



U.S. Ski & Snowboard COVID-19 Cross Country Ski Domestic Competitions Guidance

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COVID-19 Cross Country Ski Strategic Planning Commission

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(<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1PZj83AsAoGTusUhUe65UizpAuFlrYh5tkdJMYxkxFiE/edit?pli=1#gid=341894714>)

Goals

- Provide guidance and direction for hosting cross country ski races during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Help to minimize the risk and spread of COVID-19 infection at U.S. Ski & Snowboard races
 - U.S. Ski & Snowboard to provide best practice direction on physical distancing as well as; forms for clubs/teams to manage pre-screen questionnaires and daily symptom checks
 - Compliance with local health authority mandates and diligence in hosting events gives everyone the best opportunity to avoid cancelations
 - Partner with our host venues for hosting cross country ski races

I. Introduction

U.S. Ski & Snowboard is committed to assisting all members, clubs, volunteers and competition organizers navigate the upcoming 2020-21 domestic competition season as impacted by the COVID-19 global pandemic. We recognize that COVID-19 has impacted different parts of the country in different ways and with different timing. COVID-19 is extremely contagious and is believed to spread mainly from person-to-person contact and can lead to severe illness and death.

All U.S. Ski & Snowboard members and participants are expected to follow all local, state and federal public health mandates during competition participation. Everyone's compliance and diligence are required in order to help minimize risk in the competitive environment and the ability to run a 2020-21 competitive season. Compliance with mandates and diligence in safely hosting events gives everyone the best opportunity to avoid cancellations.



This cross country ski guidance document (Cross Country Ski Guidance) on domestic cross country ski competition hosting considerations during the COVID-19 pandemic has been developed by the COVID-19 Cross Country Ski National Domestic Competition Working Group and is intended to guide the planning of all domestic FIS and U.S. Ski & Snowboard sanctioned cross country ski racing competitions. Other sport-specific protocols will be released separately and in a timely manner. The Cross Country Ski Guidance is based on [U.S. Ski & Snowboard's COVID-19 Domestic Competitions Guidance](#) and includes portions of specific content from the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Primary considerations for returning to domestic competition are the rules and regulations set forth by public health authorities and state and local governments, which will be different across the country. The secondary considerations should be the specific recommendations set forth in this document and [U.S. Ski & Snowboard's Guidance](#). In either case (State/Local or U.S. Ski & Snowboard), the more restrictive portions of each regulation should be the guidance that is followed. This does not prevent associations, local clubs, and competition organizers from adopting even more strict or more conservative approaches than those mandated by local public health authorities or recommended by the U.S. Ski & Snowboard Guidance.

This Cross Country Ski Guidance should be considered a “living document.” This document’s criteria and recommendations are based on known factors at the time of writing (October 27, 2020). As more information becomes available concerning cross country ski competition and COVID-19, this Cross Country Ski Guidance will be updated as appropriate, and new version(s) released to the U.S. Ski & Snowboard cross country membership and competition organizers.

U.S. Ski & Snowboard COVID-19 mitigation documents are designed to reduce potential exposure and mitigate risk of viral transmission. However, they are not all encompassing and while they provide guidance for a wide range of scenarios, they do not account for every variable. Until a vaccine or other therapeutics are widely available, there will be an underlying, inherent risk of COVID-19 exposure and contraction when leaving the confines of one’s home. Preventative measures cannot guarantee that you will not become infected with COVID-19.

II. General

Per [CDC considerations](#), the risk of COVID-19 spread increases in sports settings as follows:

- **Lowest Risk:** Performing skill-building drills or conditioning at home, alone or with family members.



- **Increasing Risk:** Team-based practice.
- **More Risk:** Within-team competition.
- **Even More Risk:** Full competition between teams from the same local geographic area.
- **Highest Risk:** Full competition between teams from different geographic areas.

Consideration of the inherent potential for disease transmission associated with different sports should be part of the planning process. Per the [USOPC's](#) Return to Event Considerations, skiing and snowboarding are sports that are conducted outdoors and, in many circumstances, can account for physical distancing and proper sanitization procedures, and therefore can be planned according to public health mandates.

Definitions

U.S. Ski & Snowboard defines the below terms as follows for the purpose of this Cross Country Ski Guidance:

- **Close contact:** any individual who was within six (6) feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes (accumulated over any 24 hour period) starting from two (2) days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, two (2) days prior to positive specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.
- **Physical distancing:** minimum six (6) feet at rest and minimum ten (10) feet while exercising.

