

Considerations for Biathlon Organizing Committees 2020-2021

BIATHLON CANADA COVID-19 RETURN TO COMPETITION

IMPORTANT: *The information included in this guide is current for the time of publishing and is aligned with the current recommendations from national and international bodies, including the World Health Organization (WHO) and Public Health Canada. However, recommendations will change quickly depending on local, provincial, national and global COVID-19 situation reports. Local resources should also be consulted for up to date information. This information is accepted on the condition that error or omissions shall not be made the basis of any claim, demand or cause of action.*

*Where anything in this guide conflicts with applicable law and recommendations from local public health authorities, members must comply with applicable law and that public health advice and adapt their approach. Consult your insurance company to determine if COVID-19, and other contagious diseases, are included with your policy. As a reminder, under Biathlon Canada's insurance, COVID-19 and other contagious diseases **are not** included in our policy.*

As new information is made available, efforts will be made to update and revise this document, and to circulate revisions to members. The information and recommendations outlined within this guide should be used to develop individual plans that evaluate the unique risks that each training environment presents. This document is to supplement and not replace the information outlined by public health authorities. Individuals, in consultation with a medical professional, are also required to assess and evaluate their own personal risks.

In the event of ambiguity or conflict between this guide and federal, provincial or local directives, the directives will prevail.

Restrictions may differ across Canada, keep updated and follow your health authority directives. [COVID-19 page - Government of Canada](#)

Biathlon Canada's [COVID-19 page](#) will be updated when required.

This document outlines considerations for Organizing Committees for domestic hosting in the 2020-2021 competitive season. All organizing committees must consult local, regional, and national COVID-19 directives throughout the hosting preparation phase. Please also consider reviewing the Return to Competition Assessment Tool (R-CAT) developed by Own the Podium.

Definitions

Participants - all people involved in the event including but not limited to coaches, athletes, officials, volunteers, and spectators.

Volunteers - includes Officials.

Biathlon Canada responsibilities

Biathlon Canada will offer recommendations and tools to help facilitate a safe and successful competitive season, please reach out at any time if you have questions. Refer to our [COVID-19 resources](#) web page for more information.

Biathlon Canada will work alongside local organizers for Trials, North American Opens, Canadian Championships, and any other National sanctioned biathlon event. Biathlon Canada, in conjunction with the local Organizing Committee will decide if National events can proceed as planned, must be adjusted, or cancelled.

Division responsibilities

Divisions should work with local organizing committees to run safe Division-sanctioned events, provide guidance for their clubs, and help train officials and volunteers in COVID-19 specific protocols.

Organizing Committee (OC) responsibilities

OC's should run events that prioritize safety for all participants while preserving normal biathlon competition as much as possible for IBU classes.

OC's will work with their Division to run Division events and with Biathlon Canada when running a national-level event.

Consider the following when running events:

Appoint a COVID-19 lead on your OC:

- Responsible for organizing and enforcing all COVID-19 related measures.
- Receives information about confirmed and suspected COVID-19 cases.

- Hosts a virtual, mandatory COVID-19 guideline event overview meeting with all participants. This meeting should cover:
 - Up-to-date information on how COVID-19 spreads,
 - At-risk populations,
 - Respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene, and physical distancing,
 - Specific venue procedures for minimizing the risk of spread and maximizing distancing.
- Leads the protocol in the event of a positive test and/or an outbreak.

Registration:

- Athlete registration form should include an assumption of risk for COVID-19 if they have not already signed the assumption of risk through Zone 4.
- Non-athlete participants (i.e: coaches and volunteers) should register their attendance (for tracking and numbers management) and complete an assumption of risk.
- OC's must keep a register of participants for tracing in the event of an outbreak.

Screening:

- Have a pre-event online daily screening (declaration of health) for all participants in between registration end and event start.
- Establish and monitor a daily screening during the event for all participants (online and/or at venue entrance).

