



In 2002, the American Greyhound Track Operators Association (AGTOA), adopted a [Statement of Standards and Principles](#) to reflect their commitment to responsible greyhound care and adoption. When greyhounds reach the track, two additional layers of regulation come into effect. State racing regulators enforce laws pertaining to pari-mutuel betting and the handling of horses and greyhounds at the track. In addition, tracks impose their own rules and policies through the contracts they sign with kennel operators. Here is more information about each of these regulatory layers:

State Racing Commissions

All greyhound racing in the U.S. is regulated by state or local law. Racing commissions in each jurisdiction enforce laws designed to ensure the integrity of pari-mutuel racing as well as the welfare of the horses and greyhounds that race at the tracks. Typically, these commissions issue and revoke racing licenses, monitor revenue and tax collections, enforce administrative rules, discipline violators, and enforce compliance with greyhound health and welfare rules. In some states, regulators also have jurisdiction over track-operated greyhound adoption programs.

Regulatory statutes in Florida, where about half of the nation's greyhound tracks are located, are typical of the laws that exist in most racing states. Here are some of the rules designed to ensure the proper treatment of racing greyhounds under Florida law.

- Each track must employ a veterinarian who is licensed and in good standing with the state board of veterinary medicine.
- Greyhounds must be examined by the track veterinarian before each race.
- Greyhounds deemed unsound for racing must be scratched, and their condition reported to the racing steward.
- Any illness with unusual symptoms must be reported to the track veterinarian.
- All racing animals must be inoculated for infectious and contagious diseases.
- Records must be maintained of all racing greyhounds treated and/or medicated.
- Tracks must contribute a portion of their revenue to bona fide adoption organizations.

A global regulators association, [Racing Commissioners International \(ARCI\)](#), hosts a website with links to state and local racing jurisdictions.

Track Contracts

In addition to state regulation, greyhound tracks impose their own rules, policies and procedures to ensure greyhound welfare. In exchange for the right to race their greyhounds at the track, kennel owners must sign contracts in which they agree to abide by those rules. If kennel owners violate these contract clauses, the tracks can void their contracts and suspend or revoke their racing privileges.

Most track contracts require that:

- Track-owned kennel facilities are kept clean, safe, climate-controlled and odor-free.
- Greyhounds are handled by competent, trained personnel.
- Greyhounds are treated humanely in compliance with track and state rules.
- Proper precautions are taken to prevent the spread of contagious illnesses.
- Penalties are imposed for the improper treatment or handling of greyhounds.
- No live lures are used in training.

Tracks have been especially aggressive in establishing rules to protect retired greyhounds when they leave the track. They require documentation that retired greyhounds are headed back to their owners, out to another track, or into a recognized adoption program before leaving track property.

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