

**GOVERNMENT OF PUERTO RICO**  
**GAMING COMMISSION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF PUERTO RICO**  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

<b>ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER</b>	<b>OADE-NH-26-10</b>	<b>RE: Veterinary Medical Evaluation (Lameness Test) of Imported Horses in Racing Age</b>
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**ORDER**

The Gaming Commission of the Government of Puerto Rico (hereinafter the "Commission") was created by virtue of Act No. 81-2019, as amended, known as the "Gaming Commission Act of the Government of Puerto Rico." Said statute granted the Commission jurisdiction over the matters set forth in Act No. 83 of July 2, 1987, as amended, known as the "Horse Racing Industry and Sport Act of Puerto Rico" (hereinafter the "Horse Racing Act").

Following the amendments made by Act 81-2019, supra, to the Horse Racing Act, all matters related to the Administration of the Horse Racing Industry and Sport in Puerto Rico came under the Commission's jurisdiction. Accordingly, the Commission, in the exercise of its functions to preserve and ensure the well-being of all components of the horse racing industry, has the duty to safeguard the health, welfare, and safety of all horses that train and compete in Puerto Rico. Similarly, the statute empowered the Executive Director to issue orders conducive to safeguarding the public policy contained in the Horse Racing Act and the economic well-being of the horse racing industry whenever necessary.

In our jurisdiction, a significant proportion of the horses that train and compete are acquired and transported from other jurisdictions, particularly from the United States. The importation of horses constitutes an essential component to strengthening the racing horse inventory in Puerto Rico, improving the competitiveness of equestrian events, and fostering public confidence in the integrity of the sport. In response to this reality, the Commission adopted Regulation No. 9424 of December 27, 2022, known as the "Regulation on the Importation and Transportation of Racing Horses Participating in Events at Puerto Rico Racetracks," through which requirements were established aimed at safeguarding the physical well-being of horses during transport, including adequate conditions of space, ventilation, feeding, hydration, and protection against injury.

Furthermore, recognizing the importance of imported horses to the inventory, in recent years the Commission has authorized the disbursement of funds to finance owners in the acquisition of two-year-old horses in training, horses in "racing age" and/or

"yearlings" outside of Puerto Rico, charged to the Additional Dividend Fund. This year, an additional incentive has also been granted to cover, in whole or in part, the transportation costs of horses in racing age acquired outside of Puerto Rico during the year 2026, thereby contributing to the development and sustainability of the horse racing sport in our jurisdiction.

Likewise, the Commission reaffirms its commitment to the comprehensive well-being of the horses that are part of the horse racing industry, not only during their competitive lives, but also once their racing career concludes. As part of this commitment, the Commission has collaborated and continues to collaborate with entities and organizations dedicated to the rehabilitation, care, retirement, and relocation of retired racehorses, through grants aimed at promoting their protection and ensuring adequate conditions after their participation in the sport has ended. These actions reflect the Commission's public policy of promoting responsible treatment and the well-being of horses at all stages of their lives while ensuring the sustainability of the industry.

Nevertheless, the importation of horses from other jurisdictions carries the responsibility of ensuring that such horses are in physical condition suitable for training and competition, without this representing a risk to their physical integrity, the safety of jockeys, or the integrity of the races. The participation of horses with undiagnosed musculoskeletal conditions or lameness could significantly increase the risk of serious or catastrophic injuries, which compromises the well-being of racehorses, track safety, and the integrity of the sport.

In this context, the evaluation of the musculoskeletal condition of horses prior to their importation and entry into the racetrack stables in Puerto Rico constitutes an essential component for injury prevention and the protection of their well-being. Early evaluation will make it possible to identify orthopedic conditions in their limbs that could compromise the horse's well-being or fitness to compete.

In view of the foregoing, it is necessary to adopt additional measures aimed at ensuring that horses acquired outside Puerto Rico for importation, training, and participation in races are in physical condition suitable for such purposes, and do not present musculoskeletal conditions that could compromise their well-being, track safety, or the integrity of the sport.

As part of efforts directed at strengthening the health and safety of imported horses, the Commission held a meeting with representatives of owner associations, independent owners, and the operating company of Camarero Racetrack, in which measures aimed at promoting responsible practices in the acquisition and importation of horses were discussed. As a result of these discussions, and with the consensus of the participating

sectors, it was agreed to establish the requirement of conducting a veterinary lameness examination (*lameness test*) for every horse in racing age that is acquired outside Puerto Rico with the purpose of being imported for training and competition.

The lameness examination (claudication) is a specialized and recognized veterinary evaluation in equine sports medicine, aimed at identifying the presence of pain, alterations in locomotion, or musculoskeletal conditions that may affect the functional capacity of the horse. This examination constitutes a fundamental tool for determining the physical fitness of the horse for training and competition, as well as for preventing serious injuries that could compromise its well-being.

Ordinarily, said examination includes a comprehensive clinical evaluation comprising the horse's medical history, physical inspection at rest, dynamic evaluation in motion, joint flexion tests, and when necessary, the use of regional diagnostic anesthesia and imaging studies to precisely locate any musculoskeletal condition. These evaluations allow the veterinarian to identify existing or potential orthopedic conditions and issue an informed determination regarding the horse's fitness for use in competitive activities.

