



WELSH ATHLETICS
ATHLETAU CYMRU

*LIFTING ATHLETICS
OUT OF LOCKDOWN*

#StaySafe

Return to Mountain & Trail Running Competition [V4 – 26/04/2021]

This document has been created to provide sport-specific advice to help competition providers within the confines of the Welsh Government's roadmap to unlocking society. This guidance is based on there being a return to events in the future, however what is currently unknown is what, whether and when restrictions may be placed on mass gatherings by National and Local Authorities. Therefore, it is important to state that all Welsh Athletics guidance will be updated as per Welsh Government guidelines when they are made available or as soon as possible thereafter. There may also be divergence in policies between the Home Nations.

These guidelines will apply to Wales only.

All races should take account of local conditions and any risk assessment for normal activity should be undertaken along with a COVID-19 specific risk assessment. It is the responsibility of each competition provider, athlete, coach, facility and landowner to make assessments based on their local environment. The event risk assessment must consider mitigations and plans for when activities do not go as expected e.g. treatment of an injury whilst maintaining social distancing.

It is important to note that the event delivery principles set out in this guidance document will need to be applied across the range of Mountain and Trail Running events that take place in Wales. Event Organisers will need to assess how the delivery principles will be implemented for their individual events.

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Introduction

COVID-19 continues to cause significant challenges. Regardless of size or scale of events, our sport will be affected, and we all need to look into ways of conducting races in a safe way for all participants, including competitors, volunteers, the event delivery team and the general public.

- Social distancing requirements
- Required safety and hygiene controls
- Any additional controls, such as local lockdown measures

This guidance document has been produced in collaboration with UK Athletics to help event organisers consider what measures need to be implemented at events to fulfil their duty of care in providing a safe environment for participants to take part.

Please note that this guidance suggests principles for controlling the transmission of coronavirus at events. The transmission method of the virus is common, either surface or aerosol transmission. This guidance seeks to respect social distancing requirements or maximum attendance set out by the Welsh Government.

It should be noted that events may have to react to regional lockdown conditions and may not be able to go ahead even if they have implemented all necessary mitigating measures.

Race organisers should bear in mind that it is a condition of UK Athletics race licencing that events have local authority approval. Under COVID-19 conditions, local authorities and other stakeholders such as landowners may require evidence of the additional measures that have been implemented by an event organiser before giving approval for an event to take place.

It is important to state that this guidance will be kept under review and may change as and when further Welsh Government directives are issued.

This guidance document is supported by:

- Participant Code of Conduct
- Spectator Code of Conduct
- Volunteer Code of Conduct
- Advice on PPE (Appendix 2 & 3)

This document provides guidance for licensed events relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. It should be read alongside the existing event delivery guidance available.

Events must update their risk assessments based upon these guidelines which reflects the requirements issued by the Welsh Government. Normal operating procedures and emergency action plans must be updated to reflect any changes made as a result of this guidance.

Event organisers have a responsibility to take reasonable steps to ensure their activities and the event environment is as safe as possible for all.

Medical provision must remain in line with the current UK Athletics licensing process. Additional requirements specific to the current COVID-19 situation are detailed in the Medical Considerations section of this document.

Welsh Government Restrictions for Outdoor Sport & Activity

The current restrictions limit attendees at any outdoor organised activity to a maximum of 30 people.

The activity must be organised by a responsible body such as a sports club, public body, charity, gym or leisure centre where the environment is risk-assessed and all reasonable measures to reduce the risk of spreading the virus have been taken.

Organising an outdoor event where more than 30 people attend at the same time (whether or not they are 'gathering') is prohibited. Multiple groups of 30 are permitted as long as sufficient space is available. There should be NO overlapping or interaction between separate groups of 30.

The number of children aged 18 and under who can legally participate in an organised outdoor children's activity is now constrained by the boundaries of the setting and the need for sufficient adults to be present to supervise. Where there is a mixture of children and adults as part of a group, the numerical limit of 30 will apply.

