

Guideline to Supplement to Codes of Practice – Greyhound Euthanasia

Greyhounds which are physically healthy and behaviourally sound should be given the opportunity to be kept as a companion animal.

Greyhounds should only be placed in homes where it is believed they will be appropriately cared for.

There are certain circumstances where humane destruction of a greyhound may be unavoidable due to health, behavioural or legislative reasons or where the welfare and quality of life of the greyhound are at risk due to a lack of appropriate rehoming options.

The destruction of a greyhound must be undertaken humanely by a veterinary surgeon. Veterinary surgeon should continue to exercise their professional judgement to act in the best interests of the animals in their care.

In order to ensure compliance with *Greyhound Racing Prohibition Act 2016 No 36* part 5 section 21 (2) veterinary surgeons and owners must not euthanase or otherwise destroy any greyhound without the prior written consent of GRNSW.

What should an owner do if they would like to euthanise their greyhound?

Prior to considering euthanasia, the owner to explore all possible appropriate options for the retirement of a greyhound. An owner of a greyhound must attempt to rehome their greyhound on no less than two occasions, in accordance with the guidelines on rehoming below.

An owner must undertake the following steps if they wish to euthanase their greyhound:

1. The owner must complete a Consent Form.
2. Evidence of attempts to rehome the greyhound must be attached to the Consent Form and must be provided to the qualified veterinary surgeon administering euthanasia. GRNSW may contact rehoming providers to verify the information provided.
3. In completing the consent form, the owner must declare whether they are unable and/or unwilling to care for the greyhound's welfare. The owner must also declare whether the greyhound is suitable for rehoming, or has been deemed to be unsuitable for rehoming.
4. The owner to send the Consent Form (with the veterinary surgeon's input as required) to GRNSW (Email – retirement@grnsw.com.au; Post – PO Box 170, Concord West, NSW 2138).

If I am a veterinary surgeon what should I do if an owner asks me to euthanase their greyhound?

1. A veterinarian surgeon must complete the relevant section of the Consent Form in order for the owner to obtain the consent of GRNSW to euthanase the dog. A veterinarian surgeon must not euthanase a greyhound until GRNSW consent is obtained.

- a. However, GRNSW's consent is not required if the greyhound is destroyed by a veterinary surgeon in accordance with section 26AA of the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979* (NSW) which relevantly provides as follows:

(1) Where, in the opinion of a veterinary practitioner:

(a) an animal is so severely injured, so diseased or in such a physical condition that it is cruel to keep it alive, and

(b) the animal is not about to be destroyed, or is about to be destroyed in a manner that will inflict unnecessary pain upon the animal,

the veterinary practitioner may:

(e) destroy the animal, or cause it to be destroyed, in a manner that causes it to die quickly and without unnecessary pain.

2. While compliance with the requirements remains the responsibility of the greyhound owner, GRNSW encourages veterinary surgeon to remind owners of their obligations.
3. A veterinary surgeon must determine if it is in the greyhound's best interest to be euthanased. In making this assessment the veterinary surgeon must have regard to evidence provided by the owner on attempts to rehome the greyhound or the circumstances prescribed in the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979* (NSW).
4. On the Consent Form the veterinary surgeon must make a recommendation. A veterinary surgeon must decide on if euthanasia should be administered on the basis:
 - Of the owner's inability or unwillingness to care for the greyhound's welfare and no suitable rehoming options have been found by the owner; or
 - Euthanasia will be administered to the greyhound on the basis that the greyhound has been deemed unsuitable for rehoming based on behavioural issues; or
 - Neither of the above apply (i.e. euthanasia is not recommended).
5. The destruction of a greyhound must be undertaken humanely.
6. Veterinary surgeons should continue to exercise their professional judgement to act in the best interests of the animals in their care.

How many rehoming providers should an owner contact prior to seeking euthanasia of their greyhound?

An owner of a greyhound must attempt to rehome their greyhound with no less than two rehoming providers. This must include at least one attempt to rehome with the Greyhounds As Pets (GAP) program and at least one attempt to rehome at a private rehoming provider facility. A list of rehoming providers (including the GAP program and private providers) is at **Annexure A** to this Guideline. An attempt to rehome a greyhound with family or a friend is also acceptable (as long as the GAP program and a private rehoming provider have also been approached).

What if a rehoming provider cannot provide immediate homing but can provide homing at a later date?

There may be situations where a rehoming provider does not currently have any places for the greyhound to be rehomed but will have a place for a greyhound to be rehomed in the near future. If the rehoming provider does not have a place for the greyhound within 10 business days of the initial inquiry with the rehoming provider, the rehoming provider is deemed unable to rehome the greyhound.

What material should an owner provide to a veterinary surgeon to demonstrate evidence of attempts to rehome a greyhound?

Satisfactory evidence of attempts to rehome a greyhound must include a declaration from the owner confirming that they have attempted to rehome their greyhound. This declaration should include the following (but is not limited to):

- Details of the rehoming provider / family / friend (including contact details so that GRNSW can verify the information provided by the owner); and
- Details and evidence of how the rehoming provider / family / friend provided notification that rehoming a greyhound at the rehoming facility / location was not possible. Evidence may include but is not limited to a letter, email, text message, and details of phone call or information contained on a website.

If I am an owner, will I be given the opportunity to respond to adverse information?

There be instances where GRNSW uses adverse information that it possess or has been provided by a third party and the owner of the greyhound has not seen this information. To ensure procedural fairness GRNSW will provide the owner of the greyhound reasonable opportunity respond to this adverse information.

Where should I send my Consent Form to euthanase my greyhound?

Requests to euthanase a greyhound should be sent via email or post to:

- retirement@grnsw.com.au;
- PO Box 179, Concord West, NSW 2138

When will I be notified if consent has been granted to euthanase my greyhound?

You will receive an acknowledgement receipt from GRNSW within 24 hours of seeking permission to euthanase a greyhound.

You will be notified of the outcome of your request to euthanase a greyhound within five business days.

If I am a rehoming provider can I seek financial support from GRNSW?

GRNSW has a Re-homing Contribution Scheme, which aims to assist independent greyhound rehoming organisations. For further information see: <http://www.grnsw.com.au/welfare/rehoming/rehoming-assistance-schemes>

If I am an owner and I intend to euthanase my greyhound and I am first exploring rehoming options will I be required to receive consent from GRNSW to transfer a greyhound to an independent adoption program or rehoming provider?

No you will not be required to complete the request to transfer a greyhound to a person or organisation form if you are inquiring or exploring options for rehoming your greyhound with the Greyhounds as Pets (GAP) program, a rehoming provider, family or friend.

Why must I seek GRNSW's consent before I euthanase a greyhound?

On 26 August 2016, *the Greyhound Racing Prohibition Act 2016* (Prohibition Act) commenced which requires owners of greyhounds registered in New South Wales to notify or seek consent from GRNSW if they want to do certain things with their greyhound.

Relevantly, the Prohibition Act prohibits a greyhound owner from destroying a greyhound or causing it to be destroyed unless the owner has written consent from GRNSW. GRNSW consent is not required if the greyhound is destroyed by a veterinary surgeon in an emergency in order to relieve it of suffering or distress due to injury or illness.

What happens if I euthanase a greyhound prior to having consent from GRNSW?

Persons found to have destroyed a greyhound other than in accordance with the provisions of the Prohibition Act are subject to a maximum fine of up to \$5,500. GRNSW may also take further action against anyone found to have breached the Prohibition Act or failed to comply with this policy.

The maximum penalty that may be imposed under the Rules is \$22,000 and/or suspension, disqualification, warning off and/or cancellation of registration.

