

## **FEI Policy for Enhanced Competition Safety during the Covid-19 Pandemic**

(Effective for all FEI Events held as of 1 July 2020; UPDATED ~~12 OCTOBER 2020~~ 4 MAY 2021)

*Note: for ease of reading, all updates made since the last version of this document appear in [mark-up](#). Previous updates are shown in red. The links are updated from time to time without this being shown as a change to the document.*

The FEI Policy for Enhanced Competition Safety during the Covid-19 Pandemic (“Policy”) is intended to assist FEI Event Organisers (“OC”s) and National Federations (“NFs”) in deciding how to hold Events while limiting the risk of transmission and further spread of Covid-19 until an effective treatment and/or vaccine as determined by the World Health Organization are available.

Decisions regarding the timing of resumption of equestrian Events must be made by NFs and OCs in close consultation with the applicable domestic government and public health authorities.

This Policy is issued according to the FEI Board Decision of 5 May 2020 and applies to all Events held under FEI jurisdiction as of 1 July 2020 until further notice. The FEI Board has mandated FEI Headquarters to make updates to this policy as and when necessary as the situation in relation to Covid-19 evolves and best practices are identified.

Reference to this Policy will be made in all Event Schedules.

*Note: in this Policy, capitalised terms either refer to the existing definitions in the FEI General Regulations (“GRs”) or to the definition provided in this Policy.*

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## I. Objectives of the Policy

1. Ensure a standard approach across FEI Events to mitigate the risk of transmission and further spread of Covid-19 until an effective treatment and/or vaccine as determined by the World Health Organization are available.
2. Help OCs and NFs assess the risks potentially posed by Events from their planning phase and identify relevant measures to mitigate such risks.
3. Enable OCs and NFs to demonstrate to public authorities that the FEI competitions are ready to resume.

## II. Persons bound by the Policy

1. As a condition of their presence on the event venue, all persons attending an FEI Event (“Event”) are bound by the measures put into place by the OC under this Policy.

This includes Participants<sup>1</sup>, OC members and their staff/volunteers, NF/FEI staff, NF/FEI Officials, Service Providers<sup>2</sup>, and public/spectators.

2. In addition, NFs, OCs, FEI Officials and the FEI are bound by this Policy and have the following responsibilities:

### 2.1 NFs

- a) Communicate this Policy to the OCs under their jurisdiction.
- b) Request that all OCs under their jurisdiction run a risk assessment and develop a risk mitigation plan in accordance with this Policy for any FEI Event/Competition they intend to hold.
- c) Assist the OCs in this task if required.
- d) Facilitate the OCs’ interaction with the relevant domestic government and health authorities.
- e) Instruct OCs to confirm that the relevant domestic government and health authorities have not expressed objections to their Event being held when consulted.

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<sup>1</sup> Under this Policy, the term **Participants** includes:

- Owners, Lessees, Athletes (riders, vaulters, drivers, lungers), Participating Support Personnel as defined in the FEI General Regulations.
- Parents, trainers, coaches, grooms, navigators, personal care assistants (PCAs), support personnel. This Policy refers as “support personnel” the persons employed or contracted by Participants who are essential for providing care to horses and/or Participants. This includes, but is not limited to, veterinarians, farriers, equine therapists, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Under the Policy, the term **Service Providers** refers to persons or entities who provide direct services contracted by Event management, such as vendors, caterers, feed suppliers, photographers, videographers, media, cleaning service providers, waste disposal personnel, etc.

- f) For each Event, based on the outcome of the risk assessment, decide jointly with the OC whether the Event will be held or not.
- g) For each Event that will be held, submit the risk assessment and mitigation plan (including name and contact details of the person in charge) to the FEI as an annex to the Event Schedule, at the latest ten (10) working days before the Event's deadline for Definite Entries.

