



## **US Equestrian Federation**

### **COVID-19 Action Plan**

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

**New Edition: May 18, 2021**





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### Additional Resources

*(click on links to access)*

- [Appendix A – Recommended Best Practices for Competition Organizers](#)
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## A. Purpose & Scope

The US Equestrian Federation is dedicated to ensuring the safety and welfare of horses and all participants. While there is no way to eliminate all risks related to COVID-19, the following requirements are aimed to decrease the risk of COVID-19 infection. These requirements are intended to ensure that everyone at USEF competitions follows the most recent guidance from federal, state, and local public health officials. As that guidance continues to change, the content of this Action Plan will be modified to reflect those changes. It is important to note that organizers may impose more restrictive actions than those of state and local authorities and the CDC.

These requirements 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. Whatever your role at a USEF competition, 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 appendices accessible at the end of this document.

**\*\*Attention FEI Competition Organizers: Click [here](#) to access the FEI Policy for Enhanced Competition Safety during the COVID-19 Pandemic, effective July 1, 2020, and updated May 4, 2021.**



## 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	<a href="mailto:ksacco@usef.org">ksacco@usef.org</a>	(859) 225-6981
Compliance <i>(including any questions related to the protocols outlined in this document)</i>	Debbie Saliling	<a href="mailto:dsaliling@usef.org">dsaliling@usef.org</a>	(859) 225-6930
Licensed Officials	Alina Brazzil	<a href="mailto:abrazzil@usef.org">abrazzil@usef.org</a>	(859) 225-2044
Drugs & Medications	Stephen Schumacher	<a href="mailto:sschumacher@usef.org">sschumacher@usef.org</a>	(859) 225-2075

## Additional Resources for Organizers & Participants

Subject	Contact	Email	Phone
FEI Sport	Will Connell	<a href="mailto:wconnell@usef.org">wconnell@usef.org</a>	(859) 225-7682
National Sport - Breed or Discipline	Terri Dolan	<a href="mailto:tdolan@usef.org">tdolan@usef.org</a>	(859) 225-6957
Marketing & Communication	Vicki Lowell	<a href="mailto:vlowell@usef.org">vlowell@usef.org</a>	(859) 225-2024
Finance	Todd McCoy	<a href="mailto:tmccoy@usef.org">tmccoy@usef.org</a>	(859) 225-6933
Information Technology	Justin Provost	<a href="mailto:jprovost@usef.org">jprovost@usef.org</a>	(859) 225-6905
General Counsel	Sonja Keating	<a href="mailto:skeating@usef.org">skeating@usef.org</a>	(859) 225-2045
CEO	Bill Moroney	<a href="mailto:bmoroney@usef.org">bmoroney@usef.org</a>	(859) 225-6912



## C. Definitions

**CDC** – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. USEF recommends that all activity that occurs at a USEF-licensed competition 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.

- **Officials** - Any reference to officials, or licensed officials includes all types of competition officials (see GR113). For the purposes of this document, any individuals participating in an approved educational activity for a USEF or Recognized Affiliate licensing program (e.g. apprentices, training program participants, dressage applicants observing or sitting, clinicians, instructors, etc.) are also considered officials and must comply with all applicable requirements within the Action Plan.

**Close Contact** – For purposes of this document, close contact as [defined by the CDC](#) is someone who was within six (6) feet of an infected person unmasked for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period\* beginning two (2) days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, two (2) days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated. It is important to note that close contact has occurred regardless of whether one, or both individuals is wearing a mask. (Refer to [CDC FAQ](#)).

*\*Individual exposures added together over a 24-hour period (e.g., three 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes).*

Any person who is not fully vaccinated and who has been in close contact with an individual who is confirmed or suspected to be COVID-19-positive should quarantine in accordance with [CDC Guidelines](#).

**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.



## Definitions - *continued*

**Exposure** – For purposes of this document, exposure is considered as having occurred when a person not fully vaccinated comes into [close contact](#) with a COVID-19-infected individual (exhibiting symptoms or confirmed by a positive test result) within a distance of six feet for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more and is unmasked and results in the need to quarantine unless the exposed individual is fully vaccinated (but those individuals must still monitor for symptoms for 14 days post-exposure). While the ideal quarantine time is still considered to be 14 days, it is recognized that a shorter quarantine period may balance significant societal burdens against the progressive smaller possibility of spreading the virus over time after exposure accordingly. An individual may discontinue quarantine:

- After Day 10 following close contact (exposure) without testing if no COVID-19 symptoms are present, or;
- After Day 7 if no COVID-19 symptoms are present and after receiving a negative COVID-19 test result (testing must occur on Day 5 or later after exposure)

After discontinuing quarantine, all individuals should:

- Monitor for symptoms for 14 days after exposure
- Immediately self-isolate if symptoms develop and contact a personal healthcare provider or public health authority
- Wear a face mask/face covering, maintain social distancing of at least six feet from others, and wash hands frequently

**Face Masks** – For purposes of this document, any reference to face masks includes cloth face coverings, N-95, KN-95 and surgical masks. If required to be worn, face coverings/masks must fully cover the nose and the mouth while being worn.

