

# JOHN BEARGREASE SLED DOG RACE SERIES 2024 OFFICIAL RULES



The John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon is the premier long-distance sled dog race in the lower 48 states and one of Northern Minnesota's greatest winter attractions. The sled dog marathon honors John Beargrease's legacy, the indigenous cultures, and North Shore communities while celebrating the history of mushing and the incredible canine athletes who make it possible. It is the intention of the John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon, Inc. (otherwise referred to in these rules as the Corporation) to conduct a race that follows the spirit of frontier adventurism established at the turn of the century by John Beargrease, along with a host of other North Shore mail carriers. Beargrease and his fellow carriers were a colorful, boisterous group whose ingenuity and determination helped to ensure the tradition of continued mail delivery, even under adverse conditions.

To bring the legend of John Beargrease to life, the Corporation presents the John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon to the people of the North Shore. The Corporation has made special effort in giving high visibility to the Marathon and associated races. However, ensuring the safety and care of the animal athletes and maintaining a positive spirit of competition are the priorities.



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Note: Sections in red have changes from the 2023 rules



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## I. ENTRY

### A. ENTRY FEE

1. Entries will not be considered complete until payment is received and all requested information, including a biography and high-resolution photo, are submitted. Entry fees are as follows:

Dates	Marathon	Beargrease 120	Beargrease 40
through 11/30/2023	\$390	\$240	\$80
12/1/2023 - 1/15/2024	\$450	\$290	\$80

2. The deadline for registration is **Monday, January 15, 2024.**
3. Registered teams may move up or down a class at any time prior to January 15, 2024 under the following conditions:
  - a. If moving down a class, refunds will be the difference between entry paid and rate of lower class at the time of request and will be issued by check.
    - i. Starting position will be at the end of all registrants in that class (including wait list).
  - b. If moving up a class the following conditions apply:
    - i. Additional entry fees will be the difference between the entry fee paid and the entry fee of the upper class at the time of the request. This does not apply to teams that were called off the waitlist.
    - ii. Registration is not official until fees are paid.
    - iii. Starting position will be at the end of all other registrations.

### B. QUALIFICATIONS

1. All entrants in the Beargrease will be paid members in good standing. Musher Membership dues are \$50 per year and are included in the entry fee. Membership fees are non-refundable.
2. The Corporation reserves the right to reject any entry in any Beargrease event.
3. If using the John Beargrease Marathon as an Iditarod 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 Corporation is not responsible for the musher's application.



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## C. DRIVER

1. A driver must be named by January 15, 2024.
2. The driver starting the race shall drive the team throughout the race.
3. Driver Qualifications:
  - a. **Marathon:**
    - i. The driver must have completed a qualifying race of at least 100 continuous miles. Verifiable proof of qualifying race(s) must be submitted in writing, along with entry. Exceptions to this rule may be permitted. The driver must submit their written mushing qualifications with their race registration. A committee consisting of the Race Marshall, another Race Judge and the Beargrease Marathon Musher Representative will review the driver's application and determine if the driver will be permitted to run the Marathon. An interview may also be required for this exception.
    - ii. The driver must be sixteen years of age or older. An experienced musher, younger than 16 years old that wishes to enter must apply to the Corporation in writing for a waiver of minimum age requirement. Underage applicants (drivers) must supply years of experience, race history, related experiences and references from at least two veteran long-distance drivers, and written consent from a parent or legal guardian.
  - b. **Beargrease 120:**
    - i. The driver must be fourteen years of age or older. Drivers who are twelve or thirteen may be allowed to race with submission of musher's race experience and per Race Marshall approval.
    - ii. For the Beargrease-120 Jr. Class, the driver must not be over the age of 18. Any driver who is a minor must supply the Corporation with a written release signed by a parent or legal guardian before they will be allowed to race.
  - c. **Beargrease 40:**
    - i. The driver must be twelve years of age or older. Any driver who is a minor must supply the Corporation with a written release signed by a parent or legal guardian before they will be allowed to race.
4. Substitution of drivers may be allowed by the Race Marshal up to the start of the Driver's Meeting and only in the case of an emergency (providing the substitute driver meets the qualifications).
5. All entering drivers must attend the mandatory Driver's Meeting. Failure of a driver to meet the first roll call may result in a fine of up to \$50. Failure of a driver to attend the meeting may result in a fine, time penalty or disqualification.
6. All drivers or their representative must attend Opening Ceremonies to pick up their bib. Failure to attend may result in a fine of \$50.



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## D. DOGS

1. Minimum and maximum dogs to start for each race are as follows:

	Full Marathon	Beargrease 120	Beargrease 40
Maximum (start)	12	8	6
Minimum (start)	8	6	5
Minimum always standing in harness	6	5	4

The Rules Interpretation Committee will make the final determination regarding numbers of dogs when trail and safety conditions warrant.