## 2.2 OCs

- a) Complete the risk assessment provided with this Policy and decide (in consultation with their NF) whether or not to hold their Event based on the final risk score obtained.
- b) Involve the domestic health authorities in the risk assessment and mitigation measures elaboration process.
- c) Document the process. Communicate the outcome of the risk assessment and the mitigation measures plan (including name and contact details of the person in charge) to their NF, along with confirmation from the relevant domestic authorities that the Event can be held accordingly.
- d) Monitor the evolution of the Covid-19 situation, locally and globally, and if necessary repeat the risk assessment process closer to the Event to verify that the overall risk score has not changed and the mitigation measures planned are still appropriate.
- e) Communicate the plan and mitigation measures decided to the FEI Officials appointed for the Event (Foreign Judge/President Ground Jury/Technical Delegate/Chief Steward/Veterinary Delegate)
- f) Apply and enforce the mitigation measures identified for the Event.
- g) **In addition, apply and enforce any measure identified as mandatory in this document and/or the Guidelines and Protocols which may be published by the FEI from time to time as indicated in Section V below.**

## 2.3 FEI Officials

- a) Know this Policy.
- b) Understand and comply with the Covid-19 risk mitigation measures applying at the Events they are appointed to.
- c) Within their respective functions, assist OCs with the measures implemented under this Policy.
- d) Provide any relevant feedback to the FEI in their respective reports or as directed by the FEI.

#### 2.4 FEI

- a) Ensure that completed risk assessments and corresponding mitigation measures plans are received from NFs in accordance with art. 2.1g) above.
- b) Publish the risk assessment and mitigation measures for each Event on the FEI's website as an annex to the approved Event Schedule, five (5) working days before the Event's deadline for Definite Entries.
- c) Follow up on feedback received from OCs, NFs, FEI Officials or other persons and share identified good practices with stakeholders.

### III. Sanctions

1. Events for which the FEI has not received the documented risk assessment and mitigation measures plan in accordance with article 2.1.g) will be removed from the FEI Calendar in accordance with Article 112.3 of the FEI General Regulations.

2. Anyone refusing to comply with the risk mitigation measures put into place by OCs under this Policy may be asked to leave the venue.

3. The FEI may, at its sole discretion, sanction and/or open a disciplinary case against a person or persons or OC for any alleged breach of the Policy.

### IV. FEI Policy and Domestic Legislation

All measures decided by OCs in accordance with this Policy must take into account and comply with the applicable legislation and policies from the domestic government and health authorities.

This Policy is not intended to supersede the applicable legislation and policies from the domestic government and health authorities. It is meant to supplement them with sport specific considerations in order to ensure that equivalent levels of precautions are taken at all Events.

### V. Overview of the Policy

This Policy includes the following:

- A decision-making system for sports federations/sports event organisers when planning mass gatherings in the context of Covid-19.

This system, which has been developed by the WHO, is composed of a risk assessment tool, a decision making tree, and an accompanying document outlining relevant considerations.

Under this Policy, OCs have an obligation to use the WHO's system when planning their Event.

- Best Practices for OCs

These are guidelines developed by the FEI for enhanced competition safety during the Covid-19 pandemic. The recommendations specific to FEI Events in general are included in this document.

Discipline-specific recommendations will be published separately on the FEI website <https://inside.fei.org/> and will be updated as necessary.

- **Additional Guidelines and Protocols<sup>3</sup> which will be published on the FEI website as the need arises and must be considered as annexes to this Policy. These documents may include mandatory requirements.**
- The FEI will also provide resources (such as checklists and templates) on its [website](#) to assist OCs with some elements of their risk mitigation plan.

## **VI. The mandatory risk assessment process for FEI event Organisers**

The risk assessment must be conducted during Event planning by the OC, together with their medical coordinator/team.

The relevant domestic health and safety authorities must be involved, ideally from the beginning, and their confirmation must be obtained before the Event can be held under the conditions identified in the risk assessment.

The risk assessment is carried out in three steps:

1. For background information, OCs should first read the WHO's *"Considerations for sports federations/sports event organisers when planning mass gatherings in the context of Covid-19"*.

