

## **Suggested COVID Best Practices for the Well-Being of IWPA Weight Pull Participants (July 9, 2020)**

The IWPA supports each organizer's informed decision to reschedule, postpone or cancel their respective events, as well as supporting organizers ready to hold events in locations that are open and permit gatherings. As events resume across the continent, people need to feel safe while enjoying their dog activities.

The IWPA urges organizers 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 organizers to determine the guidelines that best fit their event. In order to inform participants, specific guidelines established by the organizer should be published in the event notification, IWPA website and posted on signage/flyers at their event.

### **General Practices**

1. Organizers, 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. Wearing masks when in close proximity to others. Organizers should provide masks if desired for officials, judges and volunteers.
4. Consider wearing disposable or washable gloves.
5. Have plenty of hand sanitizers placed for people to use. CDC recommends consumers use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
6. Wash hands as frequently as possible. Have disinfecting spray at bathroom facilities for people to spray door handles (or anything else they touch).
7. If you utilize portable toilets, please ask for a hand washing station to be delivered as well.
8. Avoid shaking hands or hugging.
9. Avoid touching dogs that are not your responsibility.
10. Avoid common use pens/pencils – bring your own. Organizers may consider providing one use pens/pencils, owner/handler may keep provided pen.
11. Disinfect surfaces in common use areas as often as possible (tables, chairs, doorknobs, etc.) Organizers and facilities may consider not providing chairs.
12. Meals – No potlucks. Avoid or stagger group lunches/dinners if possible. It is recommended that organizers supply boxed lunches for judges and volunteers. Hospitality areas should avoid community items such as salt and pepper shakers, condiments, creamers, etc. Participants should consider bringing their own lunches/drinks.
13. Parking areas – Park with increased distance between vehicles if possible. This is especially critical if handlers are required to crate from their vehicles.
14. If a competitor is exhibiting symptoms of COVID 19 disease such as fever, dry cough, shortness of breath as well as other identified symptoms THEY SHOULD BE ASKED TO LEAVE THE EVENT.

## Event Planning

1. Event Set-up • For indoor events, open the exterior doors for better air flow if possible. Where possible, encourage one-way traffic flow with marked entrance and exits.
2. Crating • Crating should be at least six feet apart, except for “family” groups of handler/owners and dogs.

## Event Practices

1. Social Distancing Requirements – A minimum of six foot distances around the chute, crating, volunteer, and Judges’ and Sign Up areas should be established. Recommend marking spacing to identify safe distancing requirements.
  - Judge’s Chair/Table – Judges may have the chair/table at one side of the chute. The judge and the cart/sled marshal should maintain required distancing.
  - Timer – Set up an area where only the person timing is allowed. This is often the Judge. The timer should handle the stopwatches with gloves. If there is more than one timer/recorder maintain required distancing.
  - Sign Up – A separate table should be set up to allow handlers, one at a time, to register for the event with their own pen (or pen provided them that they then keep). This eliminates the interaction between event workers and participants. Stewards should wear gloves or sanitize their hands between handling paperwork.
  - Sign Up – Suggested for owner/handler to provide a pre-filled in registration form when registering the dog/s. This would minimize the amount of time spent at the registration table and limit contact surface of the table/equipment when registering.
  - Weigh in – Judges should sanitize their hands after weighing any dogs. Judge and handler must wear mask during weigh in. Handlers must maintain at least a 6 foot distance from one another while waiting to have their dog weighed in.
2. Chute Procedure Modifications
  - Judges, stewards and handlers should maintain the mandated required distancing throughout the event.
  - Suggest that handlers, with their dog, enter the chute from the far end and place their leashes on the ground at the far end, behind the chute barrier. They and their dog then proceed to the cart for hook up. This ensures that only the handler touches the leash. Alternatively, if handler enters from close end of the chute, they can place their leash on the cart.
  - Suggest that gloved hooker hook the dogs. This limits the number of people touching ring and clip. That person should have a bottle of hand sanitizer in an available area. They can sanitize gloves between dogs. We also recognize that some dogs can only be hooked by their owner/handler. Suggest they sanitize their hands after the dog pulls.
  - Suggest that handler’s mask can be removed while calling/working the dog in the chute, but not prior to the handler proceeding immediately to their starting point (dependent if calling the dog or driving the dog).
  - Judges, handlers, cart/sled marshals and timers/recorders should wear masks during the competition.
3. After event procedures
  - Ribbons/Awards may be placed on a pick-up table versus handed out. The judge may announce the awards and handlers/owners may pick up the awards that were laid out on a table for the class.