Although the risk of transmission with young children is lower, parents and responsible adults should still exercise good judgement and encourage children to follow hand hygiene protocols and minimise close contact wherever possible.

Guiding Principles

This document provides guidance for licensed events delivered whilst COVID-related safety measures remain in place in Wales. This should be read alongside existing event delivery guidance and licensing standards. The safety and wellbeing of all athletes, runners, coaches, officials, volunteers and the wider community is at the heart of any guidance that Welsh Athletics distributes.

The guidance that follows provides sport specific advice. It is important to say that any return to activity must take account of local conditions and any risk assessment for normal activities should be undertaken as well as ensuring that all government guidance around COVID-19 is taken into account.

It is the responsibility of each competition provider, athlete, coach and facility to make that assessment based on their local environment. Risk assessment must take into account mitigations and plans for when activities do not go as expected. Planning scenarios around, for example, an injury occurring to an athlete and the need to support that athlete while social distancing should be undertaken.

Health first	If you have any doubts or concerns about the risk to your health or that of others, stop and re-assess
Stay up to date	How will you make sure you, and those you are with, are following the latest guidance? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check the latest Welsh Government Guidance here.
Think ahead: Before, during, & after	What do you need to do before taking part? Have you assessed the risks? How will you get to and from where you're going?

When lifting restrictions please consider the following at a local level¹:

- Can the measures be implemented effectively in practice?
- How will you clearly communicate the changes to all without disadvantaging any parties?
- Will you need to provide extra encouragement or incentives to bring people back to the sport?
- Ensure you consider any consent issues – any decision to participate should be voluntary and informed.

Event Licensing

All events must apply for a Welsh Athletics license. A license application form can be found [here](#).

License applications will be processed by Welsh Athletics and will require the submission of both a COVID-specific and standard risk assessment. These risk assessments must be approved by the licensing officer prior to a license being granted for the event.

License applications should be submitted no later than 30 days before the proposed event date. This will enable a review of the risk assessments and for changes to be implemented if advised.

Communication

All key principles must be underpinned by clear, consistent messaging from the organisers to staff, volunteers, participants and the wider public, including potential spectators.

Organisers should develop and deliver a comprehensive communications plan that reinforces all key points detailed below to the relevant audience.

Application of Principles

Organisers should ensure that where applicable these principles are applied by all staff and volunteers and by all third-party suppliers, venue staff and contractors, throughout all stages of the delivery of the event, including planning and at all times on site.

Organisers should commit to demonstrating to their normal licensing authorities that these principles are adhered to throughout the planning and delivery of the event.

NHS Test, Trace & Protect

Event organisers are required to support the NHS Test, Trace & Protect system.

Organisers should ensure that participants complete pre-event COVID-19 screening prior to arrival at the event location.

All staff, contractors, volunteers and participants must support the pre-event screening, and Test, Trace & Protect procedures. If multiple venues/locations/build are being used, a separate Test, Trace & Protect check-in should be provided for each.

Staff, Volunteers, Suppliers and Contractors

All staff, volunteers, suppliers and contractors must receive and acknowledge appropriately detailed briefings on these guidelines / regulations and appropriate ways of working before arriving at any event site or meeting.

Mitigations such as increased on-site working and welfare space should be put into place. Additional time to build and take down the event should be factored in.

Staff must be issued with suitable PPE where appropriate and there must be appropriate collection, renewal and disposal facilities.

Organisers must develop suitable plans to monitor staff for COVID-19 symptoms. Staff showing COVID-19 symptoms, and those who have been in close contact with them, must follow all up-to-date Government instructions regarding isolation and Track, Trace & Protect.

Event Organisers must appoint a named COVID-19 Officer (who could be the Race Director, Event Manager or other individual involved with the organisation of the race; see Appendix 1 for role description) who shall be the first point of contact for all contractors and staff throughout the build and takedown period, and the event itself. The COVID-19 Officer will be responsible for oversight of the risk assessment and mitigation planning and will ensure that the necessary standards are met.

