



## Coronavirus pandemic in France FAQ document

Updated on 30 October 2020 (Question in green)

### 1. RACECOURSE ACCESS

Updated on 30 October 2020

- **From 30 October 2020 and until further notice, race meetings will take place behind closed doors.**

All race meetings will take place without the public, within a strictly defined framework of racing behind closed doors that includes the application of a set of very rigorous specifications. Only racing professionals who are involved in the race meeting will be admitted to the racecourse.

Since the beginning of the current health crisis, racing industry stakeholders and horse race organisations have demonstrated their ability and determination to implement all of the sanitary rules with extreme efficiency and thus will be able to reconcile the necessary continuance of the economic activity with the preservation of their health and that of their families and friends in this new period of lockdown.

### 2. RACING BEHIND CLOSED DOORS PROTOCOL

Updated on 30 October 2020

- **Consulting the protocol for racing behind closed doors**

As part of the health measures that are coming into effect on 30 October, the horse racing industry is readying itself to continue its activity in strict compliance with the health instructions as specified by the government. Race meetings will take place behind closed doors.

The National Federation of horse racing (FNCH) has worked together with the parent companies to update the protocol for racing behind closed, which is based on the rules that

were successfully implemented during the first lockdown and which have been rigorously applied by the industry stakeholders.

**Important – Before travelling to the racecourse and in order to comply with the new rules, we recommend that you read the FNCH protocol for racing behind closed doors: [HERE](#)**

- **How will race meetings be organised from 30 October 2020 onwards?**

- ✓ **Race meetings will take place behind closed door, without any spectators.** It is thus not considered an “event”, but a professional and business activity, whose main stakeholders have the status of farmers.
- ✓ **Workforce must be reduced to an absolute minimum:** Access to the racecourse will only be granted to officials from the company that organises a race meeting, employees and essential service providers, as well as racing professionals who will be limited to two people per horse (trainer or his/her representative + a lad/lass).
- ✓ **Stringent health measures must be applied:** Wearing an approved facial mask is compulsory. Work areas must be reconfigured and organised accordingly (stewards’ room, weighing room, infirmary, veterinary office,...).

- **How is access to the racecourse controlled?**

The rule book for racing behind closed doors from 30 October 2020 states that access control must take place in 2 stages:

1. **Wearing a mask:** Any person on the racecourse must wear an approved mask that covers nose and mouth.  
**A person refusing to wear a mask must be denied access to the racecourse.**
2. **Registration** of a person wishing to attend a race meeting.  
At each race meeting, the following information must be provided (model included in annex)
  - Surname
  - First name
  - Profession
  - Mobile telephone number
  - If seated at a workstation, the number of their landline
  - Arrival time
  - Departure time

Each person arriving at the racecourse must enter and exit via the same gate. This requirement will be clearly signposted at the gate.

The logbooks by each of the two entrance gates must be collected and archived at the end of the race meeting. They must be presented to the authorities for control purposes.

- **What are the safety measures in place for the people who work at the racecourse?**

The National Federation of horse racing, in conjunction with France Galop and LeTROT has brought out a new mandatory safety protocol outlining the rules for racing behind closed doors. Within this framework, very strict health measures are in place. Racing behind closed doors when adapting these rules proved very successful during the previous lockdown.

- **I am a trainer and have a runner at the next meeting. What do I need to do before arriving at the racecourse?**

As outlined in the FNCH protocol, access is limited to two people per horse: the trainer (or his/her representative) and the lad/lass.

24 hours before coming to the racecourse, the trainer must send the name and first name of the person accompanying the horse, their estimated time of arrival, as well as the name of the horse by email to the relevant authority.

If a yard has several runners, it must restrict the number of people who take the horses to the racecourse to the absolute minimum.

If the trainer cannot be present, he/she must designate a representative, who is only allowed to stay at the racecourse for the duration of the race.

For France Galop racecourses, the list of people attending must be sent per email to

- Auteuil : [hebergementauteuil@france-galop.com](mailto:hebergementauteuil@france-galop.com)
- ParisLongchamp : [hebergementlongchamp@france-galop.com](mailto:hebergementlongchamp@france-galop.com)
- Saint-Cloud : [hebergementsaintcloud@france-galop.com](mailto:hebergementsaintcloud@france-galop.com)
- Deauville : [hebergementdeauville@france-galop.com](mailto:hebergementdeauville@france-galop.com)
- Chantilly : [hebergementchantilly@france-galop.com](mailto:hebergementchantilly@france-galop.com)

Requests for rooms for the lads/lasses and box reservations with wood shavings must be sent to the same email addresses.

- **I am an owner of a runner at the meeting. Can I come to the racecourse?**

No. For these race meetings behind closed doors, only two people per horse are authorized to access the racecourse: the trainer or his/her representative and the lad/lass. Bloodstock agents and jockey agents are not permitted at the racecourse. Owners and breeders are not permitted at the racecourse. Also, partners or children are also not allowed on the racecourse.

- **I am a journalist. Can I come to the racecourse during racing behind closed doors?**

Whilst racing is taking place behind closed doors and until further notice, the number of journalists at a racecourse will be limited to 5 people. Before coming to the racecourse, you must register with the press officer of the racecourse who will decide if there are availabilities.

### 3 - DO I TRAVEL TO WORK?

Updated on 30 October 2020

New travel restrictions came into place in France on Thursday, 29 October 2020. Movement certificates and relevant documents can be downloaded on the website of the French Ministry of the Interior: click [HERE](#)

### 4 - GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR COMPANIES

Updated on 30 October 2020

- **Government support packages for companies:**

The Ministry of Economy, Finance and Relaunch website provides information about the support packages for companies during the Covid-19 crisis.

