



US Equestrian Federation

COVID-19 Action Plan

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

New Edition: August 15, 2022





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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 and virus spread. 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.

The ongoing COVID-19 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 judgment 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 [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) web page. For additional tools and resources specific to competition organizers, please visit the [Competition Safety and Biosecurity](#) and the [USEF Coronavirus Disease Resources and Updates](#) webpages 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 February 18, 2022.**



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>	Lisa Owens	lowens@usef.org	(859) 225-6966
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	Mike Delahanty	mdelahanty@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 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.

Exposure – For purposes of this document, exposure is considered as having occurred when a person 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. If you are exposed, refer to [CDC guidelines](#) and follow the masking and testing protocols and take any other applicable steps recommended by the CDC to prevent spreading COVID-19.

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. Refer to [CDC guidelines regarding the use and care of facemasks](#).

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). **Fully vaccinated, however, is not the same as having the best protection. People are best protected when they [stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccinations](#), which includes getting boosters when eligible.**



Definitions - *continued*

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.

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.

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 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 until further notice; however, they are subject to revisions as the COVID-19 virus environment continues to change.

It is strongly recommended that USEF Competition Organizers work with local governments and public health authorities prior to the start of the competition to determine the current [COVID-19 Community Level](#) in the area in which the competition is occurring. Competition Organizers are encouraged to consult their insurers and legal counsel as well.

If competition organizers have any questions, please contact Lisa Owens by email at lowens@usef.org or by phone at (859) 225-6966.

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.

F. Access

- All persons entering competition grounds are required to self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms daily prior to entering the competition grounds.
 - The following individuals are not allowed to enter the competition grounds regardless of vaccination status:
 - Regardless of whether a COVID-19 test was taken, 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 the last 5 days,
 - Anyone who has tested positive outside of the past 5 days, but is still symptomatic.
- **Please reference [Participant requirements](#) regarding Participant temperature and symptom monitoring responsibilities.**

*****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 lowens@usef.org or 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.**



Mandatory Requirements for Competition Organizers – continued

G. Signage

- Competition Organizers must post signage on their website, in their prize list and throughout the competition grounds, any competition COVID requirements.
- Additionally, Competition Organizers must post the following signage at all entrances to the competition grounds as well as throughout the competition grounds (e.g., competition office, competition and schooling areas, barns, etc.), including those areas where larger groups are likely to congregate (entrance to VIP/Hospitality area, entrance to spectator seating, etc.):
 - **USEF Poster:** [**STOP! If you proceed past this entry point, you attest to the following**](#)
 - **Sample poster:** [**Symptoms of Coronavirus Disease**](#)

H. Face Coverings/Masks

- Competition Organizers of USEF licensed competitions must comply with state and local requirements regarding use of face coverings/masks, if imposed. 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 [CDC website](#).
- 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.

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.

K. 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

L. General

USEF-Licensed competitions must operate in accordance with local requirements. In the absence of 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 any COVID-19 protocols that might be in place at the competition. Failure to do so may result in expulsion from the grounds by competition management. These requirements are in effect until further notice; however, they are subject to revisions as the COVID-19 virus environment continues to change.

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

M. 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.

N. Access

- All persons entering competition grounds are required to self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms daily prior to entering the competition grounds
- The following individuals are not allowed to enter the competition grounds regardless of vaccination status:
 - Regardless of whether a COVID-19 test was taken, 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 the last 5 days,
 - Anyone who has tested positive outside of the past 5 days, but is still symptomatic.

****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 lowens@usef.org or 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.*



Mandatory Requirements for All Persons – continued

O. Face Coverings/Masks

- All persons on competition grounds must comply with the face covering/mask requirements in place at the competition, if imposed.
 - You can find recommendations for proper use of face coverings/masks via the [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention website](#).
- Any Individual may choose to wear a face covering/mask even when not required and can do so without penalty.

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 – COVID-19 Emergency Response Plan – Optional Tool for Organizers](#)