

# CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE KEEPING OF RACING GREYHOUNDS

## GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING ESCAPE BARRIERS AND HOUSING CONSTRUCTION

### 1 Introduction

Chapter 6.7 of the Code outlines minimum requirements for establishment facilities. This includes barriers to escape and construction of greyhound housing (i.e. pens, yards and kennels).

This document aims to provide participants with guidance and clarification on the Code's minimum facility construction requirements, including:

- Barriers to escape
- General construction of greyhound housing
- Weatherproof areas
- Sleeping areas
- Flooring
- Indoor kennels
- Yard and facility area sizes

**Note:** The Code allows for existing establishments to delay compliance with chapter 6.7 of the Code, where facilities must be brought up to Code standards upon their replacement. If GRV identify welfare or safety issues at that establishment, then facilities must be compliant by a date specified by GRV.

### 2 What are barriers to escape?

Barriers to escape are structures used to prevent greyhounds from escaping the establishment.

A barrier to escape can be a fence, wall, or any other structure that a greyhound cannot cross or penetrate. Barriers to escape must:

- prevent greyhounds from injuring themselves, escaping from the establishment or digging out
- be at least 1.2 metres high.

All establishments must have at least two barriers between racing greyhounds and escape from the establishment at all times, unless the greyhound(s) are under supervision.

For example, the two barriers to escape for racing greyhounds in their kennels may be:

- their kennel walls/door, and
- the property's secured boundary fence.

### 3 Construction of greyhound housing

Sections of the Code to be aware of when constructing greyhound housing are:

- Chapter 6.7.2: minimum housing requirements, including flooring, fencing and maintenance.
- Chapters 6.7.6 – 6.7.13: construction requirements for greyhound pens and yards, including kennel, whelping and training facilities.
- Table 2: minimum housing areas for greyhounds.

It is most important to ensure that any greyhound housing is designed, constructed and maintained in a way that ensures greyhounds are safe at all times and cannot escape. This includes preventing unsafe contact between greyhounds in adjoining pens or yards.

For indoor kennels, this also includes managing temperature and ventilation. All indoor kennels must provide greyhounds with continuous access to natural daylight during the day. Where greyhounds are housed in a totally enclosed area (that is, all windows and doors are kept closed with no natural air flow), chapter 6.7.7 of the Code outlines specific ventilation requirements.

The safety of staff and other persons at the establishment must also be considered when constructing any greyhound housing or facilities.

It is recommended that all greyhound facilities are constructed from materials that are durable, non-toxic and easy to maintain and clean.

#### 3.1 What is a weatherproof area and when do I need one?

A weatherproof area is designed to protect greyhounds from the wind, rain and extreme temperatures, to safeguard their welfare.

All outdoor housing pens and yards used to house greyhounds over 16 weeks of age, for more than an hour at a time, must have at least 3 square meters of weatherproof area. This area must include a kennel with a raised sleeping area.

In addition to the 3 square meters:

- an additional 1 square meter of weatherproof area is required for each additional greyhound housed between 16 weeks and 12 months of age
- an additional 1.5 square meters of weatherproof area is required for each additional greyhound housed over 12 months of age.

If any greyhound housing is constructed of material that can conduct heat, then adequate insulation or approved heating or cooling must be used to minimise heat conduction.

A weatherproof area is not required for outdoor yards that are only used for short, supervised periods of time. For example, an exercise yard used to exercise greyhounds for 30 minutes does not require a weatherproof area. If an exercise yard is used to house greyhounds for more than an hour at a time, then a weatherproof area is required.

### 3.3 Sleeping area requirements

Sleeping areas in shared housing pens or yards must provide sufficient space and bedding material so that all greyhounds aged 16 weeks or older can sleep comfortably at the same time.

Beds and bedding must not use concrete or metal as the main construction material, and must be constructed to:

- protect greyhounds from the weather (wind, rain, sun and extremes of climate), vermin and harassment by other animals
- be raised off the ground and large enough to allow the greyhound/s to lay down comfortably
- be soft, dry and warm.

Indoor sleeping areas must have solid partitions at least one meter high on three sides.

### 3.4 What are the flooring requirements for kennels and sleeping areas?

Flooring of kennels and sleeping areas must:

- be impervious to liquids to assist cleaning, disinfection and drainage
- be surrounded by solid walls
- not be constructed of wire.

