



US Equestrian Federation

COVID-19 Action Plan

Requirements and Recommendations for Operating USEF-Licensed Competitions in the COVID-19 Environment

Effective May 05, 2020

Revised May 12, 2020





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A. Purpose & Scope

The US Equestrian Federation is dedicated to ensuring the safety and welfare of horses and all participants. As we begin to navigate the “new normal” at USEF competitions and events, we have centralized the requirements and recommendations from public health experts that will be in effect at USEF competitions. While there is no way to eliminate all risks related to COVID-19, the following requirements and recommendations are aimed to decrease the risk of COVID-19 infection. These requirements and recommendations are intended to ensure USEF organizers and participants are following the most recent guidance from federal, state, and other public health officials. As that guidance continues to change, the content of this action plan will be modified to reflect those changes.

These requirements and recommendations for operating USEF-licensed competitions are in effect immediately and until further notice, however, they are subject to modification as the guidance from the government and public health officials’ changes.

We are all in this together and the situation requires that each and every one of us take personal responsibility for the health, safety, and welfare of ourselves, our family members, and our colleagues and peers in the competition environment. Whether participant, competition organizer and staff, or vendor and support personnel, we each need to exercise caution, take precautionary measures, be accountable, and utilize good judgement at all times while interacting with one another at competitions.

US Equestrian will continue to monitor the situation, consult with you and make adjustments as warranted. For the latest information regarding the outbreak, please visit the [USEF Coronavirus Disease Resources and Updates](#) web page. For additional tools and resources specific to competition organizers, please visit the [Competition Safety and Biosecurity](#) webpage and reference the Additional Resources page at the end of this document.

****Once USEF receives notification of the FEI’s Guidelines, we will issue any necessary updates to this protocol document.**



B. Key Contacts – for Competition Organizers & Participants

Subject	Contact	Email	Phone
Competitions <i>(including licensing, scheduling, modifications, date changes, COVID-19 incident reporting, etc.)</i>	Katlynn Sacco	ksacco@usef.org	(859) 225-6981
Compliance <i>(including any questions related to the protocols outlined in this document)</i>	Debbie Saliling	dsaliling@usef.org	(859) 225-6930
Licensed Officials	Alina Brazzil	abrazzil@usef.org	(859) 225-2044
Drugs & Medications	Stephen Schumacher	sschumacher@usef.org	(859) 225-2075

Additional Resources for Organizers & Participants

Subject	Contact	Email	Phone
FEI Sport	Will Connell	wconnell@usef.org	(859) 225-7682
National Sport - Breed or Discipline	Terri Dolan	tdolan@usef.org	(859) 225-6957
Marketing & Communication	Vicki Lowell	vlowell@usef.org	(859) 225-2024
Finance	David Harris	dharris@usef.org	(859) 225-6935
Information Technology	Justin Provost	jprovost@usef.org	(859) 225-6905
General Counsel	Sonja Keating	skeating@usef.org	(859) 225-2045
CEO	Bill Moroney	bmoroney@usef.org	(859) 225-6912



C. Definitions

CDC – Centers for Disease Control. All activity that occurs at a USEF-licensed competition must be conducted in accordance with CDC guidance protocols.

Competition Area/Schooling Area - For purposes of this document, any reference to competition area and/or schooling area includes rings, arenas, fields, cross-country fields, and any other areas designated for competition, schooling or exercise purposes.

Competition Organizer – For purposes of this document, Competition Organizer includes any individual or entity that acts as competition manager, licensee, and includes any designee(s) with management authority over the competition and its operations.

Competition Staff – For purposes of this document, competition staff includes any individual who is employed or contracted by competition management. Competition staff includes, but is not limited to, ring crews, jump crews, stable crews, competition office staff, medical personnel, awards crew, in-gate personnel, paddock managers, announcers, licensed officials, scribes, etc.

COVID-19 Incident or Outbreak – *For purposes of this document, an incident is defined as a report of any COVID-19 related event or occurrence including, but not limited to, an individual who is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. An outbreak is defined as multiple COVID-19 related incidents or occurrences.*

Face Masks – For purposes of this document, any reference to face masks includes cloth face coverings, N-95, KN-95 and surgical masks.

