

The Coronavirus and Canberra Street Orienteering

Safety for both participants and organisers has always been a primary concern since the street orienteering program began in Canberra about 10 years ago. Hence there is a pre-start briefing before every event which highlights both the general risks (crossing roads, going down laneways etc) and specific risks relevant to each event (eg. concrete water courses, leaves in street gutters, head lamp light safety etc).

In recent days the worldwide rapid increase in cases of COVID-19 and advice from medical authorities, actions by government and responses by sporting organisations have all necessitated an urgent review of organisation of events. Only on Saturday the national Easter orienteering carnival and NSW Orienteering Championships have been cancelled and moved to Easter 2021 because of entries well in excess of 500.

A very good article on COVID-19 and running can be [found here](#).

General precautions for all orienteering events

Orienteering Victoria in conjunction with Orienteering Australia has released the following general precautions (Orienteering ACT is also developing a policy document):

You must not come to any orienteering event or activity if you fall into one of the following categories.

- If you are unwell with a cough or fever or other respiratory symptoms. This is particularly so for people who have recently travelled from overseas.
- If you have been a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19 until 14 days after having contact with a confirmed case even if they are completely symptom free.
- If you have returned from or transited through a listed higher risk country (currently mainland China, Iran, Italy, South Korea), until 14 days after leaving the country.
- If you are undergoing COVID-19 testing until you have received your results
- If you have been advised to stay at home by a health professional.

In addition, Dr Michael Tedeschi, a senior medical specialist at Canberra Hospital and organiser of the Waramanga street orienteering event on 16 March, advises of the following guidance given to health staff in the ACT:

Health and hygiene

Stay home if you become unwell. This includes if you develop fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, body aches, sore throat, runny nose, or muscle pain. Call your GP and seek medical advice.

- **Wash your hands thoroughly and frequently and use an alcohol handwash where possible.**
- **Avoid touching your face, including rubbing eyes.**
- **Avoid handshaking, hugging, air kissing, touching or group selfies.**
- **Sneeze into a tissue and cough into your elbow.**
- **Disinfect high touch surfaces regularly and keep your desk, keyboard and mouse clean and tidy.**

Food and drink

- **Don't share food or drink.**
- **Eat lunch at your desk or in your room in preference to using common rooms.**

Specific precautions for Canberra street orienteering

1. Water melon, chocolate bars and water will no longer be provided. Bring your own water bottle (and post event piece of fruit or snack if desired).
2. No punching of control cards and no last control punching stand. This will avoid multiple touching of each control plate and punch. You must bring a biro, pencil or texta and carry it with you and place a cross or tick on the control card in the relevant box for each control visited.
3. Change in registration procedure. On arrival at the event, you will still complete a control card and cut off and hand in the control card stub with your contact details (for essential safety management). However, there will be an additional step. You must advise which course you are doing (A, B, C, D or walk) and your name (or the names of the members of your team) will be recorded on a pad for

the course you are doing. There will be 5 pads, for the 5 course options.

4. Change in finish procedure. You will proceed directly to the registration table and advise the finish recorder which course you entered and your name. The recorder will look up your name on the list for that course and record your finish time. You will keep your control card. This change in procedure will ensure that neither the finish recorder nor the results data entry processor will be handling control cards that may be contaminated with perspiration, blood or germs.
5. Please wash your hands thoroughly with soap before coming to the event. If you visit a public toilet at the event, please wash your hands well.

Because of these changes in procedures, registration will take a bit longer so please arrive earlier if possible.

These procedures will be reviewed week by week and fine-tuned as necessary, while there will be ongoing monitoring of the management and health recommendations of the Corona virus by government and medical authorities and by Orienteering Australia and Orienteering ACT.

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