



Saskatchewan Fencing Association

Return to Competition Protocol



Saskatchewan Fencing Association

PREAMBLE

The purpose of this protocol is to support the competition committee when preparing for CFF-sanctioned fencing events by establishing safety measures to protect the health of all participants to the greatest extent practical. It is the organizer's responsibility to ensure they are in compliance with both the local public health authorities and the law at the location of the event. This is not a legal document.

The protocol is approved by the SFA COVID committee on behalf of the SFA Board of Directors, and must be strictly adhered to by all participants and attendees taking part in the event. Furthermore, the protocol must be implemented in conjunction with all sanitary requirements as prescribed by the federal and provincial public health authorities. This protocol was created with consideration of the [FIE outline of risk-mitigation requirements for national fencing federations and competition organizers in the context of COVID-19](#) that was published in February, 2021. This protocol is a live document and [the SFA reserves the right to update this guideline at its discretion.](#)

Fencing is a combat (non-contact) sport *where participants are intermittently within 1m (or closer) distance of each other.* In addition, fencers and other participants interact in close proximity with officials, trainers and coaches. Thus, rigorous implementation of all measures included in this protocol is required as a condition to safely participate in any CFF sanctioned events.

Own The Podium Resource Link: <https://www.ownthepodium.org/en-CA/Resources/COVID-19-Resources>

FIE outline of risk-mitigation requirements for national fencing federations and competition organizers in the context of COVID-19:

https://static.fie.org/uploads/25/125088-FIE_outline_risk-mitig_Covid-19%20ang%20upd%2026%20feb%202021.pdf



Saskatchewan Fencing Association

ALL ATTENDEES

All attendees taking part in this event (competition/clinic/camp), including but not limited to athletes, parents, coaches, officials, medical staff, spectators and more must undertake and recognize the following procedures prior to entry:

- Read and respect the SFA COVID-19 Return to Competition Protocol
- Sign the COVID19 Event Participation Waiver (in appendix)
- Complete and submit the Self Declaration (in appendix) every day prior to entry into the venue.
- Event host organizers must keep a record of participants and attendees at the event for contact tracing purposes and should provide the full list to the SFA immediately at the conclusion of the event.
- We strongly encourage all fencers and support persons to keep track of the times they are at the event each day.
- Participants who fail the screening questionnaire, and/or are experiencing and displaying any COVID-19 symptoms may not enter the venue.
- All attendees must, upon arrival at the event venue, show either of the following:
 - -Proof of being fully vaccinated by having their personal QR Code of Vaccination verified by the Saskatchewan Fencing Association using the SK Vax Verifier app or have a vaccination record from public health office or their white vaccination card from the SHA vaccine clinic. "Fully vaccinated" means 14 days after receiving: the second of two doses of an mRNA vaccine (Pfizer, Moderna) or AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD (all interchangeable between the two doses), or 1 dose of Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) vaccine.
 - -Proof of negative COVID-19 test (PCR or Rapid Antigen Test) acquired from a private testing provider for a fee from the Ministry of Health approved testing sites listed on the Government of Saskatchewan Website. The issuer will provide a verified, negative test certificate, including your name, birth date, type of test, date and time of sample collection, test result and will be signed by the test operator which is required to satisfy the negative test requirement. The negative tests are valid within 72 hours after the test is taken. **Note: Self administered free rapid antigen tests done that are done at the venue will be accepted, but must be witnessed by a designated member of the SFA. Anyone who wishes to do this must provide their own Rapid Test. Self Administered/ At Home Rapid test results done prior to the event will NOT be accepted.**
- Youth who are of an age (currently under age 5 years) where they are not eligible for vaccination, must provide a negative test result from no earlier than 72 hours prior to the first day of competition.
- Failure to provide either documentation will result in a denial of entry into the venue and participation in the event.
- Please leave additional time before your event sign in to complete these additional protocols.



Saskatchewan Fencing Association

- RESPECT for all volunteers who are hosting the event and maintaining a safe environment for our athletes is required. Any verbal abuse toward staff or volunteers will lead to refusal of entry to the event.
- We must at all times be cognizant of the fact that there may be kids attending who are not eligible for vaccinations, as well as fencers, coaches and support people who may be immune compromised. These decisions are for the safety of all.
- See accompanying page for more information on testing and vaccination records.