2. Next, OCs must complete the WHO's *"Mass Gathering Sports Addendum Risk Assessment"*.

This is an Excel document with four sheets:

- Sheet 1: Instructions – these must be read carefully before moving to Sheet 2.
- Sheet 2: Risk Assessment. This sheet must be completed as accurately as possible. Once it is completed, the Event's "Covid-19 Risk Score" will appear. Next, the OC must move to Sheet 3 to go through the risk mitigation measures.
- Sheet 3: Risk Mitigation Checklist: as OCs move through the measures listed in this sheet they will most likely discover points they may not have reflected

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<sup>3</sup> Guidelines and Protocols issued under this Policy address in more detail matters such as veterinary processes, discipline-specific considerations, prize giving protocols and media activities at FEI Events, etc. They are published on the FEI's dedicated website hub for this Policy: <https://inside.fei.org/fei/covid-19/return-to-play>

upon initially. In itself, this is quite useful. Once the entire sheet is filled in, a new score is obtained: the "Mitigation Score".

- Sheet 4: Overall Risk Score: in this sheet, the scores obtained in the previous two sheets are weighted against each other and the OC will then know the level of risk posed by the Event with regard to Covid-19 at this stage of their preparations.

3. Next, OCs will use the *WHO Decision Tree* (pdf document) to see, where applicable, what can be done to improve the Event's Overall Risk Score in order to lower the risk.

If the risk is "Very High", it is recommended to not hold the Event.

If the measures necessary to lower the Event's Overall Risk Score seem beyond the OC's means, the NF and the domestic health and safety authorities must be consulted for advice.

4. If the risk assessment was not conducted in collaboration with the relevant domestic health and safety authorities, the OC must communicate their findings to them and ask them to confirm whether they can proceed with the Event and which precautions must and/or should be put in place.

5. If the NF has not yet been involved in the process, the OC must inform them of the risk assessment outcome and the mitigation measures decided for the Event.

OCs must also inform their NF if the risk assessment indicates that cancellation is the best option. The final decision as to whether the Event is held or not must be taken in consultation with the NF.

## **VII. Recommended Best Practices for FEI Event Organisers**

1. Assign roles. Ensuring the safety of your Event during the Covid-19 pandemic is a new task which will require additional staff/volunteers or (depending on the event size) at least an increase in the tasks of some existing staff/volunteers. Also, you will need to designate a person who will have overall responsibility for conducting the risk assessment and overseeing the implementation of mitigation measures at your Event in accordance with this Policy.

2. Enhance and expand your Event Emergency Response Plan to include a section specific to Covid-19.

The Covid-19 section will cover domestic medical resources, essential phone numbers, the procedure to follow if a person records a temperature **equal to or greater than 38 degrees centigrade (or equal to or greater than 100.4 Fahrenheit)** , and what happens if someone attending the Event is diagnosed with Covid-19.

The Emergency Response Plan instructions in relation to Covid-19 must be disseminated to applicable personnel and included in the Covid-19 Communication Plan for the Event.

### 3. Have a Covid-19 Screening Plan

- Designate a member of the Event organisation to be responsible for preparing and overseeing this Covid-19 screening plan. This does not have to be a medical professional.
- Evaluate (post or have readily available) domestic medical resources with contact information for referral of persons who have medical issues or fail Covid-19 screening.
- Assess number of screeners required to adequately cover competition entries each day and designate specific personnel that will fulfil these duties with a schedule.
- Standard Covid-19 screening questions (all persons entering the venue):
  - Have you had a recent fever, chills or unexplained cough, diffuse muscle aches, sudden loss of smell or taste?
  - Have you been exposed to a person with Covid-19 in the last two weeks (excluding healthcare personnel “protected” contact with Covid-19 patients in their professional duties while using appropriate Personal Protective Equipment) or have you yourself been diagnosed or suspected to have Covid-19 in the last two weeks?
- Temperature screening (use non-contact thermometer; enquire with local health authorities to identify a suitable model). If temperature is **equal to or greater than 38 degrees centigrade (or equal to or greater than 100.4 Fahrenheit)** -the person cannot enter the venue.
- To avoid multiple screenings on the same day, consider using different coloured daily wristbands for re-entry.
- Anyone failing screening must seek outside medical attention. If the OC personnel is made aware of any persons already on the competition grounds exhibiting symptoms of fever or chills such persons should be asked to leave the venue immediately and be referred to outside medical attention.

### 4. Social distancing<sup>4</sup>

Enforce social distancing requirements throughout the venue at all times. Consider the following measures:

#### 4.1 Limiting entries

Consider limiting entries to the Event and/or to specific sections within the Event to manage the concentration of horses and people.

