



# SAOF guidelines for resumption of orienteering events in South Africa under Covid-19 regulations.

## The safety principles

- These guidelines are based on the precautionary principle
- Everyone has a different interpretation of what it means to be safe.
- Treat others with respect.
- Look after yourself.

## The following guidelines assume the following:

Emit technology may be used as long as the guidelines in this document are followed.

Punch cards may be used as long as the guidelines in this document are followed.

Covid 19 protocols of a screening questionnaire will be applied on arrival.

Masks to be worn at all times before the participant starts and if possible while orienteering

Sanitizing measures shall be provided and encouraged by the organizers


Crowds are to be avoided by allocating start / arrival times.

Following the event, no results or prizegiving shall be held.

## Additional Documents

- Participant Code of Conduct
- Event Risk Assessment to be done by organising club
- Screening questionnaire + protocol to be issued by organising club

## Version Control

Version 1.1	SAOF Guidelines on orienteering events under Covid-19 Regulations	Date
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## 1. Overview

Orienteering takes place in the fresh air, offering physical exercise in the outdoor environment. In most cases orienteering is a sport where an individual competes against the clock. Thus with appropriate social distancing measures and controls, the South African Orienteering Federation believes that the sport is well-placed to offer a safe and enjoyable orienteering experience during the period when restrictions are being relaxed. It is vital that any orienteering activity complies with both the letter and the spirit of the Government Regulations regarding Covid-19 and Sport. These SAOF guidelines should be amended to remain in line as and when relevant Government Regulations are amended.

## 2. Risk assessment

Clubs should conduct their usual comprehensive risk assessment for every event and/or activity, taking into account the current environment and conditions. Club Risk Assessment templates must be updated accordingly to include Covid19-specific risks.

## 3. Hygiene and cleaning requirements

Hand sanitizer and/or hand-washing facilities must be provided by the Organisers when participants arrive at the event, at registration, at the start area, download area and at any toilets.

## 4. Social distancing

The risk of droplet transmission at an orienteering event is low. There should be little reason for participants or volunteers to come within 1.5 metre of each other and it should normally be possible to maintain 2-metre distancing.

## 5. Participant Code of Conduct

Everyone taking part must follow the Participant Code of Conduct at all times.

## 6. Landowner Permissions

Permission must be obtained from landowners for any orienteering event or activity, and any legislated, local or landowner-imposed restrictions must be adhered to.

Permissions should be sought in the usual way, but clubs should be aware that they may be required to provide additional information to demonstrate that they are able to deliver a COVID-secure activity. This document can be shared with landowners and local authorities in support of obtaining permissions if required.

## 7. Registration with the SAOF

All orienteering events and activities are to be registered with the SAOF so that they can be placed on the official calendar. This ensures that insurance cover is provided as long as these guidelines are followed.

Any orienteering activities for which a set of results is produced must be registered as an event, and will be subject to the usual SAOF Orienteering levy.

## 8. Event promotion

Events can be promoted through newsletters, social media and emails. However, novices may require additional support which it may be difficult to provide in a COVID-secure manner. Therefore, events or activities should not be targeted at novices and clubs should avoid attracting novice participants at this time.

## 9. Communication

Clear communication to participants, volunteers and orienteers is critical to ensure that they take all reasonable measures to comply with social distancing and hygiene measures at all times, before, after and during an event or activity.

Organising clubs to have a standard notice board displayed at registration, the start area and at the download area reinforcing the basic guidelines and safety protocols.

## 10. Pre-Registration, payment and allocation of start times

### 10.1. Pre-registration only

All events are to be pre-registration only, with no entries taken on the day. This will allow clubs to manage the number of participants, in order to comply with restrictions on the size of gatherings, avoid queues of people on the day, and minimise the need for face-to-face interactions.

Group entries can only be made up of members residing in the same household.

### 10.2. Pre-registration form requirements

All participants taking part in orienteering must use a pre-registration system which records specific details about participants. This will allow the club to share information for Test & Trace processes.