Volunteers:

- Ask volunteers what roles they are comfortable with to accommodate people's individual risk tolerance.
- Minimize volunteer numbers when possible. Limit back-up volunteers (e.g. one team of two people for the penalty loop only).
- Utilize coaches in place of volunteers where possible (target reset, range recording, rifle check etc.).
- Ensure there is adequate space and comfort for volunteer rest periods. Consider renting heated outdoor tents (see Venue Spaces and Buildings below).
- Provide volunteers with specific COVID-19 event training.

Venue Traffic and Access:

- Establish clear instructions on access and exit to the venue (competition office, waxing cabins, meeting rooms, changing rooms, toilets, showers) and to

competition areas (equipment check, start and finish area, shooting range, course).

- Indicate the direction of travel in all high use areas.
- Control access to the premises: ie: schedule, number of people admitted, who is admitted.
- Make clear arrival/departure procedures (limit time at venue) for all participants.

Venue Spaces and Buildings:

- Limit numbers in indoor spaces (timing room, competition office, medical room), increase ventilation and ensure individuals inside wear masks at all times.
- Separate athletes and coaches, volunteers and spectators with designated areas.
- Create a clear plan for how you will manage spectators. If they are not allowed, who will ask them to leave? How will you communicate that spectators are not allowed pre-event.
- Space for volunteers to rest in between races (i.e. a heated tent with enough space to physical distance).
- Provide a place to isolate at the event that someone comes down with a suspected COVID-19 case. Then contact the local health authority for next steps.
- Reinforce the notion that athletes and coaches should: *Arrive. Train/Compete. Depart.* Unfortunately, cheering on teammates/friends or waiting to cool down with other training partners is not possible this year.
- Establish an area for athletes to keep warm/change clothes, where distancing is possible, between zero and their start time (consider personal vehicles or warming tents).

Personal Protective Equipment:

- Require the use of masks for all participants at all times, unless the athlete or coach is on course skiing or at their lane during zero.
- Ensure volunteers have adequate protective equipment (masks, disinfectant, gloves), especially those with duties that require close contact or are in vulnerable populations (bibs, transponders, starters, rifle check) and they are all trained in COVID-19 event protocols.
- Have extra masks/gloves available.

Disinfection/Sanitization:

- Make hand sanitizer dispensers available to all users, especially at entrances/exits to building.

- Provide access to soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol), one time use paper towels and waste baskets in all public washrooms.
- Remind participants of the importance of hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and physical distancing especially in areas conducive to contamination: entrances, rooms, toilets, changing rooms, showers, exterior doors.
- Avoid sharing objects ie: timing equipment. If this is not possible, implement strict hygiene and cleaning measures.
- Disinfect infrastructure and equipment regularly: shooting mats, racks, fences, doors, counters, toilets, faucets, stair railings, showers, shared equipment.

Competition:

Establish the schedule of competitions to minimize contact between participants and maximize regular competition activity.

Online/virtual tools:

- Disseminate information electronically (i.e. WhatsApp for regular/updated information and/or email),
- Online registration and payment,
- Online daily health screening,
- Virtual meetings and remote draws,
- Prize/Medal ceremony,
- Digital documents (Start lists, results).

Bibs:

- Prepare bibs in advance and be organized to limit waiting time.
- Limit pick-up to one coach for each team and/or consider bib distribution outside.
- Consider extending bib pick-up times.
- Consider dropping off team bibs to coaches in the range.

Stadium:

- Separate entrance and exit location(s) to the stadium.
- Clearly communicate the direction of travel.
- Use a protocol that will deal safely with athletes' belongings in the start/finish.

Start:

- Maximize the size of the start pen.
- Consider limiting time in the start pen (i.e. 10min before start).
- Set-up start pen to allow for 2 meters of physical distance.

- Have athletes wear a mask in the start pen, until they go into a start grid where there are clear placings marked at 2 meters apart.
- Have athletes receive transponders with masks or have athletes take their own transponder (with direction from an official/volunteer).
- Consider starts that better maintain physical distancing and reduce volunteer time directly with athletes (duel start, wave start, individual start).
- Ensure garbage cans are clearly marked.

