

Willow 300 Sled Dog Race Rules

1. Entry Requirements

- a) The entry for the W300 will open October 1 of each year. Entry forms will be posted on the W300 website. Entries may be mailed in or submitted via the on-line application process.
- b) Completed entry forms and receipt of \$530.00 (which includes the \$30.00 nonrefundable Willow 300 Sled Dog Race Association membership fee) will be required before the application will be considered complete.
- c) Mushers may be required to fill out various forms, including entry forms, vet check forms, handler contact information forms, or other information required by the W300.
- d) All mushers entering the W300 race must be a W300 member and must be in good standing with the race.
- e) The W300 reserves the right to reject any entries.
- f) Musher fully understands and agrees to comply with each and every rule as stated herein upon signing up for the W300.
- g) The musher must be 18 years of age or older on the start day of the W300.
- h) If using the W300 as a qualifier for the Iditarod and/or Yukon Quest, it is the responsibility of the musher to present the Race Marshal with the necessary paperwork. The W300 is not responsible for providing qualifier application forms for these races.
- i) The race is limited to the first 40 eligible teams to sign up. Entries are determined on a first come first serve basis. Mail-in entries postmarked on same day will be opened in random order.
- j) Entry fees must be either by check, money order, cashier's check or credit card, (Master Card, Visa, Discover, American Express). No cash will be accepted.
- k) Entry fee checks are to be made out and mailed to:
Willow 300 Sled Dog Race Association
PO Box 138
Willow, Alaska 99688

2. Substitution

- a) If the musher is unable to participate in the W300 there will be no refund of entry fees. However, a musher may find their own replacement to run the W300 pending approval by the Race Director. Please notify the Race Director of such changes at least two weeks prior to the race start. Any changes made after that time may not be accepted.
- b) If any changes to musher are made, the musher taking over the vacant position will be required to fill out all required forms and pay the W300 Association membership fee of \$30.00 before the application will be accepted.

3. Cancellation

- a) Refunds of entry fees will take place only if the W300 is cancelled.
- b) If the race is postponed the W300 will not reimburse any entry fees.
- c) If the race is cancelled, the W300 will reimburse the musher a minimum of \$450.00. The W300 Association reserves the right to withhold a maximum of \$50.00 of the initial entry fee. This cost is to cover some of the trail development and grooming costs incurred prior to the race. The W300 will do its utmost to avoid this small holding.
- d) If a cancellation does occur, a clean and transparent accounting of all cost of the trail development will be provided to each musher upon request.

4. Musher Meeting

- a) All mushers must attend and sign in for the mandatory musher meeting on Wednesday prior to the race.
- b) Meeting location and time will be announced at least 3 days prior to the start of race.
- c) Failure to attend without prior approval will result in automatic withdrawal from the race.
- d) Unexcused tardiness by a musher will result in a \$50 penalty.
- e) Mushers will participate in a random drawing to determine starting order, and will be issued the corresponding bib/number at this meeting.

5. Vet Checks

- a) All dogs competing in the race must receive a veterinarian exam no more than 10 days prior to the start of the W300.
- b) W300 will provide vet checks on the Wednesday prior to the race start. Time and location will be announced at least 3 days in advance.
- c) A maximum of 18 dogs will be examined per musher.
- d) All dogs entered in the race must have current rabies and at least distemper/adenovirus/hepatitis/parvovirus/parainfluenza (5-way) vaccinations.
- e) Proof of rabies vaccination must come from a certified veterinarian or lay vaccinator. Proof of 5-way vaccination (at least) may be in the form of records which indicate type of vaccine, proof of purchase (receipt), and date of vaccination. Proof of vaccination must be provided to W300 Veterinarians during vet checks or, with prior approval by the Race Marshall, no later than the musher meeting.
- f) If dogs have had a previous vet check within the 10 days prior to the start of the W300 the musher may submit records of the vet check and proof of vaccinations (as described in (d) above) to W300 Veterinarians during vet checks or, with prior approval by the Race Marshall, no later than the musher meeting.

