

# Welfare Standards Applicable to Pregnant and Lactating Females



## PREGNANT FEMALES

Confirming pregnancy should be done by a veterinarian, ideally using ultrasound scanning. Behavioural responses, weight gain and nipple development are not reliable indicators of pregnancy and may be associated with 'phantom' pregnancies or normal hormonal changes following a season, even if the female is not pregnant.

Pregnant females need to maintain excellent health, fitness and mental health.

A greyhound breeding female must not be serviced or inseminated on her first season.

*Greyhound Welfare Standard 4.6*

A greyhound breeding female must have a general health check performed by a veterinarian:

- (a) prior each service to assess whether the greyhound is fit to breed, and
- (b) within eight weeks of whelping.

*Greyhound Welfare Standard 4.8*

## STAFFING RATIOS

The **Greyhound Welfare Standards** specify what the minimum staffing requirements for greyhound kennels are.

- (c) at least one overnight staff member is available on-site overnight to care for whelping, sick or injured greyhounds and to undertake emergency activities if necessary; and at least one additional staff is available on call to attend within 30 minutes if needed in an emergency.

*Greyhound Welfare Standard 1.43*

## FACILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR BREEDING FEMALES

**TABLE 3 MINIMUM SIZE REQUIREMENTS FOR INDOOR AND OUTDOOR HOUSING (ABRIDGED)**

Minimum space requirements for whelping areas			
<b>Whelping box</b>	The whelping box must be large enough for the female greyhound/mother to lie flat comfortably while whelping and to accommodate the female greyhound/mother and all her puppies for the first four weeks after whelping. Minimum size: 1.5m (L) x 1.5m (W) with raised sides of minimum 0.5m high, which can allow the female to leave and prevent the puppies from falling out.		
Enclosure type	Minimum width	Minimum height	Total area
<b>Dam, and up to 10 puppies &gt;4 weeks and &lt;8 weeks</b>	2.4m	1.2m	15m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Dam, and up to 10 puppies &gt;8 weeks and &lt;16 weeks</b>	2.4m	1.2m	30m <sup>2</sup>
<b>For every additional two puppies (&gt;10 puppies), an additional 5m<sup>2</sup> is required</b>			

Whelping and lactating areas must meet the minimum size requirements in Table 3 and must, in addition to the minimum standards for kennels above (2.10-2.20):

- (a) provide access to natural daylight;
- (b) contain bedding that is safe for young puppies, soft, absorbent and easily disposed of, or cleaned and disinfected when soiled;
- (c) be temperature controlled to protect puppies from extremes of temperature at all times (the recommended temperature range is between 16°C-24°C);
- (d) have solid, raised sides that are impervious to liquids, to prevent draughts, and are high enough to ensure puppies cannot fall, but allow the mother to exit readily.

*Greyhound Welfare Standard 2.53*

Separate whelping areas must be provided for each female greyhound/mother and her puppies containing a whelping box. Females must have access to an area to toilet away from the whelping box.

*Greyhound Welfare Standard 2.54*

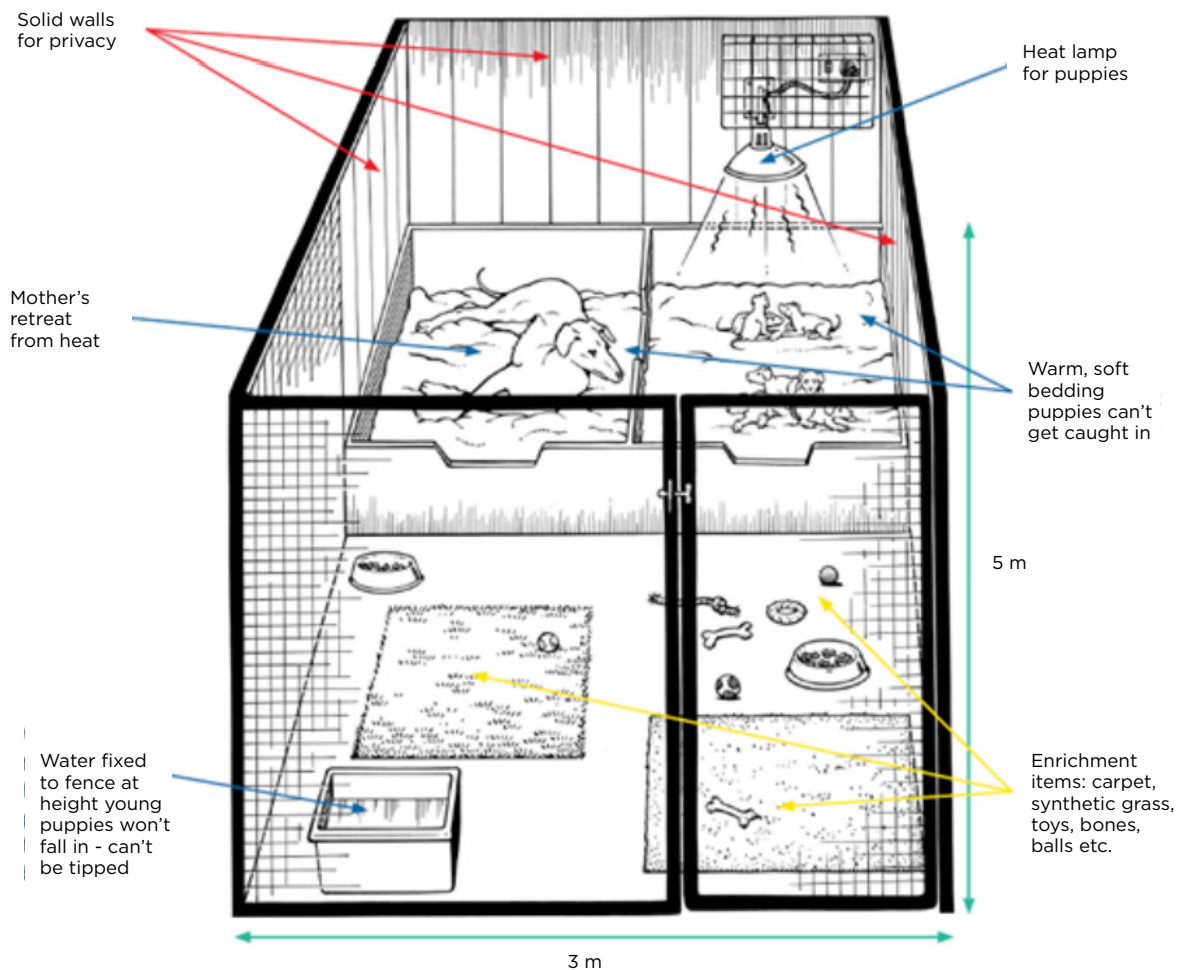
The whelping box must be large enough for the female greyhound/mother to lie comfortably while whelping and to accommodate the female greyhound/mother and her puppies for the first four weeks after whelping (see Table 3). The female must be provided with exercise and enrichment as specified in ESE Table 4.

