



Licensee information from the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario

Changes to the Human Drug and Alcohol Program

Effective April 1, 2017

After consulting with horse racing industry participants and researching best practices in other jurisdictions, the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO) is pleased to advise you that revisions have been made to the Standardbred and Thoroughbred *Rules of Racing* (the Rules) effective April 1, 2017 to reflect recent changes made to the Human Drug and Alcohol Program (the Program).

WHAT HAS CHANGED?

There are three main changes that have been made to the Program:

- AGCO has re-evaluated what is considered a 'safety-sensitive' position and has established a protocol for determining what positions may be considered 'safety sensitive' in the future;
- AGCO has defined and clarified what is deemed a prohibited substance, including cannabis and cannabis products; and
- Adoption of on-site screening for all prohibited and restricted drugs, not just alcohol, will take effect April 1, 2017.

WHAT ARE SAFETY SENSITIVE POSITIONS?

Safety Sensitive positions are horse racing related positions with a direct role in racing, which are licensed by the AGCO and, if conducted while impaired by alcohol or prohibited substances, could affect the health and safety of those around them. This includes an inadequate response or a failure to respond to an emergency or operational situation.

For example, if the starting gate personnel were to be under the influence of a prohibited substance, the safety of drivers, jockeys, and horses could be negatively impacted. Examples for this particular role would include not being able to respond to an emergency such as an injured jockey, or not being able to appropriately carry out their duties, such as driving the starter car.

The revised Rules include the following positions within the definition of Safety Sensitive:

Standardbred: Driver, trainer, groom, starting gate personnel, horse identifier Commission and Official Veterinarian, outrider, blacksmith, test inspector, TCO2 technician, and track maintenance personnel.

Thoroughbred & Quarter Horse: Apprentice jockey, exercise person, jockey, pony person, starting gate personnel, horse identifier, Commission and Official Veterinarian, jockey valet, trainer, groom, hot walker, blacksmith, test inspector and TCO2 technician.

WHO DECIDES WHAT POSITION IS SAFETY SENSITIVE AND HOW?

Determination of a Safety Sensitive Position resides with the Registrar of Alcohol, Gaming and Racing (the Registrar). The Rules prescribe that any determination or review of a position to determine if it is indeed a Safety Sensitive Position will take into consideration:

- 1) What type of contact, if any, the position has with horses.
- 2) The requirement of this position to be on the racetrack at the same time as horses.

HOW ARE PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES DETERMINED? IS CANNABIS A PROHIBITED SUBSTANCE?

A prohibited substance is any substance that the Registrar has declared prohibited. The Rules specify that all parts of the Cannabis plant, its derivatives and compounds that contain the psychoactive cannabinoid chemical “delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol” (THC), are considered prohibited. This means that under the new

Program, reporting for duty with THC in your system, under any circumstance, constitutes a violation of the Rules.

WHAT IS ON-SITE SCREENING AND WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR ME?

There will be two on-site tests now administered, one for alcohol and one for other prohibited substances. This on-site screening will continue to be conducted by an AGCO Representative and will ensure that testing results are as timely as possible.

The process for alcohol testing will remain unchanged. It is administered by blowing into a breathalyzer. The new test for prohibited substances consists of oral fluid collection. After the fluid is collected it is then processed by a device that detects the prohibited substance in the person’s system. This will produce immediate results which will enable the AGCO Representative to determine if further testing is needed, or if the individual can continue in their role for the time being. Ultimately, this ensures a safer racing environment for participants, and equine athletes.



- ConnexOntario operates three helplines:
 - Drug and Alcohol Helpline
1 800 565-8603
 - Mental Health Helpline
1 866 531-2600
 - Ontario Problem Gambling Helpline 1 888 230-3505
- These helplines are live answer 24/7, confidential and free.