

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
CALIFORNIA HORSE RACING BOARD
1010 HURLEY WAY SUITE 300
SACRAMENTO, CA 95825**

TITLE 4. BUSINESS REGULATIONS
DIVISION 4. CALIFORNIA HORSE RACING BOARD
ARTICLE 6. ENTRIES AND DECLARATIONS
RULE 1588. HORSE INELIGIBLE TO START IN A RACE
ARTICLE 16. GENERAL CONDUCT
RULE 1878. WORKOUTS

15-DAY NOTICE OF MODIFICATION TO TEXT OF PROPOSED ACTION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to the requirements of Government Code Section 11346.8(c) and Section 44 of Title 1 of the California Code of Regulations, the California Horse Racing Board (Board) is providing notice of proposed changes to Board Rules 1588 and 1878. A prior 15-day Notice was issued on March 20, 2026. The latest modified text is included in this document with proposed modifications indicated in italics with a double underline and italics with double strikeout.

Any interested person, or their authorized representative, may submit written comments relevant to the proposed changes to:

California Horse Racing Board
Attention: Chris Garmire
1010 Hurley Way Suite 300
SACRAMENTO, CA 95825

Comments may also be submitted by email to cmgarmire@chrb.ca.gov.
Comments will be accepted from July 20, 2026, to August 4, 2026.

All written comments received by August 4, 2026, which pertain to the indicated changes, will be reviewed by the Board and will be summarized and responded to in the Final Statement of Reasons. Please limit your comments to the latest modified text.

CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS
TITLE 4. BUSINESS REGULATIONS
DIVISION 4. CALIFORNIA HORSE RACING BOARD
ARTICLE 6. ENTRIES AND DECLARATIONS
RULE 1588. HORSE INELIGIBLE TO START IN A RACE

PROPOSED TEXT

Proposed 45-day changes are shown in single underline and ~~single strikeout~~.
Proposed First 15-day changes are shown in double underline and ~~double strikeout~~.

Newly revised regulatory language made available via this Second 15-day public notice are shown in *italics* with a double underline and *italics* with ~~double strikeout~~.

Omitted text is indicated by (* * *)

§ 1588. Horse Ineligible to Start in a Race.

- (a) In addition to any other valid ground or reason, a horse is ineligible to start in any race:

* * *

(16) when such horse is fifteen (15) years of age or older if a *standardbred* or ~~eleven (11) years of age or older if any other breed.~~

(17) when such horse is *eleven (11) years of age or older if any breed other than standardbred.*

(~~17~~18) when such horse is a maiden, as defined by Rule 1420(k), and ~~six (6)~~ seven (7) years of age or older.

NOTE:

Authority cited: Sections 19440 and 19562, Business and Professions Code.

Reference: Sections 19440 and 19562, Business and Professions Code

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ARTICLE 16. GENERAL CONDUCT
RULE 1878. WORKOUTS

PROPOSED TEXT

Proposed 45-day changes are shown in single underline and ~~single strikeout~~.

Proposed First 15-day changes are shown in double underline and ~~double strikeout~~.

Newly revised regulatory language made available via this Second 15-day public notice are shown in *italics* with a double underline and *italics* with ~~double strikeout~~.

Omitted text is indicated by (* * *)

§ 1878. Workouts.

* * *

(b) A horse shall not be permitted to workout unless:

(1) The horse has been examined by the trainer's attending veterinarian during the seventy-two (72) hours immediately preceding the workout for the express purpose of evaluating the horse's fitness to workout; and

(2) An evaluation has been conducted by the attending veterinarian and a determination has been made that the horse is fit to workout.

(A) The examination shall include, but not be limited to, close inspection of the eyes, examination of the legs, and observation of the horse at rest and while in motion.

(B) The attending veterinarian and trainer shall inform the Official Veterinarian of any changes in the horse's fitness after examination and before workout.

(C) The evaluation shall be recorded in the Veterinarian Report in accordance with section 1842.

~~(3) such horse is fourteen (14) years of age or younger if a standardbred or ten~~

~~(10) years or younger if any other breed.~~

~~(4) such horse is a maiden as defined by rule 1420 (k), and five (5) six (6) years of age or younger.~~

(c) In addition to the requirements above, a horse shall not be permitted to workout unless:

(1) such horse is less than fifteen (15) years of age if a standardbred.

(2) such horse is less than eleven (11) years of age if any breed other than standardbred.

(3) such horse is less than seven (7) years of age if a maiden as defined by Rule 1420(k).

(~~e~~d) For the purpose of this section, "workout" means an exercise session near full speed, or close to full speed.

NOTE:

Authority cited: Sections 19440 and 19562, Business and Professions Code.

Reference: Sections 19440 and 19562, Business and Professions Code.

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PROPOSED AMENDMENT OF RULE 1878. WORKOUTS

NOTICE OF ADDITION OF DOCUMENTS TO RULEMAKING FILE

Pursuant to the requirements of Government Code sections 11346.8(d), 11346.9(a)(1), and 11347.1, the California Horse Racing Board is providing notice that documents that the agency relied upon in adopting the proposed regulations have been added to the rulemaking file and are available for public inspection and comment.

The documents added to the rulemaking file are as follows:

1. Gramm, M., & Marksteiner, R. (2011). *The Effect of Age on Thoroughbred Racing Performance*. Journal of Equine Science, 21(4), 73–78.
<https://doi.org/10.1294/jes.21.73>
2. Hitchens, P. L., Morrice-West, A. V., Stevenson, M. A., & Whitton, R. C. (2019). *Meta-analysis of risk factors for racehorse catastrophic musculoskeletal injury in flat racing*. The Veterinary Journal, 245(1), 29–40.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tvjl.2018.11.014>
3. Georgopoulos, S. P., & Parkin, T. D. H. (2017). *Risk factors for equine fractures in Thoroughbred flat racing in North America*. Preventive Veterinary Medicine, 139, 99–104.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.prevetmed.2016.12.006>
4. Sweeney, D., Wang, Y., Palmer, S. E., Holmström, M., Donohue, K. D., Farnsworth, K. D., Sanz, M. G., Lambert, D. H., & Bayly, W. M. (2026). *Thoroughbreds deemed to be most at risk by inertial measurement unit*

sensors suffered a fatal musculoskeletal injury at a higher rate than other racehorses. Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association, 264(1), 81–88. <https://doi.org/10.2460/javma.25.04.0268>

5. The Jockey Club (Aug. 2025). *The American Stud Book: Principal Rules and Requirements*,
https://www.registry.jockeyclub.com/RegistryIncludes/pdfs/rule_book.pdf
6. United States Trotting Association. (2026, May 1). *2026 charter, bylaws, rules and regulations*. <https://www.ustrotting.com>

Beginning July 20, 2026, these documents are available for public inspection on the Board's website at <http://www.chrb.ca.gov>. These documents are also available for public inspection by request to the agency contact, or between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. at the following address:

Chris Garmire
California Horse Racing Board
1010 Hurley Way Suite 300
SACRAMENTO, CA 95835

Telephone: (279) 300-7421
EMAIL: cmgarmire@chrb.ca.gov

The Board will accept written comments on the documents between July 20, 2026, and August 4, 2026. Written comments may be submitted by mail to:

CALIFORNIA HORSE RACING BOARD
ATTENTION: CHRIS GARMIRE
1010 HURLEY WAY SUITE 300
SACRAMENTO, CA 95825

Comments may also be submitted by email to cmgarmire@chrb.ca.gov

All written comments received by August 4, 2026, which pertain to the indicated changes will be reviewed by the Board and will be summarized and responded to in the Final Statement of Reasons. Please limit your comments to the documents listed above.

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Addendum to Initial Statement of Reasons

SPECIFIC PURPOSE OF THE REGULATION

The California Horse Racing Board (Board) proposes to amend Board Rule 1588 (Horse Ineligible to Start in a Race) and Rule 1878 (Workouts) to eliminate industry confusion by standardizing and codifying into statewide regulation the age-based eligibility “house rules” currently set by individual racetracks. California tracks have long applied upper-age limits and maiden age cutoffs, with maidens becoming ineligible to race at either six (6) or seven (7) years old, depending on the venue, which creates inconsistent eligibility from track to track.

In addition, county fair race meetings, licensed by the CHRB, have traditionally operated without explicit maximum-age house rules, which has allowed some older horses to compete at fairs. Establishing uniform maximum ages will standardize eligibility across both commercial tracks and county fairs, eliminating confusion for horsemen, officials, and the public. Codification will produce a uniform, statewide standard applicable across breeds and facilities.

