

Deadlines

WHEN	WHAT	WHO
January 1st	Renew associate membership	Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association
January 15th	Stake Guide information submitted	Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association
February 15th	Huff's Guide Fair Racing Information Due for Publication	Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association
April 1st	USTA Track application due	United States Trotting Association
May 1st	Matching Funds Grant Application due	United States Trotting Association
May 1st	Permit Applications for conducting pari-mutuel wagering due	Ohio State Racing Commission
May 1st ***	Waiver letter due for the preference rule	Ohio State Racing Commission
May 1st	On Track Insurance Information Form due	Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association
October 31st	Fair Capital Improvement Grants due for following year	Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association
October 31st	Feature Race Grant Applications due for following year	Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association
November 1st	Application for Ohio Fair Funds due	Ohio Department of Agriculture
November 1st	Fair Racing Dates Request form due	Ohio Department of Agriculture
varies	Matching Funds Grant Application due 30 days after last race	United States Trotting Association
***	OHHA sent out a blanket waiver letter in 2025 covering all Ohio Fairs	

December – March

1. Attend fall/winter horsemen's association, USTA District, and/or fair board meetings to establish fair dates. Notify circuit secretaries, state horsemen's association, and USTA (via track membership application) with your fair racing dates, as well as the fair secretary for your fair book.
2. Set a Speed Committee meeting to identify all needed personnel. Review racing conditions and send to the Huff's Guide. If there is a specific entrance that horsemen should use to enter the fairgrounds, include that in the Huffs Guide.
3. Review all contracts to make sure they have been sent or received; these would include:

Sent	Contract	Name
	Ambulance	
	Starting Gate	
	Photo Finish	
	Pari-mutuels	
	Presiding Judge	
	Charter	
	Clerk	
	Program Director	
	Announcer	
	Veterinarian (Lasix)	
	Veterinarian (Blood)	
	Programs	
	Associate Judge 1	
	Associate Judge 2	
	Timer 1	
	Timer 2	
	Timer 3	
	Outrider	
	Track Person	
	Other	
	Other	

4. Gather a publicity team to work on getting a:
 - Publicity point person to write press releases, contact local media.
 - Track photographer, for winner's circle photos and to send to media.
 - Grandstand help for door prizes, Give-a-ways, etc.
 - Race sponsorship solicitation and implementation team.

Spring Fair Preparation

March – May

1. Track membership applications and the Matching Funds Grant applications are due in the USTA office. Applications may also be due to your state racing commission or horsemen's group.
2. Have your track contracts been received back?

Received	Contract	Name
	Ambulance	
	Starting Gate	
	Photo Finish	
	Pari-mutuels	
	Presiding Judge	
	Charter	
	Clerk	
	Program Director	
	Announcer	
	Veterinarian (Lasix)	
	Veterinarian (Blood)	
	Programs	
	Associate Judge 1	
	Associate Judge 2	
	Timer 1	
	Timer 2	
	Timer 3	
	Outrider	
	Track Person	
	Other	
	Other	

3. Your race sponsorship team should be sending out solicitations and contracts for race sponsorships, program ads and door prizes. Some examples are:
 - Gas cards from local stations.
 - Local pet supply stores (ads or coupons for door prizes).
 - Local restaurants (ads and/or gift certificates).
4. Obtain race day on-track insurance. OHHA will send information to you about the race day insurance. There will be a form to fill out and send back to OHHA.
5. Contact local media outlets. Take them out for lunch or invite them to the track to jog a horse pre-fair. Connect with them before you need them!
6. Set your ad schedule with newspapers, radio, TV, etc.
7. Make sure your fair's sound contract is in place for the harness races.
8. Check out the race office, judge's stand, mutual windows (if applicable) and photo finish area to make sure nothing needs to be fixed or replaced (light bulbs, windows, clear debris); ensure phones are in working order.

The Month of your Fair

1. Install pylons, set out quarter poles (eighth poles optional)
2. Remove weeds, grass, etc. from the winner's circle. Is new/updated signage needed? Where will the race trophies be set out? Will there be a golf cart available to transport horsemen to the winner's circle? Will there be winner's circle attendants?
3. Update and display track record signage.
4. Water and work the track on a consistent basis to ensure there is enough material and to work out any problem areas.
5. Do a final cleaning of speed office, judges' stand, photo finish booth, etc.
6. Have an electrician check and repair track lights (if applicable).
7. Is there a specific entrance that horsemen should use to enter fairgrounds? Will there be a designated parking area for trucks and trailers and racing officials? If so, mark them clearly.
8. Wash and check the condition of saddle pads and head numbers.
9. Determine who will be manning the draw gates during the races.