2. All dogs must undergo a pre-race veterinary check, as scheduled by the musher with the Corporation. All racing dogs must meet the criteria for signing of the Official Health Certificate, and any other specific criteria set forth by the Corporation.
3. There will be no early Vet Checks.
4. Any dogs not meeting the criteria for an Official Health Certificate will not be allowed to run the race.
5. All racing dogs must have current Distemper, Adenovirus-2, Parvovirus, Parainfluenza, **Leptospirosis** and Rabies vaccinations.
6. Proof of Distemper, Adenovirus-2, Parvovirus, Parainfluenza **Leptospirosis** vaccinations must come from a Veterinarian OR, if administered by the driver, records must include type of vaccine, proof of purchase (i.e., receipt), and date of vaccination in writing. All required vaccines must have been given at least fourteen days prior to the pre-race Vet Check and be current through the end of the race. DAPP vaccines will only be recognized as three-year vaccines if given by a veterinarian. All others will be considered as one-year vaccines.
7. For teams from the lower 48 states and Canada, proof of Rabies vaccinations must come from a licensed Veterinarian only. Rabies vaccines must be given at least 21 days prior to the Vet Check and must be current through the end of the race.
8. Dogs coming from Alaska having valid certificates signed by *lay vaccinators* will be accepted. The manufacturer and vaccine serial number of the Rabies vaccine administered to such dogs must be available to the Corporation.
9. All dogs will be marked prior to the start of the race. If there are two separate teams in the same vehicle, each team will be marked separately.



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10. Any dog dropped before or during the race, must be marked out and cannot be substituted or re-entered.
11. The driver may enter into the race any dog that fits the definition of a “sled dog”. A “sled dog” is defined as:
  - a. Any dog, irrespective of breed or type, that demonstrates a willingness to be harnessed and desire to participate in the activity for which it is harnessed.
  - b. Adequately trained and conditioned for such activity as established by participation in prior events or by demonstration of an appropriate training and conditioning program as determined by knowledgeable race officials, including the race marshal, race judge(s) and race veterinarian(s).
  - c. Capable of withstanding environmental extremes as deemed appropriate by knowledgeable race officials.

The Driver shall be responsible for ensuring that dogs trained for and participating in races are suitable for the race type in question, that they are sufficiently trained to withstand the strain that may be incurred from the race, that they are healthy and prepared for the competition they will participate in and that dogs are ensured proper welfare, care and necessary rest at all times.

12. **A muzzle or any collar that can be hooked as a full choke shall be prohibited.** If the driver has any questions about this rule they must consult the Race Marshall and Head Race Veterinarian.

### E. DRUGS

1. No injectable, oral or topical drugs that may suppress signs of illness or injury may be used on a dog. A driver may not inject any substance into his/her dogs. No drugs or other artificial means may be used to drive a dog or cause a dog to perform or attempt to perform beyond its natural ability.
2. THE FOLLOWING DRUGS AND TREATMENTS ARE **PROHIBITED**:
  - a. Anabolic Steroids
  - b. Analgesics (prescription and non-prescription)
  - c. Anesthetics
  - d. Antihistamines
  - e. Anti-inflammatory drugs including, but not limited to:
    - i. Corticosteroids (only those provided by the Beargrease Veterinarians for use on the feet are permitted)
    - ii. Antiprostaglandins
    - iii. Non-steroids (NSAIDS)
    - iv. Salicylates
    - v. DMSO (Dimethyl sulfoxide)
  - f. Bronchodilators
  - g. Central Nervous System Stimulants
  - h. Cough Suppressants
  - i. Diuretics
  - j. Injectable Anticholinergics



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- k. Muscle Relaxants
  - l. Tranquilizers & Opiates
  - m. Anticonvulsants
  - n. Acupuncture
  - o. Chiropractic Manipulations
  - p. The use of blood doping – i.e., injection of whole blood, packed blood cells or blood substitutes.
  - q. No Forced Hydration (Turkey Basting)
  - r. CBD
3. Chiropractic manipulation, Acupuncture, and Therapeutic Laser are recognized veterinary treatment modalities and, as such, their use during the Beargrease Sled Dog Race is under the jurisdiction of the Chief Race Veterinarian(s). Because it is impractical for the race veterinary team to ensure these treatment modalities would be uniformly available to all competitors, their use will be prohibited from the pre-race veterinary exam to the end of the race. If, after consulting with the Chief Race Veterinarian(s), a competitor feels their dog needs to be treated with one of these modalities, a decision may be made to allow the use of that dog, but that dog must be dropped from the race.
  4. Dogs that have been allowed to run on any of the above drugs in other races or in previous Beargrease races, must be discussed with the Head Veterinarian a minimum of 14 days prior to the Pre-race Vet Check.
  5. **Additional medications, substances and supplements that would be considered prohibited can be found on the web sites listed below.** Any medications or supplements that you are unsure of their appropriateness or legality, should be discussed with the Head Veterinarian a minimum of 14 days prior to the Pre-race Vet Check.  
<https://isdvma.org/dog-care/>  
<https://sleddogsport.net/eng/88>
  6. The only medication approved for use under sweats is Furacin Ointment (Nitrofurazone), Algyval, Emu Oil, Zaylox or Accede.
    - a. Additional medication can be approved a minimum of seven days prior to scheduled Pre-race Vet Check by providing a list of ingredients in writing to the Chief Veterinarian.
  7. It is the intent of these rules that no drugs or other artificial means be used to drive a dog beyond its natural ability. A driver must have their team free from any prohibited drugs at the time of the Pre-Race Vet Check and during the race. If, in the opinion of a Race Veterinarian, it is necessary to use one of these drugs for the dog's well-being, administration of any such drug will be done only after the dog has been dropped.
  8. Use of any prohibited substance will result in disqualification or other disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the Rules Interpretation Committee.
  9. Beargrease Race Veterinarians and/or their representatives shall have the authority to collect blood and/or urine samples at random at any point commencing with the pre-race Vet Check and ending six hours after the finish of the race. It will be the driver's responsibility to assist the Race Veterinarian and/or their representative in the collection of these samples. All samples will be sealed and signed for before the collection is considered complete.



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### F. EQUIPMENT

1. All harnesses shall be padded around the neck and chest areas.
2. All dogs shall be harnessed in single or double file.
3. Some type of sled shall be drawn.
4. The sled shall be equipped with an adequate working brake (not only a track), brush bow, snow hook and reflective tape on the rear stanchions.
5. **The sled shall include a sled bag that not only accommodates all of the mandatory equipment but is capable of restraining and completely enclosing a struggling dog and if necessary, covering a severely injured dog.**
6. All gang lines must be made of coated cable, or have a cable core, or be made of "Iron Rope." No bare cable allowed.
7. **All harnesses will have reflective tape visible from both sides (a total of 12 square inches is recommended).**
8. From dusk to dawn a working headlamp shall be worn and must be always turned on.
9. ***At least one lead dog must be equipped with a working light, which must be turned on from dusk to dawn and is visible from the front when approaching the team. NO EXCEPTIONS.***





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### 10. MUSHER'S MANDATORY GEAR

Item	Marathon	Beargrease 120	Beargrease 40
<b>Two Complete Working Headlamps</b> (capable of reaching the lead dog)	X	X	*
<b>Sleeping Bag</b>	X	X	**
<b>Knife</b>	X	X	X
<b>Promotional Material</b> (not to exceed 10 pounds)	X	X	X
<b>Cable Cutter</b>	X	X	X
<b>Mailbag</b> (to be returned to the Race official at the finish line or at the nearest checkpoint upon withdrawal from the race)	X	X	
<b>First Aid Kit</b> (including Ace bandage, pressure dressing and tape)	X	X	X
<b>Matches</b>	X	X	X
<b>Set of Booties for each dog</b>	X	X	X
<b>Vet Book</b> (must be available at start, finish and all checkpoints. Return to head veterinarian at end of the race or when leaving the race early for any reason)	X	X	X

\* Only one headlamp required for Beargrease 40 teams

\*\* No longer required for Beargrease 40 teams. Some teams may opt to carry for added safety.



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## H. REQUIRED UPON LEAVING EACH CHECKPOINT

1. For the *Marathon and Beargrease 120 teams*, one day's food ration for the driver and each dog in the team (approximately 1/2 pound of food per dog).
  - a. Disposal of required items other than for their intended purpose is strictly prohibited. A maximum fine of \$200 will be imposed for littering including checkpoints. Any team snacking on the trail may not leave food behind.

## II. OFFICIATING

### A. RACE OFFICIALS

1. The Race Marshal and judges are responsible for the enforcement of all Beargrease policies and race rules. Race officials shall consult with the Chief Veterinarian on all matters relating to dog care and treatment. The Race Marshal has the final word over all safety considerations for both the dogs and drivers. They have the authority to interpret rules at the Driver's Meeting, alter any participant's official running time, disqualify dogs, teams or drivers, and refer any rule questions to the RIC. They can order drug testing and determine winners and subsequent placements. The Race Coordinator will supply any information required by the Race Marshal for the purpose of providing the best possible decision. Prior to the closing or changing of a checkpoint, the Race Marshal will advise the Race Coordinator of any problem at hand and give them time to correct it.
2. The Race Veterinarians are consulting specialists to the race on matters pertaining to dog care, treatment, and welfare (welfare defined as health issues that are life threatening or potentially life threatening, as determined by the attending race veterinarian).
  - a. Dogs are under the care of the Head Veterinarian and the Race Veterinarians from the time of the pre-race Vet Check until after the Awards Banquet.
  - b. All dogs may be required to undergo a Post-Race Vet Check after they cross the finish line if requested by the mushers, race officials or any member of the veterinary team.
  - c. The Race Veterinarians will be available throughout the race for consultation, first aid, and major medical situations.
  - d. Two Race Veterinarians in agreement have the authority to delay or prevent a dog or a team from leaving any checkpoint or starting line for dog care, medical, or welfare concerns. If the driver is not in agreement or the veterinarians cannot agree, a consultation with the Head Veterinarian and Judge will result in a final decision.
  - e. Dogs with significant injuries or with potentially life-threatening issues (dogs receiving treatment and care by the Race Veterinarians away from the dog truck – on the race route or at a local veterinary clinic/hospital) are required to be available for follow up and subsequent discharge. This pertains to dogs in teams still racing and teams that have scratched.
3. Timers, Checkpoint checkers and Race Veterinarians will act as consultants to the Judges.



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4. The Rules Interpretation Committee (RIC) is a three-person committee. Once called together by the Race Marshal on a specific question, its decision becomes the final word on that issue. The RIC consists of the Race Marshal and two Assistant Judges. The head veterinarian will be a consultant when applicable.

### **B. CONDUCT AND DISQUALIFICATIONS**

1. Drivers are responsible for a high standard of conduct for themselves, their dogs and their designated handlers always; before, during and after the race when dealing with race personnel, officials, volunteers or the general public. Musher conduct that is recklessly injurious to the Beargrease, Beargrease competitors, sponsors, or anyone associated with the race is strictly prohibited.
2. If the Race Marshal determines that a driver, handler or team - whether in the race or on the trail - is acting in a way that is detrimental to the sport, that team will be penalized or disqualified. Common sense and good sportsmanship shall prevail.
3. Failure to adhere to the published rules may result in disqualification or penalty. Determination of this will be the responsibility of the RIC. A disqualified driver will forfeit all entry fees, placements, or monetary awards.
4. The RIC may assess penalties other than disqualification. These will take the form of time penalties or fines and can affect final placement of a team.

### **C. PENALTIES**

1. Policy and rule infractions may result in issuance of warnings, monetary penalties, time penalties, censure, withdrawals, or disqualification.
2. Within 48 hours, race officials will make every effort to make a competitor aware of a rule infraction and the penalty assessed. Warnings may be issued by any official for first-time or minor violations.
3. Monetary penalties will be imposed when determined by race officials a rule infraction has occurred and a competitive advantage has not been gained. Monetary penalties may be imposed up to \$1,500 per violation. Such penalties may be deducted from prize money. A musher with unpaid fines may not enter future Beargrease races until such fines are paid.
4. Time penalties will be imposed when determined by race officials a rule infraction has occurred and a competitive advantage has been gained. Time penalties require a majority decision of a three-member panel of race officials appointed by the Race Marshal. Time penalties may be imposed up to a maximum of four (4) hours per infraction and will be added to the Mineral Center Layover or after the musher and team finishes.
5. Withdrawal is a process that must be imposed by a three-judge panel, either by a majority or unanimous vote, and which has the effect of involuntarily eliminating the musher and team from the race, but which does not imply any deliberate misconduct or violation. The team and musher must leave the trail and may be assisted by the Beargrease Volunteers.



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6. Except as set forth in the case of a dog death, disqualifications require a unanimous decision of a three-member panel of race judges appointed by the Race Marshal. The Chief Veterinarian will be consulted in all cases involving cruel or inhumane treatment. Mushers shall be disqualified for rule infractions involving physical abuse of a dog, or for cheating, or deliberate rule infractions that give a musher unfair advantage over another musher. Mushers may also be disqualified for other acts involving cruel and inhumane treatment. It is intended that the nearest involved officials be included on the panel. The musher will be given the opportunity to present his case to each member of the panel prior to the decision. Disqualified and withdrawn teams must leave the trail or forfeit the right to enter future Beargrease Races.
7. Censure: The Board of Directors, following completion of the race, may censure a musher. A censure may include a warning, either public or private, and may eliminate the musher from future races. A written warning, monetary penalty or disqualification must have occurred before censure.

