

## **2024 Kuskokwim 300 Race Rules**

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.

1. The race begins in Bethel, Alaska at 8:00 PM on Friday, January 26, 2024.
2. K300 Membership is required to participate in K300 purse races. Annual membership costs \$100 and must be paid in addition to the K300 entry fee. Additionally, the membership fee covers entry to all local races of the 2023-24 season. The membership fee is non-refundable.
3. Registration for the 2023 K300 will open on Monday, October 9, 2023. Mushers who register from October 9 up until December 31, 2023 will pay an entry fee of \$400. Mushers who register by December 31, attend the musher meeting on Thursday, January 25 and who start the race will be eligible for a full refund. Any musher who registers on January 1, 2024 or later will pay a non-refundable entry fee of \$800. Any entry submitted the Monday prior to the race or later will require board approval. The musher must be designated at the time of entry. A substitute musher may replace the designated musher any time before the pre-race meeting if they race with dogs from the same kennel. Substitution after that time is subject to Race Marshal approval.
4. Racers will select their starting position in the race based on the order of registration.
5. A Kuskokwim 300 entrant who wishes to switch to the Akiak Dash may do so at any time up until the musher's meeting (Thursday, January 25<sup>th</sup>), 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.
6. Racers must register by signing in with the official checker at each designated checkpoint and declaring how many dogs will be dropped at designated dog drops.
7. Racers must follow the marked and/or broken race trail. Leaving the marked and/or broken trail is not allowed. Racers may not travel on the truck road except in the rare case that the marked race trail is on the truck road.
8. 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.
9. Each racer must be present at the pre-race meeting and the drawing for positions on Thursday, January 25, 2023 and the post-race mushers' meeting and awards banquet, to be held on Monday, January 29<sup>th</sup>.
10. Racers must provide as many handlers as are required to keep their teams under control at the starting point. In the event of poor trail conditions racers may be required to take additional steps to control their team at the start. Any racer may use a sled or snow machine for control at the start for as far as deemed appropriate by the racer. Racers must start in their assigned position and at

their assigned time. In addition, racers must wear any bib or banner provided by the Race Committee at the starting line.

11. 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.

12. Racers must begin the race with no more than 12 dogs and no fewer than 7 dogs and complete the race with no fewer than 5 dogs. At no time may a team travel with less than 5 dogs in harness and attached to the gang line. No dogs are to be added to a team after leaving the starting line. Each dog must wear an identification tag to be provided by the Race Committee.

13. All dogs are subject to a mandatory veterinary check at any time prior to, during, or after the race. Dogs not fit to begin or continue the race may be removed from the race at the discretion of the Race Veterinarian. The Race Veterinarian may also require a racer to delay their team at a checkpoint if the veterinarian believes dogs in the team require additional rest. No injectable substances may be used on any dog at any point during the race.

14. Unsafe or inhumane treatment of dogs is not permitted. Whips may not be carried or used during the race. 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. Any racer who appears without a suitable sled bag will be fined \$200.

15. 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. Racers will be charged for transportation of dropped dogs back to Bethel. The fee will be \$75.00 each dog dropped in Aniak or Kalskag and \$50.00 for each dog dropped at Tuluksak. 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. Racers may not sign in at a checkpoint unless all dogs in their team which left the previous checkpoint are present. Dropped dogs may not be put back in the team. Each dog dropped must have a cable neckline attached to its collar. Necklines may be purchased in Bethel. The necklines must be no more than 14 inches in length and capable of snapping at one end. The Race Committee will provide dog food and transportation to Bethel for all dropped dogs. Racers must make arrangements for pick-up and care of dogs returned to Bethel. The Race Committee accepts no legal responsibility for dropped dogs. Dogs not removed from the holding area in Bethel 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 more than 3 days.

16. 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 25, in order to be eligible for free delivery to the food drops. The Race Committee will not be responsible for food delivered before or after the scheduled time. The Race Committee will provide straw at Tuluksak, Kalskag and Aniak at no charge to the racers. Racers must make their own arrangements for the return of any equipment left at the checkpoint. Checkpoint volunteers and the Race Committee are not responsible for returning gear or food left in the checkpoints by racers.