The Event Organiser must develop a COVID-19 risk assessment and mitigation plan. Consideration should be given to the following:

- A Code of Behaviour for all contractors and staff throughout the build and takedown period which provides guidelines and details of sanctions in place for breaches of protocol.
- An appropriate education programme for all contractors and staff.
- Any activities during the build and takedown period where social distancing cannot be easily maintained should be risk-assessed and mitigated.
- Limiting all non-essential activities during the build and breakdown period, such as on-site catering provision.
- A map of the venues and the course/route defining all areas/zones, routes and access/egress points.
- The maximum capacity and layout for each area/zone to allow social distancing to be maintained.
- Information on the management, movement and scheduling of contractors and staff and their vehicles to allow social distancing to be maintained.
- A security plan, screening processes and accreditation system that defines the access control system throughout the build and takedown period.
- A transport plan for staff and contractors for travel to and from the venue/site which minimises the usage of shared or public transport.
- A signage plan to support the implementation of the guidelines.

Social Distancing of the Event

Organisers must design their event so that the applicable Welsh Government advice on social distancing can be maintained by participants and staff. Advice can be found here: <https://gov.wales/sport-recreation-and-leisure-guidance-phased-return-html#section-46491>

The event timetable and event areas should be designed in order to maximise the available space for each participant and minimise the amount of time participants spend in proximity to each other.

Organisers must assess carefully the capacity of their events, such that social distancing is possible; based on the time and space available to the organiser. Crowd flow modelling tools should be used where appropriate.

The event timetable is determined by the capacity and flow required to achieve social distancing across the event period. A level of contingency for evacuation plans, rendezvous points and so on need to be planned to maintain social distancing if these plans are enacted.

Before the Event

Ensure that race information is sent out sufficiently far in advance to allow competitors to ask any questions and receive a response before event day. Consider providing an FAQ section on the event website and update regularly in advance of the event. Online video briefings which are emailed to competitors in advance of the event could be provided.

Pre-event communication to all participants must include reminders not to attend the event if they have been unwell in the last 14 days. Event organisers must include links to the current NHS advice on coronavirus/COVID-19: <https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/latest-information-on-novel-coronavirus-covid-19/>

Event organisers are not required to have evidence of competitors' pre-health screening; however, information about appropriate health screening should be communicated to competitors in advance of the event and prior to event entry where possible.

Consideration should be given to holding a pre-event online webinar or forum for competitors to ask questions.

Only competition-essential materials should be included inside the race pack such as the race number (e.g. no promo materials) whilst reducing packaging as much as possible.

Where possible, timing chips should be included in the race pack to avoid additional stations and time spent in registration. Consult with your timing company to determine if disposable chips or bib timing systems are a viable option.

On the day, briefings should not take place unless last minute critical information needs to be shared.

Tannoy announcements, social media and text messaging services should be considered.

All competitors should have entered the event in advance and all queries need to be dealt with over the phone or email and not on race day.

Limit queues and dwell time and minimise contact / touch points. Social distancing and PPE needs to be planned in for any in person dealings with participants.

Travel to and from the Event

Welsh Government legislation around local lockdowns should be adhered to at all times: <https://gov.wales/local-lockdown>.

Organisers should assess whether it is possible for the public to maintain social distancing when travelling to and from the event.

Organisers should adapt event schedules, event areas and event capacities to ensure public transport systems can cope with volumes of people attending the event.

Organisers should, if need be, coordinate with local transport authorities to ensure sufficient capacity.

Organisers should consider providing facilities to enable alternative means of transport where appropriate, such as bike parking and car parking with clear directional signage for participants from each transport arrival node to the event site. Participants should be told a specific arrival point.

Before the Start

Organisers must ensure that areas are designed so that participants do not need to assemble in a manner which conflicts with social distancing guidelines.

Organisers should consider whether facilities (e.g. baggage drop, customer information) and activations are necessary at the event and remove event elements likely to cause participants to congregate or mitigate that congregation (e.g. queue lines / markers etc).

Organisers should consider marking out spaces on the floor or providing additional signage to remind competitors to conform to social distancing.