Do not compete/travel to a competition venue if you:

- Are exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19.** Symptoms range from mild to severe illness and may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus, including: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea.
- Have been in close contact (as defined above) with someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days.
 - Athletes and staff should complete a daily pre-screening questionnaire ([example](#)) to verify the above.
- Consult with a healthcare professional if you are at higher risk of developing a serious disease.



In the event of symptoms or positive test reported:

1. Do not take public transportation if you are sick or exhibiting symptoms, or have tested positive for COVID-19. Immediately separate anyone who has tested positive or has COVID-19 [symptoms](#) (i.e., fever, cough, shortness of breath). The local healthcare facility should be notified and arrangements should be made to transport the individual home or to the facility as directed.
2. Individuals who have had close contact with a person who has [symptoms](#) or has tested positive should be isolated and should quarantine according to state, regional guidelines, or at home if they are able to travel alone (i.e. in a car by themselves).
3. In accordance with state and local privacy and confidentiality laws and regulations, notify [local health officials](#), staff, participants and families immediately of any case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with the [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) and other applicable laws and regulations.
4. Close off areas used by a sick person and do not use these areas until after [cleaning and disinfecting](#) them (for outdoor areas, this includes surfaces or shared objects in the area, if applicable).
5. Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible. Ensure [safe and correct use](#) and storage of [cleaning](#) and disinfection products, including storing them securely away from children. Always use proper personal protection equipment with any cleaning and disinfecting steps.

III. New Cross Country Ski Policies and Procedures for Season 2020-21

This Cross Country Ski Guidance is supplemental to the [U.S. Ski & Snowboard Guidance](#), both documents should be considered for competition planning and participation.

1. A COVID-19 Coordinator is required as part of the Organizing Committee (OC)
 - a. Requirements
 - i. Medical background preferred.
 - ii. A U.S. Ski & Snowboard membership is required.
 - b. Duties include, but are not limited to:



- i. Works with local health authority on specific rules and regulations around COVID-19, including but not limited to: mass gathering limits, out-of-state quarantine rules (if any) and emergency protocols
- ii. Works with venue/resort partner for specific COVID-19 policies and procedures (including ski patrol and emergency protocols).
- iii. Acts as the central contact point for all COVID-19 questions and concerns.
- iv. Collaborates with local health authority and ski area management, in conjunction with the OC, to determine appropriate field size for the race.
- v. Working with the OC, communicates to all participants about the risks of COVID-19, symptoms of COVID-19, transmission routes, mitigation strategies, and any additional local safety protocols.
- vi. Working with the OC, communicates physical distancing rules for indoor lodge facilities and outdoor port-o-potties.
- vii. Working with the OC, recommends older individuals and/or people of any age with underlying health conditions, or those living with or that have consistent contact with those populations, consider limiting their participation or not participating.
- viii. Working with the Team Captains, verifies that participants (athletes, coaches, officials, and volunteers) pre-screen questionnaires ([example](#)) are completed before each competition or series of competitions.
- ix. Working with the Team Captains, verifies that participants (athletes, coaches, officials, and volunteers) symptom checks ([example](#)) are completed daily the morning of each race day.
- x. Follows protocols in the event of symptoms or a positive test reported (outlined above in section II).
- xi. Communicates, in collaboration with the relevant club, if a participant becomes symptomatic during or within 48 hours after the race
 1. Inform U.S. Ski & Snowboard for monitoring purposes and external communications protocols (contact U.S. Ski & Snowboard Sports Medicine Director & Lead Physical Therapist Gillian Bower, gillian.bower@usskiandsnowboard.org)
 2. Any participant who tests positive for COVID-19 must follow U.S. Ski & Snowboard [Return to Sport](#) guidelines
 3. Any participant who has had close contact with a positive COVID-19 case must follow CDC [When to Quarantine](#) guidelines before participating in a subsequent U.S. Ski & Snowboard race



2. All event participants (athletes, coaches, officials, and volunteers) must complete a pre-screen questionnaire ([example](#)) within 24-48 hours before the start of the competition or series of competitions.
 - a. COVID-19 Coordinator must confirm all event participants have completed a pre-screen questionnaire.
 - b. Event participants who do not complete a pre-screen questionnaire may be not be allowed to participate.

3. All event participants must complete a daily symptom check ([example](#)) the morning of each race day.
 - a. COVID-19 Coordinator must confirm all event participants have completed a daily symptom check.
 - b. Event participants who do not complete a daily symptom check may be not be allowed to participate.

