



2025 Race Rules

*Text in **RED** are rules that have been newly adopted by the K300 Race Committee for the 2025 race.*

The Kuskokwim 300 is a sled dog race for cash prizes from Bethel, Alaska to Aniak, Alaska and back, with stops at designated checkpoints along the trail. The 2025 race begins in Bethel, Alaska at **8:00 PM** on **Friday, January 24, 2025**.

I. Eligibility, Registration and Fees:

- A. Racers must be 18 years of age or older at the time of the race. Racers under the age of 18 may enter the race by receiving special permission from the Race Committee. Letters or personal presentation of each case must be received or heard by the Race Committee prior to December 15, 2024.
- B. Registration for the 2025 K300 will open on Monday, October 7, 2024. Mushers must register by completing the online registration form at www.k300.org and submitting their entry fee.
- C. Mushers who register from October 7 up until December 31, 2024 will pay an entry fee of \$400. Those who register by December 31, attend the pre-race musher meeting and who start the race will receive a full refund of their entry fee.
- D. Any musher who registers on January 1, 2025 or later will pay a non-refundable entry fee of \$800.
- E. Additionally, K300 Race Committee Membership is required to participate in any K300 purse race. Annual membership costs \$100 and must be paid in addition to the K300 entry fee.
- F. The Membership fee covers entry to all K300 Race Committee sponsored events of the 2024-25 season.
- G. The K300 membership fee is non-refundable.
- H. A K300 entry submitted the Monday prior to the race or later will require board approval.
- I. The musher must be designated at the time of entry.
- J. A substitute musher may replace the designated musher any time before the pre-race meeting if they race with dogs from the same kennel.
- K. Substitution after that time is subject to Race Marshal approval.

II. Travel, lodging and pre-race requirements:

A. Handlers:

1. Any musher who travels by airplane to Bethel must be accompanied by a handler.
2. A representative for the team (either the musher or handler) must arrive in Bethel ahead of the scheduled cargo flight carrying the dogs, or on the same flight.
3. Upon departure, a representative from the team must remain in Bethel until after the dogs have left.
4. Any musher wishing to receive an exception to this rule must submit a written request to the K300 Board in which they provide the details of their alternate plan.

B. Lodging:

1. The K300 will arrange lodging for visiting mushers in the homes of volunteers in the Bethel community.
2. Racers can only expect accommodations to be provided for themselves, one handler and their dog team.
3. The K300 will not arrange housing for any additional handlers or family members.
4. Dogs must stay outdoors at all times, except in the case of emergency.
5. At no time, except in the case of emergency, shall a musher or handler request that any dog(s) be allowed in a host's home.

C. Personal Conduct:

1. K300 mushers must maintain a high standard of personal and professional conduct at all times, not only during race related events. Any conduct that may be damaging to the K300 Race Committee, other K300 racers, K300 sponsors, Kuskokwim communities or anyone associated with the race is prohibited
2. The Race Committee Board of Directors will review possible violations and determine appropriate sanctions. (See rule V.C for a list of possible penalties)
3. As there is no governing body for the sport of dog mushing, for the sake of consistency, the Race Committee reserves the right to consult with other race organizations when reviewing possible violations of the Personal Conduct rule and determining sanctions for those violations.

D. Racers participating in the Bogus Creek 150 may not accept any of the support provided by the K300 Race Committee for K300 mushers. This includes housing and truck support. Any K300 racer wishing to bring a team to Bethel to participate in the Bogus Creek 150 must do so without benefitting from any support provided by the Race Committee or official K300 volunteers.

E. Each Racer must be present at the pre-race meeting and the drawing for starting positions on Thursday, January 23, 2025.

F. Racers will select their starting position based on the order of registration.

G. Race Officials, including Marshals and Veterinarians will be identified to racers at the pre-race meeting

- H. A Kuskokwim 300 entrant who wishes to switch to the Akiak Dash (scheduled for Saturday, January 25, 2024) up until the mushers' meeting but will not be eligible for K300 Race Committee assistance with travel, housing or handler help and the K300 entry fee will not be refunded.
- I. Each racer must execute a Release of Liability before the race.
- J. Food Drops:
 - 1. The Race Committee will transport food drops to checkpoints prior to the start of the race
 - 2. Dog food must be delivered to the Race Committee's designated area in Bethel between 9:00 AM and 12:00 Noon on Thursday, January 24, 2025 in order to be eligible for free delivery of the food.
 - 3. The Race Committee will not be responsible for food delivered before or after the allotted time.

