

THOROUGHBRED SAFETY COALITION

Helping Out Amid the Coronavirus Outbreak

How we're supporting the backstretch community, healthcare providers, and families in need

We recognize that in this extraordinary time, we all—the members of the Thoroughbred Safety Coalition and the broader racing community—have a responsibility to support those in need, including the backstretch community, health professionals, and people affected by COVID-19 throughout the U.S.

Under enhanced safety protocols, horsemen, track employees, grooms, farriers and veterinarians have continued their important work to maintain the health of the thousands of horses who live at our tracks and require exercise and constant care regardless of the status of live racing. Supporting these vital programs is more essential than ever in the face of the ongoing public health crisis, and our tracks are committed to working with their respective chaplaincies and other organizations to help our colleagues.

Here below is a short summary of our members' initiatives:

Breeders' Cup

Breeders' Cup is supporting backstretch communities and other industry stakeholders affected by the COVID-19 pandemic through an initial donation of \$25,000 to the Race Track Chaplaincy of America (RTCA), which will be allocated to various local backstretch communities to help those most in need.

- Breeders' Cup also donated 4,500 gloves, 2,000 hair covers, 1,200 Tyvek suits, 500 masks, and 500 shoe covers to the State of Kentucky for medical professionals to treat COVID-19 patients.
- The organization has committed to continue finding opportunities to support the racing industry, along with all the frontline heroes treating patients and helping stop the spread of the coronavirus.

Churchill Downs

Churchill Downs tracks are supporting horsemen, the backstretch community and the healthcare professionals on the frontlines of the fight against COVID-19.

- Churchill Downs hosted an at-home Kentucky Derby party on Saturday 5/2 to raise an estimated \$2 million for COVID-19 emergency relief efforts. Churchill Downs' first ever virtual horse race — [The Kentucky Derby: Triple Crown Showdown](#) — featured the 13 past Triple Crown winners and used data algorithms to determine the probability of

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their potential finishing positions. Secretariat, the 1973 Triple Crown winner who was favored to win at 7-2 odds, emerged victorious, followed by Citation (1948) and Seattle Slew (1977). Fans were able to choose their favorite horse to win the virtual race and join Churchill Downs in making a charitable donation to COVID-19 emergency relief efforts. Churchill Downs pledged to match up to \$1 million in donations, with funds to be directed to the Team Kentucky Fund and Direct Relief. A small percentage is also earmarked for the R.E.I.N. Fund (Relief for Equine Industry Needs), a program managed by Churchill Downs Foundation designed to benefit workers of the backside whose livelihood has been impacted by COVID-19 and also to help ensure essential care for horses throughout the pandemic. The fundraising portal remains open at KentuckyDerby.com.

- Additionally, Churchill Downs Chef David Danielson and his team have partnered with The LEE Initiative in Louisville to serve the community in this difficult time of need. Together, they have been producing an extraordinary amount of meals to those who need them most. Every day, the team that's cooking in the kitchens at the track is producing 300-400 meals for The Restaurant Workers Relief Program. Their efforts have recently expanded to provide meals for frontline healthcare workers, doctors, nurses, EMTs, police officers, truck drivers and food bank employees.
- At Fair Grounds in New Orleans and Turfway Park in Florence, KY, horsemen are able to shelter in place without threat of eviction and have continued to train under enhanced safety measures.
- Churchill Downs is also activating its online platforms for emergency relief efforts on the [Churchill Downs Foundation](https://ChurchillDownsFoundation.com) website and TwinSpires.com.
- The internal Helping Others Receive Support in Emergencies (HORSE) program, a nonprofit charitable organization established to provide emergency financial assistance to employees and business units, has been reinvigorated in response to the pandemic.
- Churchill Downs is also supporting the Quarantine Barn Food Bank in partnership with the [Kentucky Race Track Chaplaincy](https://KentuckyRaceTrackChaplaincy.com) and [Backside Learning Center](https://BacksideLearningCenter.com) by establishing a drop off location at the Stable Gate for non-perishable items that will be given to backside families who live in Louisville while one family member travels to other racetracks to provide additional care for horses.
- Churchill Downs is also continuing to provide health, dental, vision and life insurance benefits to all furloughed employees.