These amendments are based on the industry convention that all racehorses “age up” on January 1 in the Northern Hemisphere, regardless of the actual foaling date. Treating horses as one year older on January 1 is the longstanding rule used by The Jockey Club, United States Trotting Association, and other racing authorities to keep age-class competition consistent.

Finally, the amendments reflect the animal-welfare basis for age limits: older horses experience performance decline and increased susceptibility to injury, including catastrophic injury, due to cumulative use and natural age

progression. Establishing statewide maximum ages for racing and workouts, alongside a standardized maiden age cutoff, promotes equine safety and creates a clearer runway to viable second careers after racing.

PROBLEM

California statute sets a minimum racing age but no maximum, leaving upper-age eligibility to track-specific house rules. As a result, a horse may be eligible to race at one venue but ineligible at another, depending on breed, number of wins, and local policy. Thoroughbred racing at Santa Anita Park, Del Mar, and Los Alamitos imposes an upper age limit of ten (10) years for racing, while county fair race meetings have traditionally operated without explicit maximum-age house rules. Maiden eligibility also varies: Del Mar and Los Alamitos restrict maidens seven (7) and older, whereas Santa Anita restricts maidens six (6) and older; and Los Alamitos Quarter Horse racing historically lacked comparable rules. This patchwork produces confusion and uneven application of age-based eligibility statewide.

The absence of uniform maximum ages for both racing and workouts also undermines welfare-based consistency: a horse too old to race may still appear for timed workouts, exposing it to similar physical stress without a statewide standard to prevent it.

NECESSITY

The amendments to Rule 1588 and Rule 1878 are necessary to translate longstanding house rules into a single, statewide framework, and to harmonize eligibility between commercial tracks and county fairs in alignment with national and international standards so that the same age standards apply everywhere CHRB licensed racing occurs. Specifically:

Rule 1588 will be amended as follows.

Adding subsections (a)(16) and (a)(17) to establish maximum racing ages, which will enhance clarity for participants and the public, promote equine safety and welfare, and increase the likelihood of viable second-career pathways (aftercare, sport, recreational use) by avoiding extended late-career campaigning. The subsections codify statewide caps that already exist as track “house rules” for Thoroughbreds and Quarter Horses and harmonizes Standardbred policy with the United States Trotting Association’s age framework bringing California in line with national association standards and reducing rule fragmentation across breeds and venues.

For Standardbreds, retaining the general 14 year maximum age in subsection (a)(16) harmonizes California with the United States Trotting Association policy under which horses 15 years and older are not issued electronic eligibility for parimutuel racing, ensuring consistency with national association rules while promoting equine safety, welfare, and timely transitions to second career opportunities.

Specifically, subsection (a)(16) will read:

“when such horse is fifteen (15) years of age or older if a standardbred.”

Subsection (a)(17) will read:

“when such horse is eleven (11) years of age or older if any breed other than standardbred.”

Adding subsection (a)(18) to establish a single statewide race age maximum for maidens. This will replace the current patchwork of house rules with a uniform rule that maidens seven (7) years of age and older are ineligible to start in races, thereby removing venue variability and improving clarity for participants and the public. This maximum age aligns with the house rule currently in place at both Del Mar and Los Alamitos. Public comment weighed in favor of codifying this house rule rather than Santa Anita's house rule, which currently makes maidens ineligible to start at six (6) years of age rather than seven (7). Allowing horses one extra year to break their maiden (i.e., win their first race) relieves pressure on trainers to push the horses past their limits and is better for equine welfare.

Specifically, subsection (a)(18) will read:

“when such horse is a maiden, as defined by Rule 1420(k), and ~~six (6)~~ seven (7) years of age or older.”

Rule 1878 will be amended as follows

Add new subsections (c)(1)-(c)(3) to designate parallel maximum ages for official workouts, remove track-to-track variability, codify existing California house rules for Thoroughbreds and Quarter Horses, and harmonize Standardbred policy with the United States Trotting Association's age framework; taken together, these changes ensure training eligibility cannot outlast racing eligibility (i.e., if a horse is ineligible to race at a given age, it is likewise ineligible to conduct official workouts), thereby improving clarity for participants and the public, promoting equine safety and welfare, and encouraging timely transitions

to second-career pathways while reducing rule fragmentation across breeds and venues.