III. Dog Care:

- A. Pre-race veterinary checks are required and will take place throughout the day on the Wednesday and Thursday prior to the race.
- B. All dogs may be subject to a mandatory veterinary check at any time during or after the race. Dogs not fit to continue the race may be removed from the team at the discretion of a Race Veterinarian. The Race Veterinarian may also require a racer to delay their team at a checkpoint if they believe dogs in the team require additional rest.
- C. Each racer shall be required to carry a Vet Book at all times during the race. Race Veterinarians may choose to make notes in the book during any checkpoint stop and the book must be presented to Vets upon request. The book must be signed by a Race Veterinarian before leaving the Tuluksak (inbound) checkpoint.
- D. No injectable substances may be used on any dog at any point during the race.
- E. Each racer must provide proof that all dogs in their team have been vaccinated for rabies.
- F. Unsafe or inhumane treatment of dogs is not permitted
- G. Whips may not be carried or used during the race
- H. All race sleds must be equipped with a sled bag suitable for carrying injured or weary dogs. The bag must be equipped with closures sufficient to keep a dog from escaping or sticking legs outside of the bag.
- I. Any racer who appears without a suitable sled bag will be fined \$200

IV. The Race:

- A. The Start:
 - 1. Racers must provide as many handlers as are required to keep their teams under control at the starting point.
 - 2. In the event of poor trail conditions racers may be required to take additional steps to control their team at the start.

3. Any racer may use a sled or snow machine for control at the start for as far as deemed appropriate by the racer.
4. Racers must start in their assigned position and at their assigned time.
5. Racers must wear any bib or banner provided by the Race Committee at the starting line.
6. Racers must agree, if asked, to carry a rider across the starting line, through the starting chute and for a distance of no more than one mile from the starting line.
7. Racers must begin the race with no more than 12 dogs, no fewer than 7 dogs and must complete the race with no fewer than 5 dogs.
8. At no time may a team travel with less than 5 dogs in harness and attached to the gang line.
9. No dogs are to be added to the team after leaving the starting line.
10. Each dog must wear an identification tag to be provided by the Race Committee.

B. On the Trail:

1. Racers must follow the marked and/or broken race trail. Leaving the marked and/or broken trail is not allowed.
2. Racers may not travel on the ice road except in the rare case that the marked trail is on the ice road.
3. Motorized vehicles may not lead or pace teams unless at the discretion of Race Officials.
4. Passing: When any team approaches within 50 feet of another team, the team behind has the immediate right of way upon demand. The racer ahead must stop their dogs and hold them for a maximum of one minute or until the other team has passed, whichever occurs first. The passed team must remain behind for at least 15 minutes before demanding the trail.
5. The passing rule does not apply in "No Person's Land", which will be identified during the pre-race meeting.
6. Any racer who becomes separated from their team may use whatever means possible to recover their team. Once the team is recovered, the racer may return to the trail at any point and continue the race. Should it be determined that any time was gained by the lost team, a time adjustment may occur at the next timed stop or the finish line.
7. Required Equipment: Each racer must carry as required equipment, at all times, a sleeping bag and an axe.
8. Each racer must start the race with four (4) dog booties for each dog.
9. Racers must carry as required gear a coat for every dog. Coats must be insulated, in good condition and must include cover for flanks and genitals.
10. Additionally, every sled will be equipped with a GPS tracker which must remain affixed to the sled bag at all times during the race.
11. Racers may not accept help in the care or feeding of their dogs, or in the establishment of their camps, at any point along the trail, including at checkpoints.

12. All teams are required to leave checkpoints under their own power, without human assistance, except when being guided to the proper trail.
13. Racers must utilize the same sled throughout the entire race, except in the case of a broken sled. In the event of a broken sled, a racer may use whatever means possible to obtain a replacement sled and continue the race. The broken sled must be made available to race officials for examination.
14. No sleds may be shipped prior to the race to any of the checkpoints along the trail.
15. Racer must conduct themselves in a sportsman-like manner. Discussions about these rules or other aspects of the race must be conducted with race officials at an appropriate time and place.
16. At all race functions, conduct detrimental to the Kuskokwim 300 Race Committee, its sponsors or its volunteers is subject to penalty.
17. A team finishes the race when the nose of any dog in the team crosses the finish line in Bethel. Teams are encouraged, but not required, to run down the start/finish chute to finish the race.