Del Mar Thoroughbred Club

While its backstretch is currently empty as its next meet isn't until July, Del Mar has continued to support the local community.

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- On April 3, the Del Mar Fairgrounds and the San Diego Food Bank set up a large-scale emergency “drive-thru” food distribution for low-income families and those affected by COVID-19 disruptions.
- The “touchless” distribution provided food supplies to more than 1,000 vehicles, including canned protein, canned vegetables, canned fruits, wholegrain food items, shelf-stable foods, nonperishable foods, and fresh product. Each package totaled an estimated 25 pounds per family or vehicle.

Keeneland

Among other initiatives, Keeneland teamed with several Central Kentucky community organizations to create [Nourish Lexington](#), an initiative to utilize hospitality workers who are recently unemployed due to COVID-19 closings as well as other community food assets to provide prepared meals to those in need of immediate access to food.

- Under Nourish Lexington, food-service workers are paid \$60 to prepare and deliver meals in four-hour shifts. The meals go to those in need, including seniors in affordable-housing apartment complexes, along with children and their families through family-resource coordinators.
- Keeneland Hospitality continues to prepare thousands of meals in support of Nourish. Many of these meals feed Fayette County Public School children.
- Keeneland also donated 1,500 pounds of food to Nourish Lexington, 4,000 pairs of rubber gloves and will contribute 100% of proceeds from online sales from The Keeneland Shop and Keeneland Mercantile throughout the month of April.
- The Keeneland Chaplaincy program teamed with the Track Kitchen to prepare more than 200 complimentary Easter meals for the men and women who work on the backside. Keeneland Chaplain Dean Carpenter and his staff are meanwhile providing ongoing support to horsemen and stable employees.
- Additionally, Keeneland’s Building and Hospitality teams donated 14,000 pairs of rubber gloves to the Kentucky Governor’s office, for distribution based on need as determined by the governor’s staff.

New York Racing Association (NYRA)

Given its proximity to the COVID-19 outbreak in New York City, NYRA has worked in close coordination with New York State officials, including Governor Andrew Cuomo, to help those in need, in addition to supporting its backstretch community by promoting and participating in the fundraising efforts of its partner organizations.

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- NYRA has canceled the remainder of Aqueduct Racetrack's winter and spring meets so the property can serve as a temporary hospital site to serve the borough of Queens with a 1,000-plus patient overflow facility.
- The Belmont Child Care Association (BCCA) operates a childcare and early-childhood education facility, called the Anna House, that was forced to close on March 17. NYRA has supported [BCCA's efforts to collect donations](#) of diapers, wipes, diaper cream, powdered milk, formula, art supplies, and creative activities for the children of backstretch workers.
- NYRA is [promoting](#) The New York Race Chaplaincy of America-hosted [online fundraiser](#) to restock its food pantry, which provides food to the backstretch workers and families it supports.
- The Backstretch Employee Service Team (BEST) of New York provides backstretch workers with free healthcare, life insurance, counseling, food, and clothing – through funding from NYRA and the New York Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association (NYTHA). NYRA is [supporting](#) BEST's current effort to [raise money](#) for negative pressure rooms at their Belmont and Saratoga clinics to treat COVID-19 patients, in addition to expanding staff and clinic hours.

The Stronach Group

The Stronach Group is donating the proceeds from a weekend of spectator-free racing at Santa Anita Park (before its government-mandated closure) to initiatives that support the racing community, as well as broader efforts to help those in need due to COVID-19 disruptions.

- Santa Anita is supporting the [California Thoroughbred Horsemen Foundation](#) (CTHF), which provides health and dental care to the backstretch community while promoting overall wellness through exercise, nutrition, and recreation initiatives. Through a combination of [tweets](#), campaign-style emails and [website features](#), Santa Anita is driving donations to CTHF and its Noble Threewitt Health Center at the track.
- In Maryland, where live racing is closed indefinitely, Pimlico Race Course is serving as a COVID-19 testing site.
- Gulfstream Park has made several donations to [His Place Ministries](#) Chaplain Tom Lapointe, who runs the local racetrack chaplaincy supporting the needs of the backstretch community.