Start Line Management, Course and Finish

Organisers must design start line procedures such that the density of participants at the start line is within social distancing guidelines. This could be achieved by:

- Maximising the space available at the start line and the time available for participants to cross the start line.
- Clear messaging to participants to follow start line protocols (e.g. seeded by predicted time).
- Reducing the dwell time before the start to an absolute minimum. Move participants more rapidly to the start line.
- Modelling the start “release” time. This would include lengthening the release time to allow social distancing to be maintained throughout the course and have a buffer built in to reduce the flow rate and compensate for compression on the course due to emergency access, pedestrian crossings, incidents etc.

While it is anticipated that by slowing the rate of starters sufficiently to permit social distancing at the start line, consideration should be taken on the location and width of the narrowest point of the course to avoid pinch points.

Event features that may lead to congregating on the route (e.g. pacers, entertainment) should be withdrawn.

The density of runners on the course should allow for socially distanced overtaking. Event Organisers should consider the effect of slowing the rate of starters on lapping at later stages in the race.

Ideally experienced crowd flow dynamics experts should be consulted where appropriate (such as on multiple-lap courses or where there are pinch points) or in races where in excess of 300 participants are taking part.

Organisers should ensure that finishers are dispersed quickly away from the finish line and should take measures to guide participants safely away from the event site.

Feed Stations

Use of feed and drinks stations by participants should be minimised, and participants encouraged to bring their own hydration and nutrition to the event, using bottle belts and hydration backpacks etc.

If drinks stations must be used, they should be configured to minimise contact time. Sealed bottles are recommended rather than cups. Bottles should be picked up by participants and not handed to them.

Finish Area

Whilst the finish of any event is a positive environment, social distancing and hygiene measures must remain of paramount importance.

Unnecessary touch points (e.g. handing out of medals, drinks, t-shirts, promotional material etc.) should be removed from the finish area. Avoid using finishing discs – explore the use of manual/chip timing instead to reduce the number of unnecessary contacts between individuals.

Where possible, increase the width of the finish area to give competitors more space when crossing the finish line. The minimum finish line width will be determined by crowd flow modelling.

Ensure competitors avoid lying or sitting down in the finish chute/finish area (unless in the case of medical need/problems). Identify a pool of volunteers on duty at the finish line to look out for runners looking weak/light-headed and then encourage them to keep walking and not to stop. These volunteers should wear PPE appropriate to their role and have hand washing/sanitiser facilities available.

Following their finish, all competitors must be directed to an open space and organisers should have a plan to disperse everyone off site as efficiently as possible.

Medical Considerations

Organisers must undertake, in conjunction with local and/or national NHS planners, detailed and regular assessments to minimise the impact of staging the event on the wider community and healthcare systems.

Consideration should be given to local mountain rescue advice.

Organisers should engage a named COVID-19 Medical Officer familiar with the emerging evidence related to post-COVID-19 pathology. Liaise with your First Aid provider on this role.

Organisers must ensure that provision of PPE, other equipment and medical supplies does not impact on supply for key workers.

Organisers, where appropriate, should arrange provision of dedicated local medical triage centres. Treatment should take place on site wherever safe and possible to reduce transfers to hospital unless necessary.

Organisers must develop a plan to manage individuals presenting with COVID-19 symptoms at the event.

Currently it is unknown what impact COVID-19 will have on the long-term health of those who contracted the virus. Based on the best available evidence at this time, it is strongly advised that:

- Those who have been hospitalised due to COVID-19 should undergo a form of health screening prior to taking part in an event. This screening is best led by a doctor with specialist training in sports medicine however other doctors may feel competent to make decisions on the participants' fitness to compete and to decide any appropriate investigations that might be required.

Organisers should adapt the activity level, numbers of participants and time to allow social distancing as covered elsewhere in these guidelines.

