

COVID-19

Guidelines

While there is no way to eliminate all risks related to COVID-19, the following recommendations are aimed to decrease the risks and are intended to help organizers and participants follow guidance from federal, state, international and other public health officials as they resume participating in events. These are not all inclusive but can be used to assist organizers in planning.

Of utmost importance is the need to maintain social distancing at your event – whether that occurs in an indoor riding facility or out on the trail. As you plan the event, this is the single most important consideration that should guide your plans from start to finish and everything in between.

Secondly, in all correspondence with participants (exhibitors, judges, staff, volunteers), stress the importance of daily self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19 leading up to the event and during the event. Simply put, for the safety of all involved and to avoid a resurgence in cases which could lead to additional shut-downs, anyone exhibiting symptoms should not attend.

Recommendations:

1. Contact government representatives in the state/country/province in which the event is held to determine any specific restrictions in place during your event.
 - a. Examples would include any mandatory requirements for masks, temperature check-points, travel or quarantine restrictions for participants coming from out-of-state or out-of-country and social distancing requirements.
2. Contact your host facility to determine what requirements are in place for participation at the event. Most facilities will have measures in place, but not all will be equally equipped to handle necessary measures. Understand what is already in place and work with the facility to determine what additional measures can be provided by your show staff.
 - a. The facility should have extra measures in place for cleaning/disinfecting but all participants should be reminded to bring their own supplies (masks, disposable gloves, hand sanitizer etc.)
 - b. Organizers should have a supply of disinfecting supplies to constantly wipe down frequently touched areas where staff, judges and participants come into contact including offices, counters, pens, doorknobs, mousepads, keyboards, microphones etc.
 - c. Communicate with the facility the need for enhanced sanitizing/cleaning prior to and during your event. These should include processes to ensure extra disinfecting of all common touch-points like entrance doors, seating areas, restrooms, concessions/food areas, credit/debit card keypads, hoses and hose bibs, wash racks etc.
3. Make sure that the facility posts adequate signage concerning 1) steps to take to avoid contracting the virus (masks, hygiene etc.), 2) information on symptoms of the virus and 3) steps to take if someone is symptomatic.
3. Make sure to provide the information above to all participants (exhibitors, staff, volunteers, judges etc.) well in advance of the event so they are aware of expectations/requirements and can arrive prepared to comply.
 - a. The event should require participants to provide their own supplies to meet the restrictions but organizers should have extra supplies on hand in case participants are unprepared.
4. Get a copy of the facility 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. Make sure this information is posted at the grounds and/or provide a copy to all participants (exhibitors, staff, volunteers, judges etc.) via email, social media or on your web site. Make sure your staff and volunteers are well versed in compliance requirements.
5. Participants should not enter the competition site if they:
 - a. exhibit COVID-19 symptoms,
 - b. have tested positive for COVID-19 within last two weeks, or
 - c. have 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 performing professional duties are exempted from this restriction.
6. Have an emergency plan if an essential staffer, volunteer or judge cannot enter the grounds on event day as a result of not meeting temperature or symptom-free guidelines above.
7. If mandated, 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. Contestants shall not be penalized for wearing a facemask while competing.
8. Staff and volunteers should use best practices for their own protection as well as that of exhibitors.
 - a. Recommend that all staff/volunteers and any representatives of the