6. Start and Finish

- a) The official starting date for the W300 will be the last Thursday of January.
- b) Start time will be 10:00 a.m. at Willow Lake in Willow, Alaska.
- c) The W300 race will conclude at Sheep Creek Lodge in Willow Alaska.
- d) Start/finishing dates, times, and locations are subject to change depending on weather, trail conditions, and other considerations.
- e) Teams will leave the start in intervals of two minutes, in order of bib number. Time differential will be adjusted at the first checkpoint.
- f) Any musher who misses their starting time will depart two minutes after the last musher. Their time differential will be calculated based upon their scheduled start time.

7. Awards and Awards ceremony

- a) An awards ceremony will be held starting 6:00 p.m. on the Sunday following the race start. Dinner will be provided.
- b) Mushers will be provided with one entry ticket to the awards ceremony. Others who wish to attend and share in the meal may purchase an entry ticket at the door. Location and cost will be announced at the musher meeting.
- c) The W300 will provide a cash award and trophy for 1st through 3rd place finishers (at least). Purse amounts will not be announced prior to the awards ceremony.
- d) The W300 may select mushers in good standing to receive any of the follow awards:
 1. Vet's choice – for exemplary care of a dog team, as voted on by W300 Veterinarians. Will be awarded only to mushers who complete all their own dog care without assistance from handlers.
 2. Sportsmanship – for outstanding attitude, assistance, or fair play demonstrated during the race, as voted on by fellow racers during the awards ceremony.
 3. Rookie of the year – for the fastest finishing rookie competing in the W300 for the first time. Will be awarded only to rookies who complete all their own dog care without assistance from handlers.
 4. Red lantern – for the last musher to finish the W300.

8. Dog Maximum and Minimums

- a) Each musher must start the race with no less than 8 dogs and no more than 16 dogs in harness.
- b) Each musher must finish the race with no fewer than 5 dogs in harness at the finish line.
- c) No dogs may be replaced or added after crossing the starting line.

9. Race Route and Trail

- a) The course covers approximately 300 miles in and around Willow and up to Trapper Creek area.
- b) The trail will be broken and marked prior to the race. However, there will be no guarantee of broken trails during the race.
- c) GPS coordinates will not be provided.
- d) Official checkpoints are: Susitna Landing, Trapper Creek, Forks Roadhouse, and Sheep Creek Lodge. Checkpoints are subject to change depending on conditions and availability.
- e) Trail route and mileage are subject to change depending on conditions. The approximate course is:
 1. Leave Willow Lake and travel approximately 70 miles to Susitna Landing
 2. Leave Susitna Landing and travel approximately 50 miles to Sheep Creek Lodge
 3. Leave Sheep Creek Lodge and travel approximately 70 miles to Forks Road House
 4. Leave Forks Road House and travel to approximately 60 miles to Trapper Creek Three Bears.
 5. Leave Trapper Creek and travel approximately 70 miles back to Sheep Creek Lodge to the finish line.
- f) Mushers must follow the trail as marked. Leaving the marked trail for any competitive advantage will result in immediate disqualification.

10. Drop Bags and Supplies

- a) W300 will provide one bale of straw per dog team at each checkpoint.
- b) W300 does not provide any fuel/Heet for any of the checkpoints. Mushers must supply their own fuel to each checkpoint.
- c) W300 will not deliver any drop bags to any roadside checkpoint. Handlers are responsible for ensuring all necessary supplies are delivered to roadside checkpoints.
- d) W300 will deliver drop bags to the Forks Roadhouse checkpoint. Drop bags for this checkpoint must comply with the following requirements:
 1. Drop bags for Forks Roadhouse checkpoint must be delivered to the race start location no later than 1 hour prior to the race start. Any drop bag delivered after this time will not be guaranteed delivery to Fork Roadhouse checkpoint.
 2. All supplies must be contained in a gunny type bag that is securely closed.
 3. Fuel must be sent in a bag separate from all other supplies and clearly labeled as fuel.

4. A maximum of two full -size drop bags, plus a small bag for fuel may be sent for each team.
5. Bags weighing over 40 pounds will not be accepted or delivered.
6. All bags must be clearly marked with the following information:
 - Musher's last name
 - W300
 - "Forks Roadhouse"
 - Number of bags (1 of 2, 2 of 2, etc.).
 - "Heet" or "Fuel" for bags containing fuel (and only fuel).

11. Return Bags

- a) W300 will not be responsible for returning a musher's dropped gear or other equipment from any roadside checkpoint.
- b) W300 will take dropped gear/bags from Forks Roadhouse Checkpoint back to a location in Willow within 7 days of the completion of the race and will hold those bags for up to 7 additional days. Any drop bags/gear left after this time will be disposed of.