### D. PROTESTS AND HEARINGS

1. A musher may protest any action of a competitor or race official that they feel is contrary to the intent of these rules. To be recognized as a legitimate protest, any action observed by a musher must be presented in writing at the next checkpoint and in no case more than twenty-four (24) hours after a musher finishes the race.
2. Any occurrence between the final checkpoint and the finish line must be reported within four (4) hours after arrival at the Finish Line.
3. Protests must be submitted directly to a Judge and shall not be discussed with spectators, media representatives, on social media, or the general public prior to a decision being handed down. Failure to adhere to this rule may result in penalties up to, and including, disqualification.
4. For the Marathon, the Judge needs to notify musher of any penalty no less than one hour prior to the awards banquet. An official decision will be made by the RIC following a hearing attended by all involved parties, as deemed appropriate by the Race Marshal. This will happen no later than a week after the finish of the race.

### E. APPEAL PROCESS

Mushers may appeal race official decisions.

Appeals pertaining to warnings or monetary fines must be emailed to both [president@beargrease.com](mailto:president@beargrease.com) and [admin@beargrease.com](mailto:admin@beargrease.com) within two (2) days of the mushers' finish.

Appeals pertaining to withdrawals, disqualifications or time penalties must be emailed to both [president@beargrease.com](mailto:president@beargrease.com) and [admin@beargrease.com](mailto:admin@beargrease.com) within two (2) days following the awards banquet. Appeals will be decided by hearing before an appeals board appointed by the president of the Beargrease which will be held within thirty (30) days of filing the appeal. Review by the appeals board is the exclusive, final, and binding remedy for any dispute regarding application of the rules by race officials to a musher.



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Upon receipt of the request, the executive committee shall call a meeting of the board of directors (BOD) for the sole purpose of forming an appeals committee. The appeals committee shall consist of the following individuals nominated by the board of directors:

- 1 nominated board member
- 1 Judge not on RIC (current or past judge)
- 1 musher who competed in the same race and is not the musher representative
- 1 vet representative

The nominated board member will act as the chair, scheduling the hearing at a time and place that is mutually agreed upon (virtual meetings are acceptable) and oversee the proceedings. The chair may call any individual familiar with the case to give a statement.

Order of the proceedings:

- Prior to the meeting, the chair will designate one committee member to record the minutes of the meeting.
- The chair will call the meeting to order, clearly stating the purpose of the meeting. A representative from the RIC will make a statement on their decision and provide relevant information and/or evidence.
- Any additional persons called for the purposes of clarification of the decision may be asked to contribute during this phase.
- The musher will make a statement refuting any claims and provide relevant information and/or evidence.
- The committee will caucus in private:
  - In the event the appeals board is tied, the president of the Board of Directors would be the deciding vote.
- The Committee will announce their decision, including a written statement within 72 hours of the hearing.

## III. THE RACE

### A. START/FINISH

1. Bib Numbers:
  - a. The starting positions for the race shall be determined by a draw. Starting order will remain confidential until opening ceremonies.
  - b. Bibs will be drawn at close of musher registration by at least two (2) race officials in three (3) separate groups. The first group will be registrants that entered in person on opening day. (e.g., if four (4) marathon teams enter in person on opening day only bib numbers 1-4 will be drawn. The second group will include the first half of the remaining entries received once online registration is open. The second half will be drawn from the second half of those entries.
2. Start:
  - a. Pre-start – All drivers, handlers and team trucks must be in the official musher parking area and available to the public on Race Day by the time announced at the Driver's Meeting (typically this is three (3) hours prior to the Marathon start. Each driver's sled and mandatory equipment must be ready and available



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for inspection at any time upon a judge's request. A \$2-per-minute late fee may be charged for those arriving after the time given at the Driver's Meeting.

- b. Common Start-Time/Differential Allotment:
    - i. For elapsed time purposes, the race will be a common start event. Each driver's elapsed time will be calculated. Any driver who cannot leave the starting line within ten (10) minutes of the last team's departure may be disqualified unless extenuating circumstances prevail.
    - ii. The actual difference in departure times from the starting line will be made up at the first mandatory checkpoint. Late starting teams (teams unable to depart in the order of their bib numbers) will have their differential times calculated from their official start times.
  - c. Single Starts:
    - i. There will be single starts. Any changes due to safety concerns will be announced at the Driver's Meeting.
    - ii. There will be a device (tire, post, cable) at the Start Line for the driver to fasten his/her team. At the signal, each driver will release his/her team and begin the race.
  - d. Assistance/Start Handlers:
    - i. The Race Marshal may allow, or require, that a qualified handler and/or second sled accompany each team at the Start. Handlers may be required, or allowed, at other sections of the race, as specified by the Race Marshal.
3. Finish:
- a. The nose of the lead dog crossing the Finish Line signals the team's official finish. If the driver is not with the team when it finishes, the finish time will be officially recorded when the driver crosses the finish line after the team.
  - b. No entrant has officially finished until time cards have been verified by an official for mandatory accumulated time and differential and the vet book has been collected by a race official.
4. No Man's Land:
- a. There will be no calling of the trail in "No Man's Land". This section of trail will be announced at the Driver's Meeting.



