

Greyhound Fact Sheet

Frequently Asked Questions: Biosecurity

Having a protocol for the response to an outbreak of an infectious disease is a requirement of your EHMP (Establishment Health Management Plan) under the Victorian Code of Practice for the Keeping of Racing Greyhounds (CoP). This document is aimed to assist you with understanding, designing and implementing your protocol.

What is biosecurity?

Biosecurity is a set of preventive measures designed to reduce the spread of infectious diseases. This includes procedures such as surveillance, isolation and quarantine, movement restrictions, avoidance of potentially contaminated areas, reduction of animal contact, cleaning and disinfection, and improving greyhound health through treatment and vaccination.

Why is biosecurity important?

An outbreak of an infectious disease in the greyhound community has the potential for serious consequences. It may have implications for the health and welfare of the greyhounds as well as repercussions for the trainers, owners, punters and regulatory bodies. In greyhound kennels, the most common infectious outbreaks are Kennel Cough (CIRDC - Canine Infectious Respiratory Disease Complex) and gastroenteritis. While fatalities are generally very rare, outbreaks can result in illness in a large number of greyhounds, leading to the temporary closure of racing or significant reductions in the available racing population.

What is my role in biosecurity?

Greyhound trainers and owners have a role in almost every aspect of biosecurity including:

1. Surveillance
2. Isolation and Quarantine
3. Cleaning and disinfection
4. Protection of at-risk animals

What is surveillance?

Surveillance is the process by which we monitor for possible disease outbreaks. Prompt identification and response to cases of disease can help minimise transmission to other greyhounds in your kennels and others. You are required under the CoP to immediately contact your veterinarian if you are suspicious of an infectious disease at your establishment. You or your veterinarian should also alert GRV to help monitoring of any potential outbreak and to reduce the risk and minimise impact of any outbreak. Email vets@grv.org.au or contact (03) 8329 1100. As a participant, you should ensure you have a good understanding of different infectious diseases and when to seek veterinary attention. If you are aware of an outbreak in your area, all staff should remain vigilant and consider increasing the number of times per day you or the kennel staff check the greyhounds.

What is the difference between isolation and quarantine?

Separating contagious and healthy animals is a critical step in maintaining good biosecurity. Isolation involves the physical separation of the infected greyhounds from the rest of your healthy greyhounds. Quarantine involves the physical separation of the greyhounds that have been exposed to a contagious disease and may become infectious themselves. Greyhounds in quarantine that start showing symptoms should be isolated. Greyhounds should not be removed from quarantine until the maximum incubation period (the time between being infected and showing symptoms) for the infection has passed with no symptoms. Your veterinarian can help to provide further advice, but 7-14 days is a typical incubation period.

Because of the incubation period, you cannot always tell just by looking at an animal whether it has been infected and is incubating the disease. Sometimes it can be useful to employ a “traffic light system” to identify which greyhounds pose a risk of infection and which are at risk of becoming infected. Good biosecurity will mean adapting your management according to the traffic light system below. Greyhounds in each of the groups (red, amber, green) should each have their own dedicated bowls, leads, muzzles etc. that are also colour coded, with no equipment transferred between groups. Feeding, exercising or toileting greyhounds should occur from green first and finish with the red group. Handling of green animals should not occur after amber or red animals without a thorough disinfection process.

Traffic Light Colour	Red	Amber	Green
Identification	All greyhounds showing clinical signs and those that have had the diagnosis confirmed by your veterinarian.	Greyhounds that have had contact with the Red group but are not showing any symptoms.	Greyhounds that have <u>not</u> had contact with either the Red or Amber group and are not showing any symptoms.
Recommended Action	Isolate these animals. Barrier nurse (i.e. tend to sick animals in isolation). Seek advice/treatment from veterinarian.	Quarantine – keep separate from greyhounds in the Red and Green groups Monitor closely for signs of disease.	Keep separate from greyhounds in the Red and Amber groups to minimise risk of infection. Monitor signs of disease.

Where can I find information on cleaning and disinfection?

Thorough cleaning of organic debris before disinfecting the entire facility and all equipment is essential - please see the Greyhound Husbandry Fact Sheet on Sanitation¹.

How else can I help protect at risk animals?

To minimise risk within your property:

- Consider avoiding potentially contaminated areas or putting healthy greyhounds in kennels where you know unwell greyhounds have been recently. These areas need to be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected prior to re-use.
- Wear protective clothing when working with affected greyhounds and prevent unnecessary contact between greyhounds and staff.
- You can use disinfectant sprays on clothing or shoes (or footbaths with disinfectant) as a precaution.
- Staff attending affected greyhounds should minimise contact with unaffected greyhounds. If staff are handling both healthy affected greyhounds, handle the unwell animals last.

To minimise the risk of infection onto or off your property:

- Limit and quarantine new arrivals.
- Avoid unnecessary movement of unwell greyhounds off the property.
- Scratch affected greyhounds from races to minimise the risk of them spreading infection at racing Clubs.
- Transport vehicles and shoes can be a common means of transmission of infectious disease. Ensure that you remove visible organic material (debris) before disinfecting. You can spray your tyres with disinfectant agents, such as F10.

¹[https://fasttrack.blob.core.windows.net/fasttrackpublic/stewardsHearing/2020/greyhound%20husbandry%20\(part%202\)%20sanitation%20faq%20\(1\)9bb26c81-fb27-451c-99a2-54afd003a133.pdf](https://fasttrack.blob.core.windows.net/fasttrackpublic/stewardsHearing/2020/greyhound%20husbandry%20(part%202)%20sanitation%20faq%20(1)9bb26c81-fb27-451c-99a2-54afd003a133.pdf)