12. Mandatory Layovers

- a) A minimum of 18 hours total layover must be taken at the official checkpoints.
- b) Layover time (other than any start differential) must be taken in 30-minute increments. Time will be rounded down to the nearest half hour (e.g. a layover time of 3 hours and 28 minutes will be counted as three hours only.)
- c) It is the responsibility of the musher and/or their handlers to keep track of their layover time and ensure all time is completed
- d) Any layover time that is not completed prior to the finish of the race will be doubled and added to the finishing time.

13. Checkpoints

- a) Mushers must personally sign in and out of each checkpoint.
- b) Bib number must be clearly visible upon entering each checkpoint.
- c) All mushers have the option to rest in a vehicle at roadside checkpoints. Mushers are not required to do so but do have that option. Checkpoints may or may not have indoor space available for mushers.

14. Parking at Susitna Landing

The Susitna Landing checkpoint will only allow one parking space per team. A parking pass for this vehicle will be provided at the musher meeting. All other vehicles may need to pay for parking at this checkpoint.

15. Handler Requirements and Outside Assistance

- a) All handlers must be identified on a contact form submitted to the W300.
- b) All mushers are required to have a handler at each roadside checkpoint, and Parks Highway road crossings. Failure to comply will result in \$100.00 penalty for each location.
- c) Handlers for all mushers are required to receive and care for returned dogs.
- d) Handlers for all mushers are required to clean up all litter, including straw, dog waste, booties and garbage within 30 minutes of musher leaving checkpoint. Handlers should be prepared to bring their own cleaning supplies, i.e. rake, shovel, trash bags, etc. W300 does not supply these items. A \$100 penalty will be given for any litter, cleaning supplies, full trash bags, etc. left at any checkpoint.
- e) Handlers for all mushers may assist with the following tasks at checkpoints:
 1. Delivering drop bags to all roadside checkpoints;
 2. Assisting team to safely park and leave a checkpoint;
 3. Bringing drop bags, straw, and water to the team's parked location at a checkpoint; and
 4. Watching over a team while the musher leaves the dog lot area in a checkpoint for sleep, food, etc., and intervening with/handling dogs as necessary to keep dogs safe.
- f) Qualifying Mushers:

Mushers who intend to use the race to qualify for Iditarod or Yukon Quest may not have outside help/assistance during the race with the exception of those tasks listed above.
- g) Non-Qualifying Mushers:
 1. Unlike any other area races, W300 will allow outside help for mushers that are not using this race to qualify for the Iditarod or the Yukon Quest.
 2. Handlers for non-qualifying mushers have the option to assist with the following additional tasks within a checkpoint: booting/unbooting dogs, dog massage or other care, preparing meals for dogs, feeding dogs, spreading straw for dogs, gear repair, etc.
 3. If a non-qualifying musher uses handlers for any assistance with dog care beyond that listed in 6e, that musher will not qualify to receive the Vet's Choice Award or Rookie of the Year Award.

16. Passing

- a) When a musher and team are within 50 ft of another team, the team behind will have the right-of-way upon request. This rule does not apply within a mile of the finish line, which is no man's land.
- b) The passing musher should request trail at a place that is safe and practical for passing.
- c) The musher ahead must stop their team and hold them to the best of their ability for a maximum of 1 minute or until the other team has passed.
- d) The passed team must remain behind for at least 2 minutes.
- e) Ski poles are not allowed to be used when passing another team.

17. Sled

- a) The sled must be capable of hauling any injured or fatigued dogs under cover, as well as all mandatory equipment and food.
- b) Only one sled may be used by a musher during the race. If a sled is damaged beyond repair it may be replaced only if approval is given by the Race Judge and/or Race Marshall.
- c) Mushers can use one trailer attached to the sled.
- d) Dogs must be hauled in a secure, protected, and humane manner.
- e) Mushers may not carry dogs for another team under any circumstance unless it is medically necessary.

