

# LIFE AFTER RACING



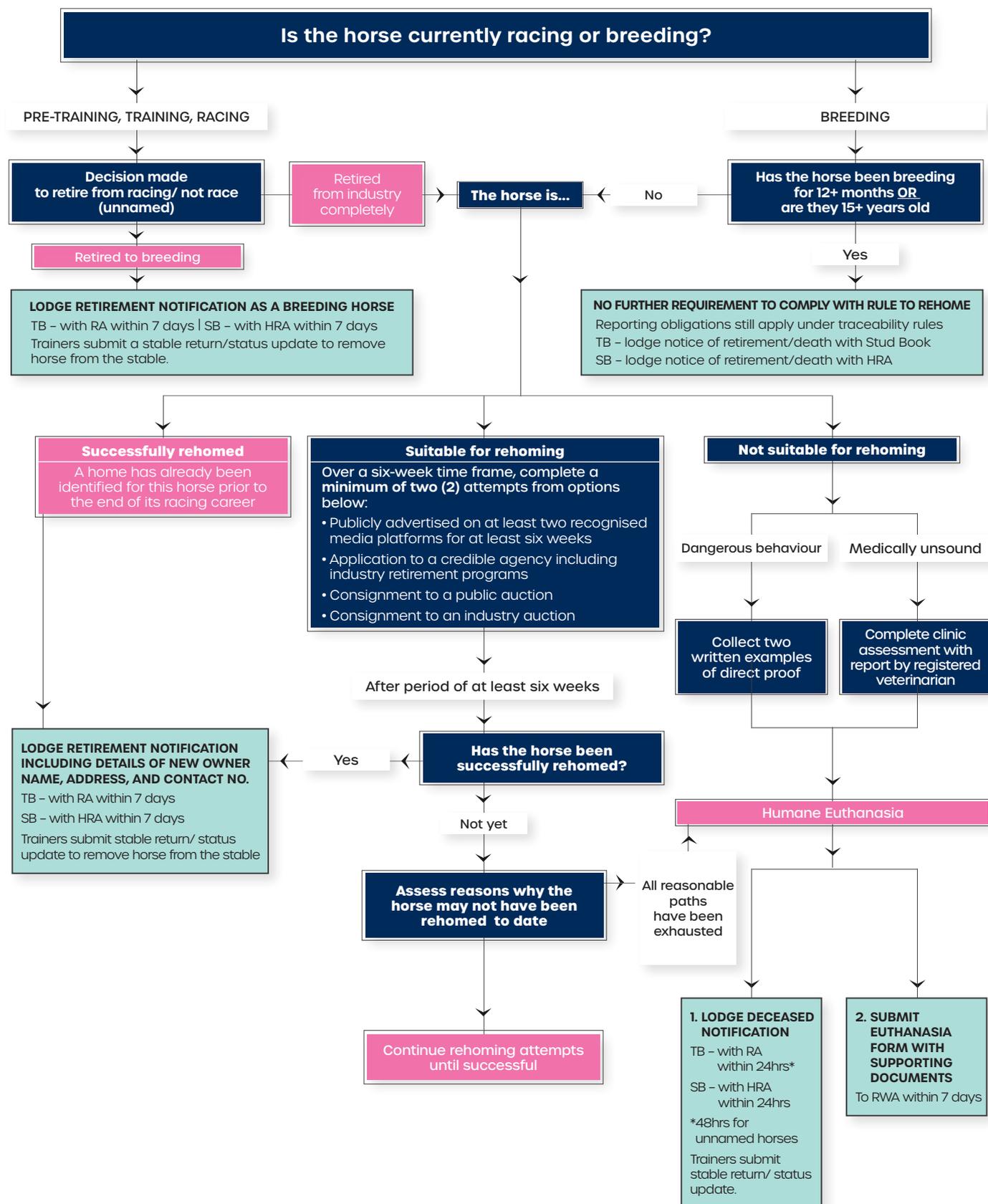
**RACINGWA**

**Racing WA aims for all healthy and behaviourally sound thoroughbred and standardbred horses to be rehomed at the end of their racing careers.**



# PATHWAYS FOR RACING RETIREMENT

Persons responsible for horses retiring from racing should follow the steps outlined below:



## Key

RWA - Racing WA | RA - Racing Australia | HRA - Harness Racing Australia  
More information contact [equinetraceability@rwwa.com.au](mailto:equinetraceability@rwwa.com.au)

# RETIREMENT RULE FOR RACEHORSES

The local rules of racing LR313 (Thoroughbred) and LR96B (Harness) outline the requirements for all horses retiring from racing and outline all expectations of the person responsible for these horses, in relation to these retirement rules. This booklet is designed to assist industry participants in understanding the options available when horses are being retired from racing. The rules of racing can be found at [racingwa.com.au/industry-essentials/rules-and-policies](http://racingwa.com.au/industry-essentials/rules-and-policies)

