



Willow Dog Musher's Association



# WILLOW 300 SLED DOG RACE

## 2021 Official Race Rules

Official Race Rules for the 2021 Willow 300 (W300) Sled Dog Race  
As adopted by the Willow Dog Musher's Association on August 26, 2020.

As amended by the Willow Dog Musher's Association on January 16, 2021.

As amended by Dee Dee Jonrowe, 2021 W300 Race Marshal, January 19, 2021

### WILLOW 300 RULES OF COMPETITION

NOTICE: ALL VET CHECKS, MUSHERS MEETING, VOLUNTEER MEETING, AND REQUIRED PAPERWORK TO BE COMPLETED AT THE WILLOW COMMUNITY CENTER SHEEP CREEK LODGE (location may change depending upon the status of construction at the Willow Community Center) STARTING FROM 10 AM 9AM THROUGH 3 PM 6PM ON WEDNESDAY, February 3, 2021. PLEASE CHECK FACEBOOK, TWITTER OR THE WDMA WEBSITE FOR ANY POSSIBLE CHANGES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.

#### RULE 1: W300 START AND FINISH

The official starting date for the 2021 race will be Thursday, February 4, 2021 with a 11:00 AM 10:00AM start. ~~The W300 will begin as a mass start on Willow Lake, Willow, Alaska.~~ ~~The W300 will begin at Deshka Landing for 2021 and will not be a mass start.~~ Every effort will be made to have a mass start but the mass start is contingent on ice conditions of Willow Lake. If Since a mass start is not possible, teams will leave in two minute intervals. There will be assigned parking for mushers at Deshka Landing. Upon entry, place your parking pass (truck number) on your dashboard. A map will be provided to assist with parking spot location. No water will be available at the Deshka Landing start. Mushers must pack their own water. If Since a non-mass start is required, the order of the start shall be in the order in which entries were received by Willow Dog Musher's Association. In the event more than one entry is received in one day, those entries that were hand delivered to a WDMA Board Member will be listed first, followed by mail entries. When more than one entry arrives by mail, the date of the postmark will determine their order. If entries are postmarked the



same day, the order will be determined randomly. Any changes to this rule may be made by the W300 Race Marshal with approval from the W300 Race Committee.



The 2021 W300 will conclude at Sheep Creek Lodge, Willow, Alaska.

Mushers must start the race with no fewer than 8 dogs and no more than 14 and must finish the race with no less than 5 dogs in harness, No dogs will be added or replaced after the start of the race. Dog drivers and handlers must not be under the influence of drugs and alcohol and will follow Iditarod's standards regarding such rule.

## **RULE 2: ENTRY FEE & PURSE**

2021 W300 entry opens October 1, 2020. Receipt of the \$525.00 (which includes the non refundable required Willow Dog Musher's Association Membership), completed application form and completed Willow Dog Musher's Association Membership Application will constitute the driver's intent to enter the race, and further acknowledges that the driver understands and agrees to comply with each and every rule as stated. W300 and WDMA reserve the right to reject any entries. Entries are determined on a first come first serve basis. Entries postmarked on the same day will be opened in random order. **Any conflicts in the determination of possible available race slots may be determined by an impartial blind lottery for those specific slots.**

**Entry fees MUST BE CHECK, MONEY ORDER, CASHIER'S CHECK or SQUARE PAYMENT only. NO CASH will be accepted.**

**Entry Fees should be made payable to: WDMA**  
(Please put W300 on the MEMO line)

**Entries must be mailed to:**

Willow Dog Musher's Association/W300  
PO Box 858  
Willow, Alaska 99688

If any musher is unable to fill his/her position in the W300, there will be no refund of entry fees, however **you may find your own replacement to run.** Please notify the W300 Race Committee of such changes as soon as possible. Such changes may be made no later than Monday, February 1, 2021. **The replacement musher MUST COMPLETE and PAY the required WDMA Membership Application and \$25 Fee prior to Vet Checks.**



Refunds of entry fees only will take place if the W300 is cancelled at the discretion of the Race Marshal and Race Committee (see RULE 4).

Refunds will be a minimum of \$475. WDMA and the W300 Race Committee reserve the right to withhold a maximum of \$25 of the initial \$500 entry fee to cover some of the costs of trail development and grooming prior to the race. WDMA and the W300 Race Committee will do our utmost to avoid this small withholding. If a cancellation occurs, a clear and transparent accounting of the cost of the trail development will be provided to each musher explaining how the withholding was utilized.



Purse amounts will be determined and posted by December 1, 2020.

### **RULE 3: MUSER**

All Mushers in the W300 will be WDMA members in good standing. If using the W300 as an Iditarod and/or Yukon Quest Qualifier, all necessary paperwork is the responsibility of the musher in both presenting to and retrieving from the Chief Veterinarian, Race Marshal and/or other race officials. The W300 is not responsible for the musher's application.