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## B. CHECKPOINT LIST

ONLY CHECKPOINTS WILL BE DOG DROPS

Race cutoff times will be determined by the Race Marshal

<b>Marathon</b>	<b>Beargrease 120</b>	<b>Beargrease 40</b>
Duluth Start East End Auto-Billy's Bar	Duluth Start East End Auto-Billy's Bar	Duluth Start East End Auto-Billy's Bar
Two Harbors (Hwy 2)	Two Harbors (Hwy 2)	Finish/Two Harbors (Hwy 2)
Finland	Finland	
Sawbill (unassisted)	Finish/Trestle Inn	
Trail Center		
Skyport Lodge		
Mineral Center		
Finish/Grand Portage Casino		

## C. OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE

1. Drivers and teams may not receive outside assistance.
  - a. Drivers must not use planned outside assistance between checkpoints.
  - b. Drivers may assist each other in appropriate ways in an emergency.
  - c. Dog handlers are NOT allowed to meet teams at road crossings. This may result in a one-hour time penalty or disqualification of the team.
  
2. In a case where a dog or musher's life or limb are in danger, appropriate outside assistance is acceptable. All such assistance must be reported to a race judge as soon as possible.
  
3. Other Assistance:
  - a. Replacement of broken or lost equipment between checkpoints must be arranged through, and directed by, a Race Judge. In the event of a broken sled, the driver must send word to a Race Judge who will then direct a handler to transport a replacement to the stranded driver.
  - b. Drivers may accept rides on motorized vehicles in an emergency. Such incidents must be reported to a judge at the next checkpoint.



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- c. Drivers may not arrange for any person or persons to instruct them between checkpoints. Requests for directions along the way are acceptable.
- d. Pacing is prohibited.
- e. GPS units are permitted.
- f. Ski poling is permitted except within 50 feet of another team and in “No Man’s Land.”
- g. No person except for the driver of that sled shall be allowed on any sled that is checked into the race.

### D. MANAGEMENT/HANDLING OF DOGS

1. The cruel and/or inhumane treatment (including refusing treatments deemed necessary by race Veterinarians for the dog’s health and welfare) of any dog by a driver is strictly prohibited and will be penalized by disqualification and possible barring from future Beargrease events. Welfare is defined as health issues that are life threatening or potentially life threatening as determined by a Race Veterinarian. When checking in at the Pre-Race Vet Checks, the musher will be asked to sign a document stating that they have read and understand this rule.
2. **The use of physical discipline is not allowed. Whips, e-collars, and other devices that are utilized for physical discipline (regardless of design or intended use) are not permitted. Additionally, the physical use of force, such as dragging of a dog, to move a team down the trail is not permitted. It is the intent of these rules that no use of force be used to drive a dog beyond its natural ability and that each dog willingly leave each checkpoint and continue down the trail.**
3. Loose leaders are not allowed.
4. Boxing of dogs:
  - a. Dropped dogs must be presented to and marked out by a member of the Veterinary team or Judge before the driver leaves the checkpoint and before the dog is boxed. A handler may drop a dog; however, the driver will be held responsible if there is a mistake in dog identity. All dropped dogs must be checked by a qualified member of the Veterinary team prior to boxing.
  - b. Any dog that remains in the race shall not be boxed once the race has begun.
5. Expired Dogs:
  - a. Any dog that expires on the trail must be taken to the nearest checkpoint. Expired dogs must be covered completely when being carried in the sled. The driver must stay at the checkpoint until the Chief Veterinarian comes to investigate the situation. At that time, there will be an interview between the driver and Race Officials. The driver may be allowed to continue/finish the race contingent on the Gross Necropsy and/or only after approval of the Chief Veterinarian and Race Marshal.
  - b. Any dog that expires during the race will have a Necropsy/Examination performed by a licensed Veterinarian according to ISDVMA Necropsy Guidelines.
  - c. Prize money will not be paid out until the results of the Histopathology portion of the necropsy are returned (may take 4–6 months). If it is determined that the cause of death was other than natural causes, the team will be disqualified. The place money will then revert to the John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon General Fund.
  - d. If the Necropsy determines the cause of death to be abuse, the team will be disqualified and barred from participation in any future Beargrease events.
6. Hauling Dogs:





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- a. A driver may not allow any of their dogs to be hauled by another team.
- b. A dog hauled in the sled must be handled in a humane fashion.