### 10.3. Pre- registration form: COVID-19 status and Participant Code of Conduct

Pre-registration forms require entrants to acknowledge that they must not attend if they or a member of their household has COVID-19 symptoms, or if they have to self-isolate in accordance with the Covid19 regulation, and that they will abide by the Participant Code of Conduct at all times.

They should also acknowledge that should they later (within a week of the event) test positive for Covid-19 that organiser may reveal their identity to the volunteers & participants of the event so that each participant or volunteer can assess if they were in close contact.

### 10.4. Emit card hire

It is for clubs to decide whether or not they hire or lend out equipment. Any equipment must be sanitised before it is hired or lent out, and cleaned again upon return.

See Appendix B for punch cards.

## 10.5. Payments

Clubs should ideally take payment for any entry, card hire or venue fees prior to the event, using an online payment platform such as Orienter or bank transfer to the club account.

## 10.6. Refunds

Clubs should offer a full refund to anyone who needs to withdraw their entry because they or a member of their household has COVID-19 symptoms, or because they have been asked to quarantine.

## 10.7. Allocated arrival/start times

No more than six people, including any officials, must be present in the immediate start area at any one time, and social distancing must be maintained between people from different households. To limit the number of people in the start area, all participants must be allocated either a start time or a fifteen-minute start window. Participants must be informed that they should not proceed to Registration earlier than 30 minutes before their start time.

The start area should make abundant use of starting blocks to ensure separation of competitors and officials.

# 11. First Aid

## 11.1. First aid provision at events/activities

As before, first aid provision must be appropriate to the needs of the event or activity.

Always and only provide first aid within your qualification training and guidelines.

## 11.2. Additional COVID-19 guidance

Appropriate PPE must be available for use by the designated first aider, including gloves and face covering (covering the nose and mouth, such as buff or fabric mask and a face shield).

There must be available additional sets of suitable PPE (i.e. mask & face shield) for any participant or volunteer who may require first aid.

# 12. Course and Event Planning Considerations

Relay events must not be held at this time.

Map swaps must not be used. Rather print on both sides of the map.

Start time intervals must be increased compared to traditional orienteering guidelines – e.g. a minimum of 2 minutes for Short course events.

Planners must minimise shared controls across courses as far as practically possible. Courses should be designed in such a way that minimises the use of common routes by participants on different courses. The use of “Butterfly” courses with repeated controls is NOT allowed.

Configure start locations and design the first legs of the courses so that participants leave the start heading away from those waiting to start, and so that participants on different courses will tend to diverge leaving the start.

Avoid legs that might tempt participants on their course to pass through/near parking areas, the assembly area, the download area, areas where people are lined up to start, and any other areas where other participants or other persons may be assembled.

Avoid control placements in restricted areas like pits or deep gullies or hemmed in by thick vegetation that might tend to force participants into close proximity.

The Finish must be far enough from the download area for people to catch their breath before entering the queue to download.

## 13. At the Orienteering event

### 13.1. Signage

Appropriate signage is to be clearly displayed around the venue (registration areas, start, finish and download areas, toilets) to remind participants of the importance of social distancing and good hygiene.

Signage to be displayed indicating that:

- Masks are compulsory within the event arena - Masks or buffs must be correctly worn at all times. The participant is responsible for keeping possession of the mask or buff during and after the event, and must not discard it.
- Social Distancing – A minimum distance of 2 m is to be maintained at all times. The signage is to be displayed anywhere where there could be a build-up of participants e.g. at registration, toilets, start, finish and download areas.
- Personal Hygiene - regular washing hands or sanitizing is to be practiced.
- Information on who should not participate – those with COVID-19 symptoms.

### 13.2. Toilets

If toilets are available at venues, then local Covid-19 regulations must be adhered to.

### 13.3. Catering

Catering must not be provided.

### 13.4. Parking

Consideration should be given to allowing extra space between cars where the parking area permits.

### 13.5. Participant routes at the venue

Clubs must plan for the route those taking part will take at the venue. Appropriate signage is to be in place (see section above) and social distancing allowed for. Where possible, when not out on the course, participants are to flow in one direction from car to registration to start, then finish to download to car.

### 13.6. At Registration

Registration consists of verbally informing the Organisers that a participant has arrived; Covid-19 screenings and collection of pre-bagged hired Emit cards and control descriptions.

