

Ski Mountaineering Competition Canada COVID-19 Safety Guidelines for the 2022 season, revised 2021-12-03

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1. Introduction and Information on COVID-19

Ski Mountaineering Competition Canada (SMCC) has a responsibility to ensure the safety of all athletes, volunteers, hosts, and spectators at all events. Additional measures are needed during the COVID-19 Pandemic to avoid spreading the virus in connection with an event.

These ‘SMCC COVID-19 Safety Guidelines for the 2022 Season’ provide advice for all SMCC events based on information and publications from the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Ski Mountaineering Federation (ISMF), The Government of Canada, Provincial Health Authorities in British Columbia and Alberta, and viaSPORT.

Race Directors and Event Organizers shall follow Public Health Regulations and ensure that adequate measures are in place to protect the health of all participants. This includes preventative measures, education for participants, monitoring, and reporting of symptomatic individuals.

Race Directors and Event Organizers together with host ski areas are in a position to assist with contact tracing, should it be required. Race Directors have contact details of all athletes (from SMCC data base and Zone4 on line registration system) and volunteers.

With the fluid nature of COVID-19 and the frequent revisions to public health directives, SMCC policies for Covid-19 will require on-going revision.

Information on COVID-19

Transmission

- COVID-19 is highly transmissible from person-to-person and spreads easily between individuals in close contact.
- The virus spreads in small droplets produced by coughing, talking, heavy breathing, and sneezing. These droplets can contaminate surfaces. A person can get COVID-19 from touching a surface and then touching their face.

- The virus can persist in the air for up to three (3) hours and on a variety of surfaces for up to nine (9) days
- A person is most contagious during the first three (3) days after the onset of symptoms, although the spread is possible before symptoms appear or by someone who is asymptomatic.

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Common Symptoms

- Symptoms may take up to 14 days to appear after exposure to COVID-19.
- While most cases result in mild symptoms, some may progress to more severe disease requiring hospitalization. In severe cases, infection can lead to death.
- Symptoms have included:
 - Fever, chills
 - Dry cough, sore throat
 - Shortness of breath
 - Tiredness, feeling confused, losing consciousness
 - Severe difficulty breathing (e.g. struggling to breathe or speaking in single words)
 - Severe chest pain
 - Runny nose, loss of taste or smell
 - Aches and pains, headache
 - Diarrhea, nausea and vomiting, loss of appetite
 - Conjunctivitis
 - A rash on skin, or discolouration of fingers or toes

Prevention

It is extremely important to follow preventative measures to reduce exposure to COVID-19. Preventative measures include:

- Stay at home when you are sick
- Wash your hands with soap for at least 20 seconds
- Use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol
- Wear a face mask when in public places
- Avoid touching eyes, nose & mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid contact with people who are sick
- Clean & disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, or into your sleeve
- Avoid being within 2 metres of others without wearing a mask
- Avoid crowded places and all unnecessary travel

When using a mask, the World Health Organization (WHO) recommends:

- Clean your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand before putting it on
- Cover your mouth and nose with the mask and make sure there are no gaps between your face and the mask
- Avoid touching the mask while using it and clean your hands if you do

- Replace the mask with a new one as soon as it is damp and don't reuse single-use masks
- Remove the mask from behind, discard it immediately into a closed bin or sealed bag and then clean your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Do not place used masks loosely into packs or pockets as they can cause contamination of all surfaces it contacts.

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2. Risk Assessment

The 'Mass Gathering risk assessment COVID-19: key considerations' tool created by the World Health Organization (WHO) will enable organisers to review the key considerations for hosting an event, and so inform their risk assessment of COVID-19 on the event.

This will help organisers to understand and manage any additional from COVID-19.

This should be reviewed regularly during planning and updated immediately prior to the handover to the operational phase especially in light of the rapidly evolving outbreak with reference to the updated guidance and situation reports on the WHO website:

The COVID-19 risk assessment for the event must be coordinated and integrated with the host country's national COVID-19 risk assessment and should include input from the local public health authority, along with consulting WHO's updated technical guidance and ensuring that there is an up-to-date evaluation of the epidemiological situation.