### **E. CHECKPOINT PROCEDURES**

1. Each driver must sign both in and out of all checkpoints.
2. All dogs must be accounted for.
3. A driver may return to a checkpoint with their team and may use their truck to return a dog but may not have handler assistance.
4. Each driver will be responsible for reporting any dogs in the bag to the Judges and/or Vets.
5. There will be no pre-reserving of sites. Sites will be selected when you check-in to that checkpoint.

### **F. ACCOMMODATIONS**

1. Accommodations (space for bedding down dogs, restrooms, parking, etc.) are on a first-come, first-served basis. Checkpoint officials may designate additional areas for teams if necessary. Parking is limited at checkpoints, only one vehicle per musher (if you have oversized rigs, you may be required to park in an alternative location when parking is limited, as decided by the checkpoint official).
2. All handlers must check in to the checkpoint with the checkpoint personnel. Handlers or drivers are responsible for cleanup and removal of straw or hay in a timely manner. Officials will inspect and approve each team's area. Penalties (time or fines) will be imposed for non compliance.
3. Boisterous behavior or other infractions on the part of drivers or handlers in the checkpoint is strictly prohibited.

### **G. MANDATORY LAYOVER / REST TIME**

1. Each Marathon team will be required to take a four (4) hour (plus differential) mandatory layover at Sawbill, and an additional four (4) hour mandatory layover at Mineral Center. Mandatory layovers will be mandatory Vet Checks.
2. Marathon Drivers must accumulate an additional sixteen (16) hours of layover time for a total of twenty-four (24) hours layover time, plus start differential. Mandatory rest time will be adjusted proportionately in the event of a low snow/alternate start race. Beargrease 120 Drivers must accumulate a total of eight (8) hours plus start differential. The mandatory vet check will take place in a location announced at the second checkpoint. Plan your rest appropriately.
3. All drivers must remain at checkpoints. Every effort will be made to secure quiet, controlled parking areas.



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## H. FOOD AND WATER

1. Each driver and their handlers are responsible for having necessary food and water at checkpoints (for both mushers and dogs). The Corporation will make no arrangements for food and water distribution. All checkpoints are accessible by truck.

## I. UNATTENDED TEAMS

1. No team or dropped dog/s shall be left unattended.
2. Handlers may feed and water teams at any checkpoint except Sawbill.

## J. REMOTE CHECKPOINT RULES

1. Straw will be provided. It will not be the responsibility of Checkpoint Personnel to deliver straw.
2. Musher must supply drop containers or bags.
3. Type of container(s) allowed for drop bag use:
  - a. Burlap style sack.
  - b. Woven plastic bag (no plastic garbage bags or dog food bags).
  - c. Hard plastic container or cooler.
4. Remote checkpoint bags will be dropped at a specified area at the starting line. Bag drops must be made one (1) hour before your team departs.
5. Musher will be allowed two (2) bags, containers or coolers not to exceed fifty (50) pounds each.
6. Musher is responsible for securing drops.
7. Musher's last name must be clearly marked on their drops.
8. Musher must leave a one (1) day ration of food, and a tether or chain for all dropped dogs.
9. Musher is responsible for picking up their drop bags at the checkpoint. It is not the responsibility of Checkpoint Personnel to deliver drop bags to the Musher's site. All drop bags will be in a neutrally located, secure area.
10. All gear must be packed up and returned to the secure area prior to the musher leaving the remote checkpoint. Any gear left behind that is not packed accordingly will become property of the race organization. Straw will be cleaned up by race volunteers.



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11. The Corporation will make arrangements for dropped dogs and gear to be transported to Trail Center.
12. Returned dogs must be picked up in a timely fashion. If a team drops out of the race, returned dogs must be picked up at that time.