### 13.6.1. On Arrival

Registration must be set up outdoors. Keep all interaction processes between volunteers and participants as short as possible.

Set up can include impermeable barriers (face shields, plastic curtains, plexiglass or the like) between participants and volunteers.

Markings should indicate the 2m separation for participants waiting to check in.

Immediately on arrival at the event, the Club organisers must pose screening questions to the participant. If the answers to the screening questions indicate a participant may be Covid-19 positive, the participant and anyone who has travelled with them is to leave the event premises immediately.

### 13.6.2. Payment on the day

Payment on the day should be avoided. If payments for entries are taken on the day the arrangements for taking these payments must be arranged so that those queuing adhere to 2m social distancing requirements. No entry on the day can take place, and all registration information should be captured as part of the pre-registration process.

### 13.6.3. Emit hire and control description

Hire card distribution will need to be arranged so that those queuing adhere to 2m social distancing requirements e.g. Those wishing to hire a card will have indicated this on their pre-registration form, and cards should be prepared in advance. This preparation must involve sanitizing and placing the Emit cards and control descriptions in a bag. The bag containing the Emit cards and control descriptions must be placed in a position for the participant to pick up without the need for contact.

See Appendix B for punch cards.

### 13.6.4. Key drop

To reduce the risk of Covid19 fomite transmission, we recommend that clubs do not provide a key drop service.

## 13.7. Water on the Course

Participants are responsible for carrying their own water.

The Organiser must have water available for an emergency.

## 13.8. At the Start

### 13.8.1. Start layout

Starts will need to be arranged so that those queuing to start adhere to 2m social distancing requirements e.g. a formal start layout with large, clearly defined boxes, or a more informal punching start with sufficient space for participants to observe social distancing while queuing, and with no more than six people in the immediate vicinity (including any officials) at any one time.

Use as many start blocks as are available on colour coded events to minimise sharing.



Given the restriction on the number of starters from a single location, organisers may wish to provide separate start locations for different courses. If multiple start locations are used, these must also be sufficiently far apart to ensure the groups of participants waiting to start remain separate, and must not be merely multiple lanes at the same start.

Where the venue permits, the start location(s) should be close to and, ideally, visible from the parking area, to reduce the likelihood that people will arrive at the start area significantly in advance of their start time.

#### 13.8.2. Map distribution

If multiple courses use the same start, maps should be placed in map boxes that are appropriately spaced, and arranged in such a way that participants should only need to touch a single map. Maps must not be reused.

Avoid the need to use staplers at the start.

### 13.9. At the Controls

Participants should avoid touching Emit blocks as far as possible. See Appendix B for punch cards.

Maintain social distancing at a control, even if it means waiting a couple of seconds for another participant to complete the punching.

After punching, participants should move away immediately to avoid a queue at the control.

Groups orienteering together should only send one person to punch the control with the others standing 10 meters away from the control.

### 13.10. At the Finish

The finish must be sufficiently far from the start area(s) to ensure that those who have finished remain separate from those waiting to start. Participants should be encouraged to move clear of the finish after punching, and signage to encourage this is available as well as to remind people to replace their face cover.

Ensure there is sufficient space available after the finish to allow participants to recover before they download, while observing social distancing requirements. Signage may be required to direct participants to the download area.

### 13.11. At the Download

The download area must be set up outdoors.

Queues should be marked out to comply with social distancing requirements, including a suitable distance between the event volunteer(s) manning download and the participant.

The download unit must be cleaned regularly by the volunteer.

Printer paper rolls should be checked and refilled before the event.

Set up an impermeable barrier (face shield, plastic curtains, plexiglass or the like) between participants and volunteers.

Clubs can provide print outs of participant's times. The participant must be able to access the print out themselves. The printer must also be cleaned regularly by the volunteer.

No results are to be displayed.

### 13.12. Hired and returned Emit cards – Hygiene

A system will need to be in place to store and clean hired cards after they have been returned. Immediately on return all hire cards are to be placed in a box and leave them for a week. Before the next event they must be sanitised before reuse. (See Appendix A).