Areas within Ski Mountaineering events where individuals are close to one another:

- Ski Lodge: washrooms, food services, race briefings, protection from elements
- Race or volunteer briefings: indoor or outdoor
- Chair Lift: transportation to the start line
- Gear check: race officials and athletes in close proximity to check gear and beacons
- Race Corral: start area of the race
- Skin Track: athletes can be in close proximity anywhere along a race course
- Transition Areas: volunteers and athletes
- Spectator Areas: spectators along the race course
- Anti-doping testing: testing officials and athletes in close proximity
- Podium: close proximity, medal transfer, flow of traffic
- Medical emergencies: emergency personnel

Areas where race participants may come into contact with the public:

- Ski Lodge: washrooms, food services, hallways
- Chair Lift: line and chair lift
- Race Corral: along the edge of the start and finish line
- Race course: along any areas of the course where there is no barrier to the public
- Medical Emergencies

Equipment that may be shared by individuals:

- Race numbers, lift tickets, race swag
- Volunteer maps, briefings, timing equipment
- Waivers and pens
- Touching of other bags and gear at the start or finish line

Surfaces that people often touch:

- Lodge: door handles, washroom doors, knobs, food area, payment kiosks, race check in table and pens
- Chair lift: safety bar

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3. SMCC Protocols to Reduce Risk

The SMCC has developed the following Protocols to reduce the risk for all event organizers, participants, volunteers, and spectators. Direction from the ISMF was used to create these guidelines. Directions from Local Health Authorities as well as host resorts must be followed.

The key protocols to be addressed in all SMCC events include:

Proof of vaccination for all racers and volunteers

Physical Distancing: stay 2 metres apart, virtual or outside whenever possible

Hygiene: Hand washing, respiratory hygiene

Equipment Cleaning and Barriers: disinfectants, face masks

Health Monitoring: self assessment daily

Communication and Reporting: provide education and training, signs to limit occupancy and direct flow, keep records of all individuals involved in an event, and enforce reporting duties

Event Organizers must complete the 'Application to become a Ski Mountaineering Competition Canada Sanctioned Event' document and submit to the SMCC. This document contains the checklists required to comply with the Guidelines outlined below:

Pre-race Protocols

Athlete and Volunteer Registration

- Race registration, contact information, medical information, and emergency contact information to be collected electronically for all individuals involved in an event. Details are required so that contact tracing can be performed if needed.
- Payment to be done electronically when possible
- People over 65 or who have health issues that make them more susceptible to COVID-19 should not to participate in any part of the event unless deemed essential and wearing FFP2 Mask

- Waivers to be done electronically if possible. If paper registrations need to be done, the following is needed: hand sanitizer provided and enforced, posted occupancy limit signs, direction of flow, maximum number of people in the area, minimal contact with paper, surface and pen cleaned with proper disinfectant for the appropriate amount of time, people distanced by 2 metres or face masks required
- Include information on COVID-19 and information about screening tools and reporting of any symptoms as part of registration.
- Race numbers and lift tickets
 - Enforce hand sanitizer use at the entrance
 - Establish direction of flow of traffic
 - Face masks required
 - Maintain 2 metres of distance as much as possible and minimize contact

- All event organizers, athletes, and volunteers must complete and pass the COVID-19

Self Assessment Tool in the 24 hours before the start of an event. A system must be in place to check that all individuals have completed this process.

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- Include a duty to report a positive diagnosis of COVID-19 within 2 weeks of the event to event organizer and SMCC Chair

Race Briefing

- Race Briefings to include:
 - COVID-19 risks and safety measures (encourage clear labeling of items to avoid confusion of items and touching of other peoples' gear), hand and respiratory hygiene
 - Course information
 - Required equipment (face masks to be added as a mandatory item)
 - ISMF rules
 - Individuals have a duty to report the development of symptoms during an event to the event organizer or designated individual
 - Any individual that receives a positive diagnosis of COVID-19 in the two weeks following the event must contact the race organizer
- As much information to be delivered electronically as possible.
- Final race details and weather update to be done ideally outside with social distancing. If indoor, social distancing and face masks required.

Volunteer Briefing

- To be done electronically or in person while maintaining 2 metres of distance as

much as possible. If indoors, masks required. If outdoors and closer than 2 metres, masks required.

Lift Access

- Follow Host Resort protocols, wear face masks, and maintain distance of 2 meters

Warm-up

- Must provide an area for athletes that is closed to the public with direction of travel designated.
- Distance of 2 metres between all individuals must be maintained or face masks must be worn.

