



Duty of care to horses

Duty of care

Having a duty of care means that you are legally obliged to care for a horse by providing for its needs in a reasonable way, including:

- food and water
- accommodation and living conditions
- treatment of disease and injury
- handling the horse
- the display of normal patterns of behaviour.

You must do this in a way that is appropriate to the type, age and circumstances of the horse and the climate.

Under Queensland's animal welfare law, if you are **in charge** of a horse you have a legal duty of care to that horse.

There are different ways that you can be the person legally in charge of a horse. These include owning a horse or having a horse in your care or under your control. For example, this could be looking after a friend's horse while they are away, or working with horses.

Joint duty of care

Sometimes you might be the only person who has the duty of care of a particular horse. At other times, different people can share this duty of care—for instance you own a horse but it is agisted or stabled at someone else's property.

Examples of people who might share the duty of care of a horse are owners, riders, instructors, grooms, trainers, syndicate owners, stable owners and staff, farriers, veterinarians and transporters.

Failure to provide duty of care

Failure to meet your duty of care is an offence under the *Animal Care and Protection Act 2001*. The maximum penalty for an individual convicted of this offence is \$30 000 or one year imprisonment.

If you believe someone is failing to meet their duty of care to a horse, or committing any other animal welfare offence, contact:

- the RSPCA on 1300 852 188
- Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23
- your local police station.

These agencies work together and will arrange for the most appropriate person in your area to investigate your report.

More information

For more information about duty of care to horses or animal welfare, call Biosecurity Queensland on **13 25 23** or visit www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au