C. Checkpoints:

1. Checkpoints in the 2025 K300 include Tuluksak, Kalskag, Aniak, Kalskag, Tuluksak and Bethel.
2. Racers are not required to stop at Tuluksak (outbound) but must identify themselves to checkers as they pass through.
3. At all other checkpoints racers are required to sign in and out with checkers.
4. Racers may accept hospitality at checkpoints where such hospitality is generally available to all racers. Hospitality includes food and beverage, sleeping quarters and bathroom facilities.
5. Racers may not accept hospitality at other locations.
6. Wake-up calls are not permitted. Racers may not ask for or accept wake-up calls from checkpoint personnel or spectators.
7. Food and gear drops provided to the Race Committee at the designated time prior to the race (Thursday, January 23, 9:00 AM - 12:00 Noon) are delivered to Tuluksak, Kalskag and Aniak at the Committee's expense.
8. Racers may also transport food or equipment to those locations at their own expense if desired but this must be done prior to the start of the race.
9. Food and gear must be stored at the checkpoint and transported from the checkpoint solely by the racer.
10. Racers must obtain their dog food and water from a location designated by the official checker. All dog food and water must be carried from the designated location by the racer who will use it.
11. Racers may leave prepared food or water at checkpoints during the race, but only at locations approved by a race official or checker.
12. Racers, in emergency situations only, may use food and gear transported to checkpoints after the start of the race.

13. Racers may not utilize food or equipment from any other location along the trail except in an emergency situation. Use of such food or equipment in an emergency must be reported to a race official before leaving the next checkpoint.
14. Any food or equipment used outside of checkpoints must be hauled during the race by the dog team using it.
15. Once a racer drops food or gear it may not be transported by another party and reused by the racer at any point during the race.
16. The Race Committee will provide straw at Tuluksak, Kalskag and Aniak at no charge to racers.
17. All litter must be properly disposed of at checkpoints and may not be left along the trail.
18. Racers must make their own arrangements for the return of any equipment left at the checkpoint.
19. Checkpoint volunteers and the Race Committee are not responsible for returning gear or food left in the checkpoint by racers.

D. Required Rest:

1. Racers must take six (6) combined layover hours at the checkpoints of Kalskag (outbound), Aniak and Kalskag (inbound).
2. A layover begins when the racer declares their intention to the checker and signs in. A layover ends when the racer signs out.
3. A racer may cancel a layover, once declared, if the racer elects to postpone the layover time until a later checkpoint.
4. Each team is subject to a time adjustment to compensate for the staggered start wherever the team takes its first layover.
5. The six layover hours may be broken up amongst the checkpoints however a racer deems appropriate. For example, a racer may take a 4-hour layover (plus time adjustment) in Kalskag (outbound), a 1-hour layover in Aniak and a 1-hour layover in Kalskag (inbound).
6. Layover time will only be counted in 1-hour increments and will round **down** to the nearest whole hour. For example, staying in a checkpoint for 1 hour and 55 minutes would count as 1 hour of layover time, while staying in the checkpoint for 2 hours and 4 minutes would count as 2 hours of layover time.
7. Each team is subject to a 4-hour mandatory layover at Tuluksak on the return trail during which time the Race Veterinarian will inspect each dog to determine its fitness to travel the remaining portion of the trail to the finish line. This 4-hour layover begins when the racer signs in and ends when the racer signs out with the official checker.

E. Dropped Dogs:

1. Racers may drop any number of dogs from their team during the race as long as five dogs remain in harness and attached to the gangline.
2. Racers must declare to official checkers how many dogs they intend to drop at designated checkpoints.

3. Racers will be charged for transportation of dropped dogs back to Bethel. The fee is \$75 for each dog dropped in Aniak and Kalskag and \$50 for each dog dropped at Tuluksak.
4. Racers wishing to transport their own dropped dogs are encouraged to do so but must notify the Race Committee during the pre-race meeting of their intentions and must also notify checkers of each dog retrieved.
5. Racers may not sign in at a checkpoint unless all dogs in their team which left the previous checkpoint are present.
6. Dropped dogs may not be put back in the team.
7. Each dog dropped must have a cable neckline attached to its collar. Necklines must be no more than 14 inches in length and capable of snapping at one end. Necklines may be purchased in Bethel at the pre-race meeting.
8. The Race Committee will provide dog food and transportation to Bethel for all dropped dogs.
9. The Race Committee accepts no legal responsibility for dropped dogs.
10. When possible, the Race Committee will deliver dropped dogs to the team's place of lodging in Bethel.
11. Racers must make arrangements for the care of dogs, and when necessary, the pick-up of dogs returned to Bethel before completion of the race.
12. Dogs that for any reason cannot be returned to the team's place of lodging will be kept in a designated holding area. Dogs not removed from the holding area within 24 hours of their return are subject to a handling fee of \$10 per day, which must be paid before the dogs are released. The Race Committee may relocate dogs left for more than 3 days.

