



A Practical Guide for **Competition Organisers- Cross Country** following the Covid-19 Restrictions



Return to Cross Country Competition

Always follow the Government Guidelines of Good Hand Hygiene – Respiratory Etiquette – Social Distancing

Notes for this document:

The guidelines in this document relate to a return to athletics cross country competition within the current Government and Sport Ireland Covid Expert Group guidelines. This document will be reviewed in line with future government announcements.

Key Notes:

1. Permits competition limited to 200 people maximum (including officials, athletes, volunteers) where the facility can always ensure adequate social distancing. No spectators are permitted, and the venue must be closed to the public.
2. Organisers must ensure no congregation of crowds in any areas e.g. drop off and collection points, finishes etc.
3. You must adhere to any domestic travel restrictions in place.
4. Permits individuals to extend their travel beyond their County.
5. If you feel unwell do not present to the competition.
6. If you are recovering from Covid19 seek medical advice prior to attending.

Safe every step of the way

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|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
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We know that running provides great mental and physical health benefits for our society. We have a duty of care to ensure that our athletics competitions ensure that we operate within a safe environment.

This practical guide, prepared by our team in consultation with medical experts and in line with Government Guidelines and World Athletics, outlines the robust measures Athletics Ireland strongly recommend competition organisers to implement and maintain to help safeguard all members during the COVID-19 pandemic. This will allow all of us to get back to competition safely, improving the wellbeing of members across the country.

Our measures and procedures are under constant review and updated as advice from government, health authorities and governing bodies evolves in line with the gradual lifting of social restrictions.

Pre-Competition

- Covid Compliance Officer to be appointed for the event, whom will be responsible for managing issues relating to the Covid 19 pandemic. This officer should;
 - Ensure that sufficient HSE Covid-19 information Posters are on site and PA messages are played.
 - Be responsible for informing all stakeholders of the Covid-19 guidelines and insist on full cooperation.
 - Ensure all approved and recommended Covid-19 protocols are in place for the event.
 - Ensure that the event staff, volunteers and participants always adhere to HSE / Public Health advice.
- Covid Compliance assistants to be appointed for each area of the competition (e.g. check in, starts), whom will be responsible for managing issues relating to the Covid 19 pandemic in that area. This officer should;
 - Ensure that sufficient HSE Covid-19 information Posters are on site
 - Be responsible for informing all stakeholders of the Covid-19 guidelines and insist on full cooperation.
 - Ensure all approved and recommended Covid-19 protocols are in place for that area.
 - Ensure that the officials and athletes within that area adhere to HSE / Public Health advice at all times.
- For involvement in the competition athletes, officials, parents/guardians must;
 - Have registered for the event providing contact details before arriving at the competition venue.
 - Not have been off the island of Ireland in the last 14 days.
 - Not have been in close contact in the last 14 days with someone diagnosed with Covid-19 or someone waiting on a Covid test or test results.
 - Not be in a period of self-isolation and/or cocooning under the current Health Policy Rules.
 - Not be displaying COVID-19 symptoms.
 - Adhere to any travel restrictions in place.
- Athlete entry to be taken electronically prior to the Competition. Strictly no entries on the day of competition. The entry4sports online entry system is recommended for organisers.
- Reduce number of age groups and events within races to minimise numbers entered.
- Officials training provided online, to cover event protocols and HSE guidelines. Must be completed at least 24 hours before the event day. With health questionnaire signed by officials.



- Notification to participants regarding protocols in place and event specific guidelines,
 - Covid-19 specific guidelines.
 - Competition specific messages.
 - Athlete etiquette (No spitting, no handshakes etc).
 - Event maps.
- Thorough consultation process with venue and local authorities where applicable whom must agree with Event safety Management Plan and Covid-19 protocols.
- Event medical plan to include procedures for handling suspected Covid cases on site (to be designed by Event medical plan supplier).
- In conjunction with the venue owner ensure a thorough clean of all indoor areas and those that are frequently touched.
- Officials to manage routes, direction signage to be erected.
- Social Distancing signage also erected.
- Hand sanitisation points to be provided at main ingress and egress points.
- Sample event access map.
- **Competition set up**
 - Officials to collect own equipment required and set up their own area.
 - Gloves to be utilised for setting up of areas.
 - Health and safety briefing to be attended by all officials on the morning of competition prior to setting up work areas.
- **Officials break area:**
 - Breaks should be staggered and kept to a minimum time for officials.
 - In conjunction with caterers ensure any food supplied is done in a compliant manner.
 - Designated outdoor area should be used with tables spaced 2m apart.