17. Food and gear drops are at the Tuluksak, Kalskag and Aniak checkpoints. Racers may transport food or equipment to those locations at their own expense if desired. Food and gear drops must be completed prior to the start of the race. Food and gear must be stored at the checkpoints and transported from the checkpoint solely by the racer. Racers, in emergency situations only, may use food and gear transported to checkpoints after the start of the race. 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. Any food or equipment used outside of the designated food drops must be hauled during the race by the dog team using it. 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.

18. 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 checkpoints. 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. Racers may leave prepared food or water at checkpoints during the race, but only at locations approved by a race official or checker. Racers may accept hospitality at a location where such hospitality is generally available to all racers. Hospitality includes food and beverage, sleeping quarters, and bathroom facilities. Wake-up calls are not permitted - racers may not ask for or accept wake-up calls from checkpoint personnel or spectators. Racers may not accept hospitality in other locations.

19. Prize Money: The 2024 Total Purse is \$185,000 dispersed over 25 places. An exact breakdown of payments may be found on the K300 website, [www.k300.org](http://www.k300.org).

20. The highest finishing rookie racer 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 2024 Kuskokwim 300 race. Racers wishing to compete for the Rookie Award must identify themselves at the pre-race meeting.

21. Motorized vehicles may not lead or pace teams unless at the direction of the race officials. The race officials include the Race Marshall, the Race Head Veterinarian and any race judges. All officials will be identified to the racers at the pre-race meeting.

22. Each racer must carry as required equipment, at all times, a sleeping bag and an ax. Each racer must start the race with four dog booties for each dog. Additionally, every sled will be equipped with a GPS tracker which must be carried at all times during the race.

23. Each racer must execute a Release of Liability before entering the race. Each racer must show proof that dogs in their team have been vaccinated for rabies.

24. 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, 2023.

25. Racers must take six (6) combined layover hours at the checkpoints of Kalskag and/or Aniak. A layover begins when the racer declares their intention to the checker and signs in. A

layover ends when the racer signs out. Layovers may be taken at Kalskag or Aniak on the outgoing or incoming trail. A racer may cancel a layover, once declared, if the racer elects to postpone the layover time until a later checkpoint. Each team is subject to a time adjustment to compensate for the staggered start wherever the team takes its first layover. 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 on the incoming trail. 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.

26. Each team is subject to a 4-hour mandatory layover at Tuluksak on the return trail during which time the Race Veterinarian may 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.

27. Checkpoints in the 2024 race include Tuluksak, Kalskag, Aniak, Kalskag, Tuluksak, and Bethel. Racers are not required to stop at Tuluksak (outbound) but must identify themselves to checkers as they pass through. At all other checkpoints racers are required to sign in and out with checkers.

28. All litter must be properly disposed of at checkpoints and may not be left along the trail.

29. Any racer who becomes separated from their team may use whatever means are 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.

30. 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 to the best of their ability for a maximum of one minute or until the other team has passed, whichever occurs first. The passed team must remain behind at least 15 minutes before demanding the trail. The passing rule does not apply in No Man's Land, which will be identified during the pre-race meeting.

31. Racers must utilize the same sled throughout the entire race, except in the case of a broken sled. No sleds may be shipped prior to the race to any of the checkpoints along the trail. 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.

32. Racers 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. At all race functions, conduct detrimental to the Kuskokwim 300 Race Committee, its sponsors or its volunteers is subject to penalty.

33. 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. The decision of the race officials shall be final.

34. Kuskokwim 300 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. The Race Committee Board of Directors will review violations and determine appropriate sanctions. See Rule 39 for the list of possible penalties.

35. 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 violations of the Personal Conduct rule and determining sanctions for those violations.

36. Racers who have outstanding accounts with the K300 will have their prize money adjusted accordingly. 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.

37. Racers who are being provided musher housing for the race can only expect housing to be provided for themselves and their dog team and one handler. The K300 will not arrange housing for any additional handlers or family members.

38. 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 second 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.

39. 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.

**Race officials may administer penalties 1 through 5. The Race Committee may administer penalty 6.**

*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](mailto:k300@k300.org) or at Box 3001, Bethel, Alaska 99559.*