

2026 Akiak Dash Race Rules

The Akiak Dash is a sled dog race from Bethel, Alaska to Akiak, Alaska and back.

1. The Akiak Dash begins in Bethel, Alaska at 12:00 PM on Saturday, January 24, 2026.
2. K300 Race Committee membership, for a fee of \$100, is required to participate in K300 purse races. There is no other entry fee for the Akiak Dash. Teams may enter in the name of the owner, sponsor, musher, or any other name the entrant chooses. 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. Substitution after that time is subject to Race Marshal approval.
3. There will be race officials at the halfway point but mushers are not required to stop.
4. Mushers must follow the marked and/or broken race trail. Leaving the marked and/or broken trail is not allowed. Racers may not use the truck road except in the rare case the marked race trail is on the truck road.
5. A team finishes the race when the nose of any dog in the team crosses the finish line in Bethel.
6. Each musher must be present at the pre-race meeting on Thursday, January 22 at 4:00 PM at K300 Race Headquarters (The Longhouse Hotel Conference Room).
7. Mushers must provide as many handlers as are required to keep their teams under control at the starting point. Each team may be required to carry a handler from the starting line to a point determined by race officials. Mushers must wear any bib or banner provided by the Race Committee throughout the race. The race will begin with a mass start.
8. Mushers must begin the race with no more than 8 dogs and no fewer than 5 dogs.
9. All dogs may be subject to a veterinary check at any time prior to or after the race. Dogs not fit to begin the race may be removed from the race at the discretion of the Race Veterinarian. No injectable substances may be used on any dog at any point during the race.
10. 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.
11. Mushers may not drop dogs during the Akiak Dash.

12. Any food to be given to dogs during the race must be carried on that team's sled.
13. Mushers may not accept help in the care or feeding of their dogs at any point along the trail.
14. Prize Money: The 2026 Total Purse is \$50,000 dispersed over 15 places. An exact breakdown of the payment can be found on the K300 website, www.k300.org.
15. The highest finishing rookie musher will receive recognition. A rookie is defined as any musher who has not competed in a 65 mile race or longer prior to the 2026 Akiak Dash. Mushers wishing to compete for the rookie award must identify themselves at the pre-race meeting.
16. Each musher must carry as required equipment, at all times, a sleeping bag and axe. At the start, each musher must have 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.
17. Each musher must execute a Release of Liability before entering the race. Each musher must show proof that dogs in his team have been vaccinated for rabies. It is recommended that all dogs also have distemper and parvo vaccinations before competing in the Akiak Dash.
18. No musher under the age of 14 may enter the race, unless they have previously applied for and received approval based on their qualifications and experience from the Race Committee. Application for such approval must be made prior to January 21, 2026.
19. There is no official checkpoint and no required rest in the Akiak Dash.
20. Litter may not be left on the trail.
21. Any musher who becomes separated from their team may use whatever means possible to recover his 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.
22. When any team approaches within 50 feet of another team, the team behind has the immediate right of way upon demand. The musher 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 to mushers at the race meeting.
23. Mushers 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.

24. Any observed violations of the Race Rules must be reported to a race official within 12 hours of the time that the musher registering to protest crosses the finish line. The decision of the race officials shall be final.

25. Mushers who have any outstanding accounts with the K-300 will have their prize money adjusted accordingly.

28. Rule violations subject to 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.

Penalties 1 through 5 may be administered by race officials. Penalty 6 may be administered by the Race Committee.

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. Mushers might also expect temperatures as high as 35 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 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Part of the trail will be in lightly traveled areas and mushers who lose the trail must be prepared for survival in such an emergency situation. The trail will be extensively marked and the progress of mushers will be closely monitored, however, weather may prevent a musher from being helped in the event he is 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 in Bethel or at Box 3001, Bethel, Alaska 99559.