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Hiring out horses

Last Modified June 09, 2023



On 1 October 2018, the [Animal Welfare \(Licensing of Activities Involving Animals\) \(England\) Regulations 2018](#) came into force. This legislation has changed the way certain activities involving animals are licensed and regulated, including hiring out horses for riding, or instruction in riding.

The new licence will be referred to as an 'Animal Activity Licence'.

Do I need a licence?

The regulations specify two example business tests to be considered when determining whether an activity is considered commercial, and therefore subject to licensing. These are, whether the operator:

- Makes any sale by, or otherwise carries on, the activity with a view to making a profit
- Earns any commission or fee from the activity

Activities that fulfil one or more of the following criteria are subject to licensing:

- Businesses which hire out horses for riding or for riding lessons. This includes riding schools and those that hire out horses, trekking, loan horses, pony parties (but only where the ponies are ridden), hunter hirelings, polo/polocrosse instruction and pony hire and pony rides. Please see our separate information page on licensing for [donkey rides](#)

Activities that fulfil one or more of the following criteria are not subject to licensing:

- Businesses that run pony parties where none of the ponies are ever ridden – these should be licensed as [animal exhibits](#)
- Activities that are carried out solely for military or police purposes (e.g. riding stables that are used exclusively for these purposes)
- Riding stables that are used exclusively for instructing veterinary students at university for the purpose of their course
- Individuals who occasionally lend a horse, even if a small fee is charged, where there is no profit made and no intent to make a profit

Making an application

- Complete the [application form \[PDF 134KB\]](#)
- Pay the application fee of £220 (please note this is subject to change) + Vet fees

On receipt of your application we will arrange to carry out an inspection with a council appointed vet of the premises where licensable activities are to take place before the application can be determined.

Contact

Licensing service

Municipal buildings, Corporation Street, Blackpool, FY1 1NF

Telephone 01253 478570

Email licensing@blackpool.gov.uk

The licensing service is available to contact by telephone between 10:00am and 2:00pm Monday to Friday or visit in person by

Additional information

[DEFRA guidance notes on hiring out horses](#)

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Blackpool Council

Municipal Buildings
Corporation Street
Blackpool
FY1 1NF

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