



## Introduction

The British thoroughbred breeding industry fully recognises the extremely serious and unprecedented situation facing this country and the wider world from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Through full and strict adherence to the protocols below, the British thoroughbred breeding industry is able to demonstrate it can responsibly comply with Government instructions and provide a Covid-safe working environment.

All stakeholders involved in this protocol must be in good health (absence of clinical signs and with no temperature), nor be under Track and Trace restrictions or vulnerable people at risk.

**At this time, if you cannot follow all of this protocol you should not be moving and transporting horses for thoroughbred breeding. Protecting human health and NHS resources are the priority.**

## Background

On Monday 23 March 2020, the UK Government introduced national lockdown restrictions requiring people to stay at home as far as possible to help reduce the spread of the coronavirus outbreak. The TBA carefully reviewed government advice at that time and produced protocols which breeders must follow to demonstrate they can responsibly comply with government instructions. The Chief Veterinary Officer was consulted on this guidance, which were drafted given the context of the specific seasonal nature of breeding thoroughbreds.

Tailored guidance for employers has also been developed to help protect their workforce and customers from coronavirus while still continuing to trade, which is available [here](#). Stud farms should review whether their established risk assessments are adequate in light of this guidance and that all activities comply with Government Instructions on hygiene, isolation if symptomatic, social distancing and travel. The use of the NHS Covid -19 app for staff and visitors is strongly advised.

Whilst the Government have periodically updated the restrictions since March 2020, initially relaxing them during the summer before introducing new restrictions in Autumn 2020 in response to the public health risk, these protocols will continue to apply, and will be updated as required, until advised otherwise. These protocols underpin the continuation of breeding farm activity and necessary travel by prioritising human health for activity which is essential and cannot be carried out at home.

**They are based on Government guidance and instructions, and will be updated if this changes.**

## General

1. Only staff who are essential to the care of horses, and who cannot work from home, should continue to travel to work during the period of these restrictions.

2. The standard of care should be focused primarily on upholding the welfare of the horses in their care. Any non-essential activity beyond this must be carefully considered and, where possible, avoided.
3. Studs must close to visitors, other than those that are essential for the welfare of the horses in their care. These visits are permitted, but any appointments must be made in advance of travel and any associated paperwork must be exchanged electronically.
4. Staff and any visitors must follow all Government advice on social distancing at all times. Staff and any visitors must remain at least two metres apart and wear face coverings as required by law, and also if the two metre rule cannot be adhered to.
5. Gatherings of people not from the same household should be avoided except where absolutely essential for horse welfare. In these instances, numbers and time should be limited, social distancing should be maintained wherever possible, and activities be performed outdoors as much as possible.
6. At the stud farm, facilities must be provided for robust disinfection processes for people and equipment on arrival and departure.
7. Staff and any visitors must follow all Government advice relating to good hygiene and virus transmission, and carry out proscribed hand washing and sanitising procedures including any surfaces/handles/ equipment. Staff and any visitors must avoid sharing vehicles or any equipment.
8. Hygiene is vitally important when handling new equine arrivals. Staff and any visitors must use hand wipes, gels, disinfectants to clean any related equipment both before and after handling.
9. Veterinary advice by phone and email should be sought on ensuring effective sanitisation and isolation.
10. Local procedures must be recorded and displayed as appropriate and there must be records that staff have been fully trained.

### Transport

1. Any appointments must be made in advance of travel (also see item 8.).
2. Associated paperwork must be completed and sent electronically in advance, including passport information and the completion of the NSFA's Freedom from Infection form.
3. The vehicle used for transport must be disinfected before and after every visit including any handles, the ramp or other areas where stud staff may have had, or will have, contact.
4. Staff travelling in the horsebox must comply with Government advice. Multiple occupancy vehicles should be avoided unless those occupying it are members of the same household. If another person from outside the same household must be in the vehicle, if it is not possible to keep a 2 metre distance in that vehicle then consider additional safety measures
5. Unless there is an emergency or human or animal welfare requirement related to the animal being transported or the driver, it is prohibited to stop on the journey.
6. At the destination, the unloading and re-loading of the horse must be conducted by the staff at the destination with no contact with the travelling staff. Hygiene precautions must be followed at every stage of this loading process, using robust disinfection processes of the horsebox handles and any equipment, and hand washing.
7. Staff travelling in the horsebox should only exit the horsebox at the location they are visiting to use welfare facilities, using all sanitary precautions. There must be no direct contact with the staff on the site.

All these movements between premises must be recorded online using the digital equine movement system at: <https://horsemovement.weatherbysgsb.co.uk>