- event who come in contact with the public wear masks, even if not required by the facility.
- b. Organizers should provide sanitary disposable gloves for staff/volunteers.
 - c. Have a no-contact thermometer available for staff/volunteer use and anyone with an elevated temperature should not be at the event site.
 - d. At-risk staff should not work in inside or enclosed spaces.
9. Use signs, tape and/or posters to illustrate six-foot social distancing spaces for areas where there may be lines (offices, restrooms, concessions, access to holding areas etc.). Make frequent announcements to remind participants to maintain social distancing and to remind them to exercise good hygiene.
- a. Consider where waiting lines are likely to happen and improve processes in those places when possible to eliminate lines, particularly in offices. Consider online or outdoor check-in/check-out options.
10. Social distancing should be maintained in the barns by strategic stabling to minimize contact between groups, reduction of seating areas and limiting the number of people in the barns to essential participants only. Remind those in the barns to follow best practices while at the show with signage and announcements.
- a. Consider how to maintain social distancing in wash racks.
 - b. Consider providing or asking the facility to provide hand sanitizing or washing stations in the barns when possible.
11. Spectators should be limited to spectator seating only and should refrain from being the barns, offices, paddocks or warm-up areas. Social distancing should be maintained in the spectator areas by limiting the number of spectators to the maximum number that would allow for proper social distancing to take place. The facility will likely have requirements on maximum occupancy in public spaces and should post signage to help spectators comply.
12. Consider ways to limit in-person interactions between participants and event staff/volunteers by:
- a. Allowing pre-entries only or staggering entry/check-in/check-out times to allow for social distancing.
 - b. Converting to online entry/stall processes.
 - c. Limiting the number of people in the offices – restrict to essential personnel only.
 - d. Configuring public space to comply with social distancing recommendations.
 - e. Arranging areas for judges/officials in a way to allow for social distancing.
 - f. Considering options to allow for social distancing between judges/scribes.
 - i. Do judges want to act as their own scribes?
 - ii. Can there be a barrier between judges/scribes?
 - iii. Ask judges/scribes for ideas on ways they may comply to increase their comfort level.
 - g. Developing a system to limit cross contamination of score sheets, judging cards and/or electronic devices used to tabulate scores or placings etc.
13. Consider traffic patterns on site and use directional signs to provide participants the maximum ability to social distance (ie. Hallways, bathrooms, food service areas, entrance/exit to seating areas etc.). Facility is likely handling this but check to be sure.
14. For trail, endurance, and competitive events, the additional protocols

should include:

- a. Allowing for 12' of space between horses where horse lines form to allow officials to inspect horses and maintain social distancing with other participants.
 - b. Avoid group gatherings or hold them in an area where social distancing can be maintained (meals, meetings etc.)
 - c. Provide as much information to riders as possible in advance to cut down on the need for in-person contact at the event.
 - d. Have participants pick up awards in a designated area instead of receiving them hand-to-hand from staff or volunteers.
 - e. Consider practices that will allow for social distancing at warm-up/start line, pulse checks, vet checks etc.
15. For shows, additional arena/paddock social distancing protocols should include:
- a. Space animals in arenas to maintain social distancing between competitors. When judges must inspect horses on the ground, horses should be spaced a minimum of 12' apart to allow for inspection while maintaining social distancing between judges and handlers.
 - b. Limit class sizes to comply with social distancing.
 - c. Change arena entry/exit procedures as necessary to ensure social distancing.
 - d. Instruct judges/stewards/exhibitors to maintain social distancing. Provide masks to judges/stewards/scribes.
 - e. Limit the number of people in staged photos to comply with social distancing.
 - f. Have exhibitors pick up awards in a designated area instead of receiving them hand-to-hand from staff or volunteers.
 - g. Design courses to eliminate obstacles that are touched/handled by all participants (gates, mailboxes, drags or other props in trail and ranch trail).
 - h. Schedule course walks in over fence and trail classes in small groups to allow for social distancing – be prepared for any additional time constraints as a result.
 - i. Advise participants to wear gloves when handling practice jumps and trail equipment. Consider providing sanitizing supplies at those locations.
 - j. Require arena crews to wear gloves when setting up and/or tearing down courses or when handling equipment that is touched by multiple people.
 - k. Consider the size of arenas, warm-up areas, paddocks etc. and limit the number of people allowed in those areas in order to comply with social distancing requirements. This may mean offering a class in cuts and a final when necessary or restricting how far in advance of their class exhibitors are allowed to check in at the paddock.

Every venue is unique and presents its own set of challenges. Remember, there is no such thing as over-communication! Engage facility staff, event staff, volunteers, officials and participants in planning. Commit to hosting your best event ever, even during these challenging times.

It's important to remember that we're all in this together. Best practices today will ensure the longevity of our chosen sport long into the future. Good luck to you as you organize or attend events in the coming months. Please contact ApHC for assistance as needed. We are here and prepared to help! 🐾