



Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of the Secretary
Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City

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Department of Agriculture
Administrative Order 15
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Subject : RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE WELFARE OF HORSES IN BREEDING FARMS, STABLES, RACE TRACKS, TRAINING CENTERS, RIDING SCHOOLS, POLO CLUBS AND OTHER SIMILAR FACILITIES

Section 1. BASIC POLICY AND OBJECTIVES

Welfare considerations are important for the keeping and farming of horses. Standard procedures in animal welfare are not only legally important, but they also have direct economic benefits because they enhance productivity.

Good husbandry is essential for good welfare, modern breeding, feeding, housing, and management system of horses. This will lead to an improvement in the quality of life as well as in the performance of the horses.

These Rules and Regulations are intended to encourage all persons involved in the equine industry to adopt the highest standards.

These Rules and Regulations take into consideration the five (5) basic freedoms of animals which are:

- ◆ freedom from thirst, hunger and malnutrition;
- ◆ freedom from physical discomfort and pain;
- ◆ freedom from injury and disease;
- ◆ freedom to conform to essential behavior patterns; and
- ◆ freedom from fear and distress.

Those concerned with the day-to-day care of the horses shall treat the animals with care and consideration. The welfare of horses shall be safeguarded under a variety of management systems. Horses shall be provided with comfortable and secured accommodations. If they are confined in stables, they shall have sufficient space for feeding, stretching, and expressing their normal behavioral patterns. Provided, however that if they are kept outside, they shall have shelter available to protect them from inclement weather and provided with shade from direct sunlight.

Horses are used for the following: racing, polo games, equitation, draft, entertainment, recreation, rodeos, cutting horses, pets, military activities, etc.

These Rules and Regulations are based on the knowledge and technology available at the time of publication and may need to be changed and improved in the light of future

knowledge. The application of experience and common sense in the husbandry of horses is still important.

Section 2. DEFINITION OF TERMS

- 2.1 **Breeding Farm** refers to farms for the purpose of improving the three (3) P's such as pedigree, progeny and performance of horses with a minimum of ten (10) mares to one (1) stallion.
- 2.2 **Castration** refers to the surgical removal of testicles.
- 2.3 **Committee on Unsound Horses** refers to the Committee created by the Philippine Racing Commission tasked to monitor racehorses during workouts and exercises and evaluate their soundness to participate in races whenever warranted. They decide which horses will be allowed to race.
- 2.4 **Corral** refers to an enclosure for holding animals, such as, but not limited to, holding corral, paddock, stable, stockyard and chute.
- 2.5 **Covering** refers to the act of mating in horses.
- 2.6 **Docking of Tails** refers to the cutting of part or portion of the tail.
- 2.7 **Doping** refers to the act of administering prohibited substance/s for purposes of altering the performance of the horse.
- 2.8 **Draft Horse** refers to horses used for work.
- 2.9 **Equitation** refers to the act or art of riding on horseback.
- 2.10 **Farm Paddock** refers to the covered or open enclosure where horses are exercised freely under supervision.
- 2.11 **Kalesa/Karitela/Tilbury/Carriage Horses** refer to draft horses pulling "kalesa", "karitela", tilbury or carriages.
- 2.12 **Farrier** refers to a person offering services for the trimming and shoeing of the hoof.
- 2.13 **Licensed Veterinarian** refers to a person who graduated from an accredited veterinary school with the degree of Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and duly registered with the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) and holds a Professional Tax Receipt (PTR), both of which must be current.
- 2.14 **Lunar year** refers to a 12-month period.
- 2.15 **Manila Jockey Club, Inc.** refers to the corporation of the same name which has a congressional franchise to hold horse races. The racetrack is known as San Lazaro Hippodrome and is located in Manila.