18. Mandatory Gear

- a) The following items must be carried with mushers at all times during the race:
 - 1. Cold weather sleeping bag rated to at least -30 F°.
 - 2. Hand ax with the overall length of at least 22 inches.
 - 3. One pair of functional snowshoes with bindings. Each snowshoe must have a minimum of 250 square inches in size.
 - 4. Cooker capable of boiling at least 3 gallons of water at one time.
 - 5. An adequate amount of fuel to boil 3 gallons of water.
 - 6. Adequate emergency dog food.
 - 7. Two sets of dog booties for each dog in the sled or in use.
 - 8. An insulated, non-chafing dog coat for each dog.
 - 9. Bib/number provided by W300.
- b) Mandatory gear will be checked at the start and finish of the race, as well as at any checkpoint along the trail, as determined by a Race Judge and/or the Race Marshal.

19. Dog Care and Humane Treatment

- a) Dogs must be maintained in good condition.
- b) All water and food must be ingested voluntarily.
- c) All dogs entered into the W300 are under the jurisdiction of W300 Veterinarians, Race Marshall, and Race Judges from the time that they enter the staging area before the race, until the completion of the race. Veterinarians shall have the authority to determine whether any dog requires veterinary care or should be withdrawn from the race.
- d) All dogs are subject at any time to an examination by W300 Veterinarians, Race Judges, or Race Marshal from the time that they enter the staging area before the race, until the completion of the race.
- e) There will be no cruel or inhumane treatment of dogs. Cruel or inhumane treatment involves any action or inaction, which causes preventable pain or suffering to a dog. Such treatment of any dog will be cause for immediate disqualification from the W300.
- f) Whips and other violent tactics are not permitted. Any and all such actions will be reported to all major race organizations.
- g) No drugs that may suppress the signs of illness and/or injury or cause a dog to perform beyond its natural ability will be tolerated during the W300. The W300 will follow the Iditarod's list of prohibited drugs.
- h) If any dog is in critical condition or a life-threatening condition, the musher may be issued a penalty, up to and including disqualification from the current race, forfeiture of any earnings, and permanent ban from W300, based on criteria as outlined under Rule 21.
- i) If a returned dog requires outside veterinary care upon being withdrawn from the race, the musher is required to provide the Race Marshal information on the condition of the dog until it is released from veterinary care. Decisions about adequate dog care and eligibility for future races may be based on these outcomes.
- j) Dogs demonstrating aggressive behavior and deemed by the Race Marshal to be a risk to other people or dogs will be withdrawn from the race.

20. Returned Dogs

- a) Dogs may be dropped from the team and returned to handlers at any of the checkpoints. All returned dogs must be examined and released by a W300 Veterinarian before leaving the checkpoint with the handler.
- b) A fee of \$50.00 per returned dog will be charged if W300 transports the dog, except for Forks Roadhouse.
- c) Returned dogs from Forks Roadhouse will be transported by W300 to the Kroto Creek parking area at no charge. However, it is the responsibility for the musher's handler to pick up the returned dog at Kroto Creek within an hour of being contacted.

- d) If the W300 transports a returned dog back from Kroto Creek parking area to any roadside checkpoint or other location, a fee of \$15.00 per dog will be charged to the musher.

21. Expired Dogs

- a) The death of any dog during or as a result of competing in the W300 may result in the disqualification of the driver and/or prohibit them from entering future races with the W300.
- b) Any dog that expires during the race must be loaded, fully covered in the sled, taken to the next checkpoint, and submitted to the Race Judge, Race Marshal, or a W300 Veterinarian immediately.
- c) All dog deaths will be treated as a priority with every effort being made to determine the cause of death in a thorough and reliable manner.
- d) In case of a dog death, the expired dog will become property of W300 for the purpose of performing a necropsy. A necropsy will be performed on all expired dogs.
- e) Situations which result in a dog death which will result in disqualification from the current race, forfeiture of any earnings, and disqualification from participating in future W300 races include;
 - 1. Signs of neglect or cruel, inhumane, or abusive treatment.
 - 2. If the musher has been advised by a W300 Veterinarian, Race Marshall, and/or Race Judge to drop the dog at a previous checkpoint, but opted not to do so (unless the cause of death is clearly unrelated to this recommendation).
- f) Causes of dog deaths which will result in disqualification from the current race and forfeiture of any earnings are:
 - 1. Heat stress/ hyperthermia.
 - 2. Hypothermia.
 - 3. Other causes of death determined to be avoidable given reasonable care.
- g) The musher will not be penalized and may continue if:
 - 1. Cause of death cannot be determined.
 - 2. Cause of death is due to circumstance, nature of the trail, or forces beyond the control of the musher. This recognizes the inherent risk of wilderness travel in the state of Alaska.
 - 3. Cause of death is from an unpreventable or previously undiagnosed medical condition, as shown in the necropsy report.

