



## A Message from the Executive Director

### 2025 Live Race Season Concerns with Live Horse Racing and Pari-Mutuel Wagering Activities

*May 23, 2025*

I'm writing to address some concerns raised regarding recent decisions and directives from our office, particularly concerning live horse racing and pari-mutuel wagering activities.

The Wyoming Gaming Commission is dedicated to protecting the wagering public and ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of all participants in lawful gaming and pari-mutuel activities within Wyoming. To this end, the Commission and its staff work diligently to maintain the highest standards and integrity in the state's horse racing industry. I want to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of our regulatory framework and the reasons behind it.

First, I want to clarify our office's and the Board of Stewards' position on "Official Works" from other jurisdictions. During the 2024 race season, we identified several instances suggesting the falsification of official works. In several cases, it appeared that horses were meeting the works requirement simply through a phone call requesting entry into the database. We also found that these animals were not properly identified or timed by licensed or trained clockers. These works were then published in programs, influencing wagering decisions by the public. As our office could not verify the accuracy of this information or confirm that the animals had actually worked, we determined these practices constituted fraud in Wyoming. Out of an abundance of caution, the Board of Stewards issued an order stating that works from these jurisdictions would not be recognized in Wyoming during the 2024 race meet.

Prior to the 2025 race season, our office and the Board of Stewards decided to continue this policy due to a lack of changes in the practices of these jurisdictions.

A notice explaining this decision was sent out. We subsequently received numerous calls, during which we learned that these practices had been standard operating procedure for years. Following several days of collaboration with stakeholders from Wyoming and surrounding states, we collectively developed a process to help horsemen in neighboring states meet Wyoming's work requirements while ensuring the accuracy of data for the wagering public at Wyoming tracks.

As a result, the Board of Stewards began accepting works from these jurisdictions again. This began on March 19th, 2025, through May 15th, 2025. On May 15th, 2025, the Board of Stewards determined that the problematic "works" practices were continuing, and we were again unable to verify the accuracy of the information being entered into the database. An investigation into this, proved these allegations to be true. This in turn caused the Board of Stewards to again stop accepting these works.

Unfortunately, because these practices and incidents occur outside our jurisdiction, this is the only way we can uphold our mission to protect the wagering public and ensure the integrity of our racing programs. The proper jurisdictions have been made aware of our findings. The Wyoming Gaming Commission will continue working with surrounding states and stakeholders to develop standard operating procedures that are acceptable to all parties involved in the future.

The second point I want to address is the inaccurate claim that our office has prevented or sent notices to other states or venues outside Wyoming to stop them from running races. In 2024, the Wyoming Gaming Commission enacted rules to combat unsanctioned or otherwise illegal live flat track racing events.

Wyoming Gaming Commission Pari-Mutuel Rules Chapter 2 Section 2 (b) states:

*No licensed person shall participate in any unsanctioned or otherwise illegal live flat track racing events.*

Participation in these events may result in fines, suspensions, or revocations of a Wyoming license.

At no point has this office sent any notice to another state or venue instructing them on what races they can or cannot run, particularly regarding unsanctioned or match races. We have focused on ensuring that participants in Wyoming racing are aware of and understand our rules. The decision of whether or not to participate in such events rests with each individual.

These unsanctioned events present significant dangers to both horses and humans. The welfare of horses, the risk of disease transmission, and the lack of regulation and safety measures are some of the key reasons for the Commission's stance. Furthermore, it's crucial to recognize that these events threaten the viability of sanctioned and regulated horse racing nationwide.

The Wyoming Gaming Commission does not have the authority to regulate activities in other states, nor do we wish to, however the Commission will always take the necessary steps to ensure integrity and fulfill our mission within the State of Wyoming.

Respectfully,  
Nicholas Larramendy, Executive Director

**Message from the Executive Director**