F. Scratched Teams:

1. A racer wishing to drop out of the race must notify a race official of their decision.
2. Racers who scratch are encouraged to find their own means of returning themselves, their dogs and gear to Bethel as this will often be the most efficient and economical means of doing so. The musher may elect to have their team shipped to Bethel along with dropped dogs and will pay regular rates to the K300 for doing so (\$75 per dog from Aniak or Kalskag, \$50 per dog from Tuluksak). Should the musher choose this option they are still responsible for transportation of themselves and their gear but the K300 will help facilitate as much as possible.

V. Rule Violations:

- A. Any observed violations of the Race Rules must be reported to a Race Official within 12 hours of the time that the racer registering the protest crossed the finish line.
- B. The decision of the race officials shall be final.
- C. Rule violations subject the violator to the following range of penalties:
 1. Warning (oral or written)
 2. Censure (public or private)
 3. Monetary
 4. Time delay

5. Disqualification
 6. Ineligibility for future races
- D. Race officials may administer penalties 1 through 5. Only the Race Committee Board of Directors may administer penalty 6.

VI. **Prizes:**

- A. The total purse of the 2025 K300 is \$200,000 dispersed over 25 places. An exact breakdown of payments may be found at www.k300.org.
- B. Racers who have outstanding accounts with the K300 will have their prize money adjusted accordingly.
- C. Racers must return race bibs, sled plates and trackers to the Race Committee prior to receiving a prize money check. Racers who do not return these items may be charged for replacement costs
- D. Rookie of the Year:
 1. The highest finishing rookie will receive recognition. A rookie is defined as any racer who has not *competed* in a race of 300 miles or longer prior to the 2025 K300. Racers wishing to compete for the Rookie of the Year Award must identify themselves at the pre-race meeting.
- E. Trail Prizes:
 1. Typically there are several sponsor-donated prizes awarded for achievements during the course of the race (for example, first team to Aniak). These will be announced at the pre-race meeting and issued along with prize checks at the awards banquet.
- F. All K300 finishers must attend post-race mushers' meeting and awards banquet, to be held on Monday, January 27, 2025.

The Kuskokwim 300 Race Committee urges each entrant in this year's race to fully prepare themselves and their team for possible hazardous trail conditions. Southwest Alaska is subject to high winds, low temperatures, and severe snowstorms during the month of January. Racers may also experience temperatures as high as 40 degrees with rain. Arctic style cold weather gear is recommended, including a heavy-duty sleeping bag with an outer bag or tarp to break the wind. A set of rain gear is also recommended. Daylight can be expected from 9:30 AM. to 6:00 PM.. Part of the trail will be in lightly traveled areas and racers who lose the trail must be prepared for survival in such an emergency situation. The trail will be extensively marked and the progress of racers will be closely monitored; however, weather may prevent a racer from being helped in the event that they are lost. Please plan accordingly.

The race will adhere to its schedule unless weather or trail conditions force a delay. If that should occur before the race start, the start could be delayed on a day-to-day basis. This has happened in the past, and racers will be given reasonable notice of such changes through race headquarters. Once the race has begun, such delays will be communicated through checkers and race officials on the trail. Any such delay would involve teams not being able to advance along the trail once notified of the delay. This procedure would be employed only at checkpoints. In addition to a delay, the race route may be altered either before or during the race if conditions require such a change. This could result in a longer or shorter race trail than advertised. One of the potential results would be a race that is stopped at a point short of the expected finish line, after teams have reached that location, if trail conditions do not allow the race to continue. In all of the above situations, the committee recognizes that changes would possibly affect the outcome of the race. Thus, such changes would not be made except in extraordinary circumstances. If such changes are required, the committee will make every effort to assure that dog care is not adversely affected by the change. The Kuskokwim 300 endeavors at all times to conduct a safe event that is fair for all competitors.

If you have questions about these rules or other aspects of the race, contact the Race Committee at 545-3300, k300@k300.org or at Box 3001, Bethel, Alaska 99559.