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<sup>4</sup> “**Social distancing**” means deliberately increasing the physical space between people to avoid spreading illness. It typically involves avoiding gathering together in large groups and keeping a certain distance from others. The distance specified in relation to Covid-19 may differ from country to country. **This Policy recommends a distance of two metres whenever possible.**

#### 4.2 Limiting or prohibiting the public/spectators

Consider initially prohibiting the public or spectators from being on the competition grounds to reduce risk.

VIP and other social areas are strongly discouraged unless social distancing requirements can be enforced in accordance with the applicable domestic regulations.

#### 4.3. Limit the number of entry points to the venue (and separate entry and exit if possible, using two different doors).

This will make it easier to check that people in the venue follow the social distancing instructions.

#### 4.4 Consider increasing security staff at the Event

Depending on the size of the venue, this may help enforcing your measures under this Policy.

4.5 In certain disciplines and certain situations, social distancing may not be possible, either due to the nature of the discipline or the needs of a Para Equestrian Athlete. In such circumstances, it is the responsibility of the OC, Athlete, trainer and parents/families to ensure that in these conditions adjustments to social distancing have been through the risk assessment process that ensures individuals are not putting themselves or others at undue risk. Detailed discipline-specific guidelines will be issued by the FEI to assist decision-making.

#### 4.6 Transportation

All transportation arrangements (shuttles and any other vehicles) should take social distancing into account. If impossible, the persons transported should wear masks and clean their hands with disinfectant before entering and leaving the vehicle, which should be sanitised as often as possible.

#### 4.7

In their information to the different categories of persons who will attend the Event, OCs should include the following instructions:

a) If a person is notified within the 14 days preceding the event that they must quarantine due to a close contact<sup>5</sup> with a Covid-19 case, this person must cancel their participation, except if the responsible health authorities (based on the applicable laws and policies) declare the end of the quarantine before the start of the event.

b) If a person receives a SARS-CoV-2 positive test result or is diagnosed with Covid-19 while on the venue: this person must immediately remove themselves from the venue and inform the OC.

c) If a person receives a SARS-CoV-2 positive test result or is diagnosed with Covid-19 after the event, this person should inform the OC immediately if the health authority who tested/diagnosed them considers that they may have contracted the

**Commented [A1]:** • This is the main change to art. 4.7. It is meant to accommodate the fact that quarantine measures now vary in length depending on a variety of factors (country policy, negative PCR test during quarantine time, completed vaccinations, etc.).  
• The rest of the article was re-written to make it easier to read, a), b) and c) now each showing scenarios taking place before, during or after the event.

<sup>5</sup> As defined by the relevant health authorities. Generally close contact is understood as exposure with an infected person (with symptoms or positive test) within 3-6 feet (1-2 metres) of distance for more than 15 minutes.



~~virus or could have infected other persons while attending the event. The OC must then immediately inform the relevant health authorities in order to enable any Covid-19 case isolation, contact tracing and contact quarantine measures required by the domestic law and policies.~~

~~a) In case a person receives a SARS-CoV-2 positive test result, Covid-19 diagnosis or quarantine requirement notification:~~

- ~~• within the 14 days preceding the event: this person must cancel their participation~~
- ~~• while on the venue: this person must immediately remove themselves from the venue and inform the OC~~

~~b) If a person receives a SARS-CoV-2 positive test result or is diagnosed with Covid-19:~~

- ~~• while present at the event; or~~
- ~~• after the event, if the health authority who tested/diagnosed the person considers that they may have contracted the virus or could have infected other persons while attending the event,~~

~~this person should inform the OC immediately.~~

~~The OC must then immediately inform the relevant health authorities in order to enable any Covid-19 case isolation, contact tracing and contact quarantine measures required by the domestic law and policies.~~

#### 4.8 Non-essential gatherings

Gatherings that are not absolutely essential to the Event, such as parties, should be avoided. This helps reducing the overall Covid-19 transmission risk associated with the Event.

#### 5. Communication<sup>6</sup>

A communication plan will be necessary to make sure that all persons attending the Event are informed about the measures applying at the Event before they enter the venue and know who to contact in case of need.

This should involve including appropriate announcements in the Event Schedule and OC notifications to Participants.