***The CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. Cloth face coverings should fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face, be secured with ties or ear loops, include multiple layers of fabric, allow for breathing without restriction and be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape.

Isolation – Separation of a person or group of people known or reasonably believed to be infected with a communicable disease and potentially infectious, from those who are not infected to prevent the spread of the communicable disease.

Participants – For purposes of this document, any reference to Participants includes owners, lessees, riders, athletes, parents, vaulters, drivers, trainers, coaches, grooms, longeurs, navigators, personal care assistants (PCAs), and any other required support personnel/staff that are essential for providing care to the horses and/or the athletes.

PPE – Personal Protection Equipment



Definitions - *continued*

Quarantine – Separation of a person or group of people, known or reasonably believed to have been exposed to a communicable disease but are not yet symptomatic, from others who have not yet been exposed, to prevent the possible spread of the communicable disease.

Social Distancing – Defined as avoiding congregate settings or concentration of individuals in a single area and maintaining a minimum of six feet from others unless absolutely impossible.

Public/Spectators – For purposes of this document, spectators refers to the general public, fans, or any individuals who are not directly involved in the competition by way of being a participant, a member of competition staff, a service provider (e.g. media or photographer), volunteer, or other support personnel (farrier, veterinarian, etc.).

Service Providers – For purposes of this document, service providers are those individuals or entities who provide direct services contracted by competition management. Service providers include but are not limited to vendors, caterers, feed suppliers, photographers, videographers, media, cleaning service providers (including portable restroom service), and waste disposal personnel.

Support Personnel - For purposes of this document, support personnel are those individuals employed or contracted by Participants who are essential for providing care to horses and/or participants. Support personnel includes, but is not limited to, veterinarians, farriers, equine therapists, and braiders, etc.

Symptoms – Symptoms of COVID-19 include, but are not limited to, subjective or measured fever, cough, and shortness of breath and/or difficulty breathing. Additional symptoms may include sore throat, muscle pain, headache, chills/shaking, or newly developed loss of taste or smell.

Temperature Monitoring – The daily (or alternatively defined period) non-contact body temperature testing utilizing technology that scans forehead temperature (temporal or infrared thermometer) to measure an individual’s body temperature to verify no fever is present. For purposes of this document, a fever is defined as an elevated body temperature of 99.5°F (37.5° C) or higher. *This definition of fever utilizes a temperature threshold slightly lower than in CDC guidelines, but this more stringent temperature threshold prevails as the requirement.*

WHO – World Health Organization. All activity that occurs at a USEF-licensed competition must be conducted in accordance with WHO recommendations.



Mandatory Requirements for Competition Organizers

D. General

All USEF-licensed competitions must comply with all applicable federal, state and local regulations, requirements and orders as well as [WHO recommendations](#) and [CDC guidelines](#) as they relate to mass gatherings and sporting events. Additionally, competition organizers must implement the USEF requirements listed on the following pages, and are very strongly encouraged to implement all recommended best practices contained herein or similar practices for mitigating risks related to the COVID-19 virus.

These requirements are in effect immediately and until further notice, however, they are subject to revisions as the COVID-19 virus environment changes.

USEF Competition Organizers must complete the [WHO Mass Gathering for Sports Risk Assessment Tool](#) and work with state and local governments and public health authorities prior to the start of the competition to help determine risks and mitigation measures. Competition Organizers are encouraged to consult their insurers and legal counsel as well.

If competition organizers have any questions, please contact Katlynn Sacco by email at ksacco@usef.org or by phone at (859) 225-6981.

