

USA Weightlifting Event Director Coronavirus Preparedness Recommendations & Guidelines

USA Weightlifting is committed to supporting the health, safety and well-being of event directors, their staff and participants at all USAW sanctioned events. We are in regular contact with the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC) concerning coronavirus (COVID-19), and we are closely monitoring the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines and recommendations as they apply to event operations and management. We are also working directly with the USOPC Infectious Disease Advisory Group – comprised of infectious disease experts from exceptional institutions around the country – who are in direct contact with the CDC, WHO, and the International Olympic Committee’s medical staff to regularly obtain up-to-date information, disseminate this information, and establish policies and event procedures related to this infectious disease.

We have collected the following recommendations for you to consider as you continue planning and preparing for your events:

Insurance Coverage

Athletes claiming they contracted COVID-19 at a sanctioned event

USA Weightlifting’s sanctioned event insurance includes General Liability (GL) and Participant Accident (PA) coverage as standard for all events sanctioned with USA Weightlifting.

The **GL coverage will defend the event director from a negligence lawsuit** brought by a participant that claims they contracted the Coronavirus at a sanctioned event. Event directors should feel comfortable moving forward with hosting their events knowing this coverage is in place to protect them.

If an athlete claims they contracted the Coronavirus at a sanctioned event and tries to file a medical claim using the PA policy, their claim will not be covered. USA Weightlifting’s PA policy is intended for accidents that happened during a sanctioned event and will respond to cover those injuries. It will not respond to standard medical issues such as getting sick in some way, viruses and bacterial infections – all of which are excluded from the USA Weightlifting policy.

Event Cancellation Insurance

At USA Weightlifting’s request, our insurance broker, Aon, reached out to the insurance market to investigate the availability of event cancellation insurance as it relates to COVID-19. Each carrier they spoke with is now writing exclusions into their policies for COVID-19, so any policy purchased after 3/1/2020 will not cover an event cancelled due to the Coronavirus.

General Operations and Planning

Continue as planned until you are informed otherwise by your state or local government

- You should operate under the assumption that your event will go on as planned until you are advised otherwise by the local authorities.
- Proactively reach out to local agencies to ensure they are aware of your event and can assist in emergency preparation and planning.

Meet with your state and local Department of Public Health

- Consult with their experts on prevention strategies and contingency plans for attendees becoming sick at the event.
- Know what their action plan is if there are cases reported in your area and how that applies to you and your event. Specify who is responsible for taking what action and what the timeline is.
- Communicate regularly leading up to, and after, your event.

Meet with the emergency operations or risk management team at your venue

- Discuss emergency operations plans and determine how they may impact aspects of your events, such as personnel, security, services and activities, functions, and resources.
- Have them evaluate your emergency action plans and offer guidance on improving or altering the plan to ensure smooth communication and handling of emergencies across organizations.

Plan for staff and volunteer absences

- Have a clear contingency plan for who is in charge of important areas with potentially reduced staff or volunteers. Know who is going to share or take on additional responsibilities to make up for reduced personnel and clearly communicate it with your team.

Provide cleaning supplies for staff, volunteers and athlete

- Have portable hand-washing stations, hand sanitizer, tissues and facemasks available. Facemasks are only intended for those who start showing symptoms at your event.
- Consult the [CDC's approved cleaning products](#) page to see which products are considered effective.
- Volunteers handling food, beverage and those at aid stations should all be supplied with latex gloves.
- Place hand sanitizer at locations around the venue including, but not limited to, weigh ins, warm up room, at food service areas, spectator areas, and at the awards ceremony area.

Have a plan in place for isolating someone that becomes ill

- Turn them over to EMS at the event; EMS will follow the latest protocols and advisories set out by the local Dept. of Health. Do not bring them to the medical area so as to avoid contamination.
- Have a holding space where you can isolate patients until EMS is able to attend to them.

Monitor event registrations for athletes from affected countries/states

- Communicate in advance with any participants you're aware coming from affected areas.
- Follow the [Johns Hopkins global Coronavirus tracking map](#) to monitor the number of cases in your area and to see if any of your athletes might be coming from an affected area.

Create a plan for the possibility of being forced to cancel your event

- If the local authorities force the cancellation of your event, have a plan in place for next steps.
- Consult with your contractors on cancellation/refunds of services or goods.
- Have a communications plan in place to alert participants of the cancellation and an explanation of next steps.

