



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10007

EXECUTIVE ORDER No. 64

CARRIAGE HORSE INSPECTIONS AND EXAMINATIONS

December 31, 2025

WHEREAS, urban carriage horses face a range of health and welfare concerns due to the conditions of city life, including exposure to traffic fumes, noise, hard pavement, and extreme heat, which can in turn lead to chronic respiratory problems, joint damage, heat stress, and psychological distress; and

WHEREAS, there have also been multiple reported incidents in recent months and years of carriage horses apparently suffering, collapsing, and even dying on city streets, creating distress for the horses and their caregivers, as well as for the general public, regardless of the cause of such incidents; and

WHEREAS, horses working in the carriage industry are licensed and regulated by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH); and

WHEREAS, section 17-330 of the Administrative Code outlines requirements for the licensing, operation, and maintenance of working horses in New York City, with the purpose of protecting the health, safety and well-being of such horses, sets forth provisions for inspections and examinations of horses and their facilities by DOHMH and its authorized representatives, and authorizes DOHMH to order a horse's removal from work when a horse is lame or suffers from a physical condition or illness making the horse unsuitable for work; and

WHEREAS, on September 17, 2025, I issued Executive Order No. 56, which, among other things, directed DOHMH to conduct inspections as necessary, consistent with applicable law, to ensure the health, safety and well-being of carriage horses in New York City; and

WHEREAS, DOHMH engaged a qualified independent equine veterinarian to conduct stable inspections initially focused upon the examination of multiple older carriage horses; and

WHEREAS, the veterinarian informed DOHMH that, in his professional experience, the most important part of the clinical examination is the locomotive examination, which includes viewing the horse at a trot, because trotting is part of the horse's work requirements, and is an integral part of the standard locomotive examination adopted by the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP); and

WHEREAS, the veterinarian also informed DOHMH that, in his professional experience, the second most important factor for establishing a sound locomotive examination is to confirm through bloodwork that the horse being evaluated is not on any painkillers that would mask its unsoundness, and such bloodwork is commonly performed on working horses; and

WHEREAS, on December 8 and 9, 2025, the veterinarian conducted examinations of 12 carriage horses, constituting a sample of horses from all three stables housing these carriage horses, all of which are among the oldest working in the industry in this City, and was unable to obtain the cooperation necessary to conduct examinations of two additional carriage horses whose owners did not make their horses available for examination or failed to appear for the examination; and

WHEREAS, nearly all of the horses so examined exhibited physical conditions that could bear upon the evaluation of their soundness, including scarring and related physical traits observed and documented by the examining independent veterinarian; and

WHEREAS, the owners of the 12 carriage horses examined on December 8 and 9, 2025, each refused to permit the veterinarian engaged by DOHMH to examine the horses at a trot or to conduct bloodwork to identify medications that could mask unsoundness; and

WHEREAS, in order to have a fuller understanding of the health, safety and well-being of the horses working in the carriage horse industry, and particularly those older horses that had been the subject of his examinations, the veterinarian's expert opinion was that an examination that lacks a trotting evaluation and bloodwork analysis provides an incomplete understanding of the horse's soundness; and

NOW, THEREFORE, by the power vested in me as Mayor of the City of New York, it is hereby ordered:

Section 1. I direct DOHMH to notify all licensed horse owners, including the owners of the horses initially identified for the examinations conducted by DOHMH on December 8 and 9, 2025, examined at that time or not made available for examination despite being noticed for examination, that, consistent with subdivision m of section 17-330 of the Administrative Code, each carriage horse owner must permit a licensed equine veterinarian acting on behalf of DOHMH to conduct an examination to fully understand the physical condition of the horse, which shall include examination of each horse's gait at a trot, and bloodwork or such other elements as determined by DOHMH to be appropriate to assess the horse's suitability for work. DOHMH shall issue such notices by January 9, 2026, and owners shall respond to DOHMH by January 16, 2026, to coordinate such examinations in accordance with such notices and confirm they will make their horses available for such examinations, including trotting, and bloodwork or such other elements as determined by DOHMH to be appropriate. Such examinations will then be conducted in February 2026 or as soon thereafter as practicable. If any owners refuse or continue to refuse to permit such examinations, including trotting, and bloodwork or such other elements as determined by DOHMH to be appropriate, DOHMH shall make the determination as DOHMH deems warranted to suspend their licenses and implement individual removal orders, pursuant to Article 5 of the New York City Health Code and subdivision m of section 17-330 of the Administrative

Code respectively, until such time as such owners permit such examinations or their disputes are resolved in administrative or judicial proceedings.

§ 2. I further direct DOHMH to review the results of the initial phase of the current inspection program and the examinations required pursuant to section 1 of this Order, and to determine any basis for individual removal orders it deems warranted, pursuant to subdivision m of section 17-330 of the Administrative Code.

§ 3. I further direct DOHMH to determine and then take any appropriate actions it deems warranted, including the promulgation of rules pursuant to subdivision a of section 17-330 of the Administrative Code, in order to codify a systematic, industry-wide inspection regime, with appropriate remedies for obstruction of inspections and findings of mistreatment of horses, based on the precedent of the examinations conducted in December 2025 and pursuant to section 1 of this Order.

§ 4. This Order shall take effect immediately.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Adams", written over a horizontal line.

Eric Adams  
Mayor