

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

## **PAGE**

- 1. Objectives of the Code**
- 2. General Welfare Principles**
- 3. Responsible Ownership**
- 4. Husbandry Issues**
- 5. Animal Health**
- 6. Responsible Use of Animal Remedies**

### **1. Objectives of the Code**

The primary objective of the code is to set standards and clearly define what is expected of all individuals engaged in the care and management of registered greyhounds. It addresses the main areas of activity and defines the legislation of which owners, breeders and trainers must be cognisant while active within the greyhound industry. The code is not intended as an exhaustive list of greyhound practices, but clearly highlights what level of knowledge and competence is required while caring for greyhounds. It seeks to educate stakeholders on the various legislative elements associated with animal welfare and indicates what constitutes best practice.

Greyhound welfare is concerned with the wellbeing of the dog, the physical as well as the social environment. Given that greyhounds depend on human interaction, we are responsible for their welfare. The code emphasises the vital relationship between the greyhound carer and the veterinarian and how a strong relationship between both parties will ensure that responsible care be afforded to the greyhound. This Code is produced in compliance with the requirements of section 6 of the Welfare of Greyhounds Act 2011. Compliance with the Code, the Greyhound Welfare Act and all other legislative instruments is required by all participants within the greyhound industry and will be of significant benefit to the industry and the very animal that we hold in such high regard.

The Code may be revised from time to time to reflect new knowledge and best practice, such that the welfare of greyhounds is optimised at all times.

### **2. General Welfare Principles**

- a. The official registered owner is responsible for the welfare, action and whereabouts of their greyhounds.

- b. The registered owner and the nominated keeper of the greyhound shall both take full responsibility for the physical and social well being of the greyhound and shall do so with full regard to its welfare.
- c. This code supports and promotes the principles set out in the “Five Freedoms” which underpin best welfare practice:
  - a. Freedom from hunger and thirst;
  - b. Freedom from discomfort;
  - c. Freedom from pain, injury and disease;
  - d. Freedom to express normal behaviour
  - e. Freedom from fear and distress.
- d. Owners and keepers of greyhounds shall ensure that greyhounds are kept under conditions reflecting the above principles at all times and where deficiencies are identified, take prompt action to rectify.
- e. All greyhounds must be registered in the name of the official owner and all appropriate documentation should be completed and forwarded to the keeper of the Irish Greyhound Stud Book.
- f. When transporting greyhounds, owners and keepers shall ensure that it is carried out in compliance with current Transport Regulations. [1]
- g. Industry participants shall ensure the continued funding of the Retired Greyhound Trust.

### **3. Responsible Ownership**

The registered owner or keeper of the greyhound shall ensure the following:

- a. Provision of accommodation and equipment appropriate to the physical, behavioural and social requirements of the greyhound.
- b. Provision of sufficient space for greyhounds to stand in a normal standing position, move around freely, stretch fully, rest and to express normal behaviour patterns.
- c. Provision of sufficient quantities of appropriate food and water to support optimal health.
- d. That persons charged with the day-to-day management of the greyhounds are competent and skilled and are sufficiently trained to recognise whether or not the animals are in good health (signs of ill-health include loss of appetite, listlessness, abnormal discharge, lameness, swollen joints, diarrhoea, rapid loss of condition, changes in skin condition, excessive scratching, etc.)

- e. Protection of the greyhound from disease, distress and injury.
- f. Provision of prompt veterinary and other appropriate treatment in cases of illness or injury.
- g. Implementation of a comprehensive targeted vaccination programme in line with veterinary advice
- h. Implementation of proper hygiene practices to promote the health of the greyhound.
- i. Staff must be supervised regardless of their status i.e. whether working full time or part time or working for free or reward.
- j. Maintenance of records as required by regulatory bodies.
- k. Compliance with appropriate licensing requirements relating to the greyhound and the premises.
- l. Licensed participants shall undertake educational or training courses as decided by regulatory bodies i.e. IGB and or ICC.
- m. In the event of the need for euthanasia, it must be undertaken as soon as practicable to avoid unnecessary suffering and shall be carried out in a humane way by a veterinary practitioner

#### **4. Husbandry Issues**

##### **Housing**

The registered owner or keeper of the greyhound shall ensure the following:  
Housing

- a. Location of kennel shall take account of excessive noise and pollution that could cause harm or distress to the greyhound.
- b. The kennel must have a water supply, such that greyhounds have access to water at all times
- c. Kennels must protect the greyhounds from rain and wind. It must provide adequate shade to protect from excessive sunlight, and be partially enclosed to provide a sheltered sleeping area. Consideration must be given to temperature, humidity and ventilation.

- d. Kennel housing should be separated by either solid partitions, which would assist in noise reduction, or by galvanised mesh or chain link wire dividers.
- e. Internal surfaces shall be constructed of impervious material that are easy to clean and disinfect and maintained in good condition.
- f. The housing area must be free of sharp objects and all electrical equipment and wiring must be out of reach of the greyhounds.
- g. Grassed sections should form part of large outdoor runs but must be adequately maintained and not allowed to deteriorate into bare earth. Sand runs are also acceptable, in particular for winter usage.
- h. A whelping area must be provided for the pregnant greyhound, separate from a group kennel. The whelping area must be 2 ½ times the size of the greyhound. Soft bedding must be provided and changed as required.

### **Exercise**

- a. Dogs shall have the opportunity for exercise to:
  - i allow them to urinate and defecate
  - ii give them contact with humans and, if appropriate, with other dogs
  - iii sufficiently maintain their health and fitness.

