

**RULE**  
**Office of the Governor**  
**Division of Administration**  
**Racing Commission**

Use of Riding Crop in Thoroughbred Races (LAC 35:VII.8902)

In accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act, R.S. 49:950 et seq., and through the authority granted in R.S. 4:148, notice is hereby given that the Racing Commission formally adopts LAC 35:VII.8902. The Rule establishes proper use of a riding crop in thoroughbred racing and sets penalty standards for violations. This Rule is hereby adopted on the day of promulgation.

**Title 35**  
**HORSE RACING**  
**Part VII. Equipment and Colors**

**Chapter 89. Whips**

**§8902. Use of Riding Crop in Thoroughbred Races**

A. Although the use of a riding crop is not required, a jockey who uses a riding crop during a thoroughbred race shall do so only in a manner consistent with exerting his or her best efforts to win.

B. In any thoroughbred race in which a jockey will ride without a riding crop, an announcement of that fact shall be made over the public address system.

C. An electrical or mechanical device or other expedient designed to increase or retard the speed of a horse in a thoroughbred race, other than a riding crop approved by the stewards, shall not be possessed by anyone, or applied by anyone to a horse at any time at a location under the jurisdiction of the commission.

D. A riding crop shall not be used on a two-year-old horse in thoroughbred races before April 1 of each year.

E. Allowable uses of a riding crop in thoroughbred races include the following:

1. the riding crop may be used at any time, without penalty, if, in the opinion of the stewards, the riding crop is used to avoid a dangerous situation or preserve the safety of other riders or horses in a race;

2. use of the riding crop in the overhand fashion for a total of six times from the three-eighths pole to the finish line, only to be used two times in succession and then must give a horse a chance to respond;

3. if necessary during a race, a riding crop may be used in a backhanded fashion on the hindquarters from the three-eighths to the finish line. This use will not be counted toward the use of the crop six times in the overhand fashion;

4. tapping the horse on the shoulder with the crop in the down position, while both hands are holding onto the reins and both hands are touching the neck of the horse; and

5. showing or waving the crop without contact with the horse and giving the horse time to respond before striking the horse.

F. Use of the riding crop to make contact with a horse to maintain focus and concentration, to control the horse for safety of the horse and rider, or to encourage a horse is allowed in thoroughbred races, with the following exceptions:

1. in any manner, other than backhanded on the hindquarters as set forth in Paragraph 3 of Subsection E, tapping on the shoulder as set forth in Paragraph 4 of Subsection E, or resulting in more than six times in the overhand manner as set forth in Paragraph 2 of Subsection E;

2. the riding crop shall not be used more than twice in succession and the horse must be given a chance to respond before using it again;

a. "Chance to respond" is defined as one of the following actions by a jockey:

i. pausing the use of the riding crop on their horse before resuming again;

ii. pushing on their horse with a rein in each hand, keeping the riding crop in the up or down position;

iii. showing the horse the riding crop without making contact; or

iv. moving the riding crop from one hand to the other.

3. with the rider's wrist above helmet height;

4. on the head, flanks, or on any other part of its body other than the shoulders or hindquarters;

5. during the post parade or after the finish of the race except if necessary to control the horse;

6. excessive or brutal use of the crop causing injury to the horse;

7. causing welts or breaks in the skin;

8. if the horse is clearly out of the race or has obtained its maximum placing; and

9. if the horse is showing no response.

G. A riding crop shall not be used to strike another person.

H. Use of the crop during workouts shall be permitted so long as such use does not violate Subsection F of this rule.

I. The giving of instructions by any licensee that, if obeyed, would lead to a violation of this Section may result in disciplinary action also being taken against the licensee who gave the instructions.

J. Only padded/shock absorbing riding crops approved by the stewards, which have not been modified in any way, may be carried in a thoroughbred race.

K. During a thoroughbred race, if a jockey rides in a manner contrary to this Rule, at the stewards' discretion, the stewards may impose a warning or fine of \$100 to \$500 or a suspension. If in the opinion of the stewards the violation is egregious or intentional, the stewards have the discretion to impose both a fine and a suspension. Factors in determining whether a violation is egregious include, but are not limited to:

1. recent history of similar violations;

2. number of uses over the total and consecutive limits described; and
3. using the crop in the overhanded position more than six times.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 4:147, R.S. 4:148, and R.S. 4:172.  
HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Office of the Governor, Division of Administration, Racing Commission LR 48:



Charles A. Gardiner III  
Executive Director

9-2-22

Date