E. Agreements

- **For currently licensed competitions:** Execute the Addendum to the USEF Licensing Agreement (provided by USEF) by the required deadline prior to the start of the competition.
- Ensure that all participants, including licensed officials and volunteers, provide emergency contact information and execute an updated [Waiver and Release of Liability, Assumption of Risk and Indemnity Agreement](#) required by USEF, as a condition of participation. Please ensure use of the updated form for competitions starting on May 6, 2020, or after.
- Create an Emergency Response Plan specific to a COVID-19 incident or outbreak that includes local medical resources and addresses outbreak protocols including medical evaluation, isolation and quarantine, and reporting.
 - If a COVID-19 incident or outbreak occurs, USEF, all participants and competition staff must be notified.
 - Provide training for competition staff, volunteers and licensed officials regarding all procedures and requirements associated with the Plan.
 - Ensure vendors and service providers are included in the communication and training requirements associated with the Plan.
 - Disseminate a copy of the Plan to all applicable competition personnel



Mandatory Requirements for Competition Organizers - continued

- Inform all participants, officials and competition personnel of protocols and safeguards implemented for their protection against spreading COVID-19 by providing them with a list of such measures.

F. Access

- Require temperature monitoring for volunteers, officials, competition staff and service providers once daily prior to entering the competition grounds. Anyone with a temperature ~~below~~ **of** 99.5° F (37.5° C) **or higher** may **not** enter the facility.
- Anyone who:
 - exhibits [COVID-19 symptoms](#),
 - **has tested positive for COVID-19 within last two weeks, or**
 - ***has been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 within the last two weeks***cannot enter the competition grounds.

****Exception: Healthcare personnel who have treated patients using appropriate medical-grade PPE during the course of performing professional duties are exempted from this restriction.***

- Refer to Appendix A for Self-Isolation/Self-Quarantine Directives in the event a person has a fever or exhibits other symptoms of COVID-19.

**Please reference Participant requirements regarding temperature monitoring on page 10 for Participant responsibilities.

- Notify USEF, all participants and competition staff if a person who was present on the competition grounds tests positive for COVID-19 within 14 days of the conclusion of competition. **Direct USEF reports to ksacco@usef.org.**
- Require a facemask or face covering for all staff, officials, volunteers, service providers and participants **in any setting where there is a possibility of being within six feet of any other individual, and when** not mounted on a horse.

*****A participant cannot be disqualified or penalized for wearing a facemask or face covering while competing.***

G. Signage

- **Post signage that displays all applicable federal, state and local regulations, requirements and orders as well as [WHO recommendations](#) and [CDC guidelines](#) as they relate to mass gatherings and sporting events in effect at the competition.**
- Post signage at all entrances to the competition grounds which identifies the symptoms of COVID-19 and states the following:
 - To protect others from possible transmission of the virus, anyone who exhibits [COVID-19 symptoms](#) or has been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 within the last two weeks **(exception, healthcare personnel who have treated patients using appropriate medical-grade PPE during the course of**



Mandatory Requirements for Competition Organizers - continued

performing professional duties), cannot enter the competition grounds. These individuals are encouraged to contact their health care provider immediately for further medical advice and must obtain documented clearance from their health care provider before entering the competition grounds. Participants must assume responsibility for themselves and their own staff (e.g. grooms, assistants, etc.).

- *Sample poster:* [Symptoms of Coronavirus Disease](#)

- Post signage throughout the competition grounds (i.e. competition office, competition and schooling areas, barns, etc.) which includes recommendations about good hygiene along with informing participants and others about ways to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission.
 - *Sample Poster:* [CDC – Stop the Spread of Germs](#)

H. Social Distancing & Limiting Entries and/or Stabling

Enforce social distancing requirements throughout the competition grounds at all times.

- Prohibit the public, spectators, and non-essential personnel such as guests from being on the competition grounds until further notice.
- Organize horse arrivals and departures to limit contact between people
- Arrange judges' and other officials' areas to comply with social distancing requirements.
- Restrict competition office access to essential personnel only, configure the space and limit the number of office staff to comply with social distancing, and limit the number of participants who can enter the competition office at one time (e.g., schedule check-in/check-out times)
- Competition Organizers must notify USEF if entries are to be limited.
 - The FEI will determine whether entries may be limited in FEI classes.
 - Competition Organizers may limit entries to the competition and/or to specific sections/classes within the competition to manage the concentration of horses and people.
 - Regardless of the scope of the limitation, the limiting of entries must be done on a first come, first served basis and relevant information must be posted on the competition website or in the prize list, as well as at the competition office and at each competition area (i.e. ring, arena, field, cross country course).
 - Competition management must also communicate the system used for notifying and "wait-listing" individuals who submit entries after the available spaces are filled, and the method must be equally applied to all potential participants
- Configure stabling to comply with social distancing requirements in order to manage concentration of horses and people.



