



AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUB[®]

Agility

Suggested Best Practices for the Well-Being of Dog Sport Participants

The AKC supports each club's informed decision to reschedule, postpone or cancel their respective events, as well as supporting clubs ready to hold events in locations that are open and permit gatherings. As events resume across the country, people need to feel safe while enjoying their dog activities. The AKC urges clubs to take appropriate precautions for the benefit of their participants. Events need to be held in a manner that emphasizes the safety of participants and event officials over efficiency.

The following is a list of suggested best practices that may be helpful when planning or attending an event. Event locations, facilities and dates will differ. With a situation that is continually evolving, it is up to the clubs to determine the guidelines that best fit their event. In order to inform participants, specific guidelines established by the club should be published in the premium, club website and posted on signage/flyers at their event.

General Practices for Clubs and Exhibitors

1. Clubs, officials and participants are required to follow state, local and facility guidelines that apply to the area and site where the event is held.
2. Practice social distancing consistent with current guidelines. Avoid congregating to the extent possible.
3. Consider wearing masks when in close proximity to others. Clubs should provide masks if desired for officials, judges and volunteers.
4. Exhibitors and committee should consider wearing disposable or washable gloves.
5. Have plenty of hand sanitizer placed for people to use and soap in restrooms.
6. Wash hands as frequently as possible. Have disinfecting spray at bathroom facilities for people to spray door handles (or anything else they touch). Leave doors open if possible.
7. If you utilize portable toilets, please ask for a handwashing station to be delivered as well and make sure it is kept functional for the full event.
8. Avoid shaking hands or hugging.
9. Avoid touching dogs that are not your responsibility.
10. Avoid common use pens/pencils – bring your own.
11. Crating should be at least six feet apart, except for “family” groups of exhibitors and dogs.

12. Disinfect surfaces in common use areas as often as possible (tables, chairs, doorknobs, etc.) Clubs and facilities may consider not providing chairs.
13. Meals – No potlucks. No MACH cakes. Hospitality areas should avoid community items such as salt and pepper shakers, condiments, creamers, etc. It is recommended that club supply boxed lunches for judges and volunteers and a separate cooler for each judge. Participants should consider bringing their own lunch/drinks.
14. Parking areas – Park with sufficient distance between vehicles if possible.

Trial Planning

1. Clubs may need to limit the number of exhibitors based on state or local guidelines.
 - Clubs may choose to limit trials based on the number of exhibitors allowed in the event space. For example, 50 people (exhibitors, volunteers, judges, event committee) and runs not to exceed 350 for the trial.
 - Consider running the trial in shifts in order to reduce congregating and accommodate more entrants.
 - Clubs may consider grouping exhibitors by blocks and add expected start times for each block. One example would be Large Dogs (20, 24, 24C) Ex/M Standard & JWW then Small Dogs (4,8,12,16) Ex/M Standard & JWW. Then run all Open and Novice.
 - Clubs may be able to have more people at outdoor events where people can spread out.
2. Crating
 - If possible, ask exhibitors to crate from vehicles.
 - If indoor space is limited, the club may want to request the next group to not show up earlier than 30 minutes before their start time.
3. Awards area – Recommend that this area will need the space to have exhibitors line up six feet apart to pick up ribbons and stickers. No self-serve boxes. Will need volunteer for awards area. If prizes are offered have them spaced out for people to pick up.
4. Trial Secretary Area – Recommend that it is set up with a minimum of six feet between the Trial Secretary area and exhibitors.
5. Judges Table – Judges should have a separate worktable that is not accessible to exhibitors.
6. Ring Set-Up – Evaluate current set-up and see if rings can be reoriented to allow for better spacing of exhibitors. This may include looking at entrance/exit doors of building to see if a different setup can help set up a one way flow.

Trial Practices

1. Consider recommending that exhibitors wear masks. Exhibitors should be able to run without a mask if they desire. Judges may wear masks at their discretion if not required by the club.