- 2.16 **Philippine Racing Club, Inc.** refers to the corporation of the same name which has a congressional franchise to hold horse races. The racetrack is known as Santa Ana Park and is located in Makati.
- 2.17 **Philippine Racing Commission** also known as PHILRACOM refers to the government regulatory body on horse racing.
- 2.18 **Pin firing** refers to the surgical intervention to correct/treat lameness by the use of physical heat.
- 2.19 **Polo Club** refers to aggregation of enthusiasts or places where polo games are played.
- 2.20 **Polo Ponies** refer to horses used for the sport called polo. They are usually 14-15 hands tall.
- 2.21 **Prohibited Substance** refers to any substance that enhances, diminishes or alters the racing performance of a horse due to its effects on the central or peripheral nervous, the cardio-vascular, respiratory, digestive, musculo-skeletal, and/or uro-genital systems of a horse, as determined by PHILRACOM.
- 2.22 **Racetrack** refers to any structure, facility, land or premise where horses are raced or exercised and is operated by an entity with a congressional franchise.
- 2.23 **Racing Club** refers to an entity with congressional franchise to maintain and operate racetracks with betting.
- 2.24 **Race Horses** refer to horses which are qualified to participate in horse races conducted by racing clubs with a congressional franchise to hold horse races. Qualification requirements are, among others, proper registration with the Stud Book and Animal Registry Division of the Bureau of Animal Industry, registration with the PHILRACOM and compliance with other PHILRACOM regulations in order to participate in PHILRACOM authorized horse races.
- 2.25 **Racing Paddocks** refer to enclosures where horses are held prior to horse races or polo games or other activities in racing clubs. These are also structures that are used for mating horses.
- 2.26 **Riding Horse** refers to horses being used mainly for riding or equestrian competitions.
- 2.27 **Riding School** refers to a school where people and/or horses are trained for purposes of equestrian competition or pleasure.
- 2.28 **Stable** refers to any structure or building where horses are kept or housed.
- 2.29 **Stud Book and Animal Registry Division (SBARD)** refers to the Division of the Bureau of Animal Industry where horses are registered. This Division was formerly called the National Stud Farm and is duly recognized by the International Stud Book Committee (ISBC).

- 2.30 **Surgical Procedure** refers to any procedure in the animal with the use of surgical instruments involving incision, excision, and/or transection of organs or part of it with the use of anesthetic.
- 2.31 **Training School** refers to a place where horses are trained for horse racing, equestrian competition, pleasure or draft.
- 2.32 **Trimming** refers to the cutting of the ear or a portion thereof.
- 2.33 **Twitch** refers to an apparatus which is applied to the upper or lower lip of the horse for restraining purposes.
- 2.34 **Whip** refers to an instrument used in horse racing, polo and equitation. The standard whip length varies in racing, polo games and equitation.

Section 3. MANAGEMENT OF HORSES

- 3.1 Administering a substance/s not authorized by PHILRACOM is punishable under this Administrative Order (AO), except for health purposes as administered or prescribed by a PHILRACOM – accredited licensed veterinarian. However, this exception is without prejudice to PHILRACOM’s decisions in races.
- 3.2 Surgical intervention to remove registered brands is prohibited. Tattoos, markings and other identification gadgets imbedded in the animal shall not be altered.
- 3.3 Docking of tails and trimming of ears are prohibited unless for health purposes.
- 3.4 Soring or firing of the limb is strictly prohibited.
- 3.5 Branding shall be done with efforts to reduce the pain. Branding on the face is strictly prohibited. The use of microchips is highly recommended.
- 3.6 The twitch shall never be applied to the ears.
- 3.7 Beddings shall be changed at least once a month or as often as necessary.
- 3.8 Strict hygiene and sanitation shall be enforced in the area where the animal is kept.
- 3.9 Collection of garbage at the racetracks, stables and other stabling facilities shall be done at least once a week.
- 3.10 There shall be a provision for environmental enrichment of the horses.
- 3.11 All surgical procedures in horses shall be done by a licensed veterinarian.

- 3.12 Shoeing shall be carried out regularly and whenever necessary by a Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) – Stud Book and Registry Division (SBARD) registered farrier.
- 3.13 Animal grooms and caretakers shall be properly trained.

Section 4. HEALTH CARE

- 4.1 There shall be regular vaccinations, deworming and hoof trimming/shoeing program for horses. The vaccination program shall be based on the requirements of the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) and PHILRACOM and shall be recorded accordingly.
- 4.2 The horses shall be tested for diseases as required by BAI.
- 4.3 Vaccination Certificates shall be properly accomplished and shall carry the following: Tax Identification Number (TIN), Professional Regulations Commission License Number (PRC No.), Professional Tax Receipt (PTR) PHILRACOM Accredited Number, Serial and Veterinary Registration Index Number (VRI).
- 4.4 Any licensed veterinarian who may wish to work for racehorses, polo ponies and horses for equitation shall first seek accreditation from the PHILRACOM.
- 4.5 All stables shall have their own on-call veterinarians as required under AO 8 for emergencies.
- 4.6 The above requirements shall apply to race horses, polo ponies and horses for equitation/equestrian competition.