\*\*\* 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.

**Fully Vaccinated** – An individual is considered to be [fully vaccinated](#) two weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series (Pfizer, Moderna, etc.), or two weeks after a single-dose vaccine (Johnson & Johnson).

**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, 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.



## Definitions - continued

**PPE** – Personal Protection Equipment.

**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. Please refer to [Exposure](#) definition above for quarantine guidance.

**Social Distancing** – Also called “physical distancing,” means keeping a minimum of 6 feet (about 2 arms’ length) space between yourself and other people outside your immediate household, as well as avoiding congregate settings or a concentration of individuals in a single area.

- **Immediate Household** – Individuals consistently living in the same house or dwelling. Members of a household may or may not be related. For purposes of this document, immediate household may also be referred to as same household or own household.

**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 parent, a member of competition staff, a service provider (e.g. media or photographer), volunteer, or other support personnel (farrier, veterinarian, etc.). Extended family members (other than a parent of a participant) are considered spectators.

**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, venue/facility staff, cleaning service providers (including portable restroom service), and waste disposal personnel.

**Sponsors** – For purposes of this document, sponsors are considered individual persons or business entities that have an agreement in place with the competition to provide goods, services, or financial support that is integral to the sustainability of a competition.

**Support Personnel** - For purposes of this document, support personnel are those individuals employed or contracted by Participants to provide care or services to horses and/or participants. Support personnel includes, but is not limited to, veterinarians, farriers, equine therapists, grooms, 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 or newly developed loss of smell or taste. Additional symptoms may include sore throat, muscle pain, headache or chills/shaking.



Definitions - continued

**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 100.4° F (38° C) or higher.

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



## Mandatory Requirements for Competition Organizers

### D. General

**USEF-Licensed competitions must operate in accordance with state and local requirements. In the absence of state or local requirements, USEF recommends compliance with CDC guidelines. In an effort to mitigate the risk of spreading COVID-19, Competition Organizers can impose more restrictive requirements if they so choose.**

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 in the referenced appendices 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 work with state and local governments and public health authorities prior to the start of the competition to help determine the applicable requirements for their competition. Competition Organizers are encouraged to consult their insurers and legal counsel as well.**

If permission from a state or local government agency or public health authority is required in order for a competition to be allowed to operate, competition organizers must have obtained verifiable permission from those entities prior to conducting the competition(s).

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



## Mandatory Requirements for Competition Organizers – continued

### **E. Agreements**

- Ensure that all participants, licensed officials, and volunteers, provide emergency contact information and execute state-specific [Waiver and Release of Liability, Assumption of Risk and Indemnity Agreement](#) required by USEF, as a condition of participation. If a state-specific waiver is not available, please use the [general version](#) of the form.
- Prior to the start of a competition, 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 and local public health authorities 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.
- A minimum of 14 days prior to the start of the competition, inform (e.g., via prize list/omnibus, website, social media, email, etc.) 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**

- All persons entering competition grounds are required to self-monitor their temperature once daily prior to entering the competition grounds. Anyone with a temperature of 100.4° F (38° C) or higher may not enter the facility.
- The following individuals are not allowed to enter the competition grounds:
  - Anyone who exhibits [COVID-19 symptoms](#), including a temperature of 100.4° F (38° C) or higher,
  - Anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 within last 10 days,
  - Anyone who has tested positive outside of the past 10 days, but is still symptomatic, or
  - \*Anyone who has been [exposed](#) to or has been in [close contact](#) with someone who has COVID-19 symptoms or has tested positive for COVID-19 within either the last 7 or 10 days (dependent upon certain criteria - refer to [CDC Quarantine Options](#)).

*\*Exception: Healthcare personnel who have treated patients using appropriate medical-grade PPE during the course of performing professional duties and those individuals who are [fully vaccinated](#) are exempted from this quarantine 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 Participant temperature monitoring responsibilities.



