

Suggested Best Practices for the Well-Being of Dog Sport Participants.

USCA supports each club's informed decision to reschedule, postpone or cancel their events, as well as supporting clubs ready to hold events in locations that are open and permit gatherings. As events resume across the country, people need to feel safe while enjoying their dog activities. USCA urges clubs to take precautions for the benefit of their participants. Events need to be held in a manner that emphasizes the safety of participants and event staff over efficiency. Comply with federal, state and local laws, rules, regulations and orders required in the jurisdiction of the venue

The following is a list of suggested best practices that may be helpful when planning or attending an event. Event locations, facilities and dates will differ. With a situation that is continually evolving, it is up to the clubs to determine the guidelines that best fit their event. In order to inform participants, specific guidelines established by the club should be published on the club website and posted on signage/flyers at their event.

General Practices

1. Clubs, officials, participants, and spectators are required to follow and comply with federal, state, local and facility guidelines that apply to the area and site where the event is held.
2. Practice social distancing consistent with current guidelines. Be considerate of how your movements around the venue could impact other people who are trying to maintain social distancing.
3. It is strongly recommended that everyone at the event practice social distancing and wear a mask or another face covering suitable for their circumstances even if not required by federal, state and local laws, rules, regulations and orders in the jurisdiction of the venue in which the event will take place
Bring your own masks or other face coverings, hand sanitizer, gloves and tissues. Hosting clubs might not provide these items. Or, they might not be available in sufficient quantities to supply everyone that wants or needs them.
4. Consider wearing disposable or washable gloves.
5. Have plenty of hand sanitizers placed for people to use.
6. Wash hands as frequently as possible. Have disinfecting spray at bathroom facilities for people to spray door handles (or anything else they touch).
7. If you utilize portable toilets, please ask for a hand washing station to be delivered as well.
8. Avoid shaking hands or hugging.
9. Avoid touching dogs that are not your responsibility.
10. Avoid common use pens/pencils – bring your own.
11. Disinfect surfaces in common use areas as often as possible (tables, chairs, doorknobs, etc.) Clubs and facilities may consider not providing chairs.
12. Meals – No potlucks. Hospitality areas should avoid community items such as salt and pepper shakers, condiments, creamers, etc. It is recommended that club supply boxed lunches for judges and volunteers and a separate cooler for each judge. Participants should consider bringing their own lunch/drinks.
13. Parking areas – park with sufficient distance between vehicles if possible.

Event Practices

1. Scheduling – Consider scheduling participants in blocks in order to reduce crowds.
 - Use SignUp Genius (free app) to schedule or the event secretary assigns dogs to a time block.
 - Set times for day-of-event entries – assign day-of-event participants a time and number.
 2. It is strongly recommended that participants practice social distancing and wear a mask or another face covering suitable for their circumstances even if not required by federal, state and local laws, rules, regulations, and orders in the jurisdiction of the venue in which the event will take place or the rules of the USCA or the SV/WUSV. Please bring your own masks as they may not be provided to participants and attendees by the hosting club(s).
 3. Participants waiting to trial should practice social distancing. (Option: text or call when it is time for participant to come to the field).
 4. Safe handling of paperwork and payment for day-of-event entries.
 - Go cashless as much as possible – encourage use of PayPal, Google Pay, EWallet, etc.
 - Cash for day-of-event entries – inform participants they should have correct change.
 - Individual handling paperwork, scorebooks, and entry fees should wear gloves.
 5. Consider having someone wearing gloves handling out trophies and certificates.
 6. Trial Secretary Area – Recommend that it is set up with a minimum of six feet between the Trial Secretary area and exhibitors. Judges Table – Judges should have a separate worktable that is not accessible to exhibitors.
 7. During the trial, those in assisting with field duties should practice social distancing.
 8. Equipment should be set up by a person wearing a mask and gloves. Equipment should not be touched by handlers, however, if a person touches the equipment, it should be sanitized.
 9. Identity checks will be performed but may be modified for COVID safety requirements and guidelines.
 10. In all phases the handler will report in and out no closer than 6 feet from the judge.
- Comply with all federal, state, local government, facility and event guidelines. Clubs should be prepared to enforce the guidelines that apply to their event.

CDC - How to Protect Yourself and Others:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/pets.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/stop-the-spread-of-germs.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/2019-ncov-factsheet.pdf>

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/images/social-media-toolkit/COVID-19_FaceCovering-1080x1080_4.jpg

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/316129-B-StayHomeFromWork_Poster.pdf

Tracking:

1. IGP 2 and Higher - The tracklayer should be the only person to handle the tracking flags and articles for each track, each day.
2. Day of the Trial: Ask trial participants to wait by their vehicles until the time of the draw. The draw for track order should be set up to allow for safe social distancing. Numbered draw items may be placed on the ground by the trial secretary in random order. The secretary may call each competitor up one at a time to designate the draw item. After the draw for track order, an event worker should be designated to control traffic for exhibitors and spectators. This will ensure each exhibitor will be able to park closest to their track and are able to maintain social distancing. The spectators should practice social distancing guidelines.
3. Articles: All tracklayers are advised to wear masks and gloves while handling the articles. Clubs are advised to provide unused and sealed articles for each track.

During the track, the tracklayer may wear a mask and gloves. Competitors should wear face covering and gloves during the track. After the dog has found the article, the handler shows the article to the judge and before the restart places the found article in a Ziplock (or similar) bag carried by the handler.

Obedience:

Before the trial begins if the handler has their own dumbbells (all levels) they can use them. Ensure they are marked with the handler's name and given to the trial secretary. If they do not have their own dumbbells the club must provide disinfected dumbbells. Club should have a designee responsible for wiping the dumbbells with sanitizing wipes after each separate handler has completed the retrieve exercises. The designee should wear gloves which are changed after each wipe down.

The group must maintain minimum distance of 12 feet from each other, and wear mask and/or face shield. Handler may stop in the middle of the group maintaining the 6 foot distance.

Protection:

Both handler and helper must wear masks and gloves during the protection routine. After taking the stick from the helper, the side transport is performed normally. Handler reports out maintaining 6 feet distance away from the judge. The stick may be given back to the helper or lay it on the ground after reporting out. The stick will be sanitized, and the helper should change gloves after every dog,