

Returning to the racecourse – a guide for owners attending an elite sporting competition

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Contents

Section A: General guidance	2
1. Overview [UPDATED]	2
2. Government guidance	3
a) General guidance [UPDATED].....	3
b) Guidance for behind closed doors sport.....	3
3. Racecourse attendance.....	3
4. Medical explanatory note – entry screening and social distancing.....	4
Section B: Prior to arrival at the racecourse	4
5. Registering to attend a race meeting	4
6. Online COVID-19 education module	5
7. Personal health assessment	5
8. Owners’ responsibilities.....	6
9. What to bring	6
Section C: Arrival at the racecourse	7
10. Attendance list	7
11. Entry screening.....	7
Section D: On the racecourse	8
12. The Owner Zones	8
13. Briefing areas [UPDATED]	8
14. Catering	8
15. Face coverings.....	8
16. Betting facilities [UPDATED]	8
Section E: Leaving the racecourse	9
17. Departure process	9

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Section A: General guidance

1. Overview **[UPDATED]**

From Saturday 4 July, a limited number of racehorse owners will be able to attend race meetings held behind closed doors, in the first stage of a phased plan for owners to return to the racecourse. This document outlines the protocols that must be followed by all owners attending race meetings behind closed doors, to help safeguard the health and wellbeing of all attendees.

To minimise risk for owners and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of all attendees, the following provisional measures will be in place during the early stages of return and until further notice:

- A maximum of two owners (or representatives) per horse can attend for their race(s) only.
- Pre-registration is essential. This process will be administered by the RCA's Privilege Access Swipe System (PASS) and only confirmed attendees will be granted access to the racecourse. Owners will be **emailed automatically** with details on how to register once their horse is declared to run.
- All owners attending a fixture are required to complete a two-stage health screening process. This includes the BHA's [COVID-19 online learning module](#) and a personally administered health assessment to be completed in advance of raceday, followed by health questions and a temperature check on arrival at the racecourse.
- To facilitate 2m social distancing requirements and avoid entry delays, owners are requested to arrive at the racecourse no more 45 minutes before their first horse is due to run and leave the racecourse within an hour of the final race in which they have a confirmed runner.
- Owners will have access to dedicated 'owner zones', which will be separated from the 'green zone' used by raceday workers (trainers, stable staff, jockeys, officials, media etc.) by at least two metres or a barrier. For infection control purposes movement between the two areas of the racecourse will be restricted to racecourse staff only. However, there will be briefing areas where owners can speak to trainers in line with the protocols.

All owners attending a race meeting must ensure that they have read and understood this document, together with the relevant sections of the British Horseracing Authority's (BHA) [guidelines and operating procedures](#) for behind closed doors racing. Owners are also requested to familiarise themselves with current government advice on COVID-19 (see 2, below).

Please note that this owner-specific document falls under the BHA [guidelines and operating procedures](#) for behind closed doors racing. Unless otherwise stated below, the wider industry protocols take precedence.

This document will be updated periodically, in line with changes to government guidance around COVID-19 and the return of sport.

- For further information on the return of owners to racecourses, please contact the ROA on 01183 385680 or via: info@roa.co.uk. The ROA is contactable 9am-5pm Monday to Friday and 9am-12pm Saturday and Sunday.
- For specific questions about the RCA's PASS please contact the PASS Helpdesk on 01933 270333 or via pass@weatherbys.co.uk. The PASS helpdesk is contactable 9am-5pm Monday to Friday and 9am-2pm Saturday and Sunday

2. Government guidance

a) General guidance **[UPDATED]**

This document has been developed in line with government guidance, and all owners must ensure they have read and are familiar with basic public health advice on COVID-19 before attending the racecourse.

Please note that government guidance in England, Scotland and Wales may vary at any time, so attendees should be aware of any differences:

- UK Government guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
- Scottish Government guidance: <https://www.gov.scot/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance/>
- Welsh Government guidance: <https://gov.wales/coronavirus>

b) Guidance for behind closed doors sport

The UK Government has also published specific guidance around the return of [elite domestic sporting competition behind closed doors](#), which sets the minimum standards that sport is required to meet to resume competition.

