July 23, 2020

From: Chuck Hodge, Chief of Racing and Events
To: All USA Cycling Officials
Re: Guidance for Officials During COVID-19

USA Cycling has created a set of guidelines and best practices in the “Return to Riding and Racing” documents. This resource is meant to provide event organizers with information, guidance and practices to help mitigate risk. It is extremely important that all parties understand the ultimate authority to authorize an event lies with local governments and health authorities. Likewise, any requirements or regulations provided by these authorities must be followed for USA Cycling’s permit to be valid.

As we see a return to racing in some areas, USA Cycling has worked with the National Technical Commission to provide guidance to race officials on several important areas when dealing with COVID-19.

The Event Organizer specifies and directs the general aspects of the race, including ensuring that all local rules and guidelines are followed. Event Organizers shall also take those reasonable acts necessary to promote the safety of participants and spectators. (USAC Policy VI).

The Chief Referee, and by extension the officials crew, is responsible for supervising the sporting aspects of the event including interpreting and enforcing USAC’s regulations. (USAC Regulation 1G4a)

It is more critical than ever that these parties work together to ensure that races are run in a safe and organized manner. For officials, the best practice of contacting the race organization early to discuss the event now becomes an even more important part of planning based on the items below.

Regulation Modification

It may be in the best interest of safety to modify some existing USA Cycling regulations during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is particularly relevant in areas where physical contact or handling of objects occurs. Examples of this would include:

- Not putting “hands on” a bicycle when doing a time trial bike check and allowing visual inspection.
- Allowing a longer than regulation cyclocross course if the organizer seeks to avoid lapping or runs in a time trial format.
- Changing the setup for junior rollout to have the rider manage their own bike.
- Modifying the timeline for results posting and protests to allow for electronic posting and protests.
- Utilizing all electronic registration and license verification rather than a manual in-person check.

As with any derogation of the regulations, it is important that the officials and race organization reach agreement on the need and type of modification, and that these changes are made available to race participants as early as possible, preferably in pre-event communications. In order to ensure uniformity and compliance, major modifications or derogations should be approved in advance through USA Cycling staff. Inquires and requests may be sent to the officials@usacycling.org e-mail.

Implementation of Health-Related Rules

There are a variety of regulations in place around the country from local governments and health departments. These regulations cover items such as social distancing, use of PPE, and number of participants/spectators/staff at events.

As has been stated, organizers must follow and abide by any government regulations or requirements that cover their event, as well as acquire and maintain all required permits and permissions. The Event Organizer and Chief Referee should consult before the event to communicate any requirements, particularly those impacting participants and how they will participate in the event.

USA Cycling regulations currently allow for special regulations and requirements for events, and enforcement of those by the officials assigned to the race. USA Cycling considers application of government mandated requirements to be de-facto special regulations for events with those affecting sporting aspects subject to enforcement by officials. USA Cycling has regulations in place covering application of these:

1N4. Rules and Course. It is the rider’s responsibility to familiarize themselves with the rules of the event and the race course before the start of the race. Riders may not take any other route or short cut. The fact that tape or barriers may have moved or fallen shall not stay the responsibility of the rider to stay on the designated route.

1N5. Instructions. Riders shall follow the instructions of the race organizers, the officials and police.

Example 1:

A local health department requires participants on site to wear masks at all times except for active participation (ie. during racing).

Actions:

- The Organizer is required as part of their USAC permit to require mask usage per local guidelines.
- The Chief Referee and Organizer should discuss the requirement and how it will be communicated and enforced. This should include when and how the permitting agencies require masks and when they will be required (i.e. in a race or not). In addition, the parties should discuss how they can work together to ensure compliance.
- The Organizer must communicate this requirement to event participants, ideally before the event (event notice, e-mail, social media, etc.), and state that it will be enforced.
- The Chief Referee should communicate requirements and enforcement to the other officials on the crew, both so that they understand enforcement and also follow guidelines themselves.
- The Officials are empowered to enforce wearing of masks as a special regulation of the event. Any enforcement should follow those of USA Cycling regulation on helmets, 8A1(a) and 8A1(b), generally beginning with a warning and elevated for actions such as refusal to comply. A rider who refuses to comply is in violation of the regulation (and possibly local law), endangers the event permit, and should not be allowed to participate. Extreme cases should be reported to USA Cycling for possible further discipline. USA Cycling discourages the use of fines except in exceptional circumstances.

**Example 2:**

A local health department only allows a certain number of people on site at a given time.

**Actions:**

- The Organizer is required as part of their USAC permit to follow local requirements and limit the number of people on site. One option would be for field limits to be lowered to ensure compliance.
- The Chief Referee and Organizer should discuss the requirement and how it will be communicated and enforced. Topics should include how the officials crew will be involved in staging, racing, and results distribution and how those impact the number of people on site and the flow of people through the venue.
- Communication should occur between the Organizer and Chief Referee during the event to measure compliance.
- In the case that the Chief Referee sees clear violations and the Organizer is unable or unwilling to resolve them, the Chief Referee should contact the USA Cycling Event Services team for possible enforcement action on the event permit. USA Cycling has the authority to revoke an event permit if an event is in violation of local regulations.

USA Cycling is seeking to avoid placing officials in roles outside of their mandate when working at events. Officials should not be tasked with things like making sure there is hand sanitizer in restrooms (even if it is a requirement) but should be involved in those areas where there is overlap in the sporting and rules aspects. The Chief Referee may also take action when there is a gross violation that directly threatens the overall safety of events. Officials should also always feel free to involve USA Cycling staff to intervene as needed.

**On-Site Protections for Officials**

USA Cycling requires the use of masks or face coverings for officials assigned to races in cases where they are not able to adequately social distance. Officials should always wear masks or face covering when working directly with members, the public or fellow officials. All officials should become familiar with the personal protection guidance provided through the links in USA Cycling “Return to Riding and Racing” document, and utilize additional measures, such as gloves, in circumstances where they will provide protection.

The Chief Referee, or designee, should contact the organizer well in advance to discuss on-site policies and how they might impact the officials crew. The Chief Referee will convey the on-site
policies to the rest of the officials crew in advance of the event, including all event or local policies that the crew must follow.

Risk Mitigation

Officials should follow the same risk mitigation guidelines as riders and event staff when accepting an assignment or attending an event:

- All officials should be symptom free for 14 days.
  - Fever, chill, fatigue, cough, upper respiratory infections symptoms, body aches, loss of smell or taste.
- If you are feeling sick stay home.
- Officials should consider any heightened risk factors for contracting the virus that might impact their attendance at a race.
  - People age 65+, those with pre-existing conditions or who are immunocompromised.
- Officials who have engaged in an activity that puts them at risk should not participate.
  - Travel to area of high rate of transmissions, contact with known or suspected COVID-19 patients.

To be clear, USA Cycling strongly encourages our officials to consider these factors and wants to be clear that following these guidelines will have no negative consequences for future assignments. Officials should certainly strive to

Post-Event Reporting

Officials who would like to submit information on what worked, or didn’t work, at an event may send an e-mail with any documents and pictures to eventservices@usacycling.org The information will be passed on to the appropriate staff member at USA Cycling, and may be added to future best practices documents or for further enforcement action.

USAC Contacts: USA Cycling Staff Contacts for Officials

Reference: USA Cycling COVID-19 Resource Page