



Central Gauteng Athletics Guide to Safe Returning to Athletics Activities

1. Introduction

This guide document has been developed in adherence with government guidelines as outlined by the government on the recent Gazette by Minister Nathi Mthethwa on the 28 August 2020 and to be used by CGA clubs and runners as a safety guide on Covid-19 pandemic.

The guidance that follows provides sport specific advice to help athletes and runners. It is important that any return to activity must take account of local conditions and risk assessment. To normalise activities we should undertake a risk assessment as well as ensuring that all government guidance around COVID-19 is considered.

It is the responsibility of each athlete, runner, coach, and club to make the assessment based on their local environment. Risk assessment must consider mitigations and plans for when activities do not go as expected. Planning scenarios around, for example, an injury occurring to an athlete and the need to support that athlete while social distancing should be undertaken.

These guidelines apply to all CGA clubs and athletes using public spaces and outdoor training. We also recommend that you stay up to date with government guidance at all times. Government guidance supersedes all advice given by Central Gauteng Athletics and must be followed at all times. The safety and wellbeing of all athletes, runners, coaches, and the wider athletics community is important to us. This guide can be used for any athletics activity, e.g. club runs, virtual races both track and field and road running, club time trials

2. Tips for athletes Before and after training sessions

- Check directly with your athletics club or coach on their policy for club activity on Covid-19 period. Track and field facilities should only open at the discretion and with the consent of the facility owner, provider or Municipality.
- Follow all hygiene guidance including washing your hands.
- Ensure that all arrangements have been made prior to leaving home so that any government advice on social distancing, as an example, can be maintained at any facility. This may mean prior coordination of activities with the club, or your coach or leader.
- Athletes and runners should ensure they are prepared and have planned for circumstances where injuries or other accidents occur, and they have mitigating procedures and plans in place to resolve the issue while maintaining all government guidance.
- Ensure you have enough food and hydration for the session.
- Be aware that changing facilities and toilets may not be open.
- Take hand sanitiser with you.
- Ensure that all equipment is cleaned before and after use.
- Do not congregate before or after training, return home.
- Guide Runners: guide running can take place with the following mitigations:
 - o Both guide and runner should understand the risk associated with taking part in the club activity.
- Contact details or register of members at the session should be held by clubs to ensure track and trace can be followed if needed.

3. Awareness of Government and Facility Guidelines

- Athletes and runners should ensure when they are planning to use a facility that they coordinate all activities prior to a session taking place to ensure social distancing, as well as health and safety and cleaning protocols, can be carried out.
- This communication should take place between the club, all coaches, leaders, athletes and runners and facility providers.
- Athletes and runners can access and utilise outdoor athletics training facilities with the permission of the facility owner / management. They should not access any facilities if they do not have permission to use and should at all times adhere to any guidance put in place.
- Athletes and runners should be aware of any restrictions around toilets and specific access issues for athletes with a disability or vulnerable athletes. In all cases they should ensure government guidance is followed and a risk assessment in place before any coaching takes place.

4. Safety Guide for Clubs

Resuming club activity will always carry a degree of risk associated with transmission of Covid-19. The risk cannot be eliminated unless you decide not to resume activity until there is an effective vaccine or cure, or the disease is eliminated from South Africa.

As a club you need to consider what the key generic, operational are and site specific risks and how you can mitigate these risks by specific actions you take.

The law does not expect you to eliminate all risk, but you are required to protect runