Orienteering ACT (OACT) COVID-19 Policy

1   INTRODUCTION

Orienteering is a navigation sport in which individual participants use a map and compass to find their way around a set course in the landscape. Equipment is limited to individual timing devices (SI sticks) which are inserted into/waved over fixed readers (SI units) attached to control flags at fixed locations in the field. SI sticks can be read by computer download at the Finish.

The sport involves no deliberate physical contact between participants and little by way of mass gathering or spectators. Compared to team and contact sports, orienteering is a relatively low risk environment for virus transmission.

However, we take the safety of our participants and all those involved in organising and delivering competitions and events very seriously. We will continue providing opportunities for community orienteering while monitoring the situation and making adjustments as required.

This policy will continue to be updated, as new information is made available. OACT will update the local orienteering community on any new changes.

2   GENERAL

Please refer to the ACT Government COVID-19 website here for the latest local information.
Refer to the Australian Government Health website here for more general information.
For OACT events held in NSW, conditions are subject to both ACT and NSW Government directions. NSW Government COVID-19 website here.
Information contained on the government websites will take precedence over that contained within this policy document.

Rule #1:   Stay at home if:
● you are unwell, even if you only have very mild symptoms
● you have been in contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19 until any required isolation period is over, or
● you are subject to other restrictions as listed on the Government COVID-19 websites.

Rule #2:   Use COVID-smart behaviours
COVID smart behaviours - COVID-19 (act.gov.au)
● From 26 February 2022 gathering limits no longer apply to outdoor events* and masks are not required to be worn*, but masks may still be required in some settings (for example at schools) even if they are not required at community OACT events.

* If this changes, follow directions applying at that time on the relevant Government websites.
● Physical distancing means separating yourself from other people as much as possible (about 1.5 metres apart) when you're in public places.

> **Be patient, courteous and respectful of others at all times. Please consider how your actions may appear in the eyes of your fellow orienteers, landowners or members of the public.**

3   HYGIENE
● Participants are encouraged to wash/sanitise their hands thoroughly before and after getting to the training or event.
● Hand sanitiser will be provided at the assembly area. However, participants are encouraged to bring their own hand sanitisers as well.
● Refreshments and food may be provided where appropriate arrangements can be made.
● No sharing of water bottles.
● No spitting.
● SIAC (SI Air) is highly recommended for all competitors to provide contact-less control punching.

4   PHYSICAL DISTANCING
● Avoid physical contact.
● Potential high density times are upon arrival and departure as well as at the assembly area and around Start and Finish. Actions around these are covered in more detail later in this policy.
● Shadowing of children around the course is permitted.

5   ORIENTEERING SPECIFIC CONDITIONS - GENERAL
These conditions apply to all events, unless noted as exemptions and special conditions for certain types of events, which are listed in this document.

Event entry policy
Anyone entering an OACT event MUST comply with the current COVID-19 health advice in both their home state and the ACT. It is your responsibility to maintain physical distancing and practice good hygiene.
Refunds of entry fees will be considered for anyone who is unable to attend an event due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Event entry and procedure
● Participants are encouraged to pre-enter and pre-pay before an event. Enter-on-the-Day will be available at some events with EFT payments preferred.
● Respective series Season Passes with pre-entry for all events will be available for OACT members. Members are encouraged to take up this option.
● Participants wishing to change their registration details on the day MUST provide changes to Registration Officials. This includes those requiring Course changes, SI hire and changes and Compass hire.

- It is important that each individual Clear and Check their SI stick before their run, and punches the Start unit. This will ensure that all participants are accounted for at the end of the event.
- SI sticks are not to be shared.

Assembly area
- A key box may be available for those who wish to use it, however participants are encouraged to manage their own car key.
  Example: bring a bag with your belongings and have your keys inside your bag.

Start
- The start area will be organised to facilitate physical distancing, including during clear and check (NB Check is needed to turn the SIAC sticks on.)
- Maps will be available at the Start and separately printed Control Descriptions can be provided.
- When approaching the start, be ready for an immediate exit.
- If multiple people get to the start at the same time, spread out as much as possible and wait for your turn.

Around controls
- Respect each other. When approaching a control make sure to give time and space to earlier runners.
- This might mean a slightly longer time for individual competitors, but this is a side effect that everyone needs to accept.
- The use of SIAC (SI Air) sticks is highly recommended to maximise the distancing around controls and to provide contact-less control punching.

Finish and Download area
- The download area will be organised to facilitate physical distancing.
- To further protect the computer operator and fellow runners, competitors should avoid approaching the download area while still breathing heavily following physical exertion on course.
- Print-outs of Split Times can be provided.
- Participants should not return their maps after completing their course.
- The results will be available online on Eventor and Winsplits after the event.
- Where physical distancing allows, results may be displayed at the Assembly area.

Coaching
Coaching may occur provided participants are mindful of physical distancing.
This includes small group training and programs such as Map Mates.
Special rules may be applicable in some school settings.

The following Exemptions and Special Conditions apply:

Mountain Bike Orienteering (MTBO)
- Any rented equipment can only be shared between participants from the same household.

Wednesday Midday Events
- Season Passes and pre-entry registration and payment will be available.
- For participants who have not pre-entered, Enter-on-the-Day (EOD) is available with exact money (cash only) preferred. Registration is at the Assembly Area.
- EOD competitors are to provide their name and contact number to the event organiser.
- Punch cards may be used. Event timing will be honesty based.
- Maps will be pre-printed.

7   COMMUNICATIONS
- Information about these rules will be provided in the OACT ebulletin.
- The OACT COVID-19 Policy document will be available on the OACT website.

Volunteers
- Volunteers may be given a briefing on how to practice COVID-smart behaviours.
- Volunteers may also be provided with protective equipment if applicable.

Course setters
- Course setters should take into consideration that the SI-units need to be securely mounted to avoid physical touching when punching at the controls.
- Options to consider are to choose control locations where a stand can be used, and/or limit the number of controls used for an event.
- The course setters should position the control/SI-unit to allow a through flow of runners, as opposed to a tight entry/exit on the same path.
- Course setters and control collectors may be provided with protective equipment if applicable.

Organisers
- Organisers must ensure compliance with the OACT COVID-19 Policy.
- Organisers are to provide adequate equipment, such as gloves, hand sanitisers etc.

Computer operator
- The main role of the computer operator at the event will be to set up the equipment and watch downloads for any irregularities.
- Access to the computer will be restricted.
- Results will be posted on Eventor and Winsplits after the events.

8   COMPLIANCE

The event Organiser is responsible for ensuring compliance with the OACT COVID-19 Policy.

9   PERIODIC REVIEWS AND MONITORING

Periodic review of this Policy will be maintained by the OACT Office and the Board. Members are also invited to offer advice.

10   INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

- In case of an accident or injury, there is a first aid kit available at the assembly area. Gloves are provided and are to be used. Good hygiene is a must when treating an injury. If nobody from the same household is able to adequately assist or treat the injured, someone else may give first aid when needed while keeping the physical contact to a minimum, determined by the circumstances.

11   RESOURCES

1. ACT Government Health COVID-19 Website Link
2. COVID-smart behaviours Link
3. Australian Government Health Good Hygiene For Coronavirus Link
4. Australian Government Health What You Need To Know About COVID-19 Link
5. Information for people who test positive for COVID-19 Link

12   QUESTIONS

If you have any questions, please contact the OACT Office, office@act.orienteering.asn.au

Last updated February 2024