Section 5. BREEDING

- 5.1 Mares shall be bred not earlier than 2 ½ lunar years of age.
- 5.2 Stallions standing at stud shall not be made to perform more than two (2) coverings per day and shall be given at least 1 - 2 days sexual rest after three (3) consecutive days of coverings. Vitamin and mineral supplements shall be provided.
- 5.3 Horses shall not be made to wear very tight halters and bits.
- 5.4 Imported and/or newly acquired horses shall be quarantined according to BAI requirements.
- 5.5 Breeding operations of farms shall be supervised by a licensed veterinarian.
- 5.6 Corrals, paddocks and adequate pasture area shall be made compulsory requisites in breeding farm operations. Horses shall be properly sheltered and protected during inclement and stormy weather conditions.

- 5.7 Stallions shall be kept away from the mares when not in service.

Section 6. STABLES

- 6.1 Proper shelter for boarding and stabling of horses intended for either breeding, racing and riding or for any purpose shall be provided. Existing structures shall be subject to evaluation by the BAI including its deputized agencies. Provided, however, that for new structures, upon effectivity of this Order, it shall be at least 3.5 m x 3.5 m and ground to ceiling clearance of at least 3.5 m per animal. Ideally, horses should have enough space to lie down.
- 6.2 Sharp objects shall not be allowed to protrude in the stables.
- 6.3 Stables shall have adequate drainage system, steady supply of water and feed troughs.
- 6.4 Stables shall be adequately ventilated and properly equipped with beddings. Beddings shall be changed not less than once a month.
- 6.5 Precautions against fire shall be undertaken by providing sufficient fire exits to allow evacuation in case of emergencies. Electrical installations shall be periodically checked, preferably monthly. Firefighting equipment shall also be installed.
- 6.6 Appropriate lighting system shall be installed.
- 6.7 The above requirements shall apply to race horses, polo ponies and horses for equitation/equestrian competition.

Section 7. RACING

- 7.1 Horses shall have completed two (2) lunar years (24 months) before they are allowed to race.
- 7.2 Horses to be raced shall be inspected by PHILRACOM - accredited licensed veterinarians.
- 7.3 Starting gates and paddocks at the racetracks shall be kept safe.
- 7.4 Horses that are totally blind including those with unilateral blindness shall not be allowed to race. Horses with unilateral blindness acquired during the first six (6) months of racing shall not be allowed to run. However, horses that have been in the races for more than a year that developed the same shall be allowed to continue running depending on the recommendation issued by the PHILRACOM Committee on Unsound Horses.
- 7.5 The use of sharp and pointed spurs is prohibited.
- 7.6 Excessive use of the whip during a race is not allowed including the use of whips after the finish line.

- 7.7 Horses with gross anatomical lesions on joints as well as any other discomfort, illnesses, or infectious physical infirmities that affect their flexibilities and are showing signs of lameness shall not be allowed to run.
- 7.8 Horses shall not be fitted with improvised or unauthorized racing paraphernalia. The paraphernalia used shall be in accordance with PHILRACOM standards.
- 7.9 The BAI may deputize PHILRACOM in the registration of racetracks and stables.

Section 8. POLO PONIES

- 8.1 Polo ponies shall not be used before having completed four (4) lunar years of age or until such time that the epiphyseal plate is closed.
- 8.2 There shall be a Committee on Unsound Horses for polo clubs which shall formulate the guidelines on health and welfare of the horses, during and after games. The Committee shall submit the guidelines to the AWD for approval.
- 8.3 This Committee shall be composed of the following: chairman of the polo committee, polo club veterinarian, representative from a professional veterinary association such as the Philippine Association of Equine Practitioners (PAEP), BAI representative and stable manager. The licensed veterinarians shall have been accredited by the PHILRACOM.
- 8.4 Sections 3, 4, 5 and 6 shall also be applicable to polo ponies.

Section 9. TRANSPORT OF HORSES FOR RACING, RIDING, POLO GAMES AND OTHERS

- 9.1 Shipping permits and authority to ship shall be secured from the BAI or its local agencies as required by BAI.
- 9.2 Transport vehicles shall have appropriate flooring materials to prevent horses from slipping.
- 9.3 Vehicles shall be so constructed and be provided in order that the animals inside can be inspected from the outside, and for this purpose shall be provided with suitably arranged openings and footholds.

Section 10. OTHER HORSES (Karitela, Draft, Ponies, etc.)

- 10.1 Horses that are used for whatever purpose such as draft shall be covered by an annual veterinary health certificate.

- 10.2 Horses used for pulling “karitela”(rig) and as draft shall be given ample time to rest. They shall not be used during extremely hot time of the day.
- 10.3 Calesas or karitelas shall not be overloaded. Loading on the roof shall not be allowed.
- 10.4 Downed horses shall not be whipped.

