

Recommendations and Best Practices while conducting NAHRA Field Tests during the Covid-19 Crisis

During the current covid-19 crisis, the NAHRA National Board remains committed to supporting our Local Clubs, our Communities, and our Neighbors. To that end, we offer these recommendations for Best Practices to be used in the preparation for and holding of Field Tests during this time. We support each of our individual clubs and regions in making informed decisions to postpone, reschedule, or cancel their respective events. We also support clubs that are prepared and ready to hold events in areas that permit gatherings of this type. As we resume our events in today's environment, we need to make a special effort to ensure that participants, workers, and spectators feel safe while attending our events. And let us not forget that we are all there to watch and enjoy good dog work, so we urge clubs to take appropriate precautions and emphasize the safety of workers, participants, officials, and spectators during their test planning and setup.

As we all continue to learn more about the ever-changing environment, it will be important for clubs hosting events to stay abreast of the most current information available from state and local governments as well as the CDC. It will be up to the host clubs to determine the best guidelines for their location and facilities and how to comply with government restrictions in their area. In order to inform participants and spectators of specific guidelines established by the host club, we recommend that the information be included in the premium, posted on the club's website, and posted on signage or provided as flyers at the test site. We will update this document as necessary to address the changing conditions.

General

1. Host Clubs, participants, and spectators are required to follow state and local guidelines that are in effect at the time of the test for the area where the event is being held.
2. Practice social distancing consistent with local guidelines. (Consider the number of people likely to be at the event when planning the event and laying out the tests.)
3. Consider wearing masks and gloves when local social distancing guidelines are not practical.
4. Encourage all workers and participants to wear disposable or washable gloves as a general practice.
5. Have an ample supply of hand sanitizers placed in strategic locations for people to use.
6. Wash hands as frequently as possible.
7. Have disinfecting spray available for any contact surface used by more than one person. (Door handles, serving utensils, starter pistols, etc.)
8. If you utilize portable toilets, order hand-washing stations as well.
9. Avoid any direct personal contact. (Handshakes, hugging, fist-bumps, etc.)
10. Avoid contact with dogs that are not in your charge.

11. Avoid common-use items. (The test committee should provide pens/pencils for the exclusive use of a judge or worker for the entire event. Condiments should be provided in individual disposable packages.)

12. Disinfect surfaces in common-use areas as often as possible. (Tables, chairs, doorknobs, etc.)

13. Provide the opportunity for people to stagger the times for egress and ingress. (Offset the start times of your tests. Advise people where and when you will be moving to a different location before the last couple of dogs have run. Extend the times when meals are served and remind people to take advantage of the longer schedule. Provide lunches in a take and go format such as a bag or box.)

14. Parking areas – Park with sufficient distance between vehicles if possible. Encourage people to be mindful of others by allowing for social distancing as they leave and return to their vehicles.

Event Specific

1. Consider splitting tests (Started, Junior, Senior, etc.) as necessary to reduce group size.
2. During the Judges' description of the series, practice social distancing consistent with local guidelines. Repeat the scenario 2 or 3 times to allow for smaller groups to come to the line. Also, consider running the test dog for the first two handlers and having holding blinds positioned so subsequent handlers can view the test from the blinds as the handlers ahead of them are running.
3. Scheduling - Use a Marshal's sheet to group dogs into flights to minimize the number of handlers in holding blinds and on the line. Place an extra holding blind, with appropriate social distancing, to maintain spacing.
4. Gunner's, Marshal's, and Judge's boxes should be equipped with hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, and alcohol spray.
5. Any special instructions from the Judges should be posted in the last holding blind.
6. The gallery should be spread out consistent with local social distancing guidelines.
7. Encourage participants to wear gloves when they come to the line. (This is consistent with the general guidelines for wearing gloves when handling anything that is used by others.) Gun should be wiped down between handlers.
8. Periodically disinfect holding blinds and equipment including ATVs and chairs. Encourage workers to bring their own duck-calls and chairs.

9. Use of the whistle projects a vapor! This could create a particular hazard at the line, so everyone on the line should pay attention to the movements of the handler and be mindful of the direction the handler is facing.

10. Wear gloves when handling birds and bird crates.

11. Ribbon ceremonies – Hold outside if possible. Place ribbons on table or tailgate and invite handlers to come up to obtain their ribbons, replace handshaking with applause.

12. Clubs may not develop event guidelines that are inconsistent with NAHRA Rules/Policies.

Additional Information

CDC - How to Protect Yourself and Others:

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

These Suggested Best Practices may be periodically updated. Please check the NAHRA website for updates. These best practices expire 12/31/2020.

For questions or additional suggestions, please contact Phil Hines V.P. at phines127@gmail.com.

Thank you.