Mandatory Requirements for Competition Organizers – continued

- Competition Organizers must notify USEF if stabling is to be limited.
 - Regardless of the scope of the limitation, the limiting of stabling must be done on a first come, first served basis and relevant information must be posted on the competition website or in the prize list.
 - Competition Organizer must also communicate the system used for notifying and “wait-listing” individuals who submit stabling requests after the available spaces are filled, and the method must be equally applied to all potential participants.
- Competition Organizers must publish their policy regarding entry and stall refunds within the prizelist and/or on the competition website.

I. Enforcement Authority

USEF Stewards and Technical Delegates will inform individuals when they are not in compliance with the regulations and requirements in effect at the competition and shall report such situations to the Competition Organizer. The Competition Organizer and/or a USEF Steward/Technical Delegate has the authority under GR 702.1 and GR914 to remove from the facility any person who does not comply with the regulations and requirements in effect at the competition. Stewards/Technical Delegates must report the removal of any person from competition grounds for non-compliance with regulations and requirements in effect at the competition in their Report to USEF. Removal of a person from the competition grounds must be documented by the USEF Steward/Technical Delegate in their Report to USEF.

- Stewards/TDs are required to report compliance on the part of Competition Organizers with respect to the mandatory requirements listed above.
 - Did the Competition Organizer confirm completion of the [WHO Mass Gathering for Sports Risk Assessment Tool](#)?
 - Did Competition Organizer adhere to the requirements listed above in Sections D-H to the best of its abilities, including posting the required signage?

**The USEF Steward/TD Report will be updated to facilitate the ability to report this information.*



Mandatory Requirements for Participants

J. General

All USEF-licensed competitions must be held and comply with all applicable federal, state and local regulations, requirements and orders as well as [WHO recommendations](#) and [CDC guidelines](#) as they relate to mass gatherings and sporting events. Participants are required to comply with these and any additional Competition Organizer requirements at all times while present on competition grounds. Failure to do so may result in expulsion from the grounds.

These requirements are in effect immediately and until further notice, however, they are subject to revisions as the COVID-19 virus environment changes.

If participants have any questions, please contact Debbie Saliling by email at dsaliling@usef.org or by phone at (859) 225-6930.

K. Waiver/Release & Indemnity Agreement

Provide emergency contact information and execute an updated *Waiver and Release of Liability, Assumption of Risk and Indemnity Agreement* required by USEF, as a condition of participation. Please ensure use of the updated form provided by competition organizer.

L. Access

- Participants are required to self-monitor their temperature once daily prior to entering the competition grounds. Anyone with a temperature ~~below~~ **of 99.5° F (37.5° C) or higher** may **not** enter the facility.
- Anyone who:
 - exhibits [COVID-19 symptoms](#),
 - **has tested positive for COVID-19 within last two weeks, or**
 - ***has been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 within the last two weeks***cannot enter the competition grounds.

****Exception: Healthcare personnel who have treated patients using appropriate medical-grade PPE during the course of performing professional duties are exempted from this restriction.***

- Refer to Appendix A for CDC guidelines for self-isolation/quarantine directives in the event a person has a fever or exhibits other symptoms of COVID-19.
- Participants are required to wear a facemask or face covering when ***in a public setting where there is a possibility of being within six feet of other individuals, and when*** not mounted on a horse.

*****A participant may choose to wear a facemask or face covering when mounted on a horse and cannot be disqualified or penalized for doing so while competing.***



Mandatory Requirements for Competition Participants – *continued*

M. Social Distancing/Participation Protocols

- Comply with social distancing requirements at all times while on the competition grounds.
- Wash hands often and adhere to other sanitization practices throughout the day.



Recommended Best Practices for Competition Organizers

The following Recommended Best Practices have been provided to assist Competition Organizers with determining risks and developing measures to mitigate those risks. Please note these are not mandatory, however USEF strongly encourages their implementation.