Participants should be encouraged to purchase their own cards or Consideration should be given to longer term hire, allowing participants to retain a hired card for a period of time or a set number of events. This would reduce the frequency of cards changing hands, and consequently the cleaning and administration required.

### 13.13. Post event equipment – Hygiene

Controls and other equipment must be cleaned after use by the organizers. (See Appendix A)

## 14. Volunteers and coaches

### 14.1. Duty of care

Clubs have a duty of care towards volunteers to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that they are not exposed to risks to their health and safety. Nobody should be required to work or volunteer in an unsafe environment.

### 14.2. Training

Core training for all volunteers on COVID-19 mitigations should be provided by the Organizers before the event.

### 14.3. Volunteer plans

Organising Clubs are responsible for developing and implementing their volunteer plans. Clubs are encouraged to share these plans with each other.

Specific consideration needs to be given to how the volunteers or coaches will deliver the activity or event. Detailed arrangements should be made between the volunteers prior to the event or activity. Each plan should include:

- Event timings including set up, delivery and break down of the event.
- What each individual role will entail, including where each volunteer will be located at the venue.
- Who will be doing each role.
- Emergency procedures, including what they should do in the event of a suspected COVID-19 case arising.
- How many volunteers or coaches will be required to ensure a safe event or activity.
- Identifying whether any volunteers will be required or advised to wear face coverings or other PPE.
- Identifying which roles need new processes and procedures, such as for hygiene or social distancing.

#### 14.4. Clinically vulnerable volunteers

It is possible that some regular volunteers may be classified as clinically vulnerable, including those aged over 60, or those with a comorbidity (e.g. such as Diabetes). These persons should be strongly advised not to volunteer at this time.

## 15. Appendix A – Guidance on cleaning EMIT equipment

The main EMIT products are EMIT-Cards and EMIT-Bricks.

### EMIT BRICKS

Bricks are touched by the course setters when being set out and collected. Minimise the number of helpers who are in contact with the bricks during this process. Before and after handling the bricks, the helper should carefully wash or disinfect their hands.

If the bricks can be left in a box for three days after being collected, there is no need to clean or disinfect them as the virus will not survive. This is the preferred course of action and it is a simple solution.

If the bricks need to be handled again without being left for three days then wipe each brick using an alcohol-based surface disinfectant, preferably with 70% isopropanol or 80% ethanol. Other surface disinfectants could damage the plastic surface of EMIT products

### EMIT-CARDS

The team issuing hire cards should adhere to social distancing requirements, both from one another and from participants, and should carefully wash or disinfect their hands before and after handling the Emit-Cards.

### HIRED EMIT-CARDS USED ONCE

Hired Emit cards may only be used once at an event.

If it is necessary to hand out hired EMIT-Cards, the card should be pre-allocated and placed in a plastic bag with the control description for distribution.

## 16. Appendix B – Using Manual Punching at an Event

The SAOF recognises that the use of electronic punching is not possible for all clubs and is sometimes not desired owing to the threat of vandalism or theft at some venues. This appendix deals with the use of manual punching at an event.

A punching event which requires each competitor to use a common punch at the control site should not be run. A number of alternatives are possible depending on the resources available. One possibility is described below.

Other options based on the design principle that eliminates the need for the participants to handle common items could be used.

### **Control Site Marker**

The control site is marked with the usual kite or marker board. In addition a unique symbol is clearly marked.

### **Manual Punch Card**

The manual punch card is modified to provide three blocks per control. A different symbol is printed in each of the 3 blocks. Included in the three possible options is the correct symbol that is visible at the control site. The participant demonstrates that they have visited the control site by marking the block with the correct symbol on their punch card.

### **Punch / Marking Device**

Two options are possible:

If the club has sufficient manual punches they can allocate a punch to each competitor at the registration. Punches must not be reused. The safety protocols around the issuing and handling of punches are the same as those for Emit cards (see sections 10.4, 13.12 & 13.13)

### **At the Finish**

The participant must self-mark their punch card at the finish.

A number of answer sheets with the correct symbols for all controls for each course should be made available at the finish. These sheets must be placed at sufficient distances apart to ensure social distancing can be practised by the participants.