Finish:

- Maximize the size of the finish pen.
- Distribution of one time use masks at the finish or the quick ability for athletes to grab their own mask.
- Direct traffic away from high volume areas.
- Rifle check can be completed by the athlete under the verbal direction of an official (bolt open, spare rounds out).
- Athletes can be directed to drop bib and transponders in a specific place.
- At the end of the competition, bibs and transponders should be handled with gloves. Transponders should be disinfected after each use. The bibs must be washed with laundry soap and the wash, dry cycle or both should be with the high heat setting.
- after each use.
- Have multiple sets of bibs if available.
- Have all participants bring their own meals/snacks/drinks.
- Encourage athletes to leave the finish area quickly (avoid coach-athlete discussions in/around the finish area). No coaches or support staff are allowed in this area, unless there is an emergency.
- Ensure garbage cans are clearly marked.

Rifle check:

- PPE for volunteers (glasses, mask, gloves).
- Consider multiple stations.
- Consider rifle check once per weekend or race series only.
- Consider extending the time of rifle check and/or use official training day.
- Some possible methods:
 - Done by officials with cleaning of rifle touchpoints,
 - Athletes also wear a mask and hold the rifle. Volunteer holds the trigger weight,
 - Coach checks athletes' rifles with latex gloves (provided) with official supervising.

Range:

- Mat cleaning procedure between each athlete in the prone position or;
 - dedicated lane per athlete for zero/racing.
- At minimum shooting mats to be disinfected after each athlete prone use.
- Consider reducing zero time with less athletes zeroing to increase the number of starts per day (i.e. 1 athlete/lane requires 15min zero, 2 athletes per lane requires 20min zero, 3 athletes per lane requires a 30min zero - clean between each user).
- Dedicated volunteer(s) or coach(es) to each target reset rope(s) or boxe(s), or a cleaning procedure between users.
- Minimize paper/painting where possible, dedicated person for touching painting and papering equipment.
- Consider extra time needed in order to clean (mats, target boxes or ropes, rifle racks) when making a schedule.
- One coach per team in range and/or one coach per lane in the coach box. Maintain 2 meters physical distance. When they can't maintain 2 meters distance (walking to their lane) they must wear a mask.
- Adjust rifle handling procedures for non-IBU classes to allow for 2 meters physical distancing and proper sanitization.

Wax cabins:

- Reduce use when possible.
- Limit the number of waxers and wear a mask.
- Consider implementing a wax protocol.
- Wax skis at accommodation or outside if possible.
- Open air wax tents with physical distancing and mask use.

Course:

- Skiing remains low risk - can maintain 2 meters physical distance. Can wear buff and glasses as extra precaution (athlete choice).
- Communicate early and loudly the intention to pass, pass wide and pass in strategic locations where passing will be easy (this should be done regardless of COVID-19).

Participant responsibilities

- Stay home and arrange for testing if you have been around someone with COVID-19 or if you experience symptoms such as a cough, fever, breathing difficulties, loss of taste or smell, severe fatigue.
- Limit time at the venue. *Arrive. Train/Compete. Depart.*

- Participants should wear masks at all times, unless skiing, on the shooting mat or behind a scope and can maintain 2m physical distancing.
- Masks/mouth-nose face covering need to be either high quality manufactured masks, surgical masks or of higher standard (FFP2 etc.) without valves. Buffs/scarves etc. are not considered as masks. This means that EVERY event participant (including athletes) must wear a mask when not physically exercising.
- Bring multiple masks as breathing + cold can freeze them.
- Bring your own equipment (skis, poles, rifle, ammunition).
- Keep your personal belongings to a minimum (water bottle, food, change of clothing, competition equipment, mask).
- A change of clothing, especially race gloves and masks, could be a good idea for athletes in between the race and cool-down.
- Athletes are encouraged to wash gloves & other race clothing in between races to increase sanitary measures and personal hygiene.
- Limit time spent in public washrooms and utilize washrooms at your residence. If you do use the public washroom, practice extremely good hygiene.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds and/or use hand sanitizer regularly.
- Cough and sneeze into the elbow or use a disposable tissue.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, mouth, & face with unwashed hands.
- Participants who test positive for COVID-19 should immediately notify the host organizing committee, including positive COVID-19 results up to 14 days after the event.
- Consider flu shots. [Consult Health Canada](#).