Impervious flooring means you cannot use any kind of material that will absorb liquid. Flooring of kennels and sleeping areas must allow liquids to drain away, so they do not seep from an unclean area into a clean area.

Concrete, brickwork and mortar are not impervious barriers and will absorb liquids such as urine and waste water. To make these materials impervious, they must be sealed. This will assist with disinfection, cleaning and drainage.

While paint is often used to make concrete, bricks and mortar impervious, there are other alternatives. For example, driveway sealants or polyurethane spray on sealants, that can be more durable than paint alone.

If you are considering building a new facility, ask your concrete supplier about adding a chemical to the concrete to make it impervious on laying.

### 3.5 Indoor kennel requirements

Roof height of indoor kennels (outside a sleeping area) must allow greyhounds to stand on their hind legs with their front paws raised above their heads (a common stance for an excited greyhound).

If you have a welfare concern regarding roof height, you may seek advice from your veterinary practitioner.

All internal surfaces of indoor kennel walls must be constructed of impervious, solid, washable materials, so they can be easily cleaned and disinfected.

## 4 Greyhound yard and facility sizes

This document covers construction of greyhound housing facilities. Please see relevant sections of the Code for requirements in relation to how yards and facilities may be used:

- Chapter 6.7.8: toileting yards
- Chapter 6.7.9: exercise yards
- Chapter 6.7.10: day yards
- Chapter 6.7.11: mating areas
- Chapter 6.7.12: whelping/lactating facilities
- Chapter 6.7.13: training facilities.

### 4.1 Toileting yards

Toileting yards must be at least 5 square meters. A toileting yard of this size can be used to toilet up to four compatible greyhounds at one time.

If you are toileting more than four compatible greyhounds at once, each additional greyhound requires an additional 5 square meters for toileting.

For example, if toileting six compatible greyhounds at once, the toileting area must be 15 square meters.

### 4.2 Exercise yards

An exercise yard must be at least 20 square meters, with a minimum width of 4 metres.

Exercise facilities must be separate from normal housing, unless housing pens incorporate additional space for exercise (see section 6.7.2 of the Code).

### 4.3 Day yards

Day yards must:

- have a weatherproof area of at least 3 square meters
- contain a raised bed
- be large enough for the number of greyhounds being housed, as per Table 2 of the Code.

### 4.4 Mating areas

Areas used for natural mating must be:

- physically isolated from all other greyhounds
- at least 15 square meters.

### 4.5 Whelping and lactating areas

Whelping and lactating areas must:

- have access to natural daylight
- contain bedding that is soft, absorbent and easily cleaned or removed
- be temperature controlled (the recommended temperature range is between 16°C to 24°C)
- have raised sleeping areas that ensure puppies cannot fall out.



Consider also providing a heat source in whelping and lactating areas (e.g. 25-watt globe or lamp), particularly during colder weather, to help puppies regulate their temperature. In warmer weather, it is important to provide an alternative cooler area for the female greyhound.

Whelping areas must be at least 15 square meters and physically separated from all other greyhounds. The 15 square meters may include adjoining exercise areas or day yards.

Separate whelping areas with a whelping box must be provided for each female greyhound and her puppies. The whelping box must:

- be large enough for the female greyhound to lie comfortably while whelping
- be large enough to accommodate the female greyhound and puppies for the first four weeks after whelping
- have solid sides that are high enough to allow the female greyhound to exit readily but prevent puppies under four weeks from falling out.

Lactating areas must:

- contain a fully screened bedding area to allow the female greyhound physical separation from all other greyhounds
- allow the female greyhound access to an area where her puppies cannot reach her, to allow her to rest.

#### **4.6 Training facilities**

If constructing training facilities, you must ensure that they are:

- fully enclosed and constructed of materials that will not injure greyhounds or allow them to escape
- free of large dips or holes that may cause injury to a greyhound when running
- not made of concrete or other materials that could injure the greyhound, such as wood, wire or rough scoria
- appropriately drained to prevent pooling of liquids.

Slipping tracks and galloping runs used to train two greyhounds simultaneously must have a minimum width of 3.6 metres.

If constructing starting boxes, viewing cages or race day cages, you must ensure that they are constructed of materials that will not injure the greyhound and can be easily cleaned and disinfected.