This underpins the protocols, entry requirements and screening processes defined in this document and British racing's [guidelines and operating procedures](#) for behind closed doors racing.

The protocols apply to racecourses in England and Scotland. British racing continues to engage with the Welsh Government on the return of owners for behind closed doors fixtures.

All racecourses also remain subject to local authority clearance and if a racecourse is unable to accommodate owners, you will be notified in advance.

3. Racecourse attendance

As noted in the previous section, British racing must comply with specific government guidance on the [return of elite sporting competition behind closed doors](#).

This means that during competition, racecourses are classed as elite sport venues (as distinct from other hospitality businesses) and must adhere to strict guidelines around entry requirements, such as health screening and restricting access to personnel with essential functional roles.

These guidelines recognise that social distancing restrictions will inevitably be breached by a small number of staff during the course of a race-meeting due to the nature of the sport. This is why those attending a sports venue face a more detailed screening process and why numbers are limited to minimise the risks.

In the early stages of resumption, minimising the number of individuals on course has helped ensure that new and revised protocols for behind closed doors racing are operating effectively and that participants have been able to adjust quickly to different ways of operating.

As a result of this work, British Racing is now able to commence its phased plan for the return of owners, with interim measures in place initially to ensure this is done in a practical and risk-managed way. These provisional arrangements will help ensure that owners can return to the racecourse in a way that safeguards your wellbeing and that of raceday workers.

These interim measures will be reviewed regularly in line with government guidance, with the view to easing them at the earliest possible opportunity. In the meantime, thank you for your patience and understanding.

4. Medical explanatory note – entry screening and social distancing

As part of British racing's commitment to return safely to racing behind closed doors in line with the government guidance outline above, a health screening process is in place for all racecourse attendees to safeguard their health and wellbeing. This process has been developed in consultation with government and public health officials.

Racing is a predominantly rural sport, which takes place in outdoor locations where the risk of virus transmission is recognised to be lower. It is also a non-contact sport, which enables social distancing at two metres to be delivered more consistently than other sports.

In the early stages of resumption, the number of attendees at the racecourse was also kept to an absolute minimum, to mitigate risk even further. However, as the number of people on the racecourse increases, the ability to maintain social distancing is diminished and the likelihood of attendees who are not trainers, stable staff or jockeys being from more urban areas where Covid-19 cases have been higher, is increased.

To reduce the potential of an interruption to racing because of a case of Covid-19 causing 14-day quarantine of racecourse contacts, the decision has been made to:

- physically separate owners coming onto a racecourse from other raceday workers by using a [zoning approach](#), to ensure social distancing is in place at all times
- require all owners attending race meetings to undergo a two-step health screening process, which comprises an [Covid-19 online education module](#) and [personal health assessment](#) prior to raceday, and [entry screening](#) (health questions and temperature checks) on arrival at the racecourse.

This approach, supported by government, also means that there would be currently no need to revise other elements of the screening program such as by introducing laboratory testing for all racecourse attendees.

This is an evolving landscape and hopefully as cases continue to fall, we can look forward to a more integrated raceday experience, which we would like to achieve at the earliest opportunity.

Section B: Prior to arrival at the racecourse

5. Registering to attend a race meeting

Access to the racecourse will be strictly limited to a maximum of two owners (or representatives) per horse. **Pre-registration is essential**, and anyone not registered to attend **will not** be granted access.

Owners planning to attend to watch their horse(s) run must register their attendance using the existing RCA's Privilege Access Swipe System (PASS) – an existing system which manages the complimentary access into racecourses for owners.

This should be completed as early as possible in advance of the race meeting. The deadline to register to attend is **4pm the day before the fixture**.

Once a horse is declared to run, registered owners (or Syndicators/Club Managers) will receive a confirmation email inviting them to register up to two people per horse to attend the race meeting.

To register your attendees, please log into PASS (<https://www.rcapass.com/>) and submit the names of the individuals who will attend the racecourse. As explained above, all names must be submitted by 4pm the day before the fixture. Changes after that time will not be possible.

