

**BEST PRACTICES**  
**CONSIDERATIONS FOR DRESSAGE EDUCATION EVENTS**  
*Subject to frequent updates*

In addition to the COVID-19 materials that are posted on the [USEF](#) and [USDF website](#), we have created the following Best Practices information to help facilitate all education events and activities navigate through our 'new normal' times. Please keep in mind that this is a fluid document that will be updated as needed.

Organizers and hosting GMOs will need to utilize the COVID-19 Best Practices that will work for their specific activity. Some general considerations have been outlined here, to help facilitate this. In all cases, social distancing and face masks cannot be repeated often enough. Please be reminded that for recognized competitions, USEF requires a face mask for all staff, officials, volunteers, service providers and participants in any setting where there is a possibility of being within six-feet of any other individual and when not mounted on a horse. These considerations should also be followed for all educational events and activities. It is important to check the local governmental face mask requirements for the type of educational event or activity you are involved with as requirements may differ. It is recommended that event organizers and hosting GMOs discuss their intended procedures with their instructors/presenters, event participants, and auditors in order to arrive at the most equitable arrangements for all. It is strongly suggested that the USEF release for competitions be reviewed, and that insurance providers are consulted regarding any specific COVID-19 waivers or requirements.

We encourage event organizers and hosting GMOs to use this list as a guide in formulating their own best practices. Please be aware that these are very fluid, and some components may be changed at any time. It is a Best Practice to review these before any education activity or event.

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**I. Pre-Event Preparation Items**

- Consider using an online registration process for event. This would include electronic signatures for all release forms that need to be signed by attendees. It is strongly suggested that the USEF release for competitions be reviewed, and that insurance providers are consulted regarding any specific COVID-19 waivers or requirements.
- Post online or via e-mail all pertinent information and procedures that will be utilized during the event.
- Encourage attendees to bring their own face mask and sanitizing materials for their own use.

- Send/arrange for arrival of all paperwork prior to the start of the event.
- Establish online, e-mail, and phone procedures for all communication pre and post event.
- Consider arranging participants and/or demonstration rides with a 'show and go' framework.
- Consider filming the event rides and sending the video link to all participants after the event so they can view the entirety of the event as they usually would.
- Consider your state/local guidelines regarding the size of gatherings. Theory sessions and group dinners may not be possible at this time. Based upon the size of the gathering, consider if a theory session would be safer if done via Zoom or other video conference means.
  - Check your local guidelines and be creative in coming up with options that work for all parties.
- Consider removing auditors from the event and only having one guest per participant, or if event has been filmed, offer the video link for the auditor price.
- Think through how you want to handle hospitality or food options if applicable: Grab and go/pre-packaged food or ask attendees to bring their own refreshments.
  - Bottled water should be made available to all attendees, but coffee stands may not be practical with social distancing requirements. Whatever you decide, it must be clear as to what will be available to attendees in the information sent out via email and posted online.
- Consider your refund policies to allow refunds for the last minute cancellation of the event, attendees who may not be able to attend due to exposure to the virus, or change in travel restriction as well as local, state and federal guidelines.
- Do you have a backup plan if essential personnel (instructor, on-site organizer, and facility staff) cannot attend the event at the last minute or have symptoms on an event day?
- Do you have gloves, hand sanitizer, and facial coverings for event volunteers, facility staff, and instructors?
  - Additional supplies should be available for attendees who have not come prepared. Do you have a non-contact thermometer for monitoring temperatures?

## **II. Riding Clinics**

- Consider arranging rides with a 'show and go' framework.
- Consider filming the event rides and sending the video link to all participants after the event so they can view the entirety of the event as they usually would.
- Consider your state/local guidelines regarding the size of gatherings. Theory sessions and group dinners may not be possible at this time. Based upon the size of the gathering, consider if a theory session would be safer if done via Zoom or other video conference means.
  - Check your local guidelines and be creative in coming up with options that work for all parties.
- Consider removing auditors from the event and only having one guest per participant, OR if event has been filmed, offer the video link for the auditor price.

## **III. Events with Classroom Sessions**

- Work with facility to ensure local/state guidelines are met regarding social distancing.

- Consider limiting auditors and non-essential volunteers to assure enough space is allowed for social distancing.
- Have a long registration table or large area to ease congestion during registration.
- Make sure restroom facilities are adequate for the group size. Monitor social distancing in any area a line may form.
  - Allow attendees to take restroom breaks as needed to minimize the chance of congestion.
- Make sure the presenter has enough room to be an appropriate distance throughout their presentation.