A Musher in the W300 must be 18 years of age or older on the start day of the race.

All mushers must attend the mandatory Musher's Meeting on February 3, 2021. **Mandatory sign in for Driver's Meeting is 2:30 PM at Sheep Creek Lodge with Driver's Meeting to follow.** **\*\* There are some additional forms to complete this year so feel free to complete them during your vet checks or download, complete and submit at sign in.** Failure to attend the meeting may result in a monetary and/or time penalty at the discretion of the Race Marshal and Race Committee.

### **RULE 4: RACE ROUTE AND TRAIL**

The W300 is a 300 mile race with a minimum total of 18 hours of layovers taken at official checkpoints. **A minimum 4 hour Mandatory 6-hour layover at Trapper Creek/Vitus Checkpoint Susitna Landing will be Forks Road House included in the 18 hour total. Start differential will be added at the Trapper Creek/Vitus Checkpoint Susitna Landing Checkpoint and will not be included in the 18 hour total required rest. The balance of 14 hours rest time required, may be taken at the remaining race checkpoints as the musher sees fit. If a musher fails to take their time differential, they will be assessed a time penalty to include their differential plus 30 minutes.** No musher may stay any longer than 10 hours at ~~the Forks Road House~~ **any** checkpoint.

The course covers approximately 300 miles in and around the Willow area. Mushers leave **Deshka Landing Willow Lake** with a **70 50** mile run to Susitna Landing. Teams will continue with an approximate 50 mile run to Sheep Creek Lodge. Teams travel north to Trapper Creek Trading Post approximately **70 60** miles then west to Forks Roadhouse, an approximate **40 50** mile run. Teams then continue south, approximately 77 miles, to the finish line at Sheep Creek



Lodge. Mileages are approximate and will be adjusted as trail conditions warrant. The trail will be broken and marked prior to the race, but due to weather conditions there will be no guarantee of a broken trail during the race. Mileages vary from checkpoint to checkpoint. A detailed race map will be available online approximately 3 days prior to the start of the W300 due to any changes in trail reroute. However, trail conditions may delay this. All efforts to post a detailed map as soon as possible will be taken.

**Official Checkpoints are as follows:**

- ~~Willow Lake Start~~ **Deshka Landing**
- Susitna Landing
- Sheep Creek
- Trapper Creek Trading Post (Vitus)
- Forks RoadHouse
- Sheep Creek Lodge-Finish.

**Approximate mileage will be posted after final trails meeting in early January.**

Mushers must follow the described trail as marked. Any leaving of the marked trail for competitive advantage will result in disqualification. Race trail is subject to change due to weather/trail conditions. If there is lack of snow or in the event of questionable trail conditions, the W300 Race Committee and Race Marshal will make a decision to modify the course or cancel, no less than 3 days before the race, except in extreme cases.

#### **RULE 5: OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE**

Unlike other area races, the W300 will allow outside assistance from 2 handlers during the race with 1 dog truck. Each musher, ~~not using the W300 as an Iditarod/Yukon Quest qualifier,~~ is required to have a handler **or handler designee (listed on contact information)** at each road system checkpoint **and the Parks Highway Road Crossing (North of Trapper Creek Checkpoint)** ~~Non-Qualifying Teams~~ Handlers are required to receive and care for **returned** ~~dropped~~ sled dogs and clean up bedding straw and debris to the satisfaction of W300 checkpoint race officials. **All mushers'** handlers will be responsible for the delivery of drop bags to road system checkpoints. **All handlers may deliver drop bags, straw and water to the musher.**

Dogs in harness may not be housed in dog trucks at checkpoints if they are planning to continue the race.

Unused, baled straw may be left at any checkpoint.

Handlers of non-qualifier mushers have the option to assist with dog care, sled repair, etc., **All Handlers** ~~but~~ must clean up all straw, dog waste, booties, and garbage within 30 minutes after a team leaves a checkpoint. Be prepared to bring their own cleaning supplies (rake,



trash bags, shovel, etc.) A 1 hour penalty will be assessed for any littering on the trail or failure to clean at checkpoints. **DO NOT LEAVE ANY MUSHING SUPPLIES OR CLEANING SUPPLIES AT A CHECKPOINT.** Checkpoints will only allow 1 dog truck parking space per team. Handlers must check in with the Race Officials upon their arrival at a checkpoint and check out upon their departure. **Please use the Parking Pass from the start or other provided passes to easily identify team vehicles at checkpoints.**

A Musher may carry and use any two-way communication device(s) including, but not limited to, a cell and/or satellite telephone. The use of a GPS is also permitted.