General Sanitary Measures for All Participants & Attendees

- All attendees (athlete, volunteer, official, food handler, spectator etc.) should proactively and regularly check their health status (including taking their own temperature and/or watching for any symptoms). It is strongly recommended to consult your healthcare practitioner/family physician if you notice any of the following symptoms as they may be a sign of infection:
 - abnormal fatigue
 - loss of taste and smell
 - chest pain
 - rash
 - sore throat
 - headache
 - runny nose
 - diarrhea
 - fleeting fever
 - dry cough
 - muscle pain
- If you feel ill while at the venue, notify the event organizer and/or head official immediately; you will be asked to leave the venue immediately. **If you feel ill before coming to the venue, DO NOT come to the venue.**
- When someone tests positive for COVID, Public Health is notified of the result. Any attendee who tests positive in the 14 days after the event must notify Public Health of their attendance at this event as part of their conversation with Public Health. The attendee may be asked by Public Health to notify the SFA Executive Director to assist with contact tracing. Or can provide that information to Public Health so they can contact SFA.
- Attendees must comply with any additional measures put forward by local regulations (e.g. gathering size limits, travel restrictions and quarantine protocols).
- Non-compliant attendees will be escorted out of the venue immediately and barred from re-entry for the duration of the event.



Saskatchewan Fencing Association

- Attendees who are removed from the facility due to medical concerns will be instructed to contact their local Public Health Unit and/or their personal Healthcare Provider.

Physical Distancing

- All attendees must maintain a physical distance of at least 2 meters from others whenever possible.
- Exceptions for physical distancing are made for household groups, athletes during a bout, during warm-up, and for those individuals who must approach an athlete within a 2 metre distance as required by the nature of the fencing rules and/or their official duties at the event.

Face Masks

- Face masks must be worn at all times indoors
 - Attendees are responsible for supplying their own masks. It is the responsibility of participants to make sure that they have an adequate supply of masks to last the entire day.
 - This includes athletes wearing masks under their fencing masks during competition.
- Masks must be changed when wet/soiled
- Refer to the [Government of Canada page for more information on proper donning and doffing of masks](#).
- Face masks must be worn at all times by attendees. Physical distancing between individuals must be increased (more than 2m) when eating or drinking, or during any other activity that requires the removal of the face mask. **We strongly encourage all attendees to step outside to eat or to their vehicles as they will need to unmask**
- Only appropriate multi-layer masks meant to prevent the spread of COVID-19 will be accepted (e.g., no masks with a one-way valve, no scarves, bandanas, gaiters and no transparent or mesh masks.)
 - For more information and guidelines on non-medical face masks, refer to the [Government of Canada About COVID-19 non-medical face coverings](#) page, or the [CDC Guidance for Wearing Masks](#).

Hand Washing

- Hand washing frequently and properly reduces the transmission of virus between individuals and their surrounding environment.



Saskatchewan Fencing Association

- Sanitizing or washing stations must be placed at all entrances to the venue to allow every individual entering or re-entering the venue to wash and/or sanitize their hands. Attendees are recommended to carry their own sanitizer.
- Wash hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains a minimum of 70% alcohol.
- Do not touch your eyes, mouth or nose without first washing/sanitizing your hands. Always wash or sanitize your hands after touching your face or your mask.

Food/Drinks/Personal Equipment

- Commercially packaged items are permissible for sale.
- No sharing of food is permissible outside of the family unit.
- Sanitize hands before and after eating. Immediately dispose of personal garbage from food, food containers, napkins, beverage bottles, etc. in designated garbage containers.
- Participants must bring their own bottle of water and must not share it with anyone.
- We strongly encourage all attendees to step outside to eat or to their vehicles as they will need to unmask.

Contact Tracing

- It is required that contact tracing information (i.e., email address/phone numbers, etc) will be collected by the event host(s) or designate for all attendees and participants.
- Should an individual in the venue be diagnosed with a COVID-19 infection within 14 days following the event, the above information will be shared as needed with local public health units for contact tracing purposes.
- This information will not be disclosed to any other third-parties, with the sole exception of public health authorities.
- It is considered a moral obligation for any participant who tests positive within 14 days following the event to notify the event organisers. This can be done through letting Public Health know you attended the event.
- No personal information will be shared with other participants if a positive COVID-19 test result is reported to the SFA.

Specific Rules and Practices Impacted For All Attendees

Curated from the [FIE outline of risk mitigation requirements](#)

- Rushing a fencer on the piste or after the fencer leaves the piste is suspended.
- Congratulatory hugging, kissing or handshakes are suspended until further



Saskatchewan Fencing Association

notice. Fencers may salute one another from a distance at the end of the bout.