For the avoidance of doubt, for Syndicates and Racing Clubs, it will be the responsibility of the Syndicator/Club Manager to submit the names of those individuals attending the fixture.

Internationally based owners who are not registered in the UK, should contact the racecourse directly to register attendance. This should be completed **4pm the day before the fixture**. For Racing Managers who require assistance registering attendance on behalf of owners please contact the PASS helpdesk.

Children can attend as one of the two owners if pre-registered. All children attending will undergo the entry screening process as standard.

Please note that if a horse is declared a non-runner, the owner should **not** attend the fixture.

For assistance with the PASS system, please contact the PASS helpdesk on 01933 270333 or by email: pass@weatherbys.co.uk.

6. Online COVID-19 education module

All owners are asked to complete an online education module – *Covid-19 information for participants of the racing industry* – prior to raceday. This is hosted on the [Racing2Learn website](#).

This will ensure that all attendees have a baseline understanding of COVID-19, social distancing, hand and respiratory hygiene, racecourse protocols and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements.

The online module only needs to be completed **once** (before your first racecourse attendance) and owners do not need to produce proof of completion on arrival at the racecourse.

The BHA has produced a step-by-step user guide to help individuals register with Racing2Learn and complete the online module. This can be downloaded [here](#).

7. Personal health assessment

Unlike participants and raceday workers, owners will not be required to complete a mandatory health screening questionnaire prior to attending the racecourse. This reflects the fact that owners will be on course for a shorter period, they will not interact with other raceday attendees, and are more able to maintain social distancing at all times.

However, to minimise risk for yourself and other owners, we ask that all owners assess their own health ahead of attending every fixture. To do this, owners should ask themselves five questions:

- i. Are you in a vulnerable person category, as [defined by NHS guidance](#)?

If yes, please consider carefully whether you should attend a race-meeting. If you need further advice, please contact your GP.

- ii. Do you have a fever, cough, and/or a loss of sense of smell or taste? These are symptoms of Covid-19 infection.

If yes, you cannot attend a racecourse until you have contacted NHS 111 and completed any testing or quarantine period.

- iii. Have you been contacted by NHS Test and Treat within the last 7 days and advised to self-isolate?

If yes, you cannot attend a racecourse.

- iv. In the past 14 days, have you travelled outside the United Kingdom or the Republic of Ireland?

If yes, you cannot attend a racecourse until you have completed 14 days quarantine from the date of your return to the UK unless in a [specified exempt job](#).

- v. In the past 7 days have you had contact with any laboratory-confirmed Covid-19 patients when you were NOT wearing the appropriate PPE or in the past 14 days has any member of your household had symptoms of Covid-19?

If yes, you cannot attend a racecourse until you have contacted NHS 111 and completed any testing or quarantine period.

Owners are not required to submit their responses but must answer the questions truthfully and stay away from all racecourses if required.

8. Owners' responsibilities

Owners should be aware the BHA has made a number of changes to the Rules of Racing to cover the new and revised protocols in place following resumption. All owners entering a racecourse should be aware of the Covid-19 specific requirements that sit within the Rules of Racing and which are outlined [here](#).

Please also be aware that by attending a racecourse, owners acknowledge and agree that notwithstanding the risk mitigation strategies employed by the BHA and other industry bodies in accordance with Government guidance, it is impossible to eliminate all risk and there remains the potential for unintended transmission of COVID-19 between attendees.

All attendees must play their part in minimising the risk to themselves and others by complying with these guidelines, racecourse terms and conditions of entry, and the COVID-19 requirements as set out in the Rules of Racing.

9. What to bring

Please make sure you arrive at the racecourse with your:

- Photographic ID (a copy on your phone is acceptable) – you will require this to gain entry to the racecourse.
- Your RCA PASS card - if you have been allocated one as a registered owner.

You may also wish to consider bringing your own alcohol-based hand sanitiser and a face covering (see 14 below).

Section C: Arrival at the racecourse

10. Attendance list

Only owners who have registered their attendance using the RCA's PASS should travel to the racecourse. The deadline to register to attend is **4pm the day before the fixture**.