The below list of recommendations is to be discussed between the event organiser and medical provider:

- Plan an isolation area within the main medical facility where potential COVID-19 patients can be taken. This needs to be entirely separate to the main medical post to allow containment and thus prevent transmission of the virus to healthier individuals. This could be a 3x3m gazebo or a separate room within a permanent venue.
- Patients placed in the isolation area should be asked to wear a surgical mask unless clinically impossible (e.g. due to vomiting).
- Given the medical team working in the isolation area are unable to fulfil their duties within social distancing rules, they should wear surgical masks, visors, plastic aprons and gloves as a minimum level of PPE for every patient contact.
- The PPE (other than masks or visors) is single patient use and therefore should be changed after each contact.
- Masks may be worn continuously but must be changed when they become damp. If a mask is removed for any reason it must be disposed of immediately. Masks & visors should also be changed if moving from an isolation to a non-isolation area to reduce the risk of cross-infection.
- The medical team should follow the current Resuscitation Council Guidelines on the management of cardiac arrest during this pandemic which includes specific advice about levels of PPE required in a cardiac arrest situation: <https://www.resus.org.uk/media/statements/resuscitation-council-uk-statements-on-Covid-19-coronavirus-cpr-and-resuscitation/Covid-community/>
- Provision of medical personnel needs to take account of additional requirements to allow for separate management of potential COVID-19 patients in isolation areas.
- Ice baths, ice vests and water buckets should be changed between each patient. This will increase the amount of ice and water required by the medical team.

- Hand sanitiser should be freely available throughout the event site, including the medical posts.
- Medical teams should be aware that an ambulance used to transport a potential COVID-19 patient will need to be sterilised before it can be reused so may not be able to return to the event immediately. Therefore, medical planning should consider increasing provision of ambulances.
- Event Medical guidelines will need to take account that it is common for healthy competitors to finish a race with temperatures up to 39°C (or higher if developing exertional heatstroke). Therefore, a temperature greater than 37.8°C in a competitor should not automatically be considered a likely COVID-19 case but should be reviewed by the medical team in the context of the patient's presentation.
- A regular water supply and/or running water (via a temporary or permanent sink) is strongly recommended within the main medical facilities to help maintain hygiene standards. Separate sinks should be available for the isolation area. All the above must be discussed and arranged with the medical provider.

Hygiene

Organisers must implement an appropriate education programme for all staff, officials and volunteers with an emphasis on the maintenance of strict and frequent personal hygiene measures, particularly handwashing.

Organisers must ensure that a sufficient supply of personal and hand hygiene equipment and consumables is provided for staff, officials and volunteers at the event site at all times. Provision should take account that these will be changed frequently so likely to be more than previously required.

Organisers must ensure that all relevant areas of the event site are cleaned at the standard defined in the government guidance for post-COVID-19 case non-hospital facilities cleaning (prior to the event) and government guidance for non-hospital facilities cleaning (before and after the event): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

For all clinical areas, the relevant Public Health Authority standard will apply. High contact surfaces such as door handles and light switches should be considered a priority for disinfection on a frequent basis.

Promoting Individual Responsibility

Have a Participant Code of Conduct that is provided to all entrants.

Have a Spectator Code of Conduct that is provided to all participants so they can ensure any friends or family understand the protocols.

Example/templates for codes of conduct at events are available from Welsh Athletics [here](#).

Venue & Facility Considerations

Any venue being used as part of the event is likely have their own procedures and protocols in place which event organisers will need to fully adopt and work within. Event organisers should work with the venue operator to ensure that all working spaces and facilities used are organised in a way that social distancing is respected.

In cooperation with the venue provider, ensure hygiene standards are maintained and cleaning of all touch points including, but not limited to door handles, toilet handles, taps, sinks etc. is carried out in line with the procedures set out by the venue provider. Where there are no venue staff or this responsibility is devolved to the Event Organiser, consider how this will be carried out using your own event personnel.

Where a permanent building containing toilet facilities cannot be used or is inaccessible, consider increasing the number of portable toilets to reduce queuing and ensure these are fully stocked and replenished with hand sanitisers or soap and water and paper towels.

Spectators, Residents & Businesses

Organisers should develop comprehensive communication plans to deter the number of spectators and supporters from attending the event, emphasising alternatives to follow the event where provided.