If tickets are issued for the Event, the ticketing terms and conditions must be updated to include a statement that anyone not complying with the Covid-19 measures in place on site may be required to leave the venue. If no tickets are issued, this information should appear on the Event's website and/or at the point of entry. Please refer to the FEI's template Covid-19 Communication Plan.

#### 6. Signage

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<sup>6</sup> A Covid-19 Communication Plan Checklist for OCs is available on the FEI's website.

- Post signage at all entrances to the competition grounds stating the following:  
“To protect others from possible transmission of the virus, anyone who exhibits Covid-19 symptoms<sup>7</sup> or has been in (unprotected) contact with someone who has tested positive for Covid-19 within the last two weeks, cannot enter the venue. These persons are encouraged to contact their own health care provider or a local medical resource immediately for further medical advice.”
- Post signage throughout the venue (i.e. competition office, competition and schooling areas, stables, etc.) including recommendations about good hygiene, ways to reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission (see for example [CDC – Stop the Spread of Germs](#)), as well as what to do and who to contact if someone suspects they have Covid-19 symptoms.
- The signage must display all regulations, best practices and guidelines in effect at the competition including applicable domestic law, regulations, and recommendations.

## 7. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

This Policy strongly recommends that face masks are worn by all persons on the venue, except:

- When mounted on a horse or driving a carriage; and,
- For Athletes, while training and competing.

OCs who provide and/or sell masks should ensure that information on their proper use and safe disposal<sup>8</sup> is also given.

Gloves are generally not recommended, except where specifically indicated. This is consistent with the current recommendations from the World Health Organization (WHO) and US Centre for Disease Control (CDC) that gloves are used by medical personnel only. For the general public the recommendation is to wash and sanitise hands (NB: cleaning staff should wear gloves appropriate for the chemicals being used when they are cleaning and disinfecting. Additional personal protective equipment (PPE) may be needed based on setting and product).

## 8. Facilities

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<sup>7</sup> The most **common symptoms of Covid-19** are fever, dry cough, and tiredness. Other symptoms that are less common and may affect some patients include aches and pains, nasal congestion, headache, conjunctivitis, sore throat, diarrhoea, loss of taste or smell or a rash on skin or discoloration of fingers or toes. These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually. (Source: WHO website: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/question-and-answers-hub/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses>)

<sup>8</sup> WHO website: [https://www.who.int/images/default-source/health-topics/coronavirus/masks-infographic---final-\(a4--web---rgb\).png?sfvrsn=cb3153cf\\_11](https://www.who.int/images/default-source/health-topics/coronavirus/masks-infographic---final-(a4--web---rgb).png?sfvrsn=cb3153cf_11)

a) Cleaning/Sanitising<sup>9</sup>

- Provide hand sanitisation stations with access to soap and water or alcohol based hand sanitiser throughout the grounds, including at each competition area and schooling/warm up area.
- Provide hand sanitiser to all officials, arena crew, office staff and maintenance staff.
- Frequently sanitise surfaces touched by many people: door handles, arena gates, wash racks and hoses, etc.
- Ensure frequent cleaning and sanitising of bathrooms, provide soap and water or alcohol based hand sanitiser in bathrooms.
- Prohibit the use of public water fountains.

b) Competition Office

- Strongly encourage all Athletes to complete entry forms, in their entirety, including having all requisite memberships in place, prior to entering the competition office when possible.
- Strongly encourage that all entries, additional entries, withdrawals, feed & bedding orders, billing/invoicing are done electronically where possible.
- Limit the number of people who can enter the competition office at any one time.
- Install clear plastic, glass or other type of protective shield/barrier in front of office staff.
- Provide hand sanitiser near the door.
- Provide an 'in' door and an 'out' door, if possible.
- Provide markers to delineate 2m (6 feet) spacing between people in the office and in any waiting lines (e.g. markers on floor).
- Prepare and email athlete bills as early as possible.
- Establish appointment times for checkout at the competition office.

## 9. Competition, Schooling and Exercise Areas

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<sup>9</sup> Recommendations for cleaning and disinfecting surfaces in non-healthcare settings:

Step 1: clean with soap and water or a detergent to remove organic matter

Step 2: disinfection. Use ethanol at a concentration of 70%-90%, or sodium hypochlorite (bleach) at a concentration of 0,1% (1000 ppm).