Start Coral, Gear Checks, and Beacon Check

- Face masks to be worn by race official and participant during beacon check
- Race officials are to avoid touching participants' gear.
- Provide a wide enough and deep enough start coral to allow a distance of 2 metres between all individuals at the start line (2 metres sideways and front to back).
- Provide a designated area for participant gear, discourage participants in allowing their gear to touch other people's gear. Participants to label bags and gear clearly.

Travel to Events

- Follow local public health authority protocols
- Limit the number of people travelling together and keep consistent within social bubbles
- Review the Government of Canada's Official Global Travel Advisories before International Travel

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- Shared Vehicles:
 - Traveling in private individual vehicles is preferred
 - If traveling in groups, maintain consistent groups throughout
 - Clean hands when entering vehicle
 - Daily disinfection of any highly touched surfaces in and on the car is required.
 - Rental cars: disinfect rental cars thoroughly upon receipt, prior to entering the vehicle for the first time and loading with gear
- Public Transportation:
- Face Masks required, carry and use hand sanitizer, avoid touching surfaces
- Gas Stations:
 - Use gloves when touching gas pumps, use contactless payment options and then use hand sanitizer upon completion

- Avoid going into stores for food if possible (pack food and drinks in advance)
- Public Washrooms:
 - Wear a face mask
 - Take supplies to disinfect all touch surfaces prior to use and wash hands thoroughly before leaving room
 - Use towel or glove to open exit door if needed, then use hand sanitizer
- Air Travel:
 - Follow municipal, provincial, and governmental air travel guidelines including wearing a mask as instructed
 - Ideally book seats that are on planes/routes with lower occupancy rates (less than 50% capacity) and window seats away from foot traffic
 - Use the overhead fan to create turbulent airflow in front of the face
 - Bring food and an empty water bottle in your carry-on luggage, so you do not need to purchase food or use cabin service on board. Fill a water bottle at a touchless water station
 - Bring a change of clothes and a large Ziploc bag to place travel clothes into post-flight in your carry-on luggage
 - Wipe down all surfaces in your seating area with antibacterial wipes and dispose into a sealed Ziploc bag. Use hand sanitizer after completing the wipe down of the area and avoid touching your face
 - Landing: Upon landing, change clothes, and put plane clothes into a large Ziploc/plastic bag. Wash immediately when at final accommodation
- Only stay with athletes that are in your social bubble. If staying with athletes outside of your bubble, a 14 day isolation period before or after the event is required.
- Seek single or double occupancy rooms. No shared washrooms or shower areas with the public is permitted.
- Always follow and abide by the COVID-19 guidelines for the local hotel industry. Do not admit entry to the accommodation to anyone who is not staying at the accommodation.
- Upon arrival clean all touch surfaces with a disinfectant.

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- Disinfection strategies include sanitizing daily and re-cleaning all rooms and surfaces more frequently based on use and in accordance with municipal, provincial, and governmental guidelines.
- Laundry facilities & washing: All clothing items should only be worn once and then washed. Clothing can be washed as a group. Whoever touches the laundry needs to wash their hands thoroughly before and after.

Meals

- Meals will be prepared according to municipal, provincial, and governmental COVID-19 guidelines for hotels.
- Buffet style eating is prohibited, individual orders only, and no family-style meals. Always eat in the same place, and if possible, in the hotel or another predetermined restaurant.
- The training group should be separated from other restaurant patrons and seated at a safe physical distance. Snacks and drinks must not be shared between athletes. Wash hands before and after eating and wipe down surface areas ahead of sitting down.

Race Protocols

- All individuals to maintain 2 metres of distance at all times
- Race courses to be separated from the Public. Entrance and exits controlled
- Allow enough space in transition areas for athletes to be spaced
- Avoid communal food and refreshments
- Spectators:
 - Social distancing to be maintained by spectators, keep flow one direction
 - Post a maximum number in designated areas
 - Separate spectators from start and finish areas by a minimum of 2.5 metres from the athletes and officials

Vertical race

- ISMF preference = start one by one
- After every 10 athletes, leave a gap of 2 minutes to avoid too many people at finish

Sprint

- Consider running a time trial version only keeping athletes and officials spaced

Individual

- ISMF preference = mass start with specific spacing between athletes and rows
- Masks must be worn until 30 seconds before the race starts and carried with the athlete during the race

Post-Race Protocols

- Provide a large area to maintain distance between all individuals
- Ask participants to leave the finish area as soon as possible

