

Change of ownership of Equines- information for buyers and sellers

1. **Q. I am selling a horse. What do I need to do?**

Persons selling or otherwise transferring ownership of a horse must

- (a) give the horse passport to the buyer/new owner at the time of sale and
- (b) **from 1 July 2014**, complete and sign the “seller” section of an official declaration form (an equidae transfer of ownership form) and then give the form to the purchaser/new owner/ for completion.

2. **Q. I am buying a horse. What do I need to do?**

Persons buying or otherwise acquiring ownership of a horse must

- (a) receive the horse passport for the horse from the seller at the time of purchase and
- b) From 1st July 2014, complete and sign the ‘new owner’ section of an official declaration form (equidae transfer of ownership form) in co-operation with the person transferring ownership/seller, and send the completed form to the Passport Issuing Organisation (PIO) that issued the passport. The form must be sent to the PIO within 30 days of taking ownership of the horse. Where the rules of the Passport Issuing Organisation (PIO) that issued the passport require the passport to be up-dated, they must also send the horse passport to the PIO.

3. **Q. Is there a form for notifying transfer of ownership?**

- A. Yes, PIOs will each have a supply of forms for this purpose. Copies of forms may also be available at sales venues.

4. **Q. Can the form be completed by persons other than the seller or the buyer?**

- A. Yes, where a person is acting on behalf of a buyer or seller, and have the permission of the buyer or seller to do so, she/he can complete the form.

5. Q. How much detail is required?

A. The names, addresses and contact details of the seller/person transferring ownership and new owner are required as well as details of the horse from its passport. The PIO may require additional information.

6. Q. Is there a penalty for failure to notify the PIO?

A. Yes. Failure to notify change of ownership to the PIO is an offence under the Animal Health and Welfare Act 2013 and persons are liable on conviction to a fine of up to €250,000 or to a term of imprisonment or to both.

7. Q. I bought a horse outside of Ireland and the PIO is located in another EU Member State or a country outside the EU. How do I notify change of ownership?

A. You should complete the form as the new owner and submit it to a PIO in Ireland. It is not essential in this case to have a seller's details. You should follow the rules of body that originally issued the passport in relation to recording changes of ownership on the passport itself.

8. Q. What type of records must be kept?

A. Both parties must maintain a record of the transaction. A copy of the declaration (e.g. a photocopy or photograph) would suffice for this purpose.

9. Q. How will the Regulations be enforced?

A. Authorised officers will carry out inspections and have powers to inspect records and documents.

10. Q. How will the rules operate where a Northern Ireland horse owner sells a horse to a customer in Ireland?

A. The declaration should be submitted in the usual way to the appropriate PIO in the Republic of Ireland.

11. **Q. Must I submit the horse passport so that my ownership details can be recorded?**

A. Some PIOs require that the horse passport be returned for updating. These include:

| PIO | Category of horses |
|--|---|
| Horse Sport Ireland | Irish Sport Horse Irish Draught Horse Irish Cob Kerry Bog Pony |
| The Irish Piebald & Skewbald Association Ltd t/a Leisure Horse Ireland | Irish Piebald & Skewbald Studbook Irish Donkey Studbook |
| Weatherbys Ireland | All thoroughbreds domiciled in Ireland both Irish and foreign foaled and all Weatherbys non-thoroughbred horses domiciled in Ireland. |
| Warmblood Studbook of Ireland | All Irish warmbloods |
| Connemara Pony Breeders Society | Connemara ponies |

12. **Q. When do the new rules apply from?**

A. The new rules apply to transactions taking place on or after 1 July 2014, but persons who wish to do so may have transfers of ownership in advance of that date recorded by the PIO.

13. **Q. What are the contact details for the PIO's?**

The contact details of approved PIOs are located on the Department's website.

<http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/farmingsectors/horses/equineregistrationandpassports>

14. **Q. Do my premises have to be registered with the Department before I take ownership of a horse?**

A. It is a legal requirement under the Control on Places where Horses are kept Regulations (SI 113 of 2014) that all premises where horses are kept be registered with the Department, so you should ensure that your horse is being kept on a registered premises.

15. **Q. I am selling my horse to a person living outside the State. Do the same rules apply to me?**
- A. You should notify the PIO on the form, that you no longer have ownership of the horse so that the record shows that you no longer have ownership.
16. **Q. I am bringing my horse to the abattoir? Do I also have to notify change of ownership?**
- A. If you are bringing the horse directly to an abattoir (or to a disposal facility) , and you are the owner of the horse, you do not have to notify change of ownership. In this case after the horse is slaughtered the passport is returned to the PIO body. However if you sell the horse to for example an agent acting on behalf of an abattoir, then from **1st July 2014** onwards this transfer of ownership must be recorded as set out above, as with any sale or transfer of ownership.
17. **Q. Do I have to pay a fee to the PIO?**
- A. This is a matter for the PIO.