## What to do

Where an owner expects a horse to retire for breeding or a post-racing home is already planned the horse may be rehomed, including lodging the required notifications, without carrying out any further steps.

| Requirements  |  |
|---|--|
| Retired for Breeding  | Retired from Racing (not to breeding)  |
| Lodge retirement notification as a breeding horse: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Thoroughbred</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- within 7 days from decision with RA</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Harness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- within 7 days from decision with HRA</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | Lodge retirement notification including details of new owner, name, contact number and address required as a minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Thoroughbred</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- within 7 days from decision with RA</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Harness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- within 7 days from decision with HRA</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

Under the retirement rule, additional steps are required only where an owner or trainer decides to retire or deregister a horse but no post-racing home has already been organised. In such cases, the retirement rule requires that for a minimum period of six weeks at least two different options are undertaken to source a suitable home for the horse:

- Advertising the horse in no less than two recognised media platforms (such as Off the Track WA website, Cavalletti classifieds or Rehome a Racehorse Facebook page) for at least six weeks.
- Applying to rehome the horse through a credible animal adoption or rehoming agency, including the Off the Track WA (OTTWA) retraining program.
- Consigning the horse to a public auction
- Consigning the horse to an industry auction

When rehoming a retired racehorse, the new owners should be encouraged to claim an OTTWA Passport for the horse, which helps RWA support and understand the lives and locations of former racehorses. Benefits for new owners include:

- Attending OTTWA clinics and events
- Accessing a range of discounts and offers from national and local equine businesses.
- Learning more about their horse's previous career.

## When Exceptions Arise

Any person in charge of a horse at the time of retirement is expected to make a reasonable effort to retire the horse to a second career as a companion, pleasure or performance horse.

Where there is a medical or behavioural reason which prevents the horse from being responsibly rehomed, the following must occur:

A veterinarian must assess the horse and provide a certificate that, in their opinion, it is unsuitable to be rehomed for medical reasons BEFORE the horse is euthanised.

At least two persons who have direct personal knowledge of the horse must provide a written declaration that the horse is unsuitable to be rehomed due to "Dangerous behaviour".

"Dangerous behaviour" means behaviour that is unpredictable, aggressive, extreme, repeatable and intractable such that it may present a risk to life and that a competent adult horse handler or rider is unlikely to be able to be manage, control, modify or resolve to make the horse safe to ride or handle.

Euthanasia of any horse must be performed by a registered vet or other service provider complying with welfare standards.

Unless the horse is being sent to a knackery which has a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Racing WA, the person responsible for the horse (either the owner or trainer) must maintain personal supervision of the horse until such time it is euthanised.

Southdale is the only facility currently registered with the relevant government authorities which also has an MoU with Racing WA. Unless being transferred to Southdale, a horse cannot be sent to some other premises for the purpose of euthanasia without the person responsible remaining with the horse to personally supervise it until it is euthanised.

The retirement rehoming rule does not apply to horses that have been retired for breeding for at least 12 months or who are over the age of 15 years, however, reporting obligations still apply.

## More information

Contact Racing WA by email at [equinetraceability@rwwa.com.au](mailto:equinetraceability@rwwa.com.au)

*Racing WA Local Rule of Retirement: Thoroughbred (LR313) and Harness (LR96B)*

# CHECKLIST FOR RETIREMENT AND REHOMING

- Complete the appropriate retirement paperwork and ensure the horse has been deregistered for racing. For trainers, this includes ensuring that you submit a stable return/status update to remove the horse from active in your stable.
- Identify a suitable pathway for the horse. Consider the requirements for anyone taking on the horse as well as any special care needs the horse may have.
- Advertise the horse for sale directly from racing on the Off the Track WA website buy and sell page or another media platform such as Cavalletti.
- Find and contact a Network Retrainer to take on the horse for re-education and assistance with rehoming.
- Apply for the horse to enter the Off the Track WA Retraining Program.
- Consider the other steps to assist in rehoming the horse such as taking current photos for advertisements, arranging a vet check and organising spelling for a let-down period or recovery from any minor injuries.

# REHOMING A RETIRED RACEHORSE

There are many avenues for rehoming a racehorse once it retires. Options within the industry suit some horses while others move on to new pursuits. Some pathways include:

- Direct to stud or returned to breeder
- Industry sales
- Sale direct from racing
- Retrained for equestrian or pleasure pursuits prior to sale.

## Off The Track WA

Off the Track WA (OTTWA) promotes thoroughbreds and standardbreds in their second careers as pleasure or performance horses and has a number of options available to support the transition of retired racehorses into their post-racing life. OTTWA supports horses through sale direct from racing or by retraining before sale.