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Gear Check

- Race Officials and athletes to stay 2 metres apart or wear a face mask
- Race Officials to avoid touching athlete equipment

Anti-doping

- Anti-doping Officials and Athletes are required to stay 2 metres apart or wear a face mask

- Each Sample collection agency must confirm it follows the WADA Guidelines fulfilling the necessary measures

- Additional hand washing and/or disinfection, waste management, and cleaning needed

Results

- Provide hand washing and discourage touching of results page
- Post in a public area for long enough for all participants to view individually
- Consider posting in multiple locations, preferably outdoors
- Provide a direction of flow to and from the results and a clear location for disputes
- Masks to be worn when disputing results and distance maintained if possible

Podium

- Mark locations to stand with 2 metres of space and a direction of flow to the podium
- Hand sanitization for the person giving medals and for athletes
- Masks to be worn when giving or receiving medals.
- Avoid touching the athlete - no hand shaking
- If photos taken, 2 metre distance must be maintained by athletes (even if outside)

Symptomatic Individual at an Event

- If an individual develops symptoms at an event, they must put on a mask (if not already wearing one) and isolate themselves
- The participant is required to notify the event organizer of their symptoms
- The participant is to contact and follow the guidelines of Local Health Authorities
- The participant is to inform the Event Organizer of the test result
- The SMCC Chair or Protocol Officer will be in contact with Public Health and take the appropriate actions

Positive COVID-19 Diagnosis

- If an individual experiences any COVID-19 symptoms in the two weeks following an event, the participant must contact the Event Organizer and Local Health Authorities
- The Event Organizer must notify the SMCC Chair and Protocol Officer of the symptoms and follow up on test results
- The SMCC Chair or Protocol Officer will be in contact with Public Health and take the appropriate actions

Participation after a Positive COVID-19 Diagnosis

- Individuals will be allowed to participate in SMCC events after they have been cleared by Public Health Officials to return to public areas.

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National Team Training Protocols

- Waivers, contact information, medical information, and emergency contact information to be collected electronically for all individuals involved in the training event

- Education must be provided to all involved regarding COVID-19, hand washing, mask use, respiratory hygiene, and disinfectants

- Athletes and coaches must complete and pass the COVID-19 Self Assessment Tool

in the 24 hours before the start of the training event and daily throughout. A system must be in place to check that all individuals have completed this process.

- Include a duty to report a positive diagnosis of COVID-19 within 2 weeks of the event

to event organizer and SMCC Chair

- Physical Distancing: stay 2 metres apart, virtual or outside whenever possible, face masks required when less than 2 metres apart or sharing a common area inside for more than 10 minutes

- Hygiene: provide hand washing stations in all areas, reminders of respiratory hygiene

- Equipment Cleaning and Barriers: all shared equipment and contact surfaces must be cleaned with disinfectants at a regular schedule

- Accommodation

- Only stay with athletes that are in your social bubble. If staying with athletes outside of your bubble, a 14 day isolation period before or after the event is required.

- Seek single or double occupancy rooms. No shared washrooms or shower areas with the public is permitted.

- Always follow and abide by the COVID-19 guidelines for the local hotel industry. Do not admit entry to the accommodation to anyone who is not staying at the accommodation.

- Upon arrival clean all touch surfaces with a disinfectant.

- Disinfection strategies include sanitizing daily and re-cleaning all rooms and surfaces more frequently based on use and in accordance with municipal, provincial, and governmental guidelines.

- Laundry facilities & washing: All clothing items should only be worn once and

- then washed. Clothing can be washed as a group. Whoever touches the laundry needs to wash their hands thoroughly before and after.

- Meals

- Meals will be prepared according to municipal, provincial, and governmental COVID-19 guidelines for hotels.

- Buffet style eating is prohibited, individual orders only, and no family-style meals. Always eat in the same place, and if possible, in the hotel or another predetermined restaurant.

- The training group should be separated from other restaurant patrons and seated at a safe physical distance. Snacks and drinks must not be shared between athletes. Wash hands before and after eating and wipe down surface areas ahead of sitting down.

Race Officials Training Protocols

- Training to be completed virtually when possible.

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- Distance of 2 metres to be maintained when possible. Mask to be worn indoors or when less than 2 metres apart when outside.

SMCC Meeting and Annual General Meeting Protocols - To be completed electronically.