## Mandatory Requirements for Competition Organizers - continued

*\*\*\*Questions regarding access to competition grounds and eligibility to participate in competition that may not be clearly identified under the points above must be directed to [ksacco@usef.org](mailto:ksacco@usef.org) or [dsaliling@usef.org](mailto:dsaliling@usef.org) who will consult with USEF medical experts and provide a written decision from the USEF with regard to the participant's eligibility.*

- Competition Organizers must notify USEF and local public health authorities, if any individual who was present on the competition grounds tests positive for COVID-19 within 14 days of the conclusion of the competition. Direct USEF reports to [ksacco@usef.org](mailto:ksacco@usef.org).
  - Competition Organizers will direct the reporting individual to contact the local public health authorities (and provide the contact information) for the purposes of having the local public health authorities perform contact tracing.
  - Competition Organizers are required to remind all [competition staff](#), [service providers](#), [sponsors](#), [participants](#), and [support personnel](#) of their responsibility to report if they test positive for COVID-19 within 14 days of the conclusion of competition (refer to [Section O](#)).

### **G. Signage**

- Competition Organizers must post signage on their website, in their prize list and throughout the competition grounds that lists the competition COVID requirements.
- Competition Organizers must 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](#), has been [exposed](#) to or has been in [close contact](#) with someone who has COVID-19 symptoms, or anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 within either the last 7 or 10 days (dependent upon certain criteria - refer to [CDC Quarantine Options](#)) cannot enter the competition grounds. (Exception: healthcare personnel who have treated patients using appropriate medical-grade PPE during the course of performing professional duties and those who are [fully vaccinated](#)). 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](#)*
  - STOP! - If you proceed past this entry point you attest to the following:
    - ✓ I do not have a temperature of 100.4° F (38° C) or higher;
    - ✓ I am NOT experiencing any possible COVID-19 symptoms (e.g., Fever or chills, Cough, Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, Fatigue, Muscle or body



## Mandatory Requirements for Competition Organizers – continued

aches, Headache, New loss of taste or smell, Sore throat, Congestion or runny nose, Nausea or vomiting, Diarrhea);

- ✓ I have NOT tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 10 days
- ✓ \*I have NOT been in close proximity to anyone who has tested positive within the last 14 days\*

\*Exception: Healthcare personnel who have treated patients using appropriate medical-grade PPE during the course of performing professional duties and those individuals who are [fully vaccinated](#) (at least 14 days after their final COVID vaccination) are able to be in close proximity of COVID-19 infectious people.

- ✓ I agree to comply with all organizer requirements for attendance
- ✓ I understand I can be removed from competition grounds for non-compliance of spectator protocols
- ✓ I acknowledge that the inherent risk of exposure to COVID-19 exists in any public place where people are present. By attending this equestrian competition, I voluntarily assume all risks related to COVID-19 exposure and agree not to hold the competition, its organizers, or any of its directors, officers, staff, agents, contractors, or volunteers liable for any illness or injury.
  - **USEF Poster:** [STOP! If you proceed past this entry point, you attest to the following](#)
- Competition Organizers must 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. Face Coverings/Masks**

- Competition Organizers of USEF licensed competitions must comply with state and local requirements regarding use of face coverings/masks. In the absence of state or local requirements, USEF recommends compliance with CDC guidelines. In an effort to mitigate the risk of spreading COVID-19, Competition Organizers can impose more restrictive requirements if they so choose. You can find recommendations for proper use of face coverings/masks via the [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention website](#).

When state or local authorities, or a competition organizer requires the wearing of a face covering/mask at a competition, the following applies:

- To eat or drink, an individual must move far enough away from others to minimize the possibility of being within six feet of any other individual before the lowering the face covering/mask to eat or drink. The face covering/mask must be immediately replaced over the nose and mouth when finished.



## Mandatory Requirements for Competition Organizers – continued

- If an individual requires modification to this face covering/mask requirement, please contact the Competition Organizer.
- Any Individual may choose to wear a face covering/mask even when not required, and can do so without penalty.

### **I. Spectators**

- Subject to state and local restrictions, spectators are permitted to attend USEF-Licensed competitions and are subject to the same requirements as all other persons on competition grounds, including the Plan requirements.
  - Spectator capacity: Competition organizers must take into account the relative size of their venues and comply with any state or local capacity restrictions.
  - Competition Organizers must provide multiple sanitization stations throughout the spectator seating/viewing areas if spectators are present.
  - Competition Organizers must make multiple PA announcements throughout each competition day to remind spectators of the competition's COVID-19 safety requirements.