### **K. RUNNING THE COURSE**

1. The Trail:
  - a. Participants of the Beargrease Marathon and related events are guests of the City of Duluth, North Shore State Trail, Duluth Snowmobile Trail System, C.J. Ramstad State Trail, the Lutsen-Tofte Ski Trail, Superior National Forest and the Gunflint Trail Association. In consideration of this fact, drivers will conduct themselves in an appropriate manner, and at no time demand “rights” to the trail.
  - b. Teams inadvertently leaving the trail must regain the course at the point at which they left.
  - c. Two or more teams may not be tied together except in an emergency. Any team so involved must notify a judge at the next checkpoint.
  - d. Any team snacking on the trail may not leave food behind.
2. Passing:
  - a. When being passed, an overtaken team must let the team that is overtaking them fully overtake them before proceeding. The passed team must use common sense and common courtesy in determining when to continue. When overtaking another team, the driver shall call “trail”, and the overtaken team must relinquish the trail and assist the passing team when necessary.
  - b. When neither of the teams can pull away from the other, the drivers shall mutually agree on the appropriate team to lead out. In no way is the passing rule designed to assist a team in “manipulating” its way into trail position.
3. Lost Teams:
  - a. In the event of a lost team, the team will not be disqualified if the driver regains control of the team, provided the driver and team complete the entire race trail and comply with the rules, including checkpoint requirements. All teams must follow the trail as marked.
  - b. A driver may receive assistance from another contestant in recovering their team.
  - c. The driver may not check in at a checkpoint with a dog missing and may not continue the race until the dog is found.
  - d. A driver who has lost their team may accept any assistance they can find.
4. Safety:
  - a. It is the driver’s responsibility to check for traffic at road crossings. Every attempt will be made to secure these crossings. Toward the end of the race, however, when teams are spread out over a several hour stretch, it is likely that some crossings could be unattended. Occasionally, other situations could result in unattended crossings at other times during the race.



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- b. Always use your head lamp to signal snow machines while traveling at night. During daylight hours, travel can be more challenging as snow machines will not be able to see the light of your headlamp. Be cautious.
5. Cutoff Times:
- a. Cutoff times for departure from checkpoint(s) may be calculated based on the following guide:
    - i. Teams must remain competitive with the rest of the field. The RIC can deem teams non-competitive, using this guideline if circumstances call for it.
    - ii. Cut-off times may be altered due to extenuating circumstances as directed by the RIC. These times are calculated for ample rest and allow for completion of the race. Historically, teams who have not left within this window of time have not finished the race.

### L. WEATHER AND TRAIL CONDITIONS

1. The race will continue under all but the most severe trail and weather conditions. Drivers must be prepared to run in cold, windstorms, rain and over bare ground if necessary.
2. In the event of questionable trail conditions, the Board of Directors will decide whether to postpone, modify the course, or cancel no less than seven (7) days before the race.
3. A panel consisting of the RIC and the Race Coordinator assume responsibility for any further postponement, alteration of starting location, or cancellation. The primary consideration will be the safety and well-being of the dogs, not the comfort of the drivers.

### IV. AWARDS PRESENTATION

All drivers finishing the race must be present at the Awards Banquet. Failure to appear will result in forfeiture of any winnings.

### V. REFUNDS

Refunding of entry fees will be granted upon written request by the musher as follows: Membership fees will be retained by the corporation. Refunds will be calculated based on entry fee minus the membership fee. 80% of entry fee will be refunded until December 1, 2023, 50% of entry fee will be refunded until January 15, 2024. No refunds will be granted after January 15, 2024. In the event of race postponement or cancellation, a refund will be offered. All refunds will be issued by check.



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## VI. BIBS

Drivers are required to always wear their race bibs on the outside of their outer clothing on the trail, from the beginning of the race through the finish. Please be cognizant of the fact that sponsors of the Beargrease paid for these bibs. The more exposure we can provide for the businesses that support the Beargrease the better the opportunities to attract additional sponsors and consequently increase the race purse in future years. Your consideration is appreciated.

## VII. CLAIMS

Each driver agrees to hold John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon, Inc., race sponsors and other contributors (sponsors and contributors of the Corporation as distinguished from sponsors of any individual driver) harmless from any claim or demand based on any alleged action or inaction by the driver, his dogs, agents or others acting on their behalf. The driver also agrees to release John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon, Inc., race sponsors and agents and employees from any claim or demand resulting from injury to the driver, their dogs, or their property. Further, John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon, Inc. has the unqualified and unrestricted authority to authorize race sponsors to photograph and otherwise collect information about the race and all participants therein and to use such photographs and information for advertising, public relations or other publicity purposes.

Each driver shall sign all documents as may be requested by the Corporation to evidence the foregoing. These documents will be executed at registration. Any driver who does not sign the documents requested by the Corporation will not be allowed to participate in the race.

**OFFICIAL POLICY STATEMENT:** Upon request by a musher or handler, a member of the Veterinary Team can be available for continued care and treatment of dogs after the finish of the race and until the dogs or team leaves Duluth.

**OFFICIAL POLICY STATEMENT:** The John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon Drivers Meeting gives mushers the opportunity to discuss any problems or concerns that may have arisen during the race. To continually improve the Beargrease, it is critical to receive feedback from all race participants. The Drivers Meeting time and location will be announced at the Drivers Pre Race Meeting (typically one (1) hour prior to the Awards Banquet). The Drivers meeting shall consist of past Marathon finishers, and current year Marathon Mushers. Voting will take place for a Musher Representative at that time. Musher Representatives are members of the Beargrease Board of Directors.

**GOOD LUCK TO ALL!**