Recommendations for Organized Mass Gatherings – 500 or Less

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Recommendations for Organized Mass Gatherings – 100 or Less

For general recommendations, please refer to the Recommendations for Race Directors. There are several resources available for determining what phase your state and local jurisdictions are currently operating under. Refer to your local and state health department websites for this information. You can also reference many sources that have compiled information nationwide like the New York Times’ Coronavirus Reopen Map.

Important items to consider before submitting your permit:
- Ensure that the threshold is known for mass gatherings
- Speak with local and permitting agencies, best termed as a pre-meeting, as to what areas are defined as a mass gathering
  - Total number of athletes expected to participate in the event as listed on the permit?
  - Total number of athletes at one time at the event or within the immediate venue?
  - Total number of athletes plus staff/volunteers at the event?
    - Overall or at any given time?
  - Total number of all persons involved or at the event (inclusive of staff, volunteers, police, vendors, etc.)?
    - Inclusive of all outside the main venue footprint?
- If your permit is denied, inquire as to the reason and if adaptations can be made to re-submit. It is ideal to find out the answer regarding resubmission prior to your initial submission.
- Consider restricting spectators
  - If allowing a small number of spectators, limit to designated area(s) within venue
  - Consider offering live athlete results tracking and/or live video stream to YouTube or other internet streaming services to encourage spectators to watch and track athletes from home
1. REGISTRATION

I. Within registration, it is important that you first know the overall structure and timeline for your race. Once that is determined, this is where it is vital to have the pre-determined choices within the registration flow for athletes. This would need to include:

1. Specific arrival times for athletes to load in to transition to minimize overlap between times
2. Specific race start times with a capped registration number (ensure that you subtract the amount of staff and volunteers from this overall number, so you do not exceed the maximum guidelines for mass gatherings) for each start time

II. If you choose to have athletes select a specific start time, it is important that you provide the information upfront to the athletes that after signing up, they will be assigned specific times for packet pick up, transition check in, and start time, as well as any additional safety details that you will be sharing.

III. One additional option is to give athletes the option to registration and forego swag items, at a discounted price to minimize touch points and to create a most cost-effective model.

2. PACKET PICKUP

I. In looking at packet pickup, this has the potential to require the most oversight in order to stay within the guidelines as set forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

1. Within registration, designate specific days and times that athletes must pick up their packets prior to race day. They can be 1-2-hour windows. When looking at the maximum amount of people according to guidelines, be sure to include staff, volunteers, and others, outside of athletes, that will be present during any given time. That will help you to establish how many spots are available for a specific window. You should plan on designating one person to ensure that guidelines are being followed and will require them to look out for the safety of all as well as counting how many people are in one defined area.

   a. If you choose to not build into registration, consider creating a survey/sign-up platform with specific limits for each packet pickup window that athletes are required to sign up for.

2. Limit the number of people that work during each window, equipped with PPE, and throughout the day. You should have enough to be efficient but work to not overstaff. Consider loosening up restrictions and allowing one person to pick up multiple packets or club pickups.

   a. For 2021, a Race Director can elect to allow a single person to pick up packets for multiple registrants without proof of ID for each participant at packet pickup. Proof of ID will be required on race day at bike check-in to ensure that all athletes are matching ID and registrant.

   b. If assigning times, ensure it accounted for in terms of who is picking up packets and for how many athletes for planning purposes.

II. Curb-side pickup is another great option where a drive through queue line is formed. In executing this, it is important that gloves and masks are worn as well as ensuring all stay within their vehicles.

III. Consider multiple run, bike, or other locations to assist in dispersing the packets. Doing this will help spread out the number of athletes over multiple locations and days.

IV. Consider mailing packets to athletes ahead of time. With this option, it does have an increased cost and a higher margin of error if packets are lost, the address is not current, or other items outside of your control.

V. Consider having packets at the racks themselves so when athletes check in to transition, they can obtain their packet. With this option, it is important to let athletes know their race number prior
to arriving at the venue so it is easier for them to find their rack and packet location. Additionally, considering sending a diagram of rack positions to assist in the ease of finding their specific rack once arriving at the venue.

3. BRIEFINGS
It is recommended that briefings are virtual in order to avoid a mass gathering. All race and event information should be final 1–2 weeks prior the event, as this is the key time to release a pre-race briefing webinar. Continue to market this until race day. Within the briefings, all guidelines should be communicated to the athletes including policies, procedures, when to arrive at the venue depending on assigned race start time, etc. Overcommunication is key.

4. RACING
  I. Two Start Types
   1. Time Trial Start
      a. With this approach, it is vital to set specific start times for these athletes, so you don’t have an excessive number of athletes loading into the transition at one time and making their way to the start at one time. Consider seeding athletes based on projected swim time.
      b. An additional consideration is to create and tape out spacing / queue line boxes for athletes to stand prior to their start
      c. Limits the number of athlete packs during racing and further implement social distancing (start athletes every 5–10 seconds)
   2. Mass Start
      a. Depending on the type of race, a mass start may be appropriate depending on the current social distancing requirements
      b. Have smaller, but more frequent waves, including buffer time between waves if necessary. For example, 20 waves of 25 athletes instead of 5 waves of 100. If a very wide start area, distancing requirements may still be met assuming an equal distance to the first buoy for all athletes can be met.
      c. Consider randomizing waves and bib sequences so that each wave has a variety of different ages of athletes instead of waves of the same age group
         i. With randomized waves, because people of different ages will likely have different swim times, this mitigates the chances of them being near each other in transition at the same time
      d. Allows more athletes to start at once but still vital to stay within current guidelines
      e. Allows athletes the feeling of racing head-to-head
      f. With this approach, it is still vital to set specific start times for these athletes so you don’t have an excessive number of athletes loading in to the transition at one time and making their way to the start at one time
      g. It is crucial to overload this area with volunteers to ensure organization and convey all relevant information to the event announcer to deliver messaging
3. Example:

a. You have 500 people in total that have registered for your race
b. Determine specific race start times for a finite number of athletes
c. Work backwards to determine a transition check in time for only those specific athletes
d. For the second wave of athletes, ensure that they are not permitted to load in to transition until the previous athletes have completed the race and have removed their bikes from transition. To assist in determining which athletes are in which waves, consider pulling rough data from previous events.
e. Sample schedule for a super sprint triathlon with guidelines restricting mass gatherings of 500 or more people (if you have a total of 80 staff/volunteers/medical which allows for a maximum of 420 athletes). Upon the completion of race by each athlete, they should be instructed to immediately check their bike out of transition and exit the venue while only handling their gear.

- 6 a.m. – 7 a.m.: Transition Open for Start 1
- 7:05 a.m.: Race 1 Start
- 7:35 – 8:15 a.m.: Bike check out race 1
- 8:00 a.m.: Race 1 Complete
- 8:15 – 8:45 a.m.: Disinfection of bike racks in transition
- 9 a.m. – 10 a.m.: Transition Open for Start 2
- 10:20 a.m.: Race 2 Start
- 10:35 – 11:15 a.m.: Bike check out race 2
- 11 a.m.: Race 2 Complete
- 11:15 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.: Disinfection of bike racks in transition
- Continue race schedule depending on number of total athletes
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These recommendations will be updated according to the latest information from the WHO, CDC and other health authorities, as well as the USOPC, World Triathlon and other resources released on this topic.