

The following recommendations have been developed by DOGS NSW Agility Committee in consultation with the Dogs NSW Agility Judges sub-Committee for use in a COVID-19 environment.

These recommendations apply to the use of the grounds at Orchard Hills, which are managed by DOGS NSW. They are also the minimum requirements to be met by any Affiliated Club conducting an ANKC Agility event.

In some instances, Local Councils may require additional requirements to these recommendations and, Affiliates may wish to add individual requirements.

As we return to competition, affiliates should ensure that measures are put in place to provide the safest possible environment for all.

In our sport there are many contact areas for Judges, Stewards, competitors and event volunteers where there could be a risk of cross contamination when handling dogs and equipment.

It is recommended that affiliates should familiarise themselves with the NSW Government guidelines for safety and hygiene procedures when conducting community sport in a COVID – 19 environment.

Although our competitions are not specifically outlined in any NSW sporting recommendations, the following sites do offer suggestions which could be transferred to our environment.

- AIS Guideline for Rebooting Sport in a COVID_19 Environment (in particular the Checklist for Small Sporting Organisations: <https://ais.gov.au/health-wellbeing/covid-19>)
- COVID – 19 information for Workplaces / Safe Work Australia: <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/covid-19-information-workplaces>
- The latest official coronavirus news, updates and advice from the Australian Government: <https://www.australia.gov.au/#state-and-territory-government-information>
- NSW Government Covid-19 website: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19>
- NSW Government Public Health Orders: <https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/>
- Covid-19 Safety Plan – Community sporting competitions and full training activities: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/industry-guidelines/sports-recreation-and-gyms>

Recommendations for Affiliates

General

Communicate to all competitors, officials, volunteers and other visitors (via email, website, social media) that they must not attend Dogs NSW Agility events or activities if in the past 14 days they have any of the following:

- been unwell or had any flu-like symptoms
- been in contact with a known or suspected case of COVID-19
- experienced any sudden loss of smell or loss of taste
- have a high risk from a health perspective, including the elderly and those with pre-existing medical health conditions

Instruct anyone showing signs of COVID – 19 related sickness or symptoms while attending a Dogs NSW agility event or activity to leave immediately.

Compile a list of **everyone** attending the event, listing their names together with phone number and/or email address. This is a Government requirement.

Recommend to display approved government signage through the venue.

Recommend that everyone attending the event has the **COVIDSafe App** installed on their mobile phone.

Everyone should observe social distancing guidelines throughout the venue and avoid gathering in groups.

Recommend to wear face masks where physical distancing is not possible as per government guidelines.

Entries

- Entries should be completed online.
- Payments should be electronic wherever possible.
- Entrants competition number should be e-mailed to competitors. Competitors would print their own competition numbers.
- **Trial Schedule to include:-**
“This trial will be conducted in accordance with the recommendations of DOGS NSW in relation to Agility and any additional requirements of this Club which will be available on the Club’s website and social media pages and groups (ie: Facebook, Instagram etc).

All officials, competitors and attendees agree to abide by the recommendations relating to the conduct of the agility trial and agree to follow the directions of Club Officials and government regulations in relation to enforcing the requirements.”

Hand Sanitisation and Hygiene

- Sanitiser and gloves should be provided by the affiliate and be available at each ring and administration for all personnel.
- Soap and paper hand towels, or sanitiser should be available in the toilets.
- Recommend to sanitise hands regularly;
 - > On arrival at the venue
 - > Prior to handling any equipment
 - > After handling any equipment
 - > Prior to lining up for entry to a ring
 - > After returning from a dog run to your gazebo / rest area
 - > After using facilities
 - > Prior to departure from the venue

Equipment

- Hand sanitiser or gloves must be used by the judge, stewards and volunteers after handling all equipment. If gloves are used, they must be disposed of after handling any equipment.
- Recommend that minimal volunteers unpack equipment from storage or trailers to an area where that equipment can be accessed to setup and pack-up agility courses.
- Recommend that hands are sanitised both before and after handling stored equipment.
- Contact equipment should be handled using social distancing guidelines, e.g. only 2 people to handle a piece or segment of contact equipment.

Rings

- Entry area to ring will enable a maximum of 3 competitors distanced according to social distancing rules. This includes social distancing between the Ring Steward and competitors.
- Exit area of ring limited to one handler and dog team only.
- A cone or other suitable marker will denote the waiting point for the next competitor to allow movement into and out of the ring at an appropriate distance.
- Only one scribe and one timekeeper will be allowed ringside. Recommend sitting as per social distancing guidelines.
- Hand sanitiser / gloves and disinfectant wipes to be provided to each ring
- All possible scribe and steward equipment to be wiped over with disinfectant wipes at the start of each day, and each subsequent handover. This includes keyboards, table surfaces, timing control, folders, pens etc
- Officials should sanitise their hands arriving and leaving a ring
- Timing gates should only be handled by the Judge
- Hands must be sanitised after course resets, height changes and course faults such as dropped bars/toppled broads etc.
- Treat containers/bum bags/toys should not be placed in any receptacle and are not to be left on the ground around the entry and exit to the ring. They are not to be left near the scribes' table or gazebo.
- Lead Steward will not manage dog leads. Please refer to separate & temporary rule set by the ANKC for managing leads at Agility and Jumping trials. The Lead Steward should guide competitors into the ring as per Judges' direction and assist the Judge to correct any dislodged equipment. Ring Steward should sanitise their hands as needed.