4. At every competition, face coverings are required by all participants (athletes, coaches, officials, and volunteers) at all times when not physically distanced (less than 6 feet from others), except for training, wax testing, or racing. Face covering may be removed on the start line, but must put it back on immediately after finishing and/or crossing the finish line. Non-compliance may result in sanction in accordance with ICR/ACR 223.1.1.
 - a. COVID-19 Coordinator will bring violators to the attention of the jury:

5. All Team Captains Meetings will be virtual. All race documents will be delivered electronically.
 - a. All attending coaches must register for the race electronically, with a valid U.S. Ski & Snowboard membership and a current email address and cell phone number.
 - b. Venues with no wifi or cell service will require an alternative plan for distribution of race documents that adheres to physical distancing rules.

6. Registration
 - a. Consider online registration and entry payment.
 - b. Consider limitations of congregation at on-site registration.
 - c. Consider race packet pick-up and drop-off conducted outdoors.
 - d. Minimize point of contact for race packet pick-up and drop-off. Suggested examples include:
 - i. One-way drive-up bib and packet pick-up and drop off.
 - ii. OR one-way passage for walk-up registration.



- iii. Suggestion to include timing chip in the athletes bib pick-up packet if applicable.
 - iv. Suggest athletes apply the chip device.
 - v. Suggest athletes remove chip departing finish corral and placing timing chip in a bin. All timing chips must be cleaned and disinfected before reuse.
 - e. Consider disposable paper bibs for each day of competition.
 - f. All bibs must be cleaned and disinfected before and after the competition if using cloth or lycra bibs.
7. Athletes maintain physical Distancing (at least 6 feet) during course inspection, warmup and cool-down.
8. Race Formats
 - a. Encourage interval start distance races
 - i. Encourage interval start seeding that limits congregation on course
 1. Examples include:
 - a. Start order by ranking
 - b. OR 30 second interval starts - A & C alternating seedings
 - b. Encourage sprint qualification only OR fewer participants in heats in abidance with FIS-sanctioned formats:(https://assets.fis-ski.com/image/upload/v1596629669/fis-prod/assets/ICR_CrossCountry_2020_clean.pdf)
 - c. Consider no mass start format races or limited mass start field sizes
9. Protest Period
 - a. Consider protests made electronically, in accordance with the protest period deadlines.
 - i. The jury can extend, up to 24 hours, the period in which a protest against the timekeeping is accepted in a circumstance where results are not posted on-site and live timing is not available.
 - ii. Protest hearings should be done in person, with proper face coverings and in observation of physical distancing rules.
 - b. Consider all jury meetings be held outdoors where practical
 - i. Protest hearings should be done in person, with proper face coverings and in observation of physical distancing rules.
10. Consider expanding start areas to allow for physical distancing.



11. Consider Unofficial results to be posted on live timing websites and publicly announced at the venue.
 - a. All official results to be distributed electronically instead of on-site information or results boards that encourage congregation.
 - b. Finish time race clocks are acceptable.

12. Consider virtual awards ceremonies.
 - a. in-person awards ceremonies that adhere to physical distancing requirements are acceptable

13. Any participant who tests positive for COVID-19 within 48 hours after the conclusion of the race must contact the race's COVID Coordinator to initiate proper protocols, and must follow U.S. Ski & Snowboard [Return to Sport](#) guidelines.

14. Consider limiting participant access to indoor facilities, and minimize downtime for athletes during the day.
 - a. For venues with parking lots nearby, vehicles can be used to keep participants warm.
 - b. Use of well-ventilated tents and heat lamps can be provided to shelter and warmth for participants on cold winter days with consideration of physical distancing and masks as previously mentioned.
 - c. Consider short stays at the venue by the competing athletes.
 - i. For example, arriving 45 minutes before start, race their respective competition, short cool down, and immediately depart.
 - d. Consider spacing out of specific age categories and/ or genders during the competition day to limit competitive field sizes at the venue.
 - e. Consider methods to minimize congregation in wax cabins/ wax rooms
 - i. Consider no indoor on-site waxing
 - ii. Consider limiting access to indoor waxing facilities to wax staff and coaches only (I.E. no access to athletes)
 - iii. Consider wax cabins/ wax rooms designated to one team per cabin

15. Consider limiting any nonessential visitors, spectators, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations where spacing and physical distancing cannot be maintained, especially with individuals not from the local geographic area (e.g., community, town, city, or county). Spectators in attendance must adhere to local health guidelines, limiting gatherings and contact with individuals where spacing of at least 6



feet between people cannot be maintained. No spectators permitted inside the race arena.