Where appropriate organisers must take pre-emptive action to mitigate known points of spectator crowding, including preventing access to those areas if necessary, removing entertainment and attractions, or applying one-way systems etc.

If appropriate organisers must update existing plans for spectators and crowd flows to help to ensure social distancing is maintained.

Organisers must develop comprehensive communications plans in order to inform local residents and businesses that the event is taking place, explaining how the event is being held safely and how they can contribute towards ensuring the event remains safe.

Elite Athletes Travelling from Abroad

Organisers must ensure that all considerations around elite athletes follow COVID-19 related guidance from Government, UK Sport and/or relevant governing bodies.

Organisers should consider:

- Create a bio-secure environment for arrival, competition, presentation and departure of athletes.
- Observe current quarantine rules. Provide digital facilities to permit media engagement for remote coverage and interviews
- Provide additional frequent testing as required of all athletes, support staff and facilities staff within the quarantine environment.

- Provide bio-secure areas for accommodation, training, transit and pre-race preparation.

Appendix 1 – COVID-19 Officer Role

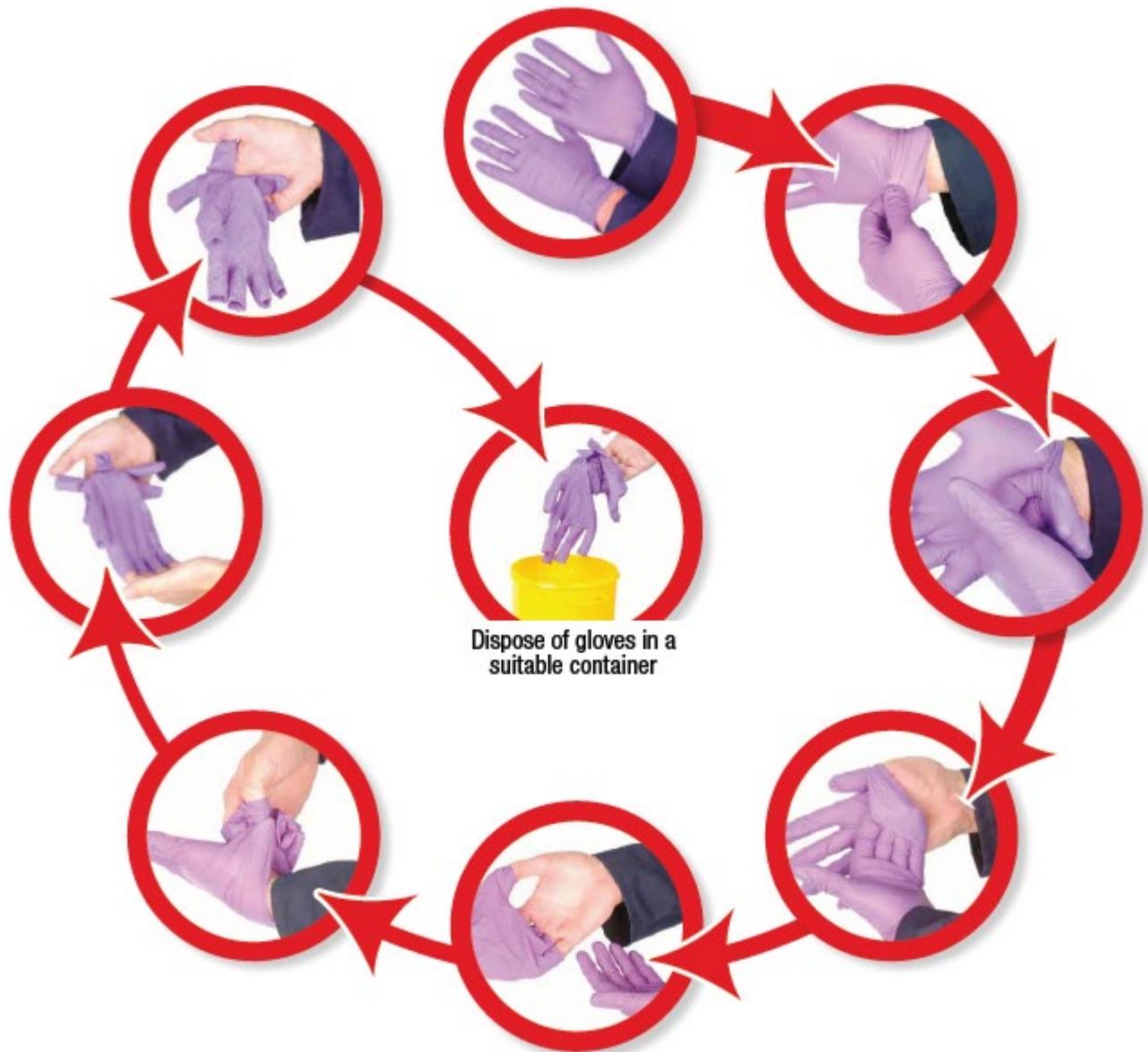
The COVID-19 Officer is responsible for reviewing each area of the competition and asking pertinent questions to ensure that Welsh Athletics and Welsh Government guidance is adhered to throughout the competition. This person can be the Meeting Manager, or someone else deemed appropriate for the role.