### Sale Direct from racing - OTTWA Website

Industry participants can list horses through OTTWA's buy and sell page until a suitable new home is found. Simply fill in a form, supply pictures and OTTWA does the rest for free.

### Retraining Before Sale - OTTWA Retrainer Network

Retrainers can assist with teaching horses skills that increase their appeal and broaden their suitability for a variety of riders after racing. OTTWA Network Retrainers are independent, experienced retrainers who have been selected through an application process and receive a financial contribution from Racing WA to assist with the retraining of retired racehorses. Industry participants can apply to any OTTWA Network Retrainer to take ownership of their retired racehorse for the purpose of retraining it for sale.

### Retraining Before Sale - OTTWA Retraining Program

The OTTWA Retraining Program includes retrainers with the skills and experience to help racehorses transition to new careers. Horses accepted into the program are evaluated on arrival at the estate and allocated to a trainer for re-education and preparation for sale. Priority is given to horses more challenging to rehome, such as those in remote areas.

## More Information

More information can be found on the Off the Track WA website: [Offthetrackwa.com.au](http://Offthetrackwa.com.au)  
Contact Off the Track WA by email on [offthetrackwa@rwwa.com.au](mailto:offthetrackwa@rwwa.com.au).



| Nikki riding standardbred Tranquil Charlie.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## How does the retirement rule change the old ways of rehoming horses?

Where a horse is being retired for breeding or a new owner is ready and willing to take a horse straight from racing, the process is unchanged. Owners and trainers are encouraged to continue using established rehoming pathways. As usual, a retirement notification as either a breeding horse or with the name, number and address of the new owner must be lodged within seven days of the decision for a thoroughbred or standardbred being retired from racing. For horses that are not retired for breeding and don't have a new owner already identified, the retirement rule requires that for a minimum period of six weeks at least two different options are undertaken to source a suitable home for the horse.

## What are the costs for using the Off The Track WA (OTTWA) Retraining Program?

There is no fee to apply to enter the program. The application process does require a veterinary check to be completed at your expense, however, there is a rebate available of up to \$200.00 to contribute to covering this cost.

## Which horses are eligible for the OTTWA Retraining Program?

Both thoroughbreds and standardbreds retiring directly from racing can be accepted, following an application process to ensure the OTTWA Retraining Program is a suitable pathway for the horse. Acceptance is based on a range of factors such as temperament, soundness and condition, plus a veterinary assessment. The full criteria and terms and conditions are at [offthetrackwa.com.au/how-to-apply-for-the-off-the-track-wa-retraining-program](http://offthetrackwa.com.au/how-to-apply-for-the-off-the-track-wa-retraining-program).

## Which horses are eligible to go to OTTWA Network Retrainers?

Network Retrainers set their own conditions as they operate independently. However, it is important to consider that horses will be going into active work if they are taken on by a retrainer. It is recommended that you contact retrainers directly to understand their criteria.

## What happens if a horse isn't accepted for retraining or the waitlist is too long? What are the other rehoming options?

There are various approaches for rehoming behaviourally and medically sound horses. They can be sold or given away direct from racing through a variety of advertising avenues, including the OTTWA sales page [offthetrackwa.com.au/sell-an-ott-horse](http://offthetrackwa.com.au/sell-an-ott-horse), which is a free resource for industry participants. Contact [offthetrackwa@rwwa.com.au](mailto:offthetrackwa@rwwa.com.au) if you need assistance.

## What if all rehoming attempts fail?

Industry participants must consider all options and make all efforts to rehome medically and behaviourally sound horses. Should rehoming attempts be unsuccessful and a horse is euthanised, the declaration form submitted to Racing WA must include documentary proof of rehoming attempts and dates of the process. The retirement rule does not prohibit on-property euthanasia by a veterinarian or a properly trained and experienced person using a humane method detailed in the relevant standards and guidelines.

## What if my horse is not sound or has behavioural problems?

Clear and documented evidence must be provided to Racing WA (on notification of euthanasia) when the person responsible for retirement of the racehorse believes there are compelling medical or behavioural reasons why a horse cannot be rehomed. Euthanasia may be performed by a registered vet or service provider when a horse is unsuitable for rehoming due to vet-assessed medical reasons or when evidence of dangerous behaviour is provided. Local rules require industry participants to use knackeries or abattoirs which have a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Racing WA and prohibit the transport of racehorses to facilities in other states. Southdale is the only facility currently registered with the relevant government authorities and with a Racing WA MoU to ensure high welfare standards and reporting processes for tracing retired racehorses. Where horses are taken to a service provider for euthanasia, and where that is not a knackery or registered veterinary clinic, the responsible person must stay with the horse until it is euthanised.



**RACINGWA**



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