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4. SMCC COVID-19 Policies

Ski Mountaineering Competition Canada (SMCC) has a responsibility to ensure the safety of all athletes, volunteers, hosts, and spectators given the current COVID-19 pandemic. These COVID-19 Policies will guide the SMCC for the upcoming (2022) Ski Mountaineering Racing season in Canada. Policies will be posted to smcc.ski website.

With the fluid nature of COVID-19 and the frequent revisions to public health directives, SMCC policies for Covid-19 will require on-going revision.

Literature review points to many international athletic federations limiting 2022 competitions in scope, with events that are planned, being routinely revised or changed based on developments. These changes in scope appear related to new Covid 19 variants and resulting complications in international travel and quarantine restrictions.

SMCC COVID-19 Safety Guidelines for the 2022 Season have been created to guide event organizers, athletes, volunteers, and spectators for events this season. This document outlines the concerns of COVID-19, identifies areas of risk in Ski Mountaineering Racing events, outlines protocols to reduce risks, provides education and links to screening questionnaires, and describes the SMCC communication plans and re-assessment protocols. These guidelines will be posted on the smss.ski website.

Policies:

1. SMCC will adhere to all directives from federal (Health Canada) and provincial health authorities where events are hosted. For the 2022 season the SMCC expects to host events in Alberta and British Columbia.
2. SMCC will ensure applicable insurance coverage for all events. If there is no insurance, SMCC will not sanction events.
3. All sanctioned SMCC events will undergo a full risk assessment using the SMCC COVID-19 Safety Guidelines and the World Health Organization (WHO) Risk Assessment and Mitigation checklist for mass gatherings in the context of COVID-19. The Event Organizer(s) are responsible to complete the assessment and submit to

the SMCC. The SMCC Chair and Protocol Officer are responsible to review and sign off on the assessment.

4. In order to participate in an SMCC sanctioned event all athletes, volunteers, race officials, media, and spectators must comply with the policies of local health authorities, the SMCC, race directors, and the host resort. Noncompliance will lead to removal from the event.
5. All racers and volunteers at sanctioned smcc events must provide proof of vaccination. No exceptions.

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5. Communication: Plans and Training

The following documents are posted on the smcc.ski website :

SMCC COVID-19 Policies

SMCC COVID-19 Safety Guidelines

Application to become a Ski Mountaineering Competition Canada Sanctioned Event

Events must include:

- Training for all individuals involved
- Documentation of training and contact information
- Signage for occupancy limits, physical distancing, and hygiene

6. Plan to Update Protocols when Events Return

All event organizers must complete the 'Application to become a Ski Mountaineering Competition Canada Sanctioned Event' document. This will be reviewed by the SMCC Protocol Officer and SMCC Chair for approval.

Protocols are to be evaluated before, during, and after each event.

Protocol Officer to follow up with all Event Organizers to identify any areas of concern and update the SMCC Guidelines.

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References:

Government and Public Health

Government of Canada - COVID-19 Information

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/prevention-risks/measure-reduce-community.html>

Government of Alberta - COVID-19 Information

<https://www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx>

Government of British Columbia - COVID-19 Information

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/current-health-topics/covid-19-novel-coronavirus?bcgovtm=20200506_GCPE_AM_COVID_9_NOTIFICATION_BCGOV_BCGOV_EN_BC_NOTIFICATION

WHO - Mass Gatherings and COVID-19

<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/how-to-use-who-risk-assessment-and-mitigation-checklist-for-mass-gatherings-in-the-context-of-covid-19>

Government of Canada Official Travel Advisories

<https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories>

Sport Organizations

ISMF ISMF Covid-19 Prevention Guidelines for Local Organising Committees, teams and staff
http://www.ismf-ski.org/webpages/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/ISMF_Guidelines_for_COVID-19.pdf

viaSPORT - COVID 19 Updates

<https://www.viasport.ca/news/covid-19-updates-sport-organizations>

Alpine Canada - COVID-19 Return to Skiing Internal Risk Mitigation Resource Document
https://alpinecanada.org/uploads/documents/July_1_20_ACA_Return_to_Training_EN.pdf

The UIAA – International Climbing & Mountaineering Federation

<https://www.theuiaa.org/uiaa/uiaa-and-covid-19-resources/> Biathlon Canada - <http://biathloncanada.ca/covid-19-resources/>

Nordiq Canada - <https://nordiqcanada.ca/nordiq-canada-covid-protocol/>
https://nordiqcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/Scenario-Plan_July162020-1.pdf