### **Environmental Enrichment**

- a. Enrichments should be supplied to dogs to provide an environment that will enhance the dogs' well-being and permit them to live in many social environments in a compatible manner.
- b. How pups are treated, dealt with and handled can help with their behavioural development with respect to socialisation and habituation and have a far reaching effect throughout their lives. Although there will always be a risk of single-event incidents that may lead to fear, nervousness or anxiety in a pup there will be a better chance of a solid, emotionally grounded individual if simple, basic socialisation and habituation techniques are carried out..

## **Temperature**

- a. The greyhound must be protected from extremes of temperature. The minimum indoor allowable temperature for breeding greyhounds is 10 C (50 F)
- b. For puppies, a temperature of 26C is the most appropriate.
- c. Maximum and minimum temperatures shall be monitored.

## **Noise**

- a. Noise from barking greyhounds must be managed to comply with noise regulations

## **Lighting**

- a. Greyhounds should be kept under lighting conditions that reflect as close as possible natural conditions. They must not be kept in permanent darkness and should have access to at least 8 hours lighting per day
- b. Lighting must be adequate so that all areas of the interior of the kennel can be seen clearly.
- c. Sunlight is the preferred means of lighting, provided shaded areas are available.
- d. Artificial light shall be provided, where needed, to allow kennel areas to be thoroughly cleaned and to enable greyhounds be checked.

## **Ventilation**

- a. Ventilation must be sufficient to eliminate the build up of stale air, prevent dampness and draughts and to minimise foul or noxious odours without draughts.

## **Bedding**

- a. All kennels must provide either a raised sleeping area or a separate lower draught free area, with appropriate bedding.
- b. Bedding must be changed frequently and kept clean and dry.
- c. Whelping greyhounds must be provided with a suitable whelping box that is lined with clean bedding and cleaned as required, but at least once daily.

### **Security**

- a. Kennels must be securely fastened.
- b. Each individual kennel must be fitted with a secure closing device that cannot be opened by the incumbent greyhounds.
- c. Any security methods used must allow for ready access and exit by staff and greyhounds in the event of an emergency.

### **Hygiene**

- a. Kennels and exercise areas must be kept clean so that the comfort of the greyhound can be maintained and disease controlled.
- b. Faeces shall be removed at least twice daily from kennels which house adult greyhounds – in the case of housing puppies, faeces must be removed more frequently and at least 4 times a day.
- c. A cleansing and disinfection regime shall be put in place that is appropriate to maintaining good hygiene on the premises thus ensuring the health and welfare of the greyhounds, The regime should take into account the intensity of the production site, the general animal health and disease situation and risk of introduction of disease through day-to-day activities.
- d. Cleansing and disinfecting agents should be selected based on their suitability, safety and effectiveness. Manufacturer's instructions for the use of these agents must be followed - to dilute a solution may be ineffective and too concentrated a solution may be toxic.

### **Pest Control**

- a. Pests including fleas, ticks, flies, lice and wild rodents must be controlled.

- b. Chemicals used for pest control shall be duly authorised and used only in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- c. As greyhounds and humans may be adversely affected by pest control agents, expert advice should be sought before pest control operations are carried out.
- d. Food must be stored appropriately, with dry food kept in a rodent free place and fresh meat kept refrigerated.
- e. Food shall be prepared hygienically and served in clean containers.

### **Waste Disposal**

Droppings, bedding and any other waste material must be disposed of promptly in accordance with relevant local authority requirements [2].

### **5. Animal Health**

- a. The health of the greyhound brood must be assessed prior to mating and the registered owner and keeper shall ensure compliance with breeding frequency restrictions stated in the Greyhound Welfare Act 2011.
- b. A comprehensive vaccination programme, including vaccination against canine distemper, hepatitis, leptospirosis and parvovirus, must be put in place and be in accordance with veterinary advice and manufacturer's instructions.
- c. Vaccination against kennel cough is recommended.
- d. Programmes for the treatment of gastrointestinal worms must be put in place and be in accordance with veterinary advice and manufacturer's instructions.
- e. A programme for the control of fleas, both on the greyhound and in the environment, must be put in place and be in accordance with veterinary advice and manufacturer's instructions.
- f. The greyhound must be checked daily to ensure it is eating, drinking, defecating, urinating, behaving normally, is of normal appearance, is able to move freely and has a normal coat.
- g. Changes in health status shall be acted upon promptly.
- h. Greyhounds known or suspected to be suffering from an infectious disease shall not be admitted to the establishment without sufficient quarantine facilities in place.

- i. Daily exercise programmes appropriate to the type of greyhound must be in place.
- j. The person in charge must establish a professional relationship with a veterinary practitioner who can attend to the needs of the greyhound, the greyhound brood in particular at whelping time, and also to advise on disease prevention measures.
- k. Where a greyhound is owned or leased other than by the keeper responsible for its day-to-day management, in the event of the need for euthanasia, written permission shall be obtained from the registered owner or his/her nominee.
- l. Euthanasia shall only be performed by a veterinary practitioner and carcass must be disposed of in compliance with the animal by-products regulations[3]
- m. Dogs known or suspected to be suffering from an infectious disease should be isolated in suitable facilities.

## **6. Responsible Use of Animal Remedies**

Registered owners and keepers shall ensure

- a. Full compliance with the current Animal Remedies Regulations [4] at all times.
- b. That only animal remedies sold or supplied by a licensed vendor (e.g. veterinary practitioner, pharmacist or licensed retailer) and authorised for use in Ireland are permitted for use in greyhounds.