N. General Considerations

- Consider limiting the number of entrances and exits to the venue to manage the number of individuals accessing the competition grounds.
- Communication – Use radio, phone and online communication methods as much as possible and communicate important information frequently throughout the competition grounds.
- VIP and other social areas are strongly discouraged unless social distancing requirements are enforced in accordance with all applicable federal, state and local regulations, requirements and orders as well as [WHO recommendations](#) and [CDC guidelines](#) as they relate to mass gatherings and sporting events.

O. Considerations for Facilities, Staff, Medical Personnel, Service Providers & Volunteers

- Cleaning/Sanitizing Locations
 - Provide hand sanitization stations with access to soap and water or alcohol based hand sanitizer at each competition area and schooling/warm up area.
 - Provide hand sanitizer to all officials, ring crew, office staff and maintenance staff.
 - Frequently sanitize surfaces touched by many: door handles, arena gates, wash racks and hoses, etc.
 - Ensure frequent cleaning and sanitizing of bathrooms, provide soap and water or alcohol based hand sanitizer in bathrooms.
 - Prohibit the use of public water fountains.
- Competition Office
 - Strongly encourage all competitors to complete entry forms, in their entirety, including having all requisite memberships in place, prior to entering competition office.
 - Strongly encourage that all entries, adds, scratches, feed & bedding orders, billing/invoicing are done electronically.
 - Install clear plastic, glass or other type of protective shield/barrier in front of office staff.
 - Provide hand sanitizer near the door.
 - Provide an 'in' door and an 'out' door, if possible.
 - Provide markers to delineate 6 feet spacing between people in the office and in any waiting lines (e.g., markers on floor).
 - Prepare and email competitor bills as early as possible.
 - Establish appointment times for checkout at the competition office.



Recommended Best Practices for Competition Organizers - continued

- Service Providers and Vendors
 - Advise any service providers (e.g. vendors, food-service, farrier, feed suppliers, waste disposal personnel) to take precautions in accordance with federal, state, local and facility regulations and CDC guidelines.
 - For onsite food-service, consider requesting provision of pre-packaged food only.

P. Competition, Schooling and Exercise Area Considerations

- Utilize posted orders of go and/or published ride times including online orders of go and ride times.
 - At venues with multiple competition areas, consider designating one area as primary where assigned times and/or orders of go take precedence.
- Consider scheduling course walks as necessary to comply with social distancing requirements (e.g., schedule small groups in separate sections).
- Utilize individual water bottles versus community water coolers.
- Limit and organize seating areas to comply with social distancing requirements.
- Restrict the number of people accompanying a horse to the competition area to those persons who are needed for safety or for achieving effective competition, but they all must comply with social distancing requirements.
- Schooling and exercise area provisions:
 - Provide monitors to ensure compliance with requirements and best practices.
 - Schooling jumps - Provide sanitizing items (spray bottles, wipes) at each competition arena and schooling/warm-up area and advise individuals to wear gloves while handling the jumps and to wipe down jump equipment after use.
 - Determine equine/human capacity in relation to the area and restrict access to a limited number in order to maintain social distancing requirements.
- In classes where participants compete collectively, ***the Competition Organizer must*** determine and communicate to participants, the maximum number of horses permitted in each competition area at one time based on the size of the competition areas and social distancing requirements.
 - Communicate with participants if classes will be divided and ***held as separate classes, or split and*** held in ***one*** or more ***than one*** section. ***For example:***
 - ***Classes may be divided into separate classes with each class receiving separate awards.***
 - ***Classes may be split into sections with the final section being comprised of the best entrants from each of the previous split sections with one set of awards given in the final section.***
- Consider utilizing technology for information transfer to mitigate the risk of virus spread by the manual transfer of paper (i.e. judge's cards, scoresheets, etc.).
- Create a method of giving ribbons and trophies that reduces or eliminates hand-to-hand contact.



Recommended Best Practices for Competition Organizers - continued

Q. Stabling Considerations

- Restrict access to the stabling areas to veterinarians, athletes, officials, grooms, trainers and other essential personnel.
- Remind all personnel in the stabling areas to comply with all best practices and guidelines in effect at the competition.
- Provide hand sanitization stations in the stabling area and encourage stable personnel to use frequently.