Section 11. HORSES FOR AMUSEMENT AND ENTERTAINMENT

- 11.1 Horsefighting shall be strictly prohibited in accordance with Section 6 of RA 8485.
- 11.2 Horses that are used for amusement and entertainment shall not be allowed to take part in any activity which will cause unnecessary suffering to itself or others.
- 11.3 Any horse showing signs of lameness or injury must not be allowed to perform and should receive veterinary attention.
- 11.4 Horses used for riding or driving purposes shall have safe and well maintained tack and harness.

Section 12. DESTRUCTION OF HORSES

- 12.1 Horses that have been diagnosed as afflicted with incurable and highly contagious diseases as certified by SBARD and the Animal Health Division of the BAI shall be destroyed immediately, observing the provisions of AO 21, series of 1999. The BAI shall provide the list of all highly contagious and notifiable diseases. After destruction, the carcass or cadaver of the horse shall be buried in a deep pit and/or disposed of according to any acceptable procedure to prevent the possible spread of disease.
- 12.2 Horses that have met accidents in the racetracks, polo fields and those for equitation and with conditions that are irreparable shall be euthanized. If the animal shall be treated or otherwise, its pain shall be immediately addressed to and shall be treated by a PHILRACOM - accredited licensed veterinarian. A weekly progress report shall be submitted to the BAI – AWD by the attending veterinarian for their assessment.
- 12.3 If a horse is in such a condition that it would be cruel to keep it alive and in the opinion of a PHILRACOM – accredited licensed veterinarian it will not respond to treatment for any serious injury involving significant pain, it must be humanely destroyed without delay.

Section 13. HUMANE SLAUGHTER FOR HORSES

13.1 Minimum standards for humane slaughter

13.1.1 No person may keep alive any horse which is in such a condition that is cruel to keep it alive.

13.1.2 Slaughter may be performed only by persons who are able to prove competence or appropriate training in the method selected.

13.1.3 Adequate precautions must be taken to protect other animals and people from injury.

13.2 Acceptable methods for the humane slaughter of horses are:

13.2.1 Rapid intravenous injection of a euthanizing agent (it should be warned that tissue residues will render the carcass unfit for human or pet consumption in this technique

13.2.2 Use of a captive bolt or humane killer.

13.2.3 Shooting, using a firearm.

13.2.4 The above procedures must be performed only by persons who are able to prove competence or appropriate training in using the method selected.

13.3 The point of entry of the captive bolt or gun shall be the point of intersection of diagonal lines taken from the base of each ear to the opposite eye.

13.4 The target area and direction of the bullet are shown below:



Figure 1. *The target area for humane destruction of a horse by shooting just above the intersection of the broken lines.*

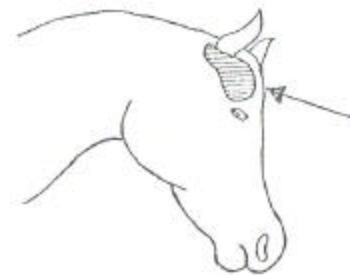


Figure 2. *The direction in which a bullet should be fired at the target area.*

Section 14. ACCREDITATION

- 14.1 The BAI shall deputize PHILRACOM to assist in the implementation of this Order in racetracks.
- 14.2 All certifications for veterinary health shall include the name of the veterinarian, Tax Identification Number (TIN), Professional Regulations Commission License No. (PRC), Professional Tax Receipt (PTR) and PHILRACOM Accreditation Number.

Section 15. PENAL PROVISIONS

Violation of any of these Rules and Regulations shall be penalized in accordance with RA 8485.

Section 16. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE

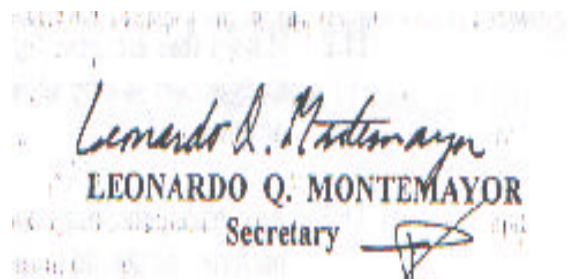
In case any provision of these Rules and Regulations is declared contrary to law and/or unconstitutional, other provisions which are not affected thereby shall continue to be enforced and in effect.

Section 17. REPEALING CLAUSE

All Administrative Orders, Rules and Regulations and other administrative issuance or parts thereof, inconsistent with the provisions of this Regulation are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 18. EFFECTIVITY

This Regulation shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in a newspaper of general circulation.



LEONARDO Q. MONTEMAYOR
Secretary