#### **IV. Training Programs with Demo Riders**

- Consider arranging rides with a 'show and go' framework.
- Consider setting a limit on the number of people riders can bring with them.
- Consider how to arrange the attendees to enable proper social distancing. Talk with the presenter come up with way to limit the use of scribes, when needed.
- Consider headsets for attendees so that a large area can be used for seating. Please note that special sanitations procedures would be required.

#### **V. Events Held at Competitions (i.e., L Education Program, Judge Training Programs)**

- Work closely with competition management team to meet their protocols for the competition.
- Keep competition management in the loop on all rentals and plans for food and drinks.
- Use of headsets is recommended to allow for more social distancing.
- Rent extra tents as needed to allow for social distancing.
- Require participants to bring their own practice scoresheets and any other writing materials they may need (clipboards, pens, etc.).
- For programs that require the use of scoresheets, consider using a plastic bin. Have one person collect tests and deliver them to the scorers. (The participant places the scoresheets in the bin). Once scored they can be returned to the box for the Instructor to review.
- The Instructor may choose to review the scoresheets and just return them to the bin for the participants to pick up as they leave.
- When possible limit the use of scribes. When scribes are needed, recommend the participant bring a scribe they are comfortable with. Face masks should be worn in these situations where social distancing may not be possible.
- An adequate area should be provided for scorers to allow for social distancing.

#### **VI. Transportation of Instructor(s)**

- Discuss vehicle rental with the instructor(s)-i.e. would they prefer to rent their own vehicle.
- Be sure there is an adequate housing situation for the instructor in a nearby hotel or on-site location that will allow for social distancing (that instructor is comfortable with).

## **VII. Arriving at the Facility**

- Work closely with facility management to be sure event can meet their protocols for social distancing and local/state guidelines.
- Can you schedule arrivals ahead of time to limit crowds? Can you utilize phones, e-mails, and texts for changes in event schedule?
- Look at the size and layout of your facility. Can you maintain social distancing in registration and seating areas? Do you need to limit the number of people?
- Participant bags and name tag distribution. Have bags and name tags available for pick up in an area which allows for social distancing. All pertinent procedures that will be utilized during the event should be included in the bags. For example, reminders about facial coverings and social distancing, any schooling restrictions, specific parking requirements, etc. should be included.
- Consider touch points that will require constant cleaning: clipboards, pens, writing surfaces, etc.
- Provide ready access to disinfecting wipes, hand sanitizer, and gloves for persons when in the facility.

## **VIII. In Stabling, Warmup, and Riding Arenas**

- Can you institute hand washing and/or sanitation stations in all stables, warmup, and riding arenas?
- Have you posted enough signage about maintaining social distancing, facial coverings etc., especially around the warmup and event arena enclosures?
- Can you organize your stabling layout with the need for social distancing between animals and/or participants? Look at aisle flow, points of congestion such as equipment in the aisles or tack stalls, cross ties, tents or pop-ups, and wash racks. Discourage any equipment sharing such as a hose in the wash rack. What areas might need sanitizing stations?
- Look at your traffic flow from the warmup arena to the event arena and try to limit congestion.
- Look at the size of your warmup. Do you need to reconfigure it? Might you need to restrict the number of horses?
- Ask participants to limit their support personnel in the warmup area to avoid congestion.
- Consider signage about leaving equipment or attire unattended; such as coolers, jackets, whips, and stable towels.
- Encourage people to not remain on the grounds outside of what is necessary.
- Consider the issue of restrooms or portable toilets. These need to be cleaned often and stocked with wipes/sanitizer. Consider how to avoid congestion.
- Can you organize the placement of participants and/or auditors in the arena to allow for social distancing?

## **IX. Best Practices for Instructors**

- Familiarize yourself with all COVID-19 related and Best Practices documents. Please be aware that these are very fluid and can change at any time.

- Discuss with event organizers travel, hotel, acquiring food, and what practices the facility will have in place.
- Consider having a backup plan that you can recommend for events you are contracted for, as to a substitute instructor, in case you cannot attend at the last minute.

Specific resources or tools to utilize:

- [USDF COVID-19 Resources](#)
- [USEF COVID-19 Resources](#)
- [USEF/USDF and other USEF Webinars OnDemand](#)