

# Socialisation – extracts from racing industry codes/policies across all states

## NSW – [Greyhound code](#)

7.6 During each week, puppies aged 8–16 weeks must be provided with three or more of the following:

- a) lessons in how to walk on a lead whilst wearing a collar;
- b) chasing games for play;
- c) training to respond to basic verbal commands;
- d) exposure to a variety of surfaces;
- e) exposure to new experiences;
- f) a variety of toys;
- g) travel in cars or trailers;
- h) exposure to different levels (such as walking up and down stairs).

## VIC – [Greyhound code](#)

Socialisation: means interaction between a greyhound and other animals (including other greyhounds) and humans to make the greyhound fit for a life in companionship with others...

Critical socialisation period: means the period between three to 16 weeks of age for a puppy. In this period, appropriate socialisation and exposure to different environments can help ensure greyhounds are well-adjusted in adulthood and can relate well to other dogs, animals and people...

To meet the requirements of this Code during the critical socialisation period for puppies, at least one staff member must be present on site for every 20 greyhounds aged between 0-16 weeks. This staff member must be present on-site for the time required to implement the applicable sections of this Code... greyhounds aged between 16 and 24 weeks must be exposed to:

- different environmental landscapes, that are available locally (e.g. reserves, parks, shopping strips, local sporting grounds) and socialised with other dogs or domestic pets as appropriate
- being walked on a lead.

## **WA – Greyhound code**

**Socialisation:** means interaction between a greyhound and other animals (including other greyhounds) and humans to make the greyhound fit for a life in companionship with others ...

..Critical socialisation period: means the period between three to 16 weeks of age for a puppy. In this period, appropriate socialisation and exposure to different environments can help ensure greyhounds are well-adjusted in adulthood and can relate well to other dogs, animals and people...

From three to 16 weeks of age is the critical socialisation period for puppies. During this period, greyhounds must:

- be provided with access to different surfaces in their pen or kennel environment (e.g. bed and bedding material, concrete, grass, carpet etc.)
- be taught to wear a collar and walk on a lead
- have multiple opportunities for isolation from their litter (in the company of a handler) or complete isolation to acclimatise them to periods of separation from their litter
- be exposed to standard racing and training facilities as outlined in the approved HEMP
- be brushed or bathed in warm water and towel dried once a month (or more frequently as required)
- be exposed to people other than their usual handlers and other dogs or domestic pets (e.g. GAP dogs) that do not pose a disease risk to the puppies (e.g. have been suitably vaccinated).

Note: Isolation is an important practice because greyhounds adopted to a home or residential household are likely to spend time alone. This situation may cause anxiety if the greyhound has not been exposed to isolation during its critical socialisation period...

In addition to the above requirements, greyhounds aged between 16 and 24 weeks must be exposed to:

- different environmental landscapes, that are available locally (e.g. reserves, parks, shopping strips, local sporting grounds) and socialised with other dogs or domestic pets as appropriate
- being walked on a lead...

### **Management of stress in Greyhounds**

Observations of any signs of stress, poor acclimatisation, or development of behavioural stereotypes must be recorded and used as a management tool for assessing the acclimatisation of the greyhound to new housing or changes to daily routine.

If signs of severe stress are observed, action must be taken immediately to alleviate the stress or advice obtained from a veterinary surgeon.

If signs of stress, poor acclimatisation or development of behavioural stereotypes are recorded for more than two consecutive days, the possible source of stress must be identified and action taken to alleviate the stress.

If signs of stress identified are related to small race kennel housing (3 to 10 sqm), the greyhound must be:

- moved to a pen of larger size, or other measures taken to reduce stress
- regularly monitored.

If the greyhound shows signs of reduced stress, the greyhound may begin a program of gradual, incremental introduction to small pen sizes. If the greyhound does not show obvious signs of improvement over a period of two to three days, a veterinary surgeon must be consulted...

- Physical contact with the dog (handling) – e.g. during leading, grooming, patting, checking, treating.
- Exposure to humans – e.g. feeding, cleaning, toileting playing, training, exercise, grooming, bathing.
- Exposure to other compatible animals – e.g. other greyhounds, other breeds of dog, or other pet species such as cats, horses, etc.
- Different surfaces (other than the required pen or yard flooring stipulated in section 4. of this Code) or environmental stimuli – e.g. exposure to racing equipment, music, odours, bones, food based enrichment, toys.
- Training activities – e.g. trialling, racing, leading, galloping.

## **SA – Greyhound code**

Socialisation: means interaction between a greyhound and other animals (including other greyhounds) and humans to make the greyhound fit for a life in companionship with others. Socialisation includes the requirements set out in this Code...

From three to 16 weeks of age is the critical socialisation period for puppies. During this period, greyhounds must:

- be provided with access to different surfaces in their pen or kennel environment (e.g. bed and bedding material, concrete, grass, carpet etc.)
- be taught to wear a collar and walk on a lead
- have multiple opportunities for isolation from their litter (in the company of a handler) or complete isolation to acclimatise them to periods of separation from their litter
- be exposed to standard racing and training facilities as outlined in the approved HEMP
- be brushed or bathed in warm water and towel dried once a month (or more frequently as required)

- be exposed to people other than their usual handlers and other dogs or domestic pets (e.g. GAP dogs) that do not pose a dis-ease risk to the puppies (e.g. have been suitably vaccinated).

Note: Isolation is an important practice because greyhounds adopted to a home or residential household are likely to spend time alone. This situation may cause anxiety if the greyhound has not been exposed to isolation during its critical socialisation period.

In addition to the above requirements, greyhounds aged between 16 and 24 weeks must be exposed to:

- different environmental landscapes, that are available locally (e.g. reserves, parks, shopping strips, local sporting grounds) and socialised with other dogs or domestic pets as appropriate
- being walked on a lead.

## **QLD - [website page only](#)**

The optimal time to socialise a pup is between 6 – 14 weeks of age. This is the time when they are more likely to approach anything or anybody new willingly and without fear.

Older puppies become more cautious with new experiences and by the time the dog reaches about 14 weeks of age, anything not yet encountered is approached with caution and apprehension.

It is also important to continue to socialise beyond 14 weeks to ensure pups do not become fearful again if socialisation stops.

Continued, sustained and consistent efforts are required until the puppy is at least one year old to achieve optimal socialisation.

## **NT – [Greyhound welfare information](#)**

No mention of socialisation could be found in the limited information available on this page. Also, while the national peak body [Greyhounds Australasia](#) has national racing rules as a guide to its state-based bodies, it provides no welfare guide.

## TAS – Greyhound rules and policies

In Tasracing's [code](#), there is one mention of socialisation at the point an owner wants to rehome a greyhound (which is far too late to begin socialisation).

### Minimum requirements for rehoming

- (e) Without limiting LR36.4(a), actions that an owner must take to find a suitable long-term home for their greyhound include:
  - (i) Notifying the Controlling Body of the commencement of a wind down period which comprises of at least 28 days during which the owner must ensure that:
    - (a) the greyhound has not engaged in any racing related activities, including but not limited to trialling, breaking, education, training or racing; and
    - (b) a record is kept of the genuine and daily efforts made to socialise the greyhound to non-training and non-racing settings and environments.

**ACT - greyhound racing is banned in this jurisdiction.**