Gazebos and Pergolas

This applies to competitor gazebos and scribe/ring gazebos.

- Recommend for a small gazebo (2.4m), 1 person only.
- Recommend for a larger gazebos (3m), maximum 2 people.
- Gazebos must be placed according to spaced following social distancing guidelines, ie 1.5m apart
- Fixed structures such as pergolas should be limited as per 4m² social distancing guidelines

Food and Beverages

- Consideration needs to be given to how meals will be provided for various personnel.
- Affiliates should consider if they will run a canteen or advise competitors to bring their own refreshments for the competition.
- Trials providing food must ensure compliance with public health orders.
- When engaging a Judge for an event, consideration should be given to judges for preferences to bring their own meals and refreshments
- Recommend all tabled seating areas are limited by social distancing guidelines and wiped with disinfectant wipes after use.

Administration

- Recommend to limit the number of people entering any administration area as determined by social distancing guidelines
- Recommend to mark entry and exit, be single direction only and limit access for visitors and competitors
- Recommend to provide hand sanitiser to be used on entry and exit
- Consideration should be given to how qualifying certificates and prizes will be prepared and presented as per government guidelines for hygiene and sanitation
- Consideration should be given to how fundraising activities may occur. This includes prize handling, prize draws and social distancing, how to sell tickets, how to handle cash etc.

Course walking

- To maintain social distancing, recommend a maximum of 20 competitors with a maximum 10 minutes per group as determined by the Judge.
- Numbers and time may be reduced for smaller groups, or short course lengths.

Dog Measuring

It is impossible to Social Distance as per guidelines whilst measuring dogs for Agility. To protect all parties the following process needs to be followed;

If multiple dogs are to be measured social distancing needs to apply while waiting your turn.

Measuring dogs

Judges and dog's owner/handler must wear masks

Judges must wear disposable gloves, and these are to be changed before next dog is measured.

The measuring stick is to be disinfected between each dog.

If possible, it would be preferable if dogs could be measured on a table or raised platform with it being disinfected between each dog.

Height Cards

Height card to be completed by handler with their own pen for information relevant to dog and handler. ***Handler will show the judge a copy of their Dogs NSW Registration certificate.***

After measurement is taken the judges, whilst still wearing the gloves are to fill in remaining details and sign with their own pens.

All supplies – disposable gloves, disinfectant and masks are to be **provided by the club hosting** the measuring.

ANKC Rule changes

National Agility Committee has been liaising regarding the Agility Rules and how Agility Trials can proceed and comply with Covid-19 restrictions.

Due to the Covid-19 virus and the various Federal and State Government requirements the National Agility Committee has identified one area within the ANKC Rules for the conduct of Agility Trials which requires temporary modification to enable compliance with these requirements.

This modification does not change the intent of the rule but will enable the recommencement of trials once permission is given by each Member Body.

Current Rule:

7.2.1 On the Steward's call of the dog's catalogue number, the Handler will enter the ring via the entry point, with the dog on lead and follow the Steward's and/or Judge's instructions. The lead and harness or head collar must be removed, the collar may be removed and all items handed to a Steward.

The temporary modified Rule:

'7.2.1 On the Steward's call of the dog's catalogue number, the Handler will enter the ring via the entry point, with the dog on lead and follow the Steward's and/or Judge's instructions. **The lead will be removed, the collar maybe removed. The Handler will either place the lead/collar in a pocket whilst running the course or wear it on them (e.g. clipped around their waist like a belt). If any of these items fall to the ground or the dog grabs the lead while running the course this will result in a DQ. The lead/collar must be inaudible and if not this will result in a DQ.'**

Leaving out 'harness or head collar' was based on discussions about modern 'active' wear doesn't usually have pockets. As such these large and sometimes heavy items could not be 'stored' on the handler with ease. This is also to prevent them from falling on the ground and becoming a trip hazard as well as to prevent the possibility of the spread of Covid-19 should it be present either on the equipment or the ground.

PLEASE NOTE: Once social distancing rules have been lifted, this exercise must comply with the current rules immediately (whether it is the rules as they appear on our website now or the new rules which become effective from 1 January 2021)

Competitor Responsibilities

- At all times adhere to Government regulations on hygiene and social distancing.
- Competitors should not attend if they are unwell
- Competitors and their guests may be asked to leave if showing any symptoms listed.
- It is recommended all competitors provide their own hand sanitiser for personal use both before and after each dog run, ie when leaving the competitor's shelter, and on return to their shelter.
- Competitor is responsible to register both their and their guest's attendance on arrival at the event.
- Given the limited number of persons able to attend an event, priority should be given to competitors to attend the event.

ENDS