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HITS Guidelines and Actions for its Competitions and Facilities to reopen under current Social Distancing and other Federal, State and Local Requirements
Updated July 29, 2020

This is a working-draft for HITS-Specific Guidelines to ensure the safest environment possible for our shows. We will continue to update this protocol as we receive updates and information from USEF, local authorities, and informed exhibitors.

USEF's Action Plan for Return to Competition will be followed in addition to the HITS guidelines. If any guideline is contradicted in either document, or in state/local guidelines, the strictest guideline will be followed.

HITS, Inc., has prepared the following list of Guidelines and Best Practices in preparation for Equestrian events to re-open in the spring of 2020, once Coronavirus restrictions have been lifted and State and Local governments, as well as the United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) deem it safe to do so.

These guidelines have been developed based on research including recommendations from HITS' home county of Ulster, New York, the New York Farm Bureau, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), and the American Horse Council, as well as meetings with the United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) and United States Hunter/Jumper Association (USHJA). We have also researched guidelines published by governing bodies for other sports including USA Triathlon (USAT).

We have taken into consideration the size of our properties, and the number of attendees, but have concentrated our efforts and protocol requirements in the areas that will cause the greatest challenges for social distancing - Restaurant, Show Office, Stabling Area and Warm-up areas.

We believe these guidelines are well within our scope to institute and enforce in these areas during our competitions. We will update these guidelines as needed based on State and Local Government requirements and/or recommendations from other local environmental health and public health agencies. Updates will be posted at HITSShows.com and HITS Social Media.

The below Guidelines will be in place whenever possible and practicable at all HITS Competitions beginning June 1, 2020.

General

- ~ Social Distancing (6 feet between individuals) will be followed
- ~ All individuals, including HITS Staff, Officials, Participants and Support Personnel **must wear a mask or face covering at all times when on Competition Grounds, except when mounted** (*per USEF's update to the Safe Return to Competition Protocol on July 29, 2020.*) HITS will provide face coverings free of charge to all staff and exhibitors.
- ~ Full-Color Signage will be posted throughout the grounds regarding Social Distancing, Hand Washing, and other safety guidelines
- ~ HITS has a property-wide PA system, and announcements regarding these guidelines will be made throughout the event.

Facility - Access

- ~ Any person with known or suspected symptoms of COVID-19 or who has been exposed to a person with symptoms of COVID-19 (cough, shortness of breath, or fever) should follow self-quarantine protocol or be barred from or removed from the grounds.
- ~ All HITS Staff (Show Office, Food Service, Jump Crew, Maintenance) will have their temperature checked before beginning work. Any staff member with a temperature of 99.5 or higher will be sent home.
- ~ All Individuals should monitor their temperature daily, and should not enter the premises if presenting with a temperature of 99.5 or higher.
- ~ All Individuals entering the Show Office and Restaurant will have their temperature taken by a HITS Staff member. Anyone with a temperature of 99.5 will be asked to leave the show grounds.
- ~ HITS has developed a Covid Response Plan that will be posted at the show office of each competition and followed in case of any individual presenting with a fever or any other symptom(s) of COVID-19.

Facility - Sanitation and Bio-Security

- ~ Individuals must stay 6 feet apart (Social Distancing) and must not congregate.
- ~ No more than 10 people will be allowed in any single area, such as Show Office, Restaurant, Ingate, or within each assigned Stabling Section. Some areas may be further restricted, but no group of more than ten will be allowed.
- ~ HITS will provide hand sanitizing stations throughout the premises.
- ~ Restrooms (portable and/or permanent) will be cleaned and sanitized once per hour, and more often if needed.
- ~ All touchpoints and common areas will be cleaned and sanitized every two hours, and more often if necessary.

Food Service

- ~ HITS Foodservice is set up for “Take Away” dining.
- ~ Markers indicating 6’ “Social Distance” will be identifiable to all customers in line, and to employees who will maintain such distance whenever practicable.
- ~ Seating will be limited, and will be allowed only in outdoor areas. Tables and chairs will be set up to maintain as much distance as possible between tables to keep Social Distance between groups. Tables, chairs and other surfaces will be sanitized by HITS Staff continuously throughout the day.
- ~ A new POS system as well as methods to order online or via text will be instituted to decrease person-to-person contact.
- ~ Payment by Credit Card or HITS Card (no cash) is encouraged to decrease person-to-person contact. *Tip: Take a picture of your HITS Card and keep it on your phone - one less thing to touch!*
- ~ VIP Club will follow strict guidelines and state and local regulations.

Daily Competition Schedule

- ~ Organizing competition/Classes for “Show and Go” by condensing as many classes of a division (or similar divisions) into as short a time frame as possible. This will allow people to arrive, show and go home within a shorter time-frame.
- ~ Utilize additional competition arenas to shorten days and relieve density. This will mean fewer people on the grounds, and for shorter periods of time.
- ~ Increase frequency of our online schedule and time updates throughout the day, via website and social media. Visit the “How Many List” at HITSShows.com or HITS Facebook Story for the most up-to-date information during the shows.