**IF YOU ARE USING THE W300 AS AN IDITAROD OR YUKON QUEST QUALIFIER, YOU MAY NOT USE HANDLER ASSISTANCE, OTHER THAN THAT SPECIFICALLY OUTLINED IN THESE RULES, AT ANY CHECKPOINT (EXCLUDING THE MASS START and PARKS HIGHWAY ROAD CROSSING).**

~~Mushers using the Willow 300 as a qualifier are expected to clean up their area of everything except for straw. W300 volunteers will take care of straw removal only for those teams using the W300 as a qualifier.~~

#### **RULE 6: CHECKPOINTS**

Mushers must personally sign in and out of each checkpoint. Mushers must have all mandatory gear when signing in to a checkpoint. Bib number will be clearly shown. The Race Marshal, in consultation with other Race Officials, may assess time and/or monetary penalties by the time the musher reaches the next checkpoint. Mandatory gear will be checked at the Start **and Finish** ~~and during the mandatory 6 hour layover~~ for conformity to the minimum standards. Gear may be checked at any other time during the Race at the discretion of the Race Marshal or the Race Judges. Mushers using the W300 as a qualifier for the Iditarod or Yukon Quest will have their mandatory gear checked at each checkpoint.

**Due to Covid 19, and in an attempt to further improve mitigation strategies, all mushers will have access to sleep/rest in their dog trucks (or other designated vehicle) at road system checkpoints. Mushers are not required to do so. However, there may be limited indoor space available at road system checkpoints.**

#### **RULE 7: PASSING**

When one team approaches within 50 feet of another team, the team behind shall have the right of way upon demand except within 1 mile of the finish line (no man's land). **Teams being passed MUST come to a complete stop and allow the passing team by.** The passed team must remain behind at least 5 minutes before demanding the trail. Ski poles **MAY NOT** be used when passing another team.



### RULE 8: SLED

No Sleds may be shipped out to any of the checkpoints prior to the race. Help with sled repairs, that is available to all drivers, may be allowed with prior approval of the Race Marshal and/or Race Judge. On prior approval of the Race Marshal, a destroyed sled may be replaced by a comparable size and weight sled. A penalty may be assessed for such replacement. The W300 will allow the use of 1 trailer in addition to sled if trail conditions allow.



A musher can only carry dogs in front of his/her racing sleds' handlebars. The musher may not allow any of their dogs to be hauled by another team. Dogs must be hauled in a humane fashion and must be covered if conditions require, at the Race Judges/Race Marshal's discretion.

### RULE 9: MANDATORY GEAR

- Cold weather sleeping bag
- Hand ax with overall length of 22 inches
- One pair of snowshoes with bindings, each snowshoe must be at least 250 square inches in size
- 3 gallon capacity cooker and cooking gear
- Adequate food for dogs and musher
- 8 booties for each dog

### RULE 10: DOG CARE AND HUMANE TREATMENT

All dogs entered in the race are under the jurisdiction of the W300, chief veterinarian, and veterinary staff from the time they enter the staging area until after the completion of the race. All dogs are subject at any time to an examination by a race veterinarian prior to, during or immediately after completing the race. Concerns about the conditions of dogs may be brought to the Race Marshall or Race Judges. The Race Marshal and Race Veterinarians may make on the spot non-rule decisions regarding dog health or care.

Dogs may be **returned** ~~dropped~~ at any of the checkpoints. **All returned dogs must be seen by a Race Vet prior to leaving the checkpoint with a handler or handler designee.** A fee of \$15 per **returned** ~~dropped~~ dog will be charged if W300 needs to transport the dog with the exception of dogs **returned** ~~dropped~~ at Forks Roadhouse. **Returned dogs from Forks Roadhouse will be transported by W300 staff to Kroto Creek Parking Area at W300 cost. Handlers will be contacted and dogs must be picked up by handler or handler designee at Kroto Creek Parking area in a timely manner. If W300 staff must transport a dog from any road system checkpoint or Kroto Creek Parking area, the \$15 fee applies. Mushers are required to have a designated individual to accept returned dropped-dogs at the official returned drop-dog retrieval location. (Details to be announced at the Musher's Meeting)**



In the case of a dog's death, the expired dog will become the property of W300 for the purpose of performing a necropsy. If the necropsy shows musher abuse, musher forfeits all earnings and is banned from the W300 permanently.



Mistreatment of dogs will be cause for immediate disqualification from the W300. Whips and other violent tactics are not permitted. Such action will be reported to all major race organizations. The Race Marshal and Race Judges have authority over this matter. No drugs that may suppress the signs of illness/injury or cause a dog to perform beyond its natural ability may be used on a dog competing in the W300. A musher may not inject any substance into his or her dogs. The W 300 will follow the Iditarod's list of prohibited drugs.