Competition Providers should appoint a designated COVID-19 Officer (preferably someone with experience in Health & Safety in a professional or volunteer setting) whose responsibilities include:

- Liaising with the facility manager / landowner in relation to all matters concerning COVID-19
- Assisting to produce site-based risk assessments ensuring that COVID-19 compliant processes and protocols are in place.
- Ensuring all necessary levels of risk mitigation are in place prior to competition.
- Competition Providers should ensure they are prepared and have planned for circumstances where injuries or other accidents occur, and they have mitigating procedures and plans in place to resolve the issue while maintaining all Welsh Government guidance and ensuring compliance of social distancing measures.
- Ensuring that volunteers/Officials, coaches/leaders, athletes, and parents/guardians are adhering to this guidance.
- Ensuring that the competition complies with the facility restrictions and guidance.

Appendix 2 - Safe Removal of Disposable Gloves

Follow the simple steps below to remove gloves correctly:



Remove carefully from your skin to protect against contamination.

Appendix 3 - How to wear a mask safely

HOW TO WEAR A MEDICAL MASK SAFELY

who.int/epi-win

Do's →



Wash your hands before touching the mask



Inspect the mask for tears or holes



Find the top side, where the metal piece or stiff edge is



Ensure the colored-side faces outwards



Place the metal piece or stiff edge over your nose



Cover your mouth, nose, and chin



Adjust the mask to your face without leaving gaps on the sides



Avoid touching the mask



Remove the mask from behind the ears or head



Keep the mask away from you and surfaces while removing it



Discard the mask immediately after use preferably into a closed bin



Wash your hands after discarding the mask

Don'ts →



Do not Use a ripped or damp mask



Do not wear the mask only over mouth or nose



Do not wear a loose mask



Do not touch the front of the mask



Do not remove the mask to talk to someone or do other things that would require touching the mask



Do not leave your used mask within the reach of others



Do not re-use the mask

Remember that masks alone cannot protect you from COVID-19. Maintain at least 1 metre distance from others and wash your hands frequently and thoroughly, even while wearing a mask.




Disclaimer

Please note that the subject matter covered in this guidance is in no way exhaustive and the material does not stand on its own nor is intended to be relied upon as a substitute for obtaining specific legal advice. Individual circumstances will differ. The information contained in this guidance is given in good faith but any liability of Welsh Athletics Ltd or its professional advisors (including their respective members or employees) to you or any third party which may arise out of the reliance by you or any other party of the contents of this guidance is hereby excluded to the fullest extent permitted by law. Welsh Athletics Ltd and its professional advisors accept no duty of care or liability for any loss occasioned, whether caused by negligence or otherwise, to any person acting or refraining from actions as a result of any material in this guidance. We would strongly recommend that you consult professional advisors on specific issues before acting or refraining from action on any of the contents of this guidance.

This guidance has been prepared by Welsh Athletics Ltd.