*Greyhound Welfare Standard 2.55*

Whelping areas must be physically separated from all other greyhounds.

*Greyhound Welfare Standard 2.56*

#### EXAMPLE OF A GOOD WHELPING FACILITY\*



\* Whelping facility - see: <https://gwic.nsw.gov.au/our-greyhounds/breeding/whelping-boxes>

## NUTRITION

Pregnant and lactating females require additional feed and calories to maintain their own nutritional requirements and those of the growing pups. You should seek advice from your veterinarian or an experienced litter master about the frequency of feeding and amount of feed required at each stage of pregnancy. Feed must be nutritionally balanced to provide all the essential nutrients pups need to ensure they thrive. In the latter stages of pregnancy it is better to feed smaller amounts more frequently as pressure due to the female's growing abdomen limits her ability to eat large quantities of food.

Pregnant females require **regular exercise and enrichment**. Follow the requirements in Table 4 of Standard 3: Exercise, Socialisation and Enrichment for pregnant females to ensure you provide their required exercise and enrichment.

In order to prevent stress, it is important that you are well prepared ahead of the expected due date for whelping with all the resources the breeding female and her litter will require.

Kennels and runs must be disinfected using a combination detergent/disinfectant product, at least once a week (or more often as required) and:

- (a) prior to the introduction of a new greyhound;
- (b) prior to whelping;
- (c) upon the removal of puppies.

In the event of a suspected or confirmed reportable disease outbreak at a kennel, a virucidal veterinary, or hospital grade disinfectant must be used on all affected kennel areas.

*Greyhound Welfare Standard 2.33*

At least seven days before her due date, unless there is a likelihood of stress or injury, a pregnant greyhound must be moved to a whelping housing area that complies with these Standards (Standard 2 Housing).

*Greyhound Welfare Standard 4.20*

Within seven days of whelping and until a litter is eight weeks of age, a greyhound breeding female and her puppies must be separated from other greyhounds.

*Greyhound Welfare Standard 4.21*

As soon as the pregnant greyhound shows signs of whelping (normal nesting behaviour), fresh bedding material must be provided, and the female greyhound must be regularly monitored (in person or remotely) until whelping is complete.

*Greyhound Welfare Standard 4.22*

LPs must ensure that, following the completion of whelping:

- (a) the greyhound breeding female and her puppies are monitored six-hourly until the puppies are all feeding and maternal acceptance has been firmly established; and
- (b) a puppy health check is performed within 12 hours of whelping; and
- (c) the whelping area is cleaned and disinfected within 24 hours following the completion of whelping.

*Greyhound Welfare Standard 4.23*

LPs must seek veterinary advice immediately if there are any abnormalities observed or concerns for the welfare of the female greyhound or puppies during the whelping process.

*Greyhound Welfare Standard 4.24*

LPs must notify GRNZ of the death of any puppies during whelping and at any time following whelping, in accordance with the rules for death notifications.

*Greyhound Welfare Standard 4.25*

LPs must seek veterinary advice regarding greyhound after-care including advice on wound care and exercise post-surgery (surgical AI or caesarean).

*Greyhound Welfare Standard 4.26*

## LACTATING FEMALES

It is important that the female and pups are checked regularly in the first few days. First time mothers may not settle straight into being a mother. You may need to supervise constantly to ensure the female does not trample or lie on her pups, and you want to make sure that all of the pups get a fair chance to suckle.

Lactating areas must:

- (a) be fully screened to allow the female greyhound/mother physical separation from all other greyhounds;
- (b) allow the female greyhound/mother access to an area where her puppies cannot reach her, to allow her to rest.

*Greyhound Welfare Standard 2.57*

LPs must ensure that they examine lactating females twice a day for mastitis, during the first two weeks post-whelp, and veterinary treatment is sought immediately where mastitis is present.

*Greyhound Welfare Standard 4.28*



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