

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE KEEPING OF RACING GREYHOUNDS

GUIDE TO WRITING A STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Introduction

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) provide step by step protocols/procedures for activities that are required to be completed regularly to ensure the welfare of the greyhounds on your property. SOPs outline activities that need to be performed to ensure consistent care of the greyhounds at your establishment and ensure compliance with the Code.

SOPs should be written in a concise, step-by-step, easy-to-read format. The information presented should be clear and straight forward. Keep it simple and short. Each step should be easy to follow and leave no doubt as to what is required. You may wish to use a flow chart and/or images to illustrate the process being described. SOPs often include checklists to ensure staff follow the correct procedures when carrying out the activities.

SOPs usually start with a purpose: a statement about what the SOP is about and what it is trying to achieve. You may then wish to provide a list of equipment required to carry out the activity. A step-by-step set of tasks should follow this. Below is an example SOP for cleaning a greyhound pen.

Example SOP — Establishment hygiene/cleaning

Purpose: This SOP describes the procedure for ensuring establishment hygiene (for both persons on site and greyhounds). It ensures certain areas of the establishment are cleaned daily (e.g. pens and yards), to reduce risk of disease for greyhounds and assist in pest management. All staff assigned this task must follow this SOP.

Equipment required:

- Overalls/apron
- Boots
- Hose
- Gloves
- Bucket
- Disinfectant (product xx – to be used at a concentration of xxxm/L)
- Faeces scoop
- Refuse bin

Procedure

Do a visual check of all greyhound housing (including yards) to identify any hazards or spills that require immediate attention and/or cleaning. If something is identified, address the hazard or spill first, before undertaking any routine cleaning.


Daily cleaning of greyhound pens/yards

1. Remove greyhound from pen area into exercise/outdoor/holding areas or to a clean and vacant pen.
2. Remove bedding and bed, food/water bowls and enrichment items from pen.
3. Pick up any faeces and leftover food and discard in refuse bin (ensure bin contains a plastic liner first). Note any loose stools, blood or vomit.
4. Add disinfectant to bucket and fill with water from hose.
5. Pour disinfectant over the areas of the pen that contained faeces and soiled food and scrub these areas clean.
6. Rinse disinfectant and any debris from the pen with clean water and if possible, remove excess water from the pen to help it dry as quickly as possible.
7. Wash food, water bowls and plastic enrichment items in hot soapy water to remove any spoiled food, dirt and algae.
8. Refill water bowl with clean water and return it to the pen with clean food bowl
9. Check cleanliness of bedding. Replace if dirty and place dirty bedding out for washing. If not sufficiently dirty to require washing, shake it outside to ensure loose hair and dirt is removed.
10. Place bed, clean bedding and enrichment items back in pen once bedding area is dry
11. Place lead on greyhound and return it to its pen – ensure the correct greyhound goes into the correct pen.
12. Record cleaning date, time and employee signature on kennel/pen card. If you noticed any loose stools, blood, vomit or other abnormalities, note these in the individual greyhound record and take action where appropriate.

Cleaning of greyhound bedding, toys and other utensils

Each of the Code's requirements in relation to cleaning of bedding material, toys and other equipment, as outlined below, will be met:

- Within 24 hours of whelping, the whelping area will be cleaned and all bedding material changed (if applicable).
- During lactation, soiled bedding material will be removed and clean bedding material will be provided daily (if applicable).
- All equipment, gear and bedding, including coats and blankets, will be cleaned before they are used by a different dog.
- Bedding, coats and blankets will be cleaned no less than four times per year or more frequently if soiled.
- Ensure all equipment, including watering, feeding receptacles and utensils are clean and free of food, mould, etc.
- Watering and feeding utensils will be disinfected if the greyhound using them is diagnosed with a disease or internal parasite infection before they are used to feed or water another greyhound.
- Utensils will be rinsed after disinfection to avoid poisoning.
- Enrichment toys will be disinfected when providing them to a different litter.



The following SOPs should be included in your EHMP. A list of considerations has been included for each SOP to assist you.


Emergency management SOPs should include procedures for:

- contacting any persons that will be required to assist in managing the emergency or evacuating the establishment
- evacuating all staff and greyhounds from the establishment
- maintaining, storing and accessing your emergency kit (e.g. first aid kit, including fire blanket etc.)
- display of emergency contacts and response plans for both humans and greyhounds, including evacuation procedures
- disease outbreaks: both common and less common diseases. Recognise that some diseases, while unlikely to occur given good biosecurity, can be highly infectious, so these protocols/SOPs need to include restrictions on movement of greyhounds and staff
- recording staff health information, in the event of injury, disease or accident
- approved methods of humane euthanasia in emergency situations (still requires approval by a veterinary practitioner before being carried out)
- personnel approved to carry out the approved methods of humane euthanasia in emergency situations (still requires approval by a veterinary practitioner before being carried out)

See Guide to developing emergency procedures.

