



29 October 2025

OFFICIAL NOTICE

AMENDMENTS TO THE NEW ZEALAND RULES OF HARNESS RACING

Under the Racing Industry Act 2020, the Constitution of Harness Racing New Zealand, and the New Zealand Rules of Harness Racing, the following rules of New Zealand Harness Racing (the Rules) were amended at the Annual General Meeting of Harness Racing New Zealand Incorporated held on 11 October 2025 at Christchurch and come into force as set out below.

The full amended Rules will be available on the HRNZ website on 1 November 2025.

1. Rule 105(1) Definition of Participant
This amendment comes into force on 1 November 2025

Rule 105(1) is amended by inserting the following definition of participant and deleting the definition of participant in rule 1701:

PARTICIPANT means:

- (a) *a person licensed or registered with HRNZ; and*
- (b) *includes (without limitation):*
 - (i) *a trainer, driver, stablehand, or a person working at harness training premises;*
 - (ii) *a breeder of standardbred horses;*
 - (iii) *an owner (or part-owner), leasor (or part-leasor) of a standardbred horse, or leased with the intention of entering a race;*
 - (iv) *any member of a syndicate;*
 - (v) *a person who otherwise deals with animals used for harness racing;*
 - (vi) *a member of a club; and*
 - (vii) *any other person to whom these rules apply.*

2. Rule 117 Providing Information to HRNZ
This amendment comes into force on 1 November 2025

Rule 116 is amended by inserting the following heading after rule 116 and inserting a new rule 117, and re-numbering the current Rule 117 Online Applications to rule 118:

Provision of Information to HRNZ

- 117 (1) *In this rule, to furnish information includes to answer any question, supply any information, produce any document, and provide any explanation.*
- (2) *The chief executive may require any participant to furnish any information within their knowledge or control touching on any matter being considered by HRNZ, the Board, any Board committee, or body appointed by the Board*

or HRNZ under the Racing Industry Act 2020, the Constitution, or these rules.

- (3) *No person shall be excused from answering any question, supplying any information, producing any document, or providing any explanation under sub-rule (2) on the grounds that to do so would or might incriminate or tend to incriminate that person in a breach of the rules.*
- (4) *A self-incriminating statement made orally by a person (whether or not the statement is recorded in writing) in the course of answering any question or supplying any information under sub-rule (2), may only be used in evidence against that person in a proceeding relating to a breach of the rules where the person gives evidence inconsistent with the statement or in a proceeding relating to a serious racing offence under rule 1001(1)(i) or (k).*

3. Rule 213(1)(i) Nasal Bleeding

This amendment comes into force on 1 November 2025

Rule 213(1)(i) is amended to state:

213(1) A Stipendiary Steward at any time may scratch from a race or declare ineligible to start in a race until a specific condition is met any horse on all or any of the following grounds:

- (i) *that the horse has suffered an episode of epistaxis, which is the appearance of an attack of nasal bleeding from one or both nostrils. The period the horse is ineligible to start shall be a period of 30 days following the first episode of epistaxis, 90 days following the second episode of epistaxis, and for life following the third episode of epistaxis. The period of ineligibility may be extended following a Stipendiary Steward receiving a report from a veterinary surgeon.*

4. Rule 859(3) Horse Starting from Incorrect Position

This amendment comes into force on 1 November 2025

Rule 859(3) is amended to state:

- (3) *In addition to any other penalty that may be imposed under these rules, a horse shall be disqualified and deemed to be scratched from a race if it:*
 - (a) *Starts in advance of its mark.*
 - (b) *Starts from an incorrect barrier position and gains an advantage.*

5. Rule 865(1) Notifiable Gear

This amendment comes into force on 1 November 2025

Rule 865(1) is amended to state:

- (1) *The trainer or person in control of a horse shall notify any notifiable gear, devices, or appliances a horse may race in or with in a betting race. This notification must be completed in accordance with the timeframes and procedures outlined in the Approved Gear Regulations.*

6. **Rule 1001B Offensive Communications**
This amendment comes into force on 1 November 2025

A new rule 1001B is inserted that states:

1001B (1) *In this rule:*
offensive communication includes:

(a) *any comment, statement, written material (including in electronic form or social media message), image, or media file on any medium available to the general public or a section of the general public (including electronic or social media forums, whether available to the general public or only to members of the forum), that could reasonably be considered:*

(i) *harassing, offensive, abusive, or insulting to a recipient; or*

(ii) *harmful to the reputation of harness racing in New Zealand.*

(b) *Any comment, statement, written material (including in electronic form or social media message), image, or media file that could reasonably be considered harassing, offensive, abusive, or insulting:*

(i) *sent to, given to, or left for a recipient; or*

(ii) *sent, given, or left where it is likely it will be found by, given to, or brought to the attention of a recipient.*

(c) *To avoid doubt a communication is not considered an offensive communication if:*

(i) *sub-rule (1)(a) or (b) do not apply and it was intended to be private; or*

(ii) *it was made in good faith and without intent to harass, offend, abuse, or insult a recipient.*

recipient means:

(a) *Any participant.*

(b) *HRNZ, any HRNZ Board member, or any person employed or engaged by HRNZ.*

(c) *A club, any committee or Board member of any club, or any person employed or engaged by a club.*

(d) *The Racing Integrity Board, or any person employed or engaged by the Racing Integrity Board.*