Competition Day

- **Parking and Transport**
 - Where possible encourage cycling, walking and public transport if available.
 - Athletes will be notified of available parking and alternative transport options. If participants must park next to another car, they should wait for the other person to exit or enter before doing so themselves.
- **Competition ingress/egress**
 - One-way system to be designed to allow space for social distancing and increase flow of athlete and spectators around the competition venue,
 - If government guidelines allow spectators in the future all tickets to be sold online in advance or paid for with electronic payments on the day to avoid cash handling.
 - Event maps and access routes to be provided to athletes in advance of the competition.
- **Athlete Check in**
 - Utilise Electronic check-in and athlete self-check in system (provided by Entry4sports online entry system).
 - Separate check in area and bib collection area.
 - One-way system for athlete flow to minimise contact.
 - Staggered times for check-in - only one event/age category permitted at a specific time.
 - Hand sanitiser available at check-in entrance & exit for athletes and on check-in/bib collection tables for officials.
 - Provide gloves & masks for officials.
 - Perspex screens between officials & athletes.
 - One official per table & tables must be 2 metres apart or within safe social distancing guidelines.
 - Only one athlete or athlete representative allowed to collect bib number.



- Minimise queues and implement ground sticker markings to demonstrate 2m safe distance for queuing.
- Erection of Dept of Health Covid-19 signage at entrance/exit routes and around the area.
- Radios, laptops and other equipment's to be cleaned and sanitised regularly.
- Only one official per laptop.
- No sharing of administrative material among people.

- **Team areas**

- Athletes to be encouraged to come ready for competition.
- Greater space given to Team tents.
- Possible markings to space tents out further and throughout the entire venue.

- **Toilets**

- Increased quantity of portaloos/toilets supplied depending on event capacity Suggested 1:50 ratio.
- Portaloos to be positioned 2m apart.
- Markings on the ground to highlight 2m distance for people queuing.
- In conjunction with the venue owner ensure toilets are cleaned and sanitised on a regular basis.

- **Warm up**

- Social distance to be adhered to.

- **Chip Check area**

- One-way system to be in operation.
- Chip timing check area to be outside.
- Increase the size of the chip check area.
- Partition to separate chip timing operator and athletes.
- Athletes only through this area.
- Markings to indicate social distancing while queuing to pass through chip timing check area.
- One official assigned to utilise the laptop/printer only.
- No sharing of administrative material.
- Sanitise all equipment post use.

- **Call up/Starts area**

- All athletes should practice responsible social distancing by remaining at least 2m apart until the call to line up for the race. Start area should allow for this.
- All athletes to wear face coverings up until final call for race (1 min prior to start).
- Reduce call up time to 10min prior to race.
- Officials to be provided with appropriate PPE.
- Increase size of pens and space between should be greater than 2m where possible.

- **Finish area**

- All athletes should be moved through the finish area as soon as possible and practice responsible social distancing by remaining at greater than 2m apart.
- The area should be big enough in size to allow for social distancing 2m. square per person.
- The number of officials should be limited to reduce the number of people present.
- Post races athletes should wait 3 minutes before interacting with the public. Officials who are in close contact to athletes at the finish line should wear face shields or maintain a greater than 2-meter distance.
- Minimum of 2 meters should be between spectators and the finish area.
- One-way flow of athletes while exiting the area.
- Provide hand washing and hand sanitizer stations for officials.
- Athletes should refrain from handshakes, high fives, fist/elbow bumps, chest bumps, group celebrations, etc.
- The number of officials should be limited to reduce the number of people present.

- **Competition results**

- Only essential officials in results area.



- Perspex screens between officials.
 - One person to utilise designated laptop/tablet.
 - All equipment to be cleaned and sanitised after use.
 - Field tablets to be utilised with paper field/track sheets as back up.
 - Paper should not pass from one person to another.
 - Printer available to officials to collect paperwork directly.
 - Officials scan in paperwork post competition.
 - Results are shared through tablets/phones.
 - Gloves to be worn when setting up equipment.
- **Awards area**
 - Awards ceremonies should not take place.
 - Awards should be posted or collected at a designate area by athletes.
 - Allow for one-way flow of athletes through awards area.
 - Athlete only or team representative to collect medal from designated area.
 - Awards area should be outside of the finish area to reduce numbers in the area and re-entry to the finish area.
- **Equipment tear down**
 - All used radio, laptops and other competition equipment to be cleaned and sanitised before storing away.
- **Survey**
 - Complete online survey of all athletes/officials/spectators.
 - Get feedback on protocols used.
- If an athlete, official or spectator becomes unwell after attending, they should first contact their GP and read the HSE guidelines and then inform the Competition Organisers. The Competition organisers will then follow advice provided to them by the HSE on the next steps.

Post Competition

- **Venue tear down**
 - Venue dismantling to begin once competition is complete.
 - Meet Director and Covid Compliance officer to oversee teardown to ensure social distancing is followed.
 - Officials to dismantle own area of work and return equipment to designated area.
 - In conjunction with the venue owner ensure a thorough clean of all indoor areas and those that are frequently touched.



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