The implementation of this requirement constitutes a reasonable and necessary preventive measure within the exercise of the Commission's regulatory authority, aimed at safeguarding the well-being of horses, protecting track safety, and promoting the integrity and sustainability of the horse racing industry in Puerto Rico.

Having set forth the foregoing, and in accordance with the powers conferred by law, the following is hereby issued:

### **ORDER**

1. Every owner licensed by the Commission who acquires a horse in racing age outside the jurisdiction of Puerto Rico, with the purpose of importing it for training and participation in races, must ensure that said horse is subjected to a veterinary lameness examination (claudication) (*lameness test*) prior to its registration with the Horse Racing Bureau. Registration fees for imported horses will not be collected until evidence of this examination is presented.
2. Every horse in racing age acquired outside the jurisdiction of Puerto Rico, with the purpose of importing it to be resold, auctioned, or raffled, must ensure that said horse is subjected to a veterinary lameness examination (claudication) (*lameness test*) prior to its registration with the Horse Racing Bureau. Registration fees for imported horses will not be collected until evidence of this examination is presented.

3. The examination **must** be performed by a duly licensed veterinarian with experience in equine sports medicine.

4. No imported horse may be registered with the Horse Racing Bureau, as defined in Regulation No. 8761 of May 27, 2016, known as the "Regulation of the Stables Area of the Administration of the Horse Racing Industry and Sport," without having previously complied with the standards established herein.

5. Only those horses that, according to the veterinary evaluation performed, do not present significant clinical evidence of lameness or musculoskeletal conditions that compromise their physical integrity, competitive fitness, or track safety may be authorized for registration and subsequently entered in races in Puerto Rico.

6. The organizations representing the Owners of our horse racing industry, such as the Confederacion Hipica de Puerto Rico, Inc. and the Puerto Rico Horse Owners Association, must notify all their members of this Administrative Order.

#### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

This Order shall take effect thirty (30) days from the date of its approval.

#### **BE IT REGISTERED AND NOTIFIED.**

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, on the 11th day of May, 2026.

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**Lcdo. Juan C. Santaella Marchan**

Executive Director

#### **NOTIFICATION**

**I CERTIFY:** That I have notified a true and exact copy of this Administrative Order by personal delivery, regular mail, and/or electronic mail to:

- **Board of Commissioners of the Gaming Commission of the Government of Puerto Rico**, through its President, Sebastian Negrón Reichard, via email: [sebastian.negron@ddec.pr.gov](mailto:sebastian.negron@ddec.pr.gov);

- **Horse Racing Bureau**, through its Director, Lcda. Monica Andreu Martinez, via email: andreum@comjuegos.pr.gov; Mr. Carlos A. Quintana Rojas, Deputy Director of the Bureau, via email: quintanac@comjuegos.pr.gov;
- **Racing Stewards**, via email: riveraa@comjuegos.pr.gov, franco.rivera@comjuegos.pr.gov;
- **Racing Secretary**, via email: ariel.gonzalez@comjuegos.pr.gov, cottoh@comjuegos.pr.gov;
- **Office of Veterinary Services**, via email: cuadra11@comjuegos.pr.gov;
- **Camarero Race Track, Corp.**, via email: erod@camareroracepr.com, vazgra@vgrlaw.com, evelyn@camareroracepr.com, alexf@camareroracepr.com, mmari@camareroracepr.com;
- **Confederacion Hipica de Puerto Rico, Inc.**, via email: rafanil1609@gmail.com, edwinsconfederacion@gmail.com;
- **Puerto Rico Horse Owners Association, Inc.**, via email: cacuprill@cuprill.com, prhorseowners@gmail.com;
- **Mr. Marc Tacher Diaz** (Sonata Stable), via email: marctacher@yahoo.com;
- **Lcdo. Luis Archilla Diaz** (L.A.R. Stable Corp.), via email: archilladiazps@gmail.com;
- **Federacion de Entrenadores de Purasangres de Puerto Rico, Inc.**; via email: rubencolon@gmail.com, ramon1166@gmail.com;
- **Puerto Rico Thoroughbred Trainers Association of Puerto Rico, Inc.**, via email: ttaopr@gmail.com;
- **Federacion de Entrenadores de Ejemplares Purasangre de Puerto Rico**, via email: info@entrenacaballosdecarrera.org;
- **Asociacion de Jinetes, Inc.**, via email: ascjinetes273@gmail.com;
- **Confederacion de Jinetes Puertorriquenos, Inc.**, via email: jinetespr@yahoo.com;
- **Criadores de Caballos de Puerto Rico**, via email: criadorespr@yahoo.com, potrero1.em@gmail.com, admlosnietos@yahoo.com.

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, on the 11th day of May, 2026.

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**Luz E. Gonzalez Martinez**

Executive Confidential Secretary III

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*This document is an English translation of Administrative Order OADE-NH-26-10, originally issued in Spanish by the Gaming Commission of the Government of Puerto Rico. Translation performed by Claude (Anthropic), an AI language model, on May 17, 2026. The original Spanish text is the authoritative version.*