(e) *TAB NZ or any person employed or engaged by TAB NZ.*

- (2) *A person commits a breach of the rules who makes, publishes, or engages in an offensive communication.*
- (3) *An offensive communication may arise from a single act or a pattern of behaviour directed against a recipient on at least two separate occasions within a period of 12 months.*
- (4) *To avoid any doubt the acts required for the purposes of sub-rule (3) may be the same type of act on each separate occasion, or different types of acts.*
- (5) *A breach of sub-rule (2) is declared to be a serious racing offence.*
- (6) *In any proceeding for a breach of sub-rule (2) a person's name, part name, or their pseudonym shall be sufficient evidence of that person's identity provided that this sub-rule does not prevent that person establishing that the name, part name, or pseudonym is a different person.*

7. Rule 1004H Bisphosphonates

This amendment comes into force on 1 November 2025

Rule 1004H is amended to state:

- (1) *In these rules bisphosphonate means a bisphosphonate other than a radiolabelled bisphosphonate which is approved for use in diagnostic nuclear imaging in a horse and was administered for the purpose of diagnostic imaging only.*
- (2) *A horse under the age of four years must not be administered any bisphosphonate.*
- (3) *A horse must not be administered bisphosphonate (including radiolabelled bisphosphonate) in the period 30 clear days prior to racing.*
- (4) *A trainer and the person in charge of the horse at the time of the administration prohibited by sub-rule (2) or (3) commits a serious racing offence.*
- (5) *A horse that races having had administered to it bisphosphonate in contravention of sub-rule (2) or (3) must be disqualified from the race and rule 1004E shall apply with any necessary modification.*

8. Rule 1106(2) Determination of Proceeding

This amendment comes into force on 1 November 2025

Rule 1106(2) is amended to state:

- (2) *A Stipendiary Steward may file an information in respect of a race on the grounds that:*
 - (a) *any of the horses started off wrong handicaps;*
 - (b) *the race was run over the wrong distance; or*
 - (c) *the race was started before the appointed time.*

On determining the proceeding under this sub-rule the Adjudicative Committee may declare the race to be void and may direct that it be run again. Any decision of the Adjudicative Committee under this sub-rule is declared to be final.

9. Rule 306 Person in Charge

This amendment comes into force on 1 December 2025

Rule 306 is amended to state:

A trainer of a horse entered to start in a race who is not present at the race meeting with the horse must notify the Secretary of the Club conducting the race-meeting, or in the Secretary's absence the Stipendiary Steward, at least one hour prior to the first race of that meeting the licensed person who shall be in control of the horse and present at the race-meeting. Nothing in this rule shall affect any other rule so far as it relates to a person in apparent control of a horse.

10. Rule 502 Enhanced Traceability

This amendment comes into force on 1 December 2025

Rule 502 is amended by amending sub-rule (1) to state and inserting a new sub-rule (1A) as follows, and re-numbering the current rule 502(1A) to rule 502(1B):

502 (1) A trainer shall notify HRNZ that they are the trainer of a horse within 72 hours after that horse has come into their care or control by notification to HRNZ, either electronically or sending a Trainer Notification Form. The notification shall include:

- (a) the horse's name;*
- (b) its breeding;*
- (c) its age, colour, and sex;*
- (d) the owner's names;*
- (e) the trainer's name and address;*
- (f) whether horse is to race in owner's or trainer's colours; and*
- (g) the horse's freeze brand and microchip number (if applicable).*

(1A) If HRNZ has not been notified, either electronically or by sending a Trainer Notification Form within the required 72 hour period, the horse may be declared ineligible to start in a race.

11. Rule 234 Testing Participants in Safety-Sensitive Activities

This amendment comes into force on a date to be notified by the Board

Rule 234 is amended by inserting a new rule 234 that states:

234 (1) In this rule a safety-sensitive activity includes but is not limited to:

- (a) Driving a horse at a workout, trial, or race.*
- (b) Handling, loading, leading, or transporting horses at a racecourse at which a workout, trial, or race is to take place.*
- (c) Operating equipment or machinery in a workout, trial, or race environment.*

- (d) Serving in an official capacity during a workout, trial, or race meeting.*
- (e) Any other activity as determined by the Board, that if performed under the influence of drugs or alcohol, may pose a risk to participant or animal safety.*
- (2) A Stipendiary Steward or Racing Investigator may stop any person from being involved in a safety-sensitive activity who they have reasonable grounds to believe is impaired by alcohol or drugs.*
- (3) Any person who is carrying out, or is about to carry out, a safety-sensitive activity may be required to provide a sample for a drug test, alcohol test, or both as directed by a Stipendiary Steward or Racing Investigator.*
- (4) A refusal to undergo a drug or alcohol test or supply a sample when required under this rule, or any attempt to obstruct the process, shall be deemed a breach of these rules and in addition to any other penalty that may be imposed under the rules:
 - (a) in the case of a driver must be immediately suspended pending further investigation or disciplinary action; and*
 - (b) in the case of a person other than a driver may result in immediate suspension pending further investigation or disciplinary action.**
- (5) The Board may make Safety-Sensitive Activities Regulations that may include (without limitation) procedures for taking samples, testing procedures, testing devices, and thresholds for alcohol and drugs below which there is no breach of the rules.*

Dated this 29 day of October 2025.



Brad Steele
Chief Executive