Owners who are not registered to attend will not be granted access to the racecourse and should not attend the fixture. If a horse is declared a non-runner the attached owners should also not attend the fixture.

Please note that all owners badge schemes are suspended at present and all attendees must be attached to a runner.

11. Entry screening

Owners are asked to arrive at the racecourse no more than 45 minutes before their first declared runner's race time. This will help minimise delays and ensure that all owners can be accommodated. Please make your way to the owner's entrance, which will be clearly signposted. This will be staffed from one hour before the first race, so no entry will be permitted before this time.

On arrival, owners will be asked to provide photo ID as proof of identity, before answering three further questions about their current health. This will be followed by a temperature check. Your temperature will be taken twice in quick succession, with the lower reading recorded. If on both occasions this temperature exceeds 37.8°C, owners will not be granted access to the racecourse and will be advised to travel home.

Any individual that fails the on-course screening will be required to **either**:

- provide evidence of a negative Covid-19 test, which can be booked on the [NHS website](#).
- **or** complete a minimum of 7 days of isolation depending on advice received from NHS Test and Trace before re-admittance to a racecourse. For more information please contact the ROA on 01183 385680 or via: info@roa.co.uk.

Owners are reminded that if any member of the same vehicle fails to clear the entry screening process all those travelling together will be denied entry onto the racecourse. Individuals will be re-admitted to the racecourse once the individual with the raised temperature has either had a negative test or if positive all contacts have followed the advice received from NHS Test and Trace.

On successful completion of the entry screening process, owners will be able to gain access to the racecourse and will be provided with a wristband identifying that they have undergone the required screening. As with the rest of the racecourse, the entrance will be monitored throughout the day by a Social Distancing Officer to help maintain social distancing and all COVID-19 protocols.

For more information about the PASS data protection policy and how your information will be managed, please visit <https://www.rcapass.com>

Section D: On the racecourse

12. The Owner Zones

To mitigate the risk of the transmitting COVID-19, owners on course will have access to a dedicated owner zones, which will be separated from raceday workers (trainers, stable staff, jockeys, officials, media etc.). For infection control purposes, no movement will be permitted between the two areas of the racecourse.

The owner zones may consist of both outside and indoor space and will include access to toilets. It will **not** allow access to the parade ring, the Winners' Enclosure, or winning connections.

At all points on the racecourse, irrespective of whether inside or outside, owners should ensure they adhere to government guidance and strict social distancing measures. A Social Distancing Officer will be located in the owner zones to help maintain social distancing and all COVID-19 protocols.

13. Briefing areas **[UPDATED]**

Where possible, racecourses can establish briefing areas, where owners will have the opportunity to speak to their trainers and / or jockeys before and after the race, while continuing to maintain social distancing and adhering to other infection control measures.

Racecourses are working to introduce briefing areas for all fixtures where it is practicable to do so. Provision may vary depending on the racecourse, and owners will be advised as to how the briefing area will operate on arrival at the fixture.

14. Catering

In line with UK Government guidance for elite sporting competitions, food and drink may not be available on course. Some racecourses may be able to provide a supply of pre-packaged food, subject to local risk assessments, but this is not guaranteed. If racecourses can make refreshments available to owners, it should be noted this will not include alcohol at present, but bottled water will be made available.

15. Face coverings

At present, in line with government guidance, face coverings are not mandatory for owners on racecourses as two metre social distancing will be possible.

16. Betting facilities **[UPDATED]**

As stated in British racing's [guidelines and operating procedures](#) for racing behind closed doors, there will be no betting facilities or on-course bookmakers in attendance until further notice.

Section E: Leaving the racecourse

17. Departure process

Following the conclusion of their race(s), owners are asked to leave the racecourse within an hour to allow for all owners to be accommodated.

Most racecourses will have one-way systems will be in place, so owners can return to their vehicle without crossing paths with others and hand hygiene stations will be provided on exit.

Upon leaving the racecourse, wristbands for the raceday should be removed by the owner and disposed of by racecourse staff. Wristbands cannot be retained for future use.