The Race Marshal has the authority to withdraw a team that is out of the competition and no longer making a valid effort to compete.

### **RULE 11: EXPIRED DOGS**

The death of any dog may result in the disqualification of the driver, and/or prohibition from entering future races. Any dog that expires during the race must be loaded, fully covered, in the sled and taken to the next checkpoint and submitted to the Race Marshal, a Race Judge, or Race Veterinarian. 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.

Dog Deaths resulting in disqualification are:

- Signs of cruel, inhumane or abusive treatment
- Cause of death is due to heat stress or hypothermia

The musher will not be penalized and may continue if:

- Cause of death cannot be determined
- Cause of death is due to circumstance, nature of trail, or force beyond the control of the musher. This recognizes the inherent risks of wilderness travel in Alaska.
- Cause of death is from an unpreventable or previously undiagnosed medical condition.

A necropsy will be performed on all expired dogs.

### **RULE 12: VET-CHECKS**

A mandatory vet check must be made prior to the race. W300 Vet Checks will be February 3, 2021 from 10 am - 3 pm at Sheep Creek Lodge. 9:30 — 2:30 PM and again from 4-6 PM at the Willow Community Center (an alternate location in Willow may be determined if the Willow Community center is unavailable due to construction). For the purposes of these vet checks, a maximum of 16 dogs will be examined.



If teams have had a vet check from a vet visit within the last 10 days, teams may submit that in place of a race vet check. Documentation can be dropped off during vet checks or submitted prior to vet checks. Paperwork will be reviewed and verified with the teams during vet checks. If any concerns occur, mushers may be asked to have a dog reviewed by a race vet the morning of the race.



If you are unable to attend Vet Check on Wednesday, please contact the Willow 300 Race Committee no less than 48 hours prior to Vet Checks and we will do our best to work with mushers/teams on a case by case basis.

All dogs must have current rabies and parvo vaccinations (5-way minimum). Proof to be presented at the W300 vet checks.

### **RULE 13: SPORTSMANSHIP**

Mushers and their crew must demonstrate sportsmanlike conduct during all parts of the W300. Any conduct that is inappropriate toward the Race Marshal, Judges, Committee, volunteers, sponsors, competitors and spectators is subject to penalty and the musher will no longer be in good standing with W300. Any behavior on the trail that is unsportsmanlike can result in penalty or disqualification from W300 at the discretion of the Race Marshal or Race Judge overseeing the matter.

### **RULE 14: PENALTIES**

The scale of penalties involved with rule breaking in the W300 are as follows:

1. Time delay
2. Monetary penalty
3. Withdrawal
4. Disqualification
5. Future ban from the W300

### **RULE 15: DROP BAGS**

All food drops must be in the gunny type bag and clearly marked with the following:

Mushers Name

W300

Checkpoint Location

Numbered (1 of 2, 2 of 2, etc)

A maximum of 2 40# drop bags per checkpoint will be accepted for the Forks Road House Checkpoint. The W300 does not provide any fuel/HEET. ~~Teams using the Willow 300 as a qualifying race may add one additional small drop bag per checkpoint containing fuel/HEET that will be delivered with your drop bags.~~ ALL mushers may add one additional small drop bag for the Forks Roadhouse checkpoint containing fuel/HEET that will be delivered with your





drop bags. **ALL** Drop bags will need to be delivered to roadside checkpoints by all handlers. Drop off locations and times will be listed on Monday, February 1, 2021.



The W300 will provide 1 bale of straw per team at checkpoints.

While W300 will not be responsible for returning a musher's dropped gear/drop bags from road system checkpoints. W300 may help in transporting (if space is available) any unclaimed drop bags to Sheep Creek Lodge from road system checkpoints to be picked up by the musher after-prior to the awards ceremony. ~~with the exception of~~ Drop bags from Forks Roadhouse and drop bags for mushers using W300 as a qualifier. **will be taken to Sheep Creek Lodge. Any drop bags that are transported to Sheep Creek Lodge must be collected by the start of the Awards Ceremony. W300 will not be responsible for any drop bags at Sheep Creek once awards are handed out. Please make appropriate arrangements.**

#### **RULE 16: AWARDS CEREMONY**

W300 Awards Ceremony will take place at Sheep Creek Lodge on Sunday, February 7, 2021 at 11 AM. Purse monies will be distributed as well as Sportsmanship, Humanitarian and Golden Scoop Awards. **Mushers do not have to be present. Awards may be picked up during the following week in a mutually agreed upon location in the Willow area. A portion of the ceremony will take place outside in and around the deck area.**

- **Please request additional Covid 19 Mitigation Procedures directly from W300 race Director or Committee.**