22. Sportsmanship

- a) All mushers and their handlers must use civil conduct and demonstrate sportsmanship-like behavior during all parts of the W300 race and associated events such as vet checks, musher meeting, and banquet.
- b) Any conduct that is inappropriate toward the Race Marshal, Race Judge, volunteers, sponsors, competitors, trail committee, or spectators will result in a penalty or disqualification from the race and the musher will no longer be in good standing with the W300.

23. Withdrawal of Teams

- a) The Race Judge and/or Race Marshal have the authority to withdraw a team that is out of competition or is not making a valid effort to compete. This decision is at the discretion of the Race Judge and/or Race Marshal, taking into consideration all available information regarding the team's performance and position.
- b) A musher whose conduct constitutes an unreasonable risk of harm to themselves, dogs, or other persons may also be withdrawn.

24. Use of Drugs and Alcohol

Mushers and handlers must not be under the influence or consume any alcohol or prohibited drugs of any kind during all parts of the W300 race and associated events such as vet checks or musher meeting (excluding awards ceremony). Such violations will result in immediate disqualification.

25. Communication Devices

A musher may carry and use any two-way communication device including but not limited to a cell phone, satellite phone, or GPS.

26. Killing of Game Animals

- a) Moose are often present on W300 trails and can be aggressive. Mushers should be prepared to defend their team in case of attack.
- b) In the event that an edible big game animal, i.e., moose, is killed in defense of life or property, the musher must gut the animal and report the incident to a race official at the next checkpoint.
- c) Following teams must help gut the animal when possible.
- d) No teams may pass until the animal has been gutted and the musher killing the animal has proceeded.
- e) Any other animal killed in defense of life or property must be reported to a race official but need not be gutted.

27. Litter

- a) No litter of any kind may be left on the trail, in camps, or in checkpoints.
- b) On the trail, litter includes booties, excessive left-over dog food, and trash.
- c) At checkpoints, litter includes booties, excessive left-over dog food, and trash, as well as straw, dog waste, and full garbage bags.

28. Violations and Penalties

- a) The Race Judge and/or Race Marshal have authority to determine if W300 rules have been violated and to determine appropriate penalties.
- b) Whenever possible, decisions will be made in conference with other available Race Judges and/or Race Marshal.
- c) The Race Marshal will not have the authority to override a decision agreed upon by the majority of Race Judges.
- d) One or more penalties may be issued to mushers for violations of W300 rules. The scale of penalties involved with rule breaking are as follows:
 - 1. Time delay. A time penalty may be imposed if the Race Judge and/or Race Marshal determine that a rule infraction occurred and a competitive advantage was gained.
 - 2. Monetary penalty. Monetary penalties may be deducted from any prize money. A musher with unpaid fines may not enter future races until the fine is paid.
 - 3. Disqualification from current race.
 - 4. Disqualification from participating in future W300 races. If this penalty is issued, the W300 will notify Iditarod, Yukon Quest, and their qualifying races.
- e) Mushers will be informed of any penalties that have been issued as soon as possible after the decision is finalized.
- f) The W300 will make a public announcement regarding all penalties that are assessed.

29. Protest

- a) A musher or handler may protest an action of a competitor or their handlers that they feel is contrary to the intent of these rules.
- b) Any infraction must be presented to the Race Marshall and/or Race Judge as soon as possible, and in no case more than twenty-four (24) hours after a musher finishes the race.
- c) The protest must explain the circumstances and why the musher believes a violation occurred.

30. Appeal of Decision:

- a) Mushers may appeal decisions made by the Race Marshall and/or Race Judge.
- b) Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Race Director, explaining the circumstances and why the musher does not believe the decision was warranted.
- c) Appeals must be received by the Race Director no later than 5 business days after the end of the race.
- d) The Race Marshall Director will review the grievance and provide a response no later than 5 days after receiving the claim.
- e) Review by the Race Director is the exclusive, final, and binding remedy for any dispute.