Animal health/care SOPs should include procedures for:

- provision of appropriate diet for greyhounds of all age classes. You may wish to include feeding frequency by age/training/breeding status
- provision of exercise, environmental enrichment and socialisation for greyhounds
- vaccination programs, including how you will treat greyhounds for injury or illness (i.e. seek veterinary advice, follow treatment plans, observe the greyhound regularly etc.)
- internal and external parasite prevention, including screening for fleas, ear mites, ticks and ringworm
- grooming requirements
- general daily visual behavioural and welfare assessment
- assessment programs for the health and welfare of greyhounds being reared at the establishment for sale (if applicable)
- identifying and responding to greyhounds showing signs of stress or the development of behavioural stereotypies (see Appendix 1 of the Code)
- animal health/welfare issues (a 'what do I do?' guide/flowchart/SOP for staff who identify an issue with an animal).



If applicable to your establishment, you should also include procedures for:


- care and monitoring of whelping greyhounds
- oral supplements and injectable substances regimes
- implementing a housing acclimatisation program
- the age at which education and pre-training greyhounds within the establishment will be exposed to:
 - collar training
 - lead training
 - chase motivation training
 - transport vehicles and equipment (e.g. trailers, crates)
 - training facilities (e.g. slipping tracks, circular tracks)
 - race facilities (e.g. starting boxes, racing kennels, catching pens).

Facility management SOPs should include procedures for:

- scheduling of veterinary health checks, vaccinations, microchipping, etc.
- a general contact list, including; establishment staff, veterinary practitioners, feed supply companies, groomers, GRV participants, GRV staff etc.
- hygiene, disinfection and disease prevention (this includes daily cleaning, watering and feeding routines, schedules, etc. See above example SOP)
- management of isolation facilities (if applicable)
- risk assessments of housing areas and yards, including how you manage the risks identified (i.e. risk management plan/s)
- quarantine and movement of greyhounds at the establishment; for example, indoor housing kennels to day yards or exercise yards, training tracks, slipping tracks or whelping/lactating areas etc.
- insect, ectoparasite and vertebrate pest control/management
- keeping the Greyhound record up to date for each greyhound at the establishment
- assessing new greyhounds for admission to the establishment
- overnight monitoring, including the implementation of emergency action if required.

If you undertake breeding, consider developing SOPs for:

- natural mating or artificial insemination
- pregnancy detection
- lactation management
- determining the suitability for breeding of greyhounds within the establishment
- exercise, socialisation, enrichment and handling of pregnant greyhounds (if you wish to have procedures that differ from Table 1 of the Code).



If you wish to develop your own program for preparing a greyhound for retirement and rehoming, your SOP should include procedures for:

- transitioning a greyhound from racing kennels into 15sqm housing
- transferring greyhounds into the Greyhound Adoption Program (GAP) or surrendering to an animal shelter/rescue organisation
- desexing greyhounds being rehomed to general members of the community (not GRV participants) or non-Council registered shelters
- assessing suitability for rehoming or euthanasia of retired greyhounds
- finding suitable homes for retired greyhounds.

Every reasonable effort must be made to find a suitable long term home for all healthy retired greyhounds. Further points can be found in section 6.5 of the Code.

Establishment Policies

In addition to SOPs, you may wish to develop a set of general policies for your establishment, that ensure all staff know what to do under all circumstances. For example, you may have a policy regarding whether non-establishment greyhounds such as staff pets are allowed on the property or not – a biosecurity policy which is accompanied by a biosecurity SOP that details what to do in the event that someone brings an unknown animal onto your property.

Policies generally consist of a general statement about what the policy covers and then some general rules relating to that policy.

For example: External animal policy

No animal not associated with this establishment is allowed into the establishment. Customers, workers, contractors, etc. are asked not to bring their animals into the establishment to maintain good biosecurity and safety of people and greyhounds.

A notice to this effect is placed on the front gate and at the entrance to the establishment kennel areas. People who do bring their animals onto the property will be asked to leave them in their cars (weather permitting) or tied up outside the establishment area.

If an external animal passes into the establishment they should be intercepted as soon as possible.