



**AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUBSM**

Farm Dog Certified Tests

Suggested Best Practices for the Well-Being of Dog Sport Participants

The AKC supports each club's informed decision to reschedule, postpone or cancel their respective events, as well as supporting clubs ready to hold events in locations that are open and permit gatherings. As events resume across the country, people need to feel safe while enjoying their dog activities. The AKC urges clubs 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 clubs to determine the guidelines that best fit their event. In order to inform participants, specific guidelines established by the club should be published in the premium, club website and posted on signage/flyers at their event.

General Practices

1. Clubs, 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. Consider wearing masks when in close proximity to others.
4. Clubs should consider having masks and gloves available for officials, judges and volunteers.
5. Consider wearing disposable or washable gloves.
6. Have plenty of hand sanitizers placed for people to use.
7. Wash hands as frequently as possible. Have disinfecting spray at bathroom facilities for people to spray door handles (or anything else they touch).
8. If you utilize portable toilets, please ask for a hand washing station to be delivered as well.
9. Avoid shaking hands or hugging.
10. Avoid touching dogs that are not your responsibility.
11. Avoid common use pens/pencils – bring your own.
12. Disinfect surfaces in common use areas as often as possible (tables, chairs, doorknobs, etc.)
13. Meals - Avoid or stagger group lunches/dinners if possible. It is recommended that clubs 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 lunch/drinks.

14. Parking areas – Park with sufficient distance between vehicles if possible.

Event Practices

1. Scheduling – Assign participants test times to minimize congregating. SignUp Genius (free downloadable app) may be helpful to manage advanced entries and schedule/assign specific test times for each dog.
2. Establish an entry number for each participant. This will be helpful when using a queuing system outside the test area prior to each entrant entering the test.
3. For day-of-event entries, provide a separate entry table distanced away from other areas of the test site. Allow plenty of space for social distancing - use flags/cones to marked spots.
4. Person taking the entries should wear mask/gloves while interacting with entrants
5. Entry forms should be completed prior to arriving at the entry table.
6. Go cashless as much as possible – encourage use of PayPal, Google Pay or EWallet.
7. Ask participants to have correct change for entries, parking, purchases, etc.
8. Ask participants to wait by their vehicles until called prior to their test time. If the parking lot is a fair distance from the testing area, allow extra time for exhibitors to get to the test area.
 - Consider using text messaging services such as Remind (free downloadable app) to inform participants via text message when their number is ready to enter the test site.
 - Ask participants provide cell phone numbers for the event secretary to call or text.
 - Use a bull horn or PA system to inform participants when their number is ready to enter the test area.
9. Consider having someone wearing gloves handing out ribbons or rosettes. No self-serve boxes.
10. In the test area, care should be given to common touch points. Disinfect after each person or provide entrants protection such as gloves/paper towels. Touch points to consider during test –
 - Greet Judge – This should be done without a handshake and at a distance no closer than 6ft. Substitute the handshake with a hand wave, air high five, etc.
 - The judge can wear a mask even if not required by local guidelines.
 - Pass through gate - Gates should be wiped after each participant.
 - Feed livestock – Test should allow for something simple such as a prefilled paper plate or bowl with food provided. After feeding, discard paper plate or bowl. If water is used, paper towel or gloves should be provided to touch the handles of bucket.
 - Jump on bale of hay – Owners should not touch the bale in order to get their dog to jump, they can point or motion.

- Supervised Separation – Owners should not wait in a chair, instead owners should stand.
 - Reaction to Noise – Same individual should touch the noise distraction or have gloves/disinfectant available.
11. During elements of the test which require walking a dog by livestock, other people or other dogs, generous and safe distances should be provided and encouraged. (10-12 ft minimum)
 12. When a dog has finished the test, clubs could offer to provide the owner an email copy of the Test Evaluation form showing a pass/fail rather than be handed a paper copy.
 13. Owners who would like to order an FDC title are encouraged to send their title application electronically via email to: performanceevents@akc.org.

Policies that Have Been Temporarily Suspended

1. Event Application Late Fees – Event application late fees are waived through the end of October. This provide clubs more flexibility in planning or rescheduling their events.
2. For events cancelled in 2020, AKC will apply Event Application fees to the club’s next event of the same type.

Participants are expected to follow state, local government, facility and event guidelines. Clubs should be prepared to enforce the guidelines that apply to their event.

These Suggested Best Practices may be periodically updated. Please check the AKC Farm Dog Certified Test website (www.akc.org/sports/herding/farm-dog-certified-test/) for the most up-to-date version.

CDC - How to Protect Yourself and Others:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

For questions or additional suggestions, please contact the Performance Events Department at performanceevents@akc.org.

Stay Safe – Enjoy Your Dogs