Specifically section (c)(1)-(3) will read:

- (c) *"In addition to the requirements above, a horse shall not be permitted to workout unless:*
- (1) such horse is less than fifteen (15) years of age if a standardbred.*
- (2) such horse is less than eleven (11) years of age if any other breed than standardbred.*
- (3) such horse is less than seven (7) years of age if a maiden as defined by Rule 1420(k)."*

Renumber previous subsection (c) to subsection (d) to allow for the addition of the new subsections described above.

BENEFITS ANTICIPATED FROM THE REGULATORY ACTION

Standardizing age limits statewide is expected to:

- Eliminate industry confusion by replacing track-specific house rules with a single statewide standard for racing and workout eligibility (including maiden cutoffs).
- Reduce injuries and catastrophic events among older horses by establishing maximum ages for racing and workouts, reflecting the increased susceptibility to injury with age and accumulated use.
- Improve transparency and fairness for owners, trainers, officials, and the wagering public by making eligibility uniform across tracks and breeds.
- Increase second-career placement potential by focusing retirement earlier in the risk curve, when horses are more adoptable and sound for alternative disciplines.

TECHNICAL, THEORETICAL, AND EMPIRICAL STUDIES, REPORTS OR SIMILAR DOCUMENTS RELIED UPON

The Board relied in part on the following reports and documents in proposing this regulatory action:

1. Gramm, M., & Marksteiner, R. (2011). *The Effect of Age on Thoroughbred Racing Performance*. *Journal of Equine Science*, 21(4), 73–78.
<https://doi.org/10.1294/jes.21.73>

2. Hitchens, P. L., Morrice-West, A. V., Stevenson, M. A., & Whitton, R. C. (2019). *Meta-analysis of risk factors for racehorse catastrophic musculoskeletal injury in flat racing*. *The Veterinary Journal*, 245(1), 29–40. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tvjl.2018.11.014>
3. Georgopoulos, S. P., & Parkin, T. D. H. (2017). *Risk factors for equine fractures in Thoroughbred flat racing in North America*. *Preventive Veterinary Medicine*, 139, 99–104. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.prevetmed.2016.12.006>
4. Sweeney, D., Wang, Y., Palmer, S. E., Holmström, M., Donohue, K. D., Farnsworth, K. D., Sanz, M. G., Lambert, D. H., & Bayly, W. M. (2026). *Thoroughbreds deemed to be most at risk by inertial measurement unit sensors suffered a fatal musculoskeletal injury at a higher rate than other racehorses*. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, 264(1), 81–88. <https://doi.org/10.2460/javma.25.04.0268>
5. The Jockey Club (Aug. 2025). *The American Stud Book: Principal Rules and Requirements*, https://www.registry.jockeyclub.com/RegistryIncludes/pdfs/rule_book.pdf
6. United States Trotting Association. (2026, May 1). *2026 charter, bylaws, rules and regulations*. <https://www.ustrotting.com>

RESULTS ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Board's Economic Impact Assessment (Gov. Code § 11346.3(b)) finds:

- No impact on the creation or elimination of jobs within the state.
- No impact on the creation of new businesses or the elimination of existing businesses within the state.
- No impact on the expansion of businesses currently doing business within the state.
- No direct benefits to the health and welfare of California residents, worker safety, or the state's environment.

Because the age cutoffs largely codify existing house rules already in effect at California racetracks, the statewide standard is not expected to have a

significant, statewide adverse economic impact on businesses or their ability to compete.

CREATION OR ELIMINATION OF JOBS WITHIN THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Defining maximum ages for racing and workouts will not result in the creation or elimination of jobs within the state.

CREATION OF NEW BUSINESSES OR THE ELIMINATION OF EXISTING BUSINESSES WITHIN THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Defining maximum ages for racing and workouts will not result in the creation of new businesses or the elimination of existing businesses within the state.

EXPANSION OF BUSINESSES CURRENTLY DOING BUSINESS WITHIN THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Defining maximum ages for racing and workouts will not result in the expansion of businesses currently doing business within the state.

BENEFITS OF THE REGULATION TO THE HEALTH AND WELFARE OF CALIFORNIA RESIDENTS, WORKER SAFETY, AND THE STATE'S ENVIRONMENT

Defining maximum ages for racing and workouts will not result in benefits to the health and welfare of California residents, worker safety, or the state's environment.