

GOLD COAST FLORIDA DIVISION OF THE UNITED STATES FENCING ASSOCIATION

COVID-19 Recommendations for Clubs, Fencers, and volunteers August 1, 2020

As the USA Fencing Association's local governing body, we present the following minimal guidelines to protect kids/adults' health practicing the sport of fencing in South Florida.

Bearing in mind that everyone is ultimately responsible for their welfare and that these suggestions are non-binding, the Gold Coast Division (GCD) Board aims to keep all our Division members safeguarded to the greatest possible extent. Further, the Division recognizes that fencing club owners would like to implement best practices emerging from other clubs in the Division and throughout the country:

- **Contactless Check-in:** Allows for COVID-19 tracing and ensures students' total number does not exceed maximum.
- **Temperature Check:** Contactless temperature check to ensure body temperature is below 100.4 F.
- **Limited capacity and Social Distancing:** six feet between fencers and six feet between fencers and coaches. Limit parent access and discourage additional visitors from remaining in the club.
- **Extra Sanitation:** 1 to 100 mix of 5% bleach solution applied to all hard surfaces upon completing each group session. Soft surfaces are either washed daily or sprayed with bleach solution and left to air dry.
- **Hand Wash:** Hand washing before and after practice. Hand sanitizing before, during, and after training to minimize the spread of germs.
- **Increased ventilation:** Open doors, increase or install commercial floor fans to improve air movement, and create a negative airflow. Many clubs are investing in HEPA ionization filtration systems for their HVAC systems or standalone as well (if they have an HVAC) or other UV based air filtration systems.
- **Mask-wearing:** Face coverings are required. Face coverings must be worn under fencing masks at all times. We do not recommend using masks with pre-installed face protections since they do not meet FDA or CDC standards.
- **Equipment Policies:** Bags should be spaced a minimum of six feet apart. Fencers should not borrow equipment. Avoid using water fountains, water coolers, and coffee stations. Soft equipment (balls, bean bags, foam swords) should not be available for use.
- **Activity policy:** Interactive fencing games with a prop are not permitted. Private lessons should occur under controlled circumstances with appropriate distancing. Drills in pairs under controlled circumstances and proper distancing, eliminate deep target attacks, fleches, and in-fighting. Drills are 3 minutes on and 3 minutes off.
- **Cross Club "Pollination":** We strongly discourage fencers from training outside of their primary club during this time. Clubs should implement a 14-day quarantine policy if a student has trained at another club.

Further Considerations from USA Fencing Association:

If you have tested positive for COVID-19, USA Fencing Association recommends fencers consult a physician as there may be additional cardiovascular concerns associated with COVID-19. For further information on Cardiovascular considerations and return to play guidance following COVID-19 infection, USA Fencing Association provided the following [articles](#).

Local Tournaments Organizer Guidelines

[USA Fencing Guidelines for the Return to Local Events](#) (a must-read for fencers, club owners, coaches, and parents). These best practices may be applied for fencing club activities as well.

The guidelines emphasize the following:

- Self-monitor and be symptom-free for at least 14 days before attending any tournament.
- Wash and sanitize all fencing equipment before arrival at the competition venue.
- Attend tournaments already dressed in freshly washed clothing.
- Avoid touching face, eyes, or mouth with unclean hands.
- Practice social distancing where appropriate.
- Wear a face mask to reduce exposure to airborne contaminated particles and reduce exposure to others.
- Athlete, coaches, and parents should refrain from shouting and screaming.
- Keep hand sanitizer and alcohol wipes available at all scoring tables.
- If there is sufficient space in the venue to have people standing along the sides of the competition strips, no spectators, coaches, or athletes should be permitted to stand directly behind the referee. All spectators and coaches should remain AT LEAST six feet from the referee.
- Require referees and pod captains to wear masks and latex/nitrile gloves.
- Do not have fencers touch or sign score sheets after each bout.
- The referee may show each fencer the scoresheet after the bout for verification. Once verified, the referee should sign or initial the sheet to acknowledge it as final for the athletes and send back to Bout Committee.
- Ensure that reel clips and other frequently touched equipment at the competition strips are frequently sanitized.
- Tape markings on floors along strips to show proper distance those watching the bout should remain away from the referee area and fencing strip.
- Designate separate entrance and exit points to the competition area.
- Clipboards, weights, and shims must be sanitized before being given from one referee to another.
- When clipboards, weights, and shims are brought back at the end of the day, they must be sanitized before being put back into the storage container.

USA Fencing Sanctioning Events

USA Fencing Local Events:

USA Fencing resumed local tournaments' sanctioning beginning on Aug. 1, 2020, as Phase 1 of the Return to Events, where local and state laws permit such events, regulations, executive orders, and other legal mandates related to COVID-19. **All sanctions and USA Fencing related insurance coverage will apply only to tournaments in areas legally permitted.** It has been, and will remain, the responsibility of each tournament organizer to stay abreast of and comply with the state, local and other legal requirements governing its own location. **Division fencers must only fence within their division. They must not attend sanctions events in different divisions, as per the USA Fencing Phase 1 of the Return to Events guidelines for August and September 2020.**

USA Fencing Regional Events:

Regional competition will begin in October with Regional Youth Circuit and Regional Junior and Cadet Circuit events followed by Regional Open Circuit events in November as Phase 2. During Phase 2, athletes will be allowed to compete in their home region only. Phase 3 will begin on December 1st with the start of the Super Youth Circuit and Super Junior and Cadet Circuit seasons.

USA Fencing National Events:

National events, including North American Cups and National Championships, will be introduced during Phase 4, which will start no earlier than Jan. 1, 2021.



RETURN TO FENCING EVENTS SCHEDULE

PHASE 1

LOCAL EVENTS

AUG. 1
(At Division's Discretion)

PHASE 2

REGION ONLY REGIONAL EVENTS*

OCT. 1 | REGIONAL YOUTH CIRCUIT / REGIONAL JUNIOR & CADET CIRCUIT

NOV. 1 | REGIONAL OPEN CIRCUIT
(*Athletes may only compete in events within their region)

PHASE 3

NATIONWIDE REGIONAL EVENTS

DEC. 1 | SUPER YOUTH CIRCUIT, SUPER JUNIOR & CADET CIRCUIT

PHASE 4

NATIONAL EVENTS

JAN. 1 | NORTH AMERICAN CUP & NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS

Questions:

If fencers, parents, coaches, or club owners have questions or comments regarding any of the above, please do not hesitate to write to eacano@mac.com or directly reach out to any division officer.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

www.usafencing.org/coronavirus

DISCLAIMER

At present, there is no way to eliminate the risk of COVID-19 infection. Additional precautions might be appropriate to the extent indicated by an organizer's specific circumstances. This document's recommendations are not intended and should not be taken to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment, nor do the GOLD COAST FLORIDA DIVISION OF THE UNITED STATES FENCING ASSOCIATION assume any liability or responsibility for the efficacy of the recommendations provided herein.

These guidelines are provided for general informational purposes only and are not intended as, nor should be relied upon as specific medical or legal advice. All event organizers and participants are strongly encouraged to consult with qualified medical personnel and/or public health officials. Also, consult applicable federal, state, and local laws, orders and/or guidelines. The GOLD COAST FLORIDA DIVISION OF THE UNITED STATES FENCING ASSOCIATION makes no warranties or representations about the completeness, reliability, and accuracy of the information contained herein.