

RETIREMENT AND REHOMING OF RACEHORSES

41.10 The OWNER of a HORSE shall remain responsible for the care and welfare of a HORSE registered in his name with the NHA, once it retires from racing and for the rest of its natural life, unless he:

- 41.10.1 transfers ownership of the HORSE to another OWNER or an owner in another racing jurisdiction; or
- 41.10.2 transfers ownership of the HORSE to a BREEDER; or
- 41.10.3 transfers ownership of the HORSE to a Horsecare Unit run under the auspices of the National Horse Trust or another rehoming facility approved by the CHIEF EXECUTIVE , together with the required fee; or
- 41.10.4 has the HORSE humanely euthanased and reports such euthanasia to the NHA; or
- 41.10.5 disposes, whether by an auction approved by the CHIEF EXECUTIVE or otherwise, the HORSE out of racing, on condition that a “second career assessment form” as prescribed from time to time, has been completed by a veterinary surgeon, the OWNER and the TRAINER, enabling the HORSE to pursue an intended second career outside of horseracing. If required, the OWNER agrees to make all relevant veterinary history available to the veterinary surgeon and TRAINER, in order to complete the form accurately. The assessment form shall be submitted to the CHIEF EXECUTIVE within one week of the horse retiring from racing. Should the assessment recommend humane euthanasia and the OWNER elects not to humanely euthanase the HORSE, then the OWNER shall remain responsible for that horse’s welfare for the rest of its natural life.

41.11 An OWNER shall be guilty of an offence if he fails to dispose of a horse in accordance with RULE 41.10

41.12 For the purposes of Rule 41, a horse will be regarded as having been retired from the time it leaves a Trainers’ yard or a breeding establishment to be placed in the care of a person who is not registered with the National Horseracing Authority

It is the purpose of this “rehoming” Rule 41.10 to create a more structured and transparent scenario in which to retire horses from racing. The intent is to create a situation where horses are evaluated and responsibly rehomed to places where they are cared for and suitably utilised. In the event of chronic and recurrent lameness or horses with extreme temperament problems, euthanasia may be the kinder option. With this in mind, the ‘Second Career Assessment Form’ has been drawn up to assess the horses. This assessment form is NOT a ‘Vetting for Purchase’, nor does it guarantee the soundness, or future soundness of the horse examined. The form is also not intended for inspection by the potential buyer, as the responsibility to vet a horse before purchase remains that of the buyer.

The assessment form asks the veterinarian doing the examination to evaluate the horse’s temperament, clinical health and soundness when trotted in hand. Provision is made for horses who may need a few months rest to recover from the physical strain of racing and for horses that may only be suitable as a hack. (Please remember here the use of the term ‘hack’ would imply a horse only suitable for outrides and light work, whereas ‘sport horse’ refers to horses pursuing careers in, for example, showjumping,

dressage or eventing). The aim of the assessment, in combination with the horse's history, is to provide the information needed by the owner and trainer to make the best decision for the horse's future, thereby helping to prevent the horse from ending up in an unsuitable home where it may be open to abuse or neglect in the future. The assessment form, when fully completed, also contains the details of the new owner and must be sent to the NHA, where it will be kept for reference. The correctly completed and submitted form will place the responsibility for the horse's welfare on the new owner. However, if the provisions of Rule 41.10 have not been followed, or the horse was not euthanased if so recommended by the vet, the owner remains responsible for that horse's welfare for the rest of its natural life and may be penalized in terms of the NHA rules if that horse is found to be uncared for or abused in the future.

The private veterinarians have agreed to complete this form the cost of a consult. The form is then submitted to the NHA and is NOT a veterinary soundness certificate for the potential purchaser of the horse. Although many owners may not be comfortable with making the decision to humanely euthanase a horse, should the majority decision be that that is the best option, then it is recommended that they sign over ownership to one of the Horse Care Units, who shall evaluate the horse further and make whatever decision is in the best interests of the horse. There is a fee payable to the Units to cover their costs and transportation of the horse. Transfer of ownership to the Horse Care Units is also an option without completion of the 'Second Career Assessment Form'.

Please note that the owner is under no obligation to sell the horse and is perfectly entitled to retain ownership and continue caring for the horse for the rest of its natural life. However, if the owner no longer wants the responsibility of the horse in the future, then the above procedures need to be followed.

Please contact any one of the NHA veterinarians should there be any other queries in this regard and they shall advise you on how best to proceed.