



USMS COVID-19 Safety Plan Addendum

Until directed otherwise, all sanctioned events must complete this COVID-19 Safety Plan Addendum and email it to their LSMC sanctions chair in addition to completing the [standard sanction application on usms.org](#). Please copy events@usmastersswimming.org on correspondence so the National Office can gather comprehensive best practices and assist as needed.

Guidance and Recommendations

Event Directors

- The event director is responsible for researching and abiding by all current applicable federal, state, local, and facility orders related to COVID-19, clearly communicating protocols in published event information, and providing email updates to attendees as needed.
- Per [CDC guidance](#) (updated July 28, 2021), at indoor facilities in [areas with substantial or high COVID-19 transmission levels](#), it is recommended that both vaccinated and unvaccinated attendees wear a mask covering the nose and mouth at all times except while swimming.
- Limit spectators and nonessential attendees.
- Limit bathroom access (swimmers arrive and leave in their suits).
- Limit hospitality (attendees should bring snacks, water, etc.). If food or drinks need to be provided, use individually wrapped or sealed containers in a grab and go setting.
- Space out seating areas and preassign to groups or individuals if possible. Encourage swimmers to avoid congregating behind the blocks before or after races, in the warmup pool, or to cheer from the side of the pool.
- Provide hand washing stations and hand sanitizer.
- Sanitize common areas and surfaces frequently.
- Publish results online only to avoid crowds at results posted on-site.
- To eliminate the need for meetings that typically are held in-person (for officials, safety personal, open water safety briefings, etc.) publish information in advance and/or organize virtual meetings via Zoom.
- Avoid or minimize post-event socials and awards ceremonies.
- For larger events, consider splitting the event into sessions to minimize the number of attendees at the venue at any given time.
- If you become aware of COVID-19 exposure (i.e., an attendee tests positive shortly after the event and could have exposed other attendees), communicate to all attendees through email or other possible means the possible exposure times and locations so attendees may determine if quarantining and/or testing are needed. [Here are positive test protocol recommendations](#) from the [Aquatics Coalition](#).
- Pool Meets:
 - Provide plenty of time between heats and events to avoid crowding behind the blocks.
 - Limit the number of swimmers allowed in each warmup lane to allow for physical distancing. Encourage swimmers to be flexible with their warmup routines and considerate of fellow swimmers.
 - Relays may be held if ample space for distancing and all other COVID-19 mitigation efforts can remain in place. Using only every other lane is a good way to provide additional space for relay swimmers.

Event Directors (continued)

- Open Water Races:

- Avoid mass starts and use wave, time trial, or rolling starts instead to avoid crowding.
- Provide a receptacle for swimmers to discard masks as they enter the water and disposable masks for swimmers to wear as soon as they exit the water.

Officials and Timers

- The referee, starter, and stroke and turn officials should space out as much as feasible corresponding to various pool configurations.
- Sanitize any equipment before use (e.g., podium, microphone, etc.)
- Timers should keep ample space from the blocks at the start of the race and only move up to the pool's edge at the end of the race to stop their watch and/or push their button. Then they should move back to their original position.
- Consider using only one timer per lane.

COVID-19 Safety Plan Details (include additional pages as needed). Describe plans for each protocol as applicable for your area and venue.

Current applicable federal, state, local, and facility orders regarding size of gatherings, other COVID-19 protocols, etc. (include links where appropriate)

- Post signage at the entrance that states that no one with a fever or symptoms of COVID-19 in the prior 14 days, is permitted in the establishment.
- Post signage to provide public health reminders regarding physical distancing, gatherings, and staying home if sick (samples at bottom of this document).
- Facilities should screen patrons for COVID-19 symptoms prior to admission to the facility. Patrons should be asked if they are currently experiencing fever (100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher) or a sense of having a fever, a new cough that cannot be attributed to another health condition, new shortness of breath that cannot be attributed to another health condition, new chills that cannot be attributed to another health condition, a new sore throat that cannot be attributed to another health condition, or new muscle aches that cannot be attributed to another health condition or specific activity (such as physical exercise). Children should be screened per the CDC guidance for screening children. Anyone experiencing symptoms should not be permitted in the facility.
- The total number of attendees (including both participants and spectators) of recreational sports cannot exceed the lesser of 50% of the occupancy load on the certificate of occupancy, if applicable, or 500 persons. For sports played on a field, attendees are limited to 500 persons per field.
- Ensure anyone who has symptoms of, has tested positive for, or has been exposed to COVID-19 follows appropriate guidelines for quarantine or isolation. Persons with symptoms should stay home until CDC criteria for ending isolation have been met. Persons with severe symptoms may need to be evaluated by a healthcare provider. Establish procedures for safely transporting anyone who is sick to their home or to a healthcare facility. If you are calling an ambulance or bringing someone to the hospital, try to call first to alert them that the person may have COVID-19.

Venue cleaning protocols for before, during, and after the event

- All seating (including lifeguard stations) must be cleaned and disinfected between uses.
- Provide hand sanitizing stations, including at the entrance/exit and where shared equipment is utilized.

Face-covering requirements and enforcement

- Employees working in customer-facing areas are required to wear face coverings, such as using CDC Use of Cloth Face Coverings guidance. Lifeguards responding to emergencies are exempt from this requirement.

Modifications to registration and check-in area and process

- Registration will take place online. Day-of registration will only be permitted for relays.
- Only the designated “captain” for a relay team may register the team and approach the registration desk.
- There will be no day-of athlete check-in. Athletes should report to the lane timers at the blocks one heat ahead of their designated heat.
- No more than two-heats, the heat that is on the blocks, and the heat that is on-deck, should be in the starting area at any given time to minimize crowding around the blocks.

Warm-up social distancing requirements and enforcement

- No more than 6 swimmers will be allowed in a single warm-up or cool-down lane (50m long-course lane)
- Circle swimming will be strictly enforced
- No more than 1 swimmer is allowed to rest on the wall at the ends of the warm-up and cool-down lanes at any given time

Venue facilities that are available and off-limits to participants

- Hot tubs, spas, saunas, splash pads, spray pools, and interactive play features will be closed.

Swimmer requirements for races (entering and exiting the water)

- Athletes will enter at front gate and exit from the middle gate next to the right of the pool deck bleachers.
- Coaches will be stationed up in the bleachers, keeping the bleachers the deck and bleachers clear so that spectators may watch from outside the gate. We will mark where they may stand, 10 feet apart.
- Athletes will come up the left-hand side of the deck to talk to coaches but will stay 3 rows down from coaches and exit down the right-hand side of the deck after talking to coaches. We will mark the flow of traffic with arrows/tape.

Other participant interaction modifications (awards, results, etc.)

- Spectators will be off deck at all times except for those who are volunteers. They will be allowed to set up tents 10 feet apart in the grassy area next to the fencing of the outside the pool deck. Seating may be provided in the upper section of the pool bleachers with at least ten feet of spacing between persons who are not members of the same household.
- Results will be emailed to registrants after the completion of the meet as well as posted online at www.vaswim.org
- Awards will be mailed to registrants with a valid mailing address at the completion of the meet, or will be mailed to a coach affiliated with the athlete's registered team.

Post-event notification protocol, in the event that an attendee subsequently tests positive for COVID-19

- All registrants will be informed by email of any possible COVID-19 exposure if a positive case results within two days after the meet
- In the notification email, registrants will also be informed of the swimming events where they may have possibly been exposed