

# When to Seek Veterinary Care



There are several pieces of New Zealand legislation that address when veterinary care must be sought for an animal. This legislation sits alongside the **GRNZ Rules of Racing** and **Greyhound Welfare Standards** which set out what LPs' obligations are.

## ANIMAL WELFARE ACT 1999

Section 11 of the Animal Welfare Act 1999 deals with the responsibility to alleviate unnecessary pain and suffering by providing treatment. In most cases, the Act requires veterinary treatment for an injury or illness.

### SECTION 11 OBLIGATION TO ALLEVIATE PAIN OR DISTRESS OF ILL OR INJURED ANIMALS

- (1) The owner of an animal that is ill or injured, and every person in charge of such an animal, must ensure that the animal receives treatment that alleviates any unreasonable or unnecessary pain or distress being suffered by the animal.
- (2) This section does not—
  - (a) limit section 10; or
  - (b) require a person to keep an animal alive when it is in such a condition that it is suffering unreasonable or unnecessary pain or distress.

## CODE OF WELFARE: DOGS

Part 7 of the Code of Welfare: Dogs contains a minimum standard for ill health and injury.

### MINIMUM STANDARD NO. 10 - ILL HEALTH AND INJURY

- (a) Owners, or persons in charge of dogs, who observe their dogs to be showing:
  - i) signs of significant acute pain, suffering and distress; or
  - ii) signs of chronic pain, suffering and distress; or
  - iii) signs of rapidly deteriorating health; or
  - iv) serious injurymust seek immediate attention from a veterinarian or appropriately trained animal health practitioner.
- (b) If a dog is suffering from pain or distress that is extreme or untreatable, then the animal must be euthanased.

## GRNZ RULES OF RACING

### R21 PROPER CARE FOR AND WELFARE OF GREYHOUNDS

- (1) A registered person must comply with the Greyhound Welfare Standards and ensure that any greyhound in the person's care or custody, is at all times provided with:
  - (a) proper and sufficient food, drink and protective apparel;
  - (b) proper exercise;
  - (c) kennels constructed and of a standard approved by GRNZ which are adequate in size and which are kept in a clean and sanitary condition;
  - (d) veterinary attention when necessary; and
  - (e) appropriate treatment for the greyhound if the person is in charge of a sick or injured greyhound.
- (2) A registered person must exercise the care and supervision necessary to prevent a greyhound under the person's care or custody from being subjected to unnecessary pain or suffering, or from anything which is likely to lead to unnecessary pain or suffering.
- (3) A registered person shall not cause or permit, on any premises owned or occupied by that person, any condition that is likely to be dangerous to the health, welfare or safety of that greyhound.

## GREYHOUND WELFARE STANDARDS

Greyhounds need to be protected from pain, injury and distress. The person inspecting greyhounds should note if each greyhound is:

- a. behaving normally,
- b. showing signs of illness or distress,
- c. free from injury and able to move about freely.

Appropriate action must be taken to treat the greyhound if any changes in health status or behaviour are detected, and abnormalities must be recorded.

*Greyhound Welfare Standard 1.23*

LPs must monitor the dental health of all greyhounds in their care and seek veterinary treatment immediately if signs of dental disease are present. See Dental Scoring Chart at Appendix 2.

*Greyhound Welfare Standard 1.24*

LPs must ensure that greyhounds in their care undergo, at least, an annual veterinary examination, which may be at the time of vaccination, and which includes a full physical and dental examination. Records of annual veterinary examinations must be kept.

*Greyhound Welfare Standard 1.28*

Immediate veterinary care must be provided for sick or injured greyhounds, to relieve pain, suffering

and distress. LPs must ensure that all directions and treatment advice, and/or post-surgical advice provided by a veterinarian are followed. Where the LPs have concerns or constraints, a second veterinary opinion may be sought.

*Greyhound Welfare Standard 1.30*

LPs must seek veterinary advice immediately if there are any abnormalities observed or concerns for the welfare of the female greyhound or puppies during the whelping process.

*Greyhound Welfare Standard 4.24*

LPs must seek veterinary advice regarding greyhound after-care including advice on wound care and exercise post-surgery (surgical AI or caesarean).

*Greyhound Welfare Standard 4.26*

LPs must monitor puppies regularly to ensure they are feeding properly and gaining sufficient weight; and seek veterinary advice for any puppies which are not feeding properly, or do not gain weight.

*Greyhound Welfare Standard 4.27*

LPs must ensure that they examine lactating females twice a day for mastitis, during the first two weeks post-whelp, and veterinary treatment is sought immediately where mastitis is present.

*Greyhound Welfare Standard 4.28*

## GENERAL ADVICE

GRNZ has created a Fact Sheet to help LPs decide when they may consider treating a wound, injury or illness at home and when a greyhound needs to see a veterinarian. See [When do I Need to Take my Greyhound to the Vet?](#)

**WE LOVE OUR DOGS.  
THEY LOVE TO RACE.**

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