Saskatchewan Fencing Association

Athletes and Coaches

- Athletes should bring enough clean face towels (multiples if required) to wipe off excess sweat . Do not use bare hands, gloves, or sleeves to wipe sweat away.
- Personal equipment, including towels, should be kept within equipment bags, and not left out on shared furniture such as chairs and tables.

New Fencing Rules

(Curated from the [FIE outline of risk mitigation requirements](#))

- Fencers' handshake at the end of bouts is replaced with a salute or blade touch.
- Video consulting procedure is adapted to maintain physical distance, where feasible.
- Sharing of equipment between individuals is not allowed.
- Screaming after a fencing hit is scored is suspended
- Team events: The two team captains will step on the strip and "salute" each other with their weapons from each side of their on-guard line on the strip, before and after the match.
- No rushing: The practice of rushing the victorious fencer on the strip or after the fencer leaves the strip is suspended until further notice.

Spectators

- Spectators may be permitted in accordance with local public health regulations, in addition to facility rules. Event host organizers should defer to their local public health/government regulations. The number of people in the venue including spectators may not exceed the maximum number of people allowed in the facility.
- Parents of minors, guardians, or other athletes that require assistance are permitted in the venue within compliance to local public health/government regulations, however a limit of one parent/guardian/assistant per athlete is suggested. We understand that in our smaller organization, athlete family members may also have roles as volunteers, officials, or coaches and that minor children may need to accompany family also. Please maintain physical distance between different household groups as much as you are able.

Referees

- Referees must use hand-disinfectant before and after each bout.



Saskatchewan Fencing Association

- Where possible/feasible, each referee should be assigned an individual set of equipment - clipboards, pen/pencil, weight/shim, that will be used by the assigned referee.
- Referees will check and test weapons at the start of the bout, as well as any time an athlete requests a weapon test to annul a touch during the bout.
- Referees may opt to wear a face shield in addition to face masks at other times as well, as they are more likely to interact with other individuals (athletes, coaches, etc.) within 2 meters.
- Referees must inform all athletes about relevant limitations/restrictions, including but not limited to the following suspended actions:
 - shaking hands
 - fist bumps
 - Hugging
 - shouting after touch
 - exchange of equipment, including masks and gloves

Medical Staff

- In case of injury only medical staff of the event and their team members can approach the injured fencer and they must wear the appropriate PPE, including the following at a minimum:
 - facemasks
 - face shields/visor/goggles
- Any participants reporting or displaying symptoms or signs consistent with COVID-19 must notify the host organizer and/or head official, and immediately leave the vicinity along with any members of their household who are present at the venue. Unaccompanied minor children who fall ill, will be safely supervised by an adult while awaiting a parent to pick them up.

PLANNING & ORGANIZATION

- Organizers or designated volunteers will need to be at the door to the venue having Event Waivers, and Self-Declarations signed as well as reviewing vaccine records and negative test result reports as needed prior to entry. Several should have the [SK Vax Verifier](#) app to scan QR codes from the SK Vax Wallet or from My Sask Health Record accounts. Learn more about SK Vax Verifier by clicking the hyperlink above.
- Sufficient approved alcohol-based gel/liquid dispensers and/or tissues for sanitizing must be provided.
 - dispensers/tissues must be placed in all areas throughout the venue to be provided for all participants during the event for hand sanitization, including but not limited to:



Saskatchewan Fencing Association

- Entrance areas
- Referees room
- DT area
- Weapon control area
- Each piste
- Changing rooms
- Washrooms
- approved disinfectant cleaner for disinfection of, as well as hand sanitizer for all individuals working in high-traffic venue areas, including but not limited to the following, in sufficient quantities to regularly sanitize high-contact equipment and surfaces:
 - DT area
 - Armoury and/or weapon control station
 - Medical booth
 - Officials room
 - Scoring machine table
- The host organizers must take steps to avoid the creation of bottlenecks in the venue.
 - At all areas of gatherings (screening, registration, weapon check, etc.), clear markings must be placed on the floor to indicate proper physical distance maintenance.
 - Volunteer staff must enforce this distance to all participants entering the venue as well as in areas of gathering as much as possible in the space
 - Chairs are to be situated and maintained at appropriate physical distance from other households as possible.
- Where possible, only allow fencers, parents, coaches, officials, and staff relevant to their respective events inside the venue space, within compliance with local health unit and venue regulations.
 - Check-ins should be located outside of the venue to ensure that all health information is collected and recorded, and health checks passed prior to venue entry
 - Upon check-in, organizers should record athletes as well as supporter(s) (coach/parent) for each athlete as paired individuals for crowd management and contact tracing purposes
 - If athletes, parents, coaches, officials, and other staff are not participating in an event for that day, they should refrain from entering the venue.
 - Participants in each event are to arrive no more than **90 minutes** prior to the close of registration for their event.
 - Participants in each event are also to leave the venue no longer than **60 minutes** after elimination, or the completion of the event, whichever comes first.



Saskatchewan Fencing Association

- Water fountains should **not** be used for drinking directly from, but only used for filling up personal water bottles.
- Catered food provided for officials is permissible, provided that:
 - Food items are individually wrapped/packaged
 - There is a space large enough to accommodate officials and staff to eat/drink seated at least 2 meters apart, and that all officials and staff be able to eat/break within a reasonable time frame Though all attendees are strongly encouraged to eat outside, in vehicle etc...
- Equipment vendors, where permitted, may present their products.
- When possible, physical barriers (i.e. plexiglass) should be erected between staff in DT, armoury, medical, and official areas.

Weapon Control Area

- Area for the weapon and equipment control must be large enough to allow fencers to keep 2 meter physical distance as much as possible.
- It is recommended to install a light plexiglass shield between the controllers and athletes. Alternatively, barriers must be applied to keep a 2 meter physical distance wherever athletes interact with controllers.
- It is recommended to reduce bottlenecks in the weapon control area and minimize the number of fencers in the area (e.g. providing specific weapon control times by event/check-in time/alphabet/club).
- Controllers must sanitize their hands and workstation before and after handling each individual athlete's equipment, using disinfectant or sanitizer provided by the host organizer.

DT Area

- Each member of the DT must have an allocated chair at the physical distance of 2 meters.
- All consultations in the DT area must be at the physical distance of 2 meters and, where possible, separated by a plexiglass shield.
- It is recommended to, at a minimum, install a light plexiglass shield on the front side of the DT desk. Alternatively, a barrier must be applied to keep 2 meter physical distance wherever an individual interacts with the DT

Event Layout

- Distance between strips and their position, as well as the position of the scoring tables and apparatus must accommodate the required physical distance of 2 metres between all participants as much as possible.
- The referee's areas must be wide enough and positioned so that the referees can always maintain the required physical distance of 2 meters, as much as feasibly possible.



Saskatchewan Fencing Association

- Participants in pool fencing should be seated, unless fencing or warming up. The distance between the seats must be 2 meters
- During the bouts, fencers should be allowed contact only with their coaches/parents/guardians/household
- Athletes/spectators are encouraged to leave after their events/medal presentation to decrease number of people present.

Awards Ceremonies

- During the presentation of the fencers on the piste, a minimum 2 meter physical distance must be kept.
- Medal ceremonies must be organized so the minimum 2 meter physical distance is maintained at all times.
- Medals are to be presented to the fencers on a tray (fencers to take medals by themselves), or in a way that would completely limit physical touch between individuals (e.g. placing medals on podiums prior to the ceremony). Janelle's Idea: Use a plastic long sword to hang medal on and reach it out to present to fencers to pull off. Easy to disinfect too.
- No handshaking is allowed
- For taking photos, a minimum 2 meter physical distance must be kept between all individuals.
- Individuals not directly involved in the medal ceremony should not congregate in this area

Accommodation & Local Transportation

- Accommodation: When possible, use hotels within a walking distance from the venue in order to avoid transportation. Liaise with the selected hotels to ensure that proper sanitization of the rooms and other premises has been conducted.
- Internal transport: Plan and organize enough transport vehicles (cars and busses) to ensure the physical distance. All transport means must be regularly sanitized and equipped with hand sanitizing sprays. Ideally fencers should travel with own household only.

Fundraisers and concessions:

- Raffles and fundraisers will be conducted in such a manner as to minimize attendees handling items or tickets. Some options would be electronic random number generator programs, wheel of fortune electronic draws and more. Contactless payment such as e-transfer, or tap, could also be used where feasible.
- Staff of these areas will sanitize surfaces and hands frequently.



Saskatchewan Fencing Association

- Food items will be individually packaged and prepared by someone with safe food handling training.
- Host clubs may choose to partner with a business to make individual snack containers such as hard boiled eggs, meat, cheese, veggies and fruit, or sandwiches etc...that are individually packaged.
- A donation bucket may be an option. Attendees who choose to bring their own food or beverages to be cautious may be willing to make a donation to the host club in lieu of utilizing the concession.

This document was modified from the CFF Return to Competition guidelines.