

Understanding Euthanasia – When is it Reasonable?



The GRNZ Rules of Racing are very specific about when euthanasia is not reasonable:

LR162A OFFENCE IN RELATION TO DEATH OF ANY GREYHOUND

- (1) No person may knowingly participate in causing the unnatural death of any greyhound, other than by accepted euthanasia by a veterinarian or in a medical emergency.
- (2) Any person found in breach of this rule or who knowingly participates in causing the unnatural death of any greyhound, other than by accepted euthanasia by a veterinarian, is subject to a fine of up to \$10,000 and/or permanent disqualification from involvement in any way in greyhound racing in New Zealand.

The **GRNZ Greyhound Euthanasia Policy** sets out the expectations that GRNZ has for all LPs regarding greyhounds in their care, which includes all registered greyhounds, retired greyhounds kept as pets by LPs, and puppies from birth to registration:

1. All greyhounds bred in New Zealand or imported into New Zealand should be retired at the end of their racing or breeding careers, or if found unsuitable for racing, and have an opportunity to live the balance of their lives as pets;
2. LPs in charge of a greyhound's care must provide for the retirement and/or rehoming of all healthy greyhounds;
3. Unnecessary euthanasia of healthy greyhounds must be eliminated wherever possible;
4. Where euthanasia is necessary, it must be performed in a humane manner by a registered veterinarian who certifies the reason for euthanasia;
5. GRNZ must be notified of all euthanasias.

Euthanasia can be undertaken by a veterinarian, under the policy, if a greyhound is severely ill or injured and where a veterinarian certifies that *the greyhound is suffering from a condition or injury that causes significant pain and/or discomfort and/or a marked reduction in quality of life, such that it is inhumane or would otherwise compromise the welfare of the greyhound to delay euthanasia.*

This type of **immediate euthanasia** may be as a result of a race or trial injury, or an accident, injury, or illness which occurs at home.

Euthanasia may be considered **as a last resort**, under the policy when:

- The greyhound has been behaviourally assessed as “Red” by Great Mates and subsequently, following behavioural retraining, deemed by the independent panel, under the “Red-dog” euthanasia decision tree as having refractory behavioural issues which make it unsuitable for rehoming; or
- The greyhound has been declared a dangerous dog under the Dog Control Act 1996 and is required to be euthanised, by a court; or

- The LP having responsibility for the care of the greyhound **notifies GRNZ of an intent to euthanise** the greyhound in their care, by completing the **Notice of Intent to Euthanise a Greyhound** form **ONLY** when:
 - the racing greyhound has completed the mandatory 28-day wind-down period from racing; and
 - the greyhound has a diagnosed veterinary condition or injury, not requiring immediate euthanasia, but which negatively impacts the greyhound's welfare and likely requires ongoing veterinary treatment (the **Greyhound On-Track Euthanasia Guidelines** should be used as a reference for conditions which may or may not require immediate euthanasia); or
 - the greyhound has a veterinary or qualified canine behaviourist diagnosed behavioural issue (e.g. phobia, aggression, anxiety) negatively impacting the greyhound's welfare and making the greyhound unsuitable for rehoming.
- The LP shall complete the **Notice of Intent to Euthanise a Greyhound** form and submit it to GRNZ, with the intended veterinarian's details, and the reasons/diagnosis, **at least 14 days prior** to the intended date of euthanasia.
- GRNZ shall notify the LP within five (5) business days, should euthanasia **NOT** be considered a suitable outcome and shall admit the greyhound into the Great Mates Programme.
- Veterinarians must positively identify the greyhound and certify the reason for euthanasia via the prescribed **GRNZ Certificate of Euthanasia by a Veterinarian**.

LPs must ensure that all veterinary euthanasia certificates are submitted to GRNZ **within three (3) business days of the euthanasia** in accordance with Rule 22(1)b.

Additionally the policy sets out requirements for LPs when rehoming greyhounds.

All LPs having responsibility for the care of a greyhound that is to be retired from racing and/or rehomed, must ensure that the greyhound is:

- deregistered from racing; and
- provided with a 'wind down' period from racing of at least 28 days; and
- behaviourally assessed prior to rehoming; and
- desexed, prior to rehoming.

GRNZ provides financial assistance for desexing and dental treatments prior to rehoming. All greyhounds entering Great Mates will have a veterinary examination and health assessment, which is recorded and the details are passed onto the new owners.