Recommended Best Practices for Participants

Although not mandatory, Participants are strongly encouraged to follow the Recommended Best Practices listed below at all times while present on the competition grounds.

R. Access & Monitoring Considerations

- Provide non-contact thermometers (e.g., temporal or infrared) to staff and require temperature monitoring throughout the day.
- Limit access to stabling area and competition grounds to essential personnel only; discourage multiple family members from accompanying owners and riders.
 - Consider having riders meet their horses at the competition or schooling areas or other pre-designated area to further limit contact in the stabling area.
 - Consider the use of mounting blocks to avoid one-on-one contact between riders and grooms/assistants.
- Provide adequate food and beverage supplies for your barn and your support staff for the duration of the competition to avoid unnecessary community exposure.

S. Cleaning & Sanitizing Considerations

- Provide hand sanitizer, gloves, masks, and other PPE deemed necessary to your barn staff and other personnel and encourage them to use these items on a regular basis.
- Do not mix equipment (tack, grooming supplies, lead shanks, etc.) and sanitize between each use.
- Regularly sanitize bikes/motorbikes/golf carts/car & truck door handles, stable doors, bucket handles, light switches, etc., and equipment including tack, grooming, feeding, stall cleaning materials, etc.

T. Scheduling Considerations

- Schedule competition days (ride times, schooling times, etc.) as efficiently as possible to minimize time spent on the competition grounds each day.



Additional Resources

U. Resources & Reference Tools

CDC (Centers for Disease Control)

[Symptoms of Coronavirus and treatment resources](#)

[Resources for Large Community Events and Mass Gatherings](#)

- [Q&A on Event Planning and COVID-19](#)
- [Guidance for Organizers - Mass Gatherings and Event Preparation](#)

Print Resources

- Poster – [Symptoms of Coronavirus Disease](#)
 - [Spanish Version](#)
- Poster/Fact Sheet - [What you should know about COVID-19 to protect yourself and others](#)
 - [Spanish Version](#)
- Poster – [Stop the Spread of Germs](#)
 - [Spanish Version](#)
- Poster – [STOP: Stay at home when you are sick!](#)
 - [Spanish Version](#)
- Poster/Fact Sheet – [Share Facts About COVID-19](#)
 - [Spanish Version](#)

Audio/Video Resources

- [Public Service Announcement Samples](#) for use by Organizers
- [Reference Videos](#)

Husch Blackwell

[State-by-State COVID-19 Resources](#)

USOPC (United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee)

[USOPC Sports Event Planning Considerations post-COVID-19](#)

[USOPC Return to Training Considerations post-COVID-19](#)

WHO (World Health Organization)

**[WHO Mass Gathering for Sports Risk Assessment Tool](#)

- [Risk Assessment Decision Tree](#)

** *Required for use by competition organizers*

[Technical Guidance: Points of Entry and Mass Gatherings](#)

- [Q&A on Mass Gatherings and COVID-19](#)
- [Key Planning Recommendations for Mass Gatherings](#)
- [Considerations for Sports Federations/Sport Event Organizers when planning mass gatherings](#)



APPENDIX A

Self-Isolation/Self-Quarantine Directives

If you...	Steps to take...
<p>If you or someone in your home might have been exposed</p>	<p>Self-Monitor</p> <p>Be alert for symptoms. Watch for fever, cough, or shortness of breath.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take your temperature if symptoms develop. • Practice social distancing. Maintain 6 feet of distance from others, and stay out of crowded places. • Follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop.
<p>If you...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19, or • Recently traveled from somewhere outside the U.S. or on a cruise ship or river boat 	<p>Steps to take...</p> <p>Self-Quarantine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check your temperature twice daily and watch for symptoms. • Stay home for 14 days and self-monitor • If possible, stay away from people who are high-risk for getting very sick from COVID-19.
<p>If you...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have been diagnosed with COVID-19, or • Are waiting for test results, or • Have symptoms such as cough, fever, or shortness of breath 	<p>Steps to take...</p> <p>Self-Isolate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay in a specific “sick room” or area and away from other people and animals. If possible, use a separate bathroom. • Read important information about caring for yourself or someone else who is sick.