2. Surfaces need to be wiped down. This includes agility equipment that is touched. Clubs will need to make sure that restrooms, doors, tables, chairs, etc. are clean/sanitized during the day.
3. Ring Crew
 - Masks suggested for all. Hand sanitizer should be available ringside or at volunteer positions. Ring crew may also wear gloves. Recommend that ring crew use their own chairs. If not, then they should be wiped down between use.
 - Gate Steward should be provided at least a 6' buffer. Recommend using gating or flagging tape to designate gate steward's space. They should be the only one to mark the gate board once the boards are at the ring entrance. Recommend they do not leave their pens unattended.
 - Gate boards can be laid out before class for exhibitors to check in – but exhibitors must use their own pens.
 - Leash Runner – Can either use and then dispose of a paper towel to handle each leash, or can apply hand sanitizer between handling of each leash or use a “grabber”. If using a grabber, wipe down between leashes. Note - For the rest of 2020 exhibitors may place leashes in their pockets or wear them when running the course. Leash must fully fit in pocket.
 - Course Builders – Recommend gloves or hand sanitizer for them. Do not share course maps with others. Make sure to wipe down the measuring wheel before/after use.
 - Timer/Scribe should sit at the ends of the table. Scribe should only use-their pens. The table, timer console and chairs should be wiped down with each shift change. If more than 2 people working than proper spacing should still be adhered too.
4. Score Sheet Runner – Recommend the use of gloves and limit the number of pick-ups from the Scribe area. Suggest that the scribe puts sheets in a basket and score runner carries basket over instead of having the score runner touch each individual sheet. Suggest not using duplicate scribe sheets.
5. Briefings may be done in the parking lot or over a PA system/ring speaker so exhibitors may stay spread out. Exhibitors do not have to come into the ring for briefing – they may stay outside of the ring. Briefings will not be required for Excellent/Master level classes.
6. Recommend only VMOs can measure dogs. No measurements will be done by the judge of record. VMOs may choose to not measure dogs. If they do, the measuring devices and table should be wiped down between dogs. VMO should consider wearing a mask if not required by the club and must sanitize their hands between dogs.
7. Walk-thru group sizes should be reduced. Suggest a maximum of 25 exhibitors per walk-thru.
8. Space out exhibitors when lining up to run. Place cones or tape lines at intervals in the area that dogs are lined up. May also set up holding areas for the on-deck team, in the hole and third team in line.
9. Suggest using chutes for dogs to enter and leave the ring to reduce contact with gating. If the club wants to use gates, add “Gate Opener/Closer” ring crew position since exhibitors would

not have gloves on at that point or available hand sanitizer. They could wear gloves, use a paper towel to open/close gates and sanitize gate/hands as needed.

10. Recommend that results be posted to a wall so that exhibitors are not all trying to flip thru results notebooks. This will help exhibitors stay spread out and not touching items.
11. Course maps must be posted per AKC Agility Regulations. Suggest not printing copies for all exhibitors. Recommend that exhibitors take pictures of the maps. To help facilitate the process and physical spacing post course copies in two locations minimum. Trial Secretaries could also email out or post to their website the morning of the trial the course maps for exhibitors to access. It is recommended that there are 5-10 course maps per course available for those that cannot take photos or access website with course maps and that these are passed out by a club volunteer if needed.
12. Judges should not have the next team come into the ring until the finishing dog is leashed up if leashes are not at the finish area.
13. If the trial is being held in a building, consider designating one-way entrance and exit doors.

Policies that Have Been Temporarily Suspended

1. Event Application Late Fees – Event application late fees are waived through the end of October. This provides clubs more flexibility in planning or rescheduling their events.
2. Judges - Waive the judge's assignment limitations of 30 days within 200 miles until December 30, 2020
3. Closing Date – Through December 30, 2020, clubs are allowed to have a closing date 7 days prior to the event. (Currently 14 days). This will provide clubs and exhibitors greater flexibility.
4. For 2020 exhibitors may place leashes in their pockets when running the course or wear on themselves (i.e., clip like a belt around the waist). Note: if the dog grabs the leash while running this will be scored as an “E”.

Participants are expected to follow State, local government, facility and event guidelines. Clubs should be prepared to enforce the guidelines that apply to their event.

These Suggested Best Practices may be periodically updated. Please check the AKC Agility website (www.akc.org/sports/agility/) for the most up-to-date version.

CDC - How to Protect Yourself and Others:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

For questions or additional suggestions, please contact the Agility Department at agility@akc.org.

Stay Safe – Enjoy Your Dog