

Equine Identification – what do you need to do?

The Equine Identification (England) Regulations 2018 came into force on the 1st October 2018. **ALL equines** (horses, ponies, donkeys and their hybrids) in England must be identified with a transponder (microchip) and identification document (passport).

FAQ's

Why does my horse need a microchip it never goes anywhere? Having up to date data recorded on the CED (Central Equine Database) will ensure you receive relevant information should there be a disease outbreak, which will help you protect your horse. If your horse is stolen or breaks out of its field you are more likely to be reunited.

Why does my horse need a passport it never goes anywhere? Certain medicines can only be administered to horses that are correctly identified with passports, if you do not have a passport the treatment options for your horse are limited, a vet cannot legally prescribe a medicine such as Phenylbutazone (bute) without a passport being present. You should already have a passport for your horse, if you do not you are committing an offence and you run the risk of a fine and/or prosecution.

My horse has a freezebrand, do I need to get it microchipped? Yes, it is a requirement that all horses are identified by a microchip before the 1st October 2020

There is no microchip listed in my horse's passport – you have until the 1st October 2020 to get your horse microchipped, the next time your vet visits ask them to scan and check there is no microchip and if necessary, microchip your horse.

My horse is microchipped and passported, do I have to do anything? Yes, you should check that all the details in the passport are up to date, you should also enter the microchip number in the CED Chipchecker (<https://www.equineregister.co.uk/home>) to confirm it is linked to your passport. If any of the identity data is incorrect or has changed you must notify the Passport Issuing Organisation (PIO), you **must not** amend or add to the passport yourself.

My horse's microchip is not showing on the Central Equine Database Chipchecker (CED)? It may be that your horse was microchipped after the passport was issued and the microchip number was not notified to the Passport Issuing Organisation (PIO), you should arrange for your vet to verify the microchip number when they next attend your horse. Blank forms for your vet to complete should be available from your PIO. Send your passport to the PIO with the completed form, they will update their records, inform the CED and return your updated passport to you.

How do I know if my horse is microchipped? Check your passport, if your horse was microchipped prior to the passport being issued (a requirement for all horses passported after July 2009) the chip number should be on the page containing the silhouette diagram.

Who can microchip my horse? Microchipping can only be carried out by a vet, who is a Registered Member of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons. As the chip is inserted into the nuchal ligament and not under the skin as it is in dogs or small mammals.

The vet has microchipped my horse and put the sticker containing the number in the horse's passport, do I have to do anything else? Yes, you must send your horse's passport containing the microchip number together with a certificate signed by your vet confirming it has been microchipped to the issuing PIO. Blank forms for your vet to sign should be available from your PIO. The PIO will update their records and the CED and return your passport to you.

My horse didn't have a passport when I bought it? It is an offence to keep a horse without a passport, you must arrange for your vet to check your horse for a microchip. If it has a microchip you should check the CED National Equine Chipchecker (<https://www.equineregister.co.uk/home>) if it is on the system the details of the PIO who issued the original passport will be available, you should contact them and arrange for a replacement passport. If it is not on the CED National Chipchecker you should apply for a passport by contacting one of the passport issuing organisations in this link (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/horse-passport-issuing-organisations>)

My horse has been stolen? Notify your PIO who will notify the CED and your horse will be flagged as stolen. You may also wish to contact your local Horsewatch representative.

I am buying a new horse, are there any checks I should make? Check the passport for the horse matches the horse you are viewing, note the microchip number and check on the CED National Equine Chipchecker (<https://www.equineregister.co.uk/home>) that the details are the same as in the passport. If a horse has been reported stolen it will be flagged on the CED, if the horse has been flagged you should notify the Police or Trading Standards Service.

I have just bought a new horse, what do I need to do? You must send the issuing PIO the passport within 30 days of purchase so they can update the ownership details and update the CED. Before sending you should check the microchip number in the CED Chipchecker (<https://www.equineregister.co.uk/home>) to confirm it is linked to your passport, as you could arrange for this information to be updated at the same time.

I am selling/giving away my horse, what do I have to do? You must provide the passport to the new owner at the time of the sale/rehoming. The new owner must then send the passport to the PIO and inform them of the change of ownership and their details (see above question).

When do I need to obtain passports for my foals? You must have your foals microchipped and apply for passports before they are 6 months of age and at the latest by the 30 November in the year of their birth (there are derogations for semi-feral ponies living on Dartmoor, Exmoor, Wicken Fen and the New Forest). There are different requirements for Thoroughbred foals intended for racing, further information here - <https://www.weatherbys.co.uk/horses-racing/bloodstock-studbook/gb-registrations-and-applications>

I have lost my passport, what should I do? If you know who the issuing PIO was you need to contact them and arrange for a replacement or duplicate passport. If you do not have any details then you need to scan your horse to check for a microchip, enter this in the CED Chipchecker (<https://www.equineregister.co.uk/home>) to see if it is linked to a passport, if so, contact the PIO displayed, if not, then you must apply for a passport from one of the PIO's.