Useful links:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html>

<https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/332096/WHO-2019-nCoV-Disinfection-2020.1-eng.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

- Frequently announce your Covid-19 requirements via facility PA systems.
- Use posted orders of go and/or published ride times including online orders of go and ride times.

At venues with multiple competition areas, consider designating one area as primary where assigned times and/or orders of go take precedence.

- Provide individual water bottles versus community water coolers.
- Arrange judges' areas to comply with social distancing requirements.
- Limit and organise seating areas to comply with social distancing requirements.
- Restrict the number of people accompanying a horse to the competition arena to those persons who are needed for safety or for achieving effective competition. All must comply with social distancing requirements.
- Schooling and exercise area provisions:
  - Provide monitors to ensure compliance with regulations and best practices.
  - Schooling jumps - Provide sanitising items (spray bottles, wipes) and closed disposal bins at each competition area and schooling/warm-up area. Advise individuals to wipe down jump equipment after use and sanitise hands before and after handling the jumps.
  - Determine equine/human capacity in relation to the area and restrict access to a limited number in order to maintain social distancing requirements.
- Where Participants compete collectively, determine and communicate to Participants, the maximum number of horses permitted in each competition area at one time based on the size of the competition areas and social distancing requirements.
- Communicate with Participants if competitions will be divided and held in one or more sections.
- Create a method of giving rosettes and trophies (Presentations) that reduces or eliminates hand-to-hand contact and maintains social distancing.

#### 10. Stabling

- Consider staggering stabling to comply with social distancing requirements.
- Restrict access to the stabling areas to veterinarians, Athletes, Officials, grooms, trainers and other essential personnel. OC will restrict access as they deem appropriate depending on individual venue circumstances. This could range from total restriction to limiting Owners access to specific times during the day.
- Remind all personnel in the stabling areas to comply with all best practices and guidelines in effect at the competition.
- Provide hand sanitisation stations in the stabling area and encourage stable personnel to use frequently.

- Provide sanitising items (spray bottles, wipes) and closed disposal bins in the stables and advise individuals to wipe down box door handles and any items they have touched after completing their horse care duties.

#### 11. Service Providers, trade stands

Consider limiting the offer of non-essential services at your Event as much as financially viable, unless social distancing can easily be enforced.

- Advise any Service Providers to take precautions in accordance with the guidelines issued by the relevant domestic authority.
- For onsite food-service, consider requesting provision of pre-packaged food only, with enforcement of social distancing by avoiding communal dining areas or tables.

#### 12. Recommended Best Practices for Participants

OCs must require all Participants to follow the best practices listed below while present on the competition grounds:

- Provide hand sanitiser and masks (along with instructions on the correct use and safe disposal of masks) to your stable staff and other personnel **and request that they use them while on the venue.**
- Regularly sanitise bikes/motorbikes/golf carts/car & truck door handles, stable doors, bucket handles, light switches, etc., and equipment including tack, grooming, feeding, stable cleaning materials, etc.
- Avoid sharing of material and, if sharing is necessary, thoroughly wipe with sanitising material after use (before it is used by other people).
- Use closed bins for waste disposal.
- Provide thermometers to staff with instructions that they monitor their temperature daily. Follow the steps communicated by the OC if any individual records a temperature higher than 37.5 degrees Celsius (99.5 degrees Fahrenheit) or exhibits Covid-19 symptoms. Explain social distancing measures to your staff and limit access to stabling area and competition grounds to essential personnel only; discourage multiple family members from accompanying Owners and Athletes.
- Provide adequate food and beverage supplies for your stable and support staff for the duration of the competition.
- Minimise time from arrival and departure from competition grounds.
- Schedule your days (ride times, schooling times, etc.) as efficiently as possible to minimise time spent on the competition grounds each day.

### **VIII. Consequences of the removal of a team member due to Covid-19**

If a team member/team members must leave the event due to a SARS-CoV-2 positive test result, Covid-19 diagnosis, or quarantine requirement notification from the relevant health authorities, the removal of the team member(s) from the team will be considered as being due to medical reasons and the consequences for the team will be determined as prescribed by the rules of the relevant discipline.