented;
The National Horsemen’s Benevolent and Protective Association is the largest racing horsemen’s representative association in North America, with 30 affiliate member organizations representing approximately 30,000 owners and trainers of thoroughbred racehorses. The National HBPA is proud partner with its corporate sponsors, Lavin Equine Insurance Services, Xpressbet, LLC, Jockey Club Information Systems, Finish Line Horse Products, Horseman Labor Solutions, Equine Savings Group, NTRA Advantage Program, Red Brand Fencing and Daily Racing Form.

Guidelines Update April 20, 2020
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The racetrack, the track apron and paddock access will be limited to Commissioned licensed trainers and essential personnel who have horses running that day;
No owners, media or fans will be allowed on the track in order to limit outside exposure;
No guests, with no exceptions;
No assembling of any personnel in any areas and all personnel should practice social distancing;
Walking ring must be closed to everyone other than licensed personnel who are required to accompany their horse to and from the saddling barn or racetrack;
Jockeys will get on their horses as soon as possible and proceed directly to the racetrack for the post parade and warm up;
Jockey’s and their agents should be recommended to limit access to backside;
The racetrack, the track apron and paddock must remain closed to the public, non-essential personnel, and anyone who has not followed security protocol entry;
A Security Access Log should be maintained by a member of the security team to register who accessed the apron on a specific day.

Access to the Jockeys’ Room and Jockeys’ RoomRestricted Protocols:

The Jockeys’ Guild should be consulted for organizational established protocols;
Only essential personnel licensed by the state and jockeys scheduled to ride in races will be allowed access to the Jockey’s room;
All jockeys and essential personnel in the Jockeys’ Room (including Valets and Clerk of the Scales) will have their temperatures monitored daily. Anyone showing any signs of illness must be denied access to the premises;
Lockers and workstations will be spaced a minimum of the required six feet apart;
All jockeys will be required to wear riding gloves;
Jockeys must be prohibited from any physical contact between themselves and others;
Jockeys are required to leave the Jockeys’ Room immediately following their last ride;
All sauna and extraneous facilities must be closed. Jockey’s quarters (including but not limited to lockers, showers, dressing areas and valet tables) should be disinfected with CDC recommended disinfectants and sanitized frequently throughout the day;
Jockeys should be encouraged to limit travel and a 14-day mandatory self-quarantine is in effect for all jockeys and personnel who have traveled internationally;
Certain states have similar self-quarantine orders in effect for anyone traveling into the state from another state.