Schooling / Warm-up Areas

- ~ Each competition ring will have a dedicated schooling area with 6-8 practice jumps.
- ~ Gloves should be worn by anyone setting jumps.
- ~ HITS Staff will institute a plan to clean and disinfect the parts of the jump most often touched, especially the plastic jump-cups.
- ~ The Ring Check-in/Order-of-Go system will encourage trainers to prepare all horses for a class at once, so only one jump in the schooling area is used for each trainer group.
- ~ Ticketed warm-up rings will be closely monitored to avoid crowding. Cleaning/disinfection of jumps, especially jump cups, will be scheduled regularly.

Competition Rings

- ~ Most Rings at HITS Facilities allows for a separate In-Gate and Out-Gate. The rings that cannot have separate In-/Out-gates will be separated/sectioned to keep horses entering and leaving the ring at appropriate social distance.

RV / Campground

- ~ The Campground will be open. Every effort will be made to park Campers using every other space, or similar method, to provide ample room between groups.
- ~ All requirements as listed above regarding social distancing, wearing of masks, and temperature monitoring must be followed in the Campground as well as on the show grounds.
- ~ Additional County Guidelines must also be followed. Currently, Ulster County (HITS Saugerties) has such guidelines, and they are posted at HitsShows.com.

Awards

- ~ Ribbons may be picked at the rings or in the show office. Trophies and special awards may be picked up in the show office. Alternatively, exhibitors may ask to have their awards mailed.
- ~ You may also ask that your awards be converted to credits that will provide meals for the less fortunate.
- ~ Contact Awards@HitsShows.com to arrange to receive your awards or donate them toward meal credits.

Stabling Areas - Access

- ~ Access to the Stabling Area will be restricted to Essential Personnel - veterinarians, equine caretakers (grooms), trainers and riders.
- ~ Non-essential individuals (friends, family members, etc.) should not enter the stabling area.
- ~ HITS will arrange stabling so there is appropriate Social Distance between trainer groups. Use only your entrance to your aisle to access your stalls. Do not enter aisles/stabling areas of other trainer groups.
- ~ Trainers should provide an ample quantity of gloves, masks, hand sanitizer and other cleaning/disinfecting products for their staff/customers for use while on premises.
- ~ Trainers should monitor temperatures of all staff/customers.
- ~ Stabling assignments will be available within 24 hours of your arrival. Call the show office or email Stabling@HitsShows.com (Saugerties and Culpeper) or LamplightStabling@HitsShows.com (HITS Chicago)

Stabling Areas – Sanitation / Bio-Security

- ~ Encourage Handwashing or Hand Sanitization before entering stabling area.
- ~ Individuals should touch only the equipment and supplies necessary for completing tasks of caring for and exercising the specific horse(s).
- ~ Do not share equipment between individuals - helmets, grooming supplies, tack, etc.
- ~ Keep water buckets and feed buckets/tubs in a fixed position within the stall to ensure feed or water can be provided without touching or removing these items.
- ~ Feed/Bedding delivery by HITS Staff will be made with as little contact as possible.

Recommended Cleaning/Disinfection

- ~ According to the CDC, the coronavirus can survive in the air up to three hours, on copper up to four hours, on cardboard up to 24 hours, and on stainless steel and plastic up to 72 hours.
- ~ More specifically to barn/stable items, the virus can persist on nonporous materials (leather bridles/saddles/halters, nylon halters/lead ropes, gate latches, door handles, spray nozzles) longer than porous materials (cotton lead ropes, saddle pads).
- ~ Clean communal leather tack daily with tack cleaner.
- ~ Disinfect stall door handles, gate latches, cross-tie snaps, light switches, feed scoops, hose ends, spray nozzles, pitchforks, wheelbarrows, and other frequently handled surfaces regularly or after contact with personnel.
- ~ Although there is no evidence that horses can contract or become ill from COVID-19, practice good hygiene by washing your hands or using at least 60% alcohol hand sanitizer after touching a horse, communal areas, or communal equipment to prevent environmental spread of the virus.
- ~ Golf Carts should not be shared, and should be disinfected regularly

Veterinary Care

- ~ Veterinarians are reducing non-essential visits and treatments due to a shortage of Personal Protective Equipment as well as Social Distancing requirements.
- ~ Communicate proactively with your veterinarian to prepare for upcoming veterinary needs such as vaccinations, coggins, or other maintenance and treatment procedures.
- ~ Communicate proactively with your veterinarian to prepare for potential veterinary emergencies.
- ~ HITS Official Veterinarian on-grounds will be available for any questions. Phone number will be posted in a visible location at the Show Office, Vet Station and Stabling Area.

This is meant as a guide to ensure the safest environment possible for Equestrian Competition to return to an active state. Updates as needed will be posted at HITSShows.com and HITS Social Media.