



**AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUB™**

Retriever Hunting Tests

Suggested Best Practices for the Well-Being of Dog Sport Participants

The AKC supports each club's informed decision to reschedule, postpone or cancel their respective events, as well as support clubs ready to hold events in locations that are open and permit gatherings. As events resume across the country, people need to feel safe while enjoying their dog activities. The AKC urges clubs to take precautions for the benefit of their exhibitors. Events need to be held in a manner that emphasizes the safety of participants and event officials over efficiency.

The following is a list of suggested best practices that may be helpful when planning or attending an event. Event locations, facilities and dates will differ. With a situation that is continually evolving, it is up to the clubs to determine the guidelines that best fit their event. In order to inform participants, specific guidelines established by the club should be published in the premium, pre-event communications, club website and posted on signage/flyers at their event.

General Practices

1. Clubs, officials and participants are required to follow state and local guidelines that apply to the area where the event is held.
2. Practice social distancing consistent with local guidelines. Avoid congregating to the extent possible.
3. Consider wearing masks when in close proximity to others.
4. Consider wearing disposable or washable gloves.
5. Have plenty of hand sanitizers placed for people to use.
6. Wash hands as frequently as possible. Have disinfecting spray at bathroom facilities for people to spray door handles (or anything else they touch).
7. If you utilize portable toilets, please ask for a hand washing station to be delivered as well.
8. Avoid shaking hands or hugging.
9. Avoid touching dogs that are not your responsibility.
10. Avoid common use pens/pencils - bring your own.
11. Disinfect surfaces in common use areas as often as possible (tables, chairs, doorknobs, etc.)
12. Meals - Avoid or stagger group lunches/dinners if possible. It is recommended that clubs supply boxed lunches for judges and volunteers. Hospitality areas should avoid community

items such as salt and pepper shakers, condiments, creamers, etc. Participants should consider bringing their own lunch/drinks.

13. Parking areas – Park with sufficient distance between vehicles if possible.
14. Travel Restrictions - In order to provide assistance to participants, clubs should consider including information in pre-event publicity if state/local travel restrictions apply to the event location. Because of the changing nature of this information, this is best done through a link to a state/local agency website. The following is a link to the CDC website which provides links to all State public health departments websites.
<https://www.cdc.gov/publichealthgateway/healthdirectories/healthdepartments.html>
15. Clubs may, at their option, require screening for all participants and guests at their event. If planned, this should be advertised in pre-event publicity. Options would include –
 - Temperature checks with a digital non-contact infrared forehead thermometer for everyone entering the event location. The CDC states that a fever for COVID-19 purposes is any temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit/38 degrees Celsius or higher.
 - Everyone entering the event location is required to complete a COVID-19 self-declaration form. This form may include, but is not limited to, questions such as –
 1. Have you tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days?
 2. Have you taken a COVID-19 test but have not yet received the results?
 3. Have you experienced any health symptoms related to COVID-19 in the past 14 days?
 4. Have you been exposed to anyone that has been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 14 days?

Event Practices

1. If practical, consider splitting tests (Junior, Senior, Master) to reduce congregating.
2. During the Judges description of the series, practice social distancing consistent with local guidelines.
3. Scheduling - Use a marshal's sheet to group dogs efficiently to minimize the number of handlers in holding blinds and on the line.
4. Suggest participants remain by their vehicles until just prior to their run if possible.
5. Marshal boxes should be equipped with hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, alcohol spray.
6. Any special instructions from the judges should be posted in the last holding blind.
7. Handlers should be invited to the line in smaller groups. Event Committee decides the group size given local guidelines and the size of the event.
8. The gallery should be spread out consistent with local social distancing guidelines.
9. Handle the gun in Senior and Master tests with gloves. Gun should be wiped down between handlers. Handlers should consider bringing their own gun.

10. Periodically disinfect holding blinds and equipment including ATVs and chairs. Workers should bring their own duck calls and chairs.
11. Anyone on the line should maintain adequate distance from the handler as blowing a whistle could potentially project a vapor.
12. Judges should bring their own pens/pencils. If possible, judges should bring their own equipment including chairs and coolers. Clubs should provide the judges hand sanitizer.
13. Wear gloves when handling birds and bird crates.
14. Hunting Test Secretary – Consider wearing gloves to handle paperwork and catalogs.
15. Ribbon ceremonies – Hold outside if possible. Place ribbons on table or tailgate and invite handlers to come up to obtain their ribbon, no handshaking.
16. Clubs have asked if closing dates can be delayed (fewer days between closing and event) in order to provide flexibility to decide whether to hold the event. This also has the advantage of reducing the number of scratches after closing. The AKC Regulations only require closing three days preceding the start of the event. If clubs are not accepting entries themselves and are interested in delaying their closing , they should discuss options with their entry service provider.

Policies that Have Been Temporarily Suspended

1. Event Application Late Fees – Event application late fees are waived through the end of October. This provide clubs more flexibility in planning or rescheduling their events.
2. For events cancelled in 2020, AKC will apply Event Application fees to the club’s next event of the same type.

Clubs may not develop event guidelines that are inconsistent with AKC Rules/Policies.

Participants are expected to follow state, local government, facility and event guidelines. Clubs should be prepared to enforce the guidelines that apply to their event.

CDC - How to Protect Yourself and Others:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

These Suggested Best Practices may be periodically updated. Please check the AKC Retriever Hunting Tests website (www.akc.org/sports/retrievers/hunting-tests/) for the most up-to-date version.

For questions or additional suggestions, please contact the Performance Events Department at performanceevents@akc.org.

Stay Safe – Enjoy Your Dogs