Read about the support packages (in French) : [HERE](#)

### 5 - RACING AUTHORITIES AND TRAINING CENTRES

Updated on 30 October 2020

- **Will the offices of the racing authorities remain open?**

Just like any other company, at the request of the Government, as part of the implemented health measures, the offices of the racing authorities must reduce as much as they can the workforce on site by only employing staff that is in charge of maintenance work that cannot be postponed, in particular the maintenance of the grass gallops.

- **Can trainers that are based at the public training centres take out their horses to train them with consideration of the safety instructions relating to COVID-19?**

Yes, trainers that are permanently based at the public training centres have the right to take out their horses for minimum work but must respect the instructions of the training centre (timetables, limited access to the gallops, etc.).

Safety instructions must be respected within the yards and when riding out. Where possible, trainers must try and organise their time schedule so that there are no large gatherings of horses and people in the walking ring.

In open common areas (platforms, headlands, etc..) safety distances must be respected at all times.

Trainers who have their own private training facilities are not allowed to come and work their horses at public training centres, which are strictly reserved for horses from stables that are part of the training centres.

- **Covid-19 protocol for Chantilly, Maison-Laffitte and Deauville training centres**

During training:

- Whilst riding: ride in single file and keep your distance
- Whilst walking:
  - No gatherings of people allowed on or next to the training tracks
  - Respect the barrier gestures and health measures.
- Respect the times schedule and opening times of the tracks

In the yards:

- Respect the recommended barrier gestures to prevent the risk of spreading the virus
- Display the list of recommended barrier gestures. Download the poster [HERE](#)
- Provide staff with soap and antibacterial hand sanitizers
- Ensure that each employee has his/her own equipment (label the broom and pitchfork with their name, bridle and saddle)
- Limit access to the changing rooms, rest area and feed store.
- Don't allow any foreign parties into your yard (apart from deliveries)

- **Do Farriers who are self-employed have to continue working?**

Like anyone who is considered an essential worker and who would like to continue working, farriers can continue to come to the training centres to carry out work that is necessary to the well-being of horses.

## **6 - EMPLOYER/EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIP**

**Updated on 30 October 2020**

- **Information for employers and employees :**

Faced with the current Covid-19 crisis, the Government has reinforced and simplified the measures in place for employees and companies who have been impacted by the coronavirus.

Information is available on the website of the French Ministry of Labour: [HERE](#)

- **Information from the MSA**

The MSA website, the French sécurité sociale agricole, provides a wealth of information for employers and employees regarding the Covid-19 pandemic: [HERE](#)

## **7 - JOCKEYS**

- **Can jockeys use the changing rooms?**

By adhering to the social distancing rules, jockeys can use their respective locker space in the weighing room, providing they keep a distance of at least 1,5m with their nearest neighbour. If necessary, other unused areas can be made available to allow for social distancing.

**Face mask must be worn at all times during the day, including in the changing rooms.**

During a race, jockeys can, if they wish to, lower the face mask. However, it must be covering the mouth and nose again as soon as the race is over. Access to the sauna is not permitted.

As there are specific rules in place for racing behind closed doors, please read the RACING BEHIND DOORS PROTOCOL carefully.

- **Is a jockey employed by France Galop?**

France Galop does not employ jockeys. A jockey can be employed by a trainer in the morning for track work or a jockey who is free-lance can be employed by a trainer for the duration of the race.

Useful link: French Jockey's association: <https://www.asso-jockeys.com/>

## **8 – HORSES AND THE CORONAVIRUS**

- **Can horses get the coronavirus?**

The coronavirus or COVID-19 belongs to the coronavirus family which groups together the virus responsible for digestive, respiratory, hepatic or neurological diseases in different species of mammals and birds.

The coronavirus exists in pets (canine respiratory coronavirus, PIF in cats), cattle, pigs and horses.

In horses, cases have been reported since 2010 in Japan, the US and recently in Europe. These are specific viruses, that is to say, they are different for each species. There have been no transmissions reported from horse to human.

The equine coronavirus is contagious for the equine species and is transmitted via the faecal-oral route (different for humans: oro-nasal route).

As a safety measure, in case of any signs of respiratory infection (fever or feeling of fever, coughing, breathing difficulties) or in case of contact with an infected person, you should not approach horses.

- **Is the coronavirus dangerous for horses?**

For horses, the disease is sporadic and present in winter, from October to April:

- Symptoms are: fever, anorexia, prostration. The digestive symptoms result in colic and diarrhoea.
- The diagnosis is made by PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction)
- The incubation period is short: 2 to 3 days
- The disease is short: less than 1 week
- Excretion and hence the risk of contagion for other horses lasts 2 to 3 weeks.
- The treatment is symptomatic (infusions, anti-inflammatories, digestive protectors). There is no vaccine
- Complications are possible: endotoxemia, septicaemia, hyperammonaemia associated with encephalopathies.

- **Can I get the virus from a horse?**

The current spread of the COVID-19 virus is the result from interhuman transmission. To date, there has been no indication that domestic animals have spread the virus. Hence, there is no justification in applying health measures, which could compromise their well-being, to domestic animals.

- **Can I give it to a horse?**

To date, there is no case where there has been a transmission of the virus between horses and humans.

There is the possibility of depositing the virus via human excretory on horsehair, but the virus cannot survive in the air for very long (current knowledge of the virus suggests three hours). As a precaution, wash your hands before and after working with the horse and before touching any other horse or equipment.

In case of any signs of respiratory infection (fever or feeling of fever, coughing, breathing difficulties) or in case of contact with an infected person, you should not approach horses.