### **J. Protocols for VIP/Hospitality Areas**

- If offered, all VIP/Hospitality areas must be arranged in a manner that complies with state or local requirements or the competition organizer's requirements including, but not limited to, social distancing.

### **K. Social Distancing**

- Enforce social distancing requirements throughout the competition grounds at all times in accordance with state, local or Competition Organizer requirements.
- Arrange judges' and other officials' areas to comply with state, local or competition organizer social distancing requirements. If social distancing is required, and in the event that it is absolutely impossible to maintain social distancing of six (6) feet or more, a solid, non-porous, securely attached divider must be placed in the location where social distancing cannot be maintained (i.e., between, in front of and/or behind seating areas). The divider provides a physical separation and barrier between individuals and therefore must be of sufficient size to effectively and significantly reduce the risk of respiratory particulates being spread.

## **L. 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 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 USEF Steward/Technical Delegate Report.



## Mandatory Requirements for All Persons

### M. General

USEF-Licensed competitions must operate in accordance with state and local requirements. In the absence of state or local requirements, USEF recommends compliance with CDC guidelines. In an effort to mitigate the risk of spreading COVID-19, Competition Organizers can impose more restrictive requirements if they so choose.

**All persons on competition grounds must comply with the COVID-19 requirements in place at the competition. Failure to do so may result in expulsion from the grounds by competition management. These requirements are in effect immediately and until further notice, however, they are subject to revisions as the COVID-19 virus environment changes.**

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

### N. Waiver/Release & Indemnity Agreement for Participants, Licensed Officials and Volunteers

All participants, licensed officials, and volunteers must provide emergency contact information and execute a state-specific [Waiver and Release of Liability, Assumption of Risk and Indemnity Agreement](#) required by USEF, as a condition of participation. If a state-specific waiver is not available, please use the [general version](#) of the form. Please ensure use of the form provided by competition organizer or accessed via the links above.

### O. Access

- All persons entering competition grounds are required to self-monitor their temperature once daily prior to entering the competition grounds. Anyone with a temperature of 100.4° F (38° C) or higher may not enter the facility.
- The following individuals are not allowed to enter the competition grounds:
  - Anyone who exhibits [COVID-19 symptoms](#), including a temperature of 100.4° F (38° C) or higher,
  - Anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 within last 10 days,
  - Anyone who has tested positive outside of the past 10 days, but is still symptomatic, or
  - \*Anyone who has been [exposed](#) to or has been in [close contact](#) with someone who has COVID-19 symptoms or has tested positive for COVID-19 within either the last 7 or 10 days (dependent upon certain criteria - refer to [CDC Quarantine Options](#)).



## Mandatory Requirements for All Persons – continued

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

*\*\*\*Questions regarding access to competition grounds and eligibility to participate in competition that may not be clearly identified under the points above must be directed to [ksacco@usef.org](mailto:ksacco@usef.org) or [dsaliling@usef.org](mailto:dsaliling@usef.org) who will consult with USEF medical experts and provide a written decision from the USEF with regard to the participant's eligibility.*

- 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.
- Any individual on competition grounds who tests positive for COVID-19 within 14 days of the conclusion of the competition, is required to report such result to the Competition Organizer.
  - Competition Organizers will direct the reporting individual to contact the local public health authorities (and provide the contact information) for the purposes of having the local public health authorities perform contact tracing.

## **P. Face Coverings/Masks**

- All persons on competition grounds must comply with the face covering/mask requirements in place at the competition.
  - You can find recommendations for proper use of face coverings/masks via the [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention website](#).
- When state or local authorities, or a competition organizer requires the wearing of a face covering/mask at a competition, the following applies:
  - To eat or drink, an individual must move far enough away from others to minimize the possibility of being within six feet of any other individual before the lowering the face covering/mask to eat or drink. The face covering/mask must be immediately replaced over the nose and mouth when finished.
  - If an individual requires modification to this face covering/mask requirement, please contact the Competition Organizer.
- Any Individual may choose to wear a face covering/mask even when not required, and can do so without penalty.

## **Q. Social Distancing**

- All persons on competition grounds must comply with the social distancing requirements in place at the competition.



Mandatory Requirements for All Persons – *continued*

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND REFERENCE TOOLS**

(click on the links to access)

- [Appendix A – Recommended Best Practices for Competition Organizers](#)
- [Appendix B – Recommended Best Practices for Competition Participants](#)
- [Appendix C – Competition Organizer Resources and Reference Tools](#)