

# 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 and age of the horse and steps a reasonable person would take in the circumstances.

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 whilst 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 \$40 035 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 respond to your concerns.

## 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](http://www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au)