

FAQ's – Digital Tattoos

What is a TRPB Digital Tattoo?

A digital tattoo indicates that a Thoroughbred Racing Protective Bureau (TRPB) technician has authenticated the identity of a horse by virtue of an in-person inspection that includes scanning the Thoroughbred's microchip, comparing markings and photos from The Jockey Club database and uploading updated digital photographs to the breed registry.

Why is the TRPB introducing the so-called digital tattoo?

With wireless technology, two-factor authentication (scanning the microchip and sharing updated photos of horses of racing age) provides a superior form of identification and further ensures integrity.

When will this change take place?

In keeping with a model rule adopted by the Association of Racing Commissioners International (ARCI), the digital tattoo system will be implemented by January 1, 2020. The model rule states that the racing secretary shall ensure all Thoroughbred horses entered to race that were foaled in 2018 or thereafter have a TRPB Digital Tattoo. [This Digital Tattoo shall indicate that the Thoroughbred Racing Protective Bureau has confirmed the identity of the horse and uploaded updated digital photographs to the breed registry database.]

What horses will this effect?

Starting January 1, 2020, any Thoroughbred making a first lifetime start in a recognized pari-mutuel race, that has not been previously tattooed, will need to have the TRPB Digital Tattoo in order to be correctly identified in the paddock and permitted to race.

Who will be doing the digital tattoo and where will it be done?

The TRPB employs 56 technicians throughout the United States and Canada who will be responsible for applying the digital tattoo, which is an electronic validation of the horse's identity, to the horse's certificate of foal registration located in the horse's database

What does an owner need to do before his/her Thoroughbred receives the digital tattoo?

The owner must ensure that his or her Thoroughbred has been microchipped and registered with The Jockey Club. The TRPB technician will collect the standard TRPB tattoo fee when he or she inspects the horse and upon confirmation of identity, applies the digital tattoo.

How will a horse identifier at the racetrack access a digital tattoo?

Horse identifiers will use a microchip scanner and a tablet that provides electronic foal papers and the pictures of the horse recently uploaded by the TRPB technician who is providing the digital tattoo.

What officials will have access to the digital tattoo?

Regulatory officials, racing secretaries, horse identification personnel, and stewards may have credentialed access to The Jockey Club Registry horse identification webpage.

Does TRPB recommend any particular scanners or tablets?

The TRPB recommends a Datamars Omni Bluetooth Scanner and a Samsung Galaxy Tablet.

Where can I learn more about microchipping and registering a foal?

The Jockey Club has produced and made available a three-minute instructional video that illustrates the implantation of microchips, which became a condition of foal registration starting with foals born in 2017 or later. The video, and other information, is available at registry.jockeyclub.com.

Where can I learn more about the introduction of the digital tattoo?

The [TRPB website](#) will feature additional information during the rollout of the digital tattoo. Questions may be directed to Emma Smith of the TRPB at (410) 398-2261, Ext. 248.