My horse's passport lists a microchip, but it is not reading on a scanner? Sometimes microchips can fail, you will need to arrange for your vet to check and if necessary, implant a new microchip. The vet should complete a certificate confirming the details of the new microchip. Blank forms for your vet to complete should be available from your PIO. Send your passport to the PIO with the completed form, they will update their records, inform the CED and return your updated passport to you.

My horse's microchip is registered with PetID, Anibase, etc. but it is not linked to his passport, do I need to notify the PIO? Yes, to ensure it is updated on your passport and to CED. See previous question 'My horse's microchip is not showing on the Central Equine Database'.



My horse has a passport issued by a European Country (including the Republic of Ireland), what should I do? You need to notify one of the UK based PIO's that your horse is resident in the UK, so they can ensure it is entered onto the CED. As soon as further information on this is received we will update this document.

I or my vet have signed the section excluding my horse from the food chain, do I have to notify anyone? Yes, you must notify the PIO of the change in status of your horse, they will then update the CED. Keeping this information up to date enables the slaughterhouses to check the food chain status of all horses sent to slaughter, and ensure that horses that shouldn't have gone to slaughter have not ended up there.

My vet has asked to see my passport? If your vet requests to see your horse's passport you must provide it without delay, this enables the vet to check the status of your horse and confirm that any treatment they provide is recorded correctly.

My livery yard manager has requested that they hold my horse's passport? If your horse is kept on livery where the yard owner/manager has day-to-day responsibility for your horse, as the 'responsible person' they should hold the passport so as to be able to provide to a vet on request. You will need access to your horse's passport, as it must be available when your horse is transported.

My horse is registered with a Passport Issuing Organisation (PIO) that no longer exists, what do I do? Your passport will still be valid, any PIO that has ceased trading is still listed in the following lists with information as to who to contact for updating. For example – The Pleasure Horse Society are no longer authorised to issue or update passports, the administration of these passports has been taken over by the Horse Passport Agency. Full details of all PIO's can be found in this link

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/horse-passport-issuing-organisations>

Are there any subsidies for microchipping for people on low income, as there were for dogs? No, however you have two years during which you are likely to have your vet out for vaccination etc. (all horses should at an absolute minimum be vaccinated for Tetanus) at which time you can request a microchip at minimum expense.

What happens if I do not follow the above? If you do not comply with the requirements of the legislation you will be in breach of the law, this may be investigated by the Local Authority who are the enforcement body. This could lead to civil sanctions including financial penalty notices, or criminal prosecution. It is also an offence to provide false information (e.g. ownership) when applying for or amending a passport.

For the Central Equine Database to be effective in reuniting stolen or straying horses, controlling disease outbreaks and ensuring the controls on horses entering the food chain are sufficient, it is imperative that all horse owners comply with the legislation.

N.B. For vets only – any difficulties with inserting a microchip or on the rare occasion that a horse develops a reaction to a microchip, the attending vet should in the first instance contact the relevant PIO. The failure of the microchip should be reported to the VMD at <https://www.vmd.defra.gov.uk/microchipeventreporting/>

Please note - This information is not an authoritative interpretation of the law and is intended only for guidance. For further information please contact your local authority (usually the Trading Standards Service)

I have a passport and my horse is microchipped do I have to do anything?

All details correct on passport including ownership

Check the microchip is on the CED
<https://www.equineregister.co.uk/home>

Microchip not listed

Arrange for your vet to verify the microchip, they will complete a form or stamp/sign the barcode label

Return passport to PIO for amending/updating

Passport received back from PIO all information correct

Food chain status incorrect

Notify PIO who will update the CED

Microchip listed, passport details and food chain status correct

No further action required

My horse doesn't have a passport? My horse didn't have a passport when I bought it?

You must arrange for your vet to check your horse for a microchip

Microchip not found

Microchip found

Contact a PIO for an application form

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/horse-passport-issuing-organisations>

Check the microchip is on the CED

<https://www.equineregister.co.uk/home>

Arrange for your vet to insert microchip and complete application form

Microchip listed contact the displayed PIO and arrange for a replacement passport

Send to PIO

Passport received back from PIO all information correct

No further action required

How do I know if my horse is microchipped?

Check your passport, if your horse was microchipped the chip number should be on the page showing the silhouette

Microchip not found

Microchip found

Arrange for your vet to check for a microchip and insert one if necessary, you have until 1 October 2020

Check the microchip is on the CED
<https://www.equineregister.co.uk/home>

Return passport to PIO, they will enter the microchip on the CED

Microchip not listed

Microchip listed and all details including food chain status correct

Passport received back from PIO all information correct

No further action required

I am buying a new horse, what should I do?

Check the passport matches the horse you are viewing, check the microchip number on the CED
<https://www.equineregister.co.uk/home>

Horse is flagged on the CED as reported lost or stolen

Horse is flagged, speak to the displayed PIO and/or Police

Passport does not match horse, report to Local Authority normally Trading Standards

All details match and horse purchased

You need to send the passport to the PIO within 30 days of purchase to change ownership details

Passport received back from PIO all information correct

No further action required