Communications

Athletes

- Communicate early and often that your event is going on as planned until you are advised otherwise by the local authorities.
- [Include an overall risk assessment](#) from your local authorities so athletes can make informed decisions.
- Promote the use of regular preventative actions:
 - Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your crook of your elbow.
 - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose.
 - Clean and sanitize frequently touched surfaces and objects daily.
 - Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Advise where to seek local healthcare if needed, including how to do so without creating risk for healthcare workers.
- Direct them to [CDC](#) or [WHO](#) websites for information on disease signs and symptoms.
- Advise on self-monitoring for symptoms and signs.

Sponsors/Vendors

- Communicate early and often that your event is going on as planned until you are advised otherwise by the local authorities.
- Review your agreements for cancellation and refund policies

Staff

- State the facts, share accurate information with your staff from the CDC, WHO and your state and local health departments.
- Provide clear instructions on what to do if they suspect they or someone they know has been exposed. Have them contact their primary care physician first for advice. Only those with symptoms of severe respiratory illness, such as rapid heart rate, low blood pressure, high or low temperature, confusion, trouble breathing, or severe dehydration [should go to the ER](#).

Staff Pre-Event meeting

- Communicate any role changes due to absent personnel.
- Establish new chain of command and incident reporting protocols.
- Discuss emergency and contingency plans.

Registration

- Ensure your staff and volunteers are prepared to answer questions:
 - How will participants be notified if there are any changes?
 - Should participants prepare any differently than other weightlifting event?
 - Do participants need to bring any cleaning/sanitizing supplies?
 - What if a participant doesn't feel comfortable attending the competition?
 - Depending on your event policies, you may offer a refund for the event registration or elect to transfer their registration to another one of your events.

Advise Staff, Volunteers and Athletes to stay home if:

- They are ill at all
- If they have had close contact (6 feet/2 meters) with someone who has been to [affected areas of the world](#) within 14 days of the event.
- If they have a cough, fever of 100 degrees F/37.7 degrees C and are short of breath.

The most important piece of advice is hand washing. Please review the following websites: www.cdc/handwashing and www.cdc/handwashing/esp/when-how-handwashing

Resources

[Create a Business Continuity Plan \(BCP\) for Coronavirus](#)

The BCP is a strategic approach that brings business departments together to create a transparent process that follows several strategic steps. These include project initiation, risk assessment, strategy development, plan development, emergency communications, awareness/training and coordination with public authorities when applicable.

The BCP outlines the actions to be taken during and after a disaster, and the process for each department to follow in their recovery to normal business operations.

The goals of the BCP should include the following:

- Create a Business Continuity Committee and determine its objectives.
- Form and outline the goals of your Business Continuity Management program.
- Determine the scope of your Business Continuity Plan.
- Put an emergency management process in place.

Business Continuity Management is a holistic process that identifies potential impacts that threaten an organization. It provides a framework for building resilience with the capability for an effective response that safeguards the interests of key stakeholders, reputation and value-creating activities.

Additional information:

[Harvard Health's Coronavirus Resource Center](#)

[WHO Coronavirus website and FAQ](#)

[CDC Coronavirus website and FAQ](#)

[CDC Guide for Preparing Your Events for COVID-19](#)

[WHO Planning Recommendations for Mass Gatherings](#)

[WHO Coronavirus Mythbuster page](#)

<https://www.aon.com/event-response/coronavirus.aspx>

USA Weightlifting is here to support you during this crisis. If you have any questions or concerns please reach out to usaw@usaweightlifting.org for more information.

Sample Messaging for your Registrants

Dear athletes,

[Event organization] wants to assure you that your health, safety and well-being is our highest priority. As we approach [Event Name] on [Event date], our organization is in regular contact with [local health authority] [other authority] and USA Weightlifting concerning coronavirus (COVID-19) and best practices for mass participation events. We are following the guidance issued by both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and at this time, the event will continue as planned.

We are aware that the situation continues to evolve, and we will communicate updates to our athletes as soon as possible [via email/website/other means].

At [Event name], we are taking the following precautions:

[list precautions your event is taking such as extra hand sanitizer, enhanced cleaning protocols, asking staff, athletes, volunteers who are sick to stay home, etc.]

In addition, please be aware of the below resources from the CDC and the U.S. Department of State to help reduce your personal risk:

- [CDC – Coronavirus Overview](#)
- [CDC – Travelers Health](#)
- [U.S. Department of State](#)
- [Prevention and treatment](#)

Additional resources can be found with the [WHO Coronavirus Website](#), [CDC Coronavirus Website](#). The IOC has also developed specific [advice for athletes](#), including a [statement from the IOC Medical and Scientific Director, Dr. Richard Budgett](#). We encourage you to follow the [travel](#), [prevention](#), [testing](#), and [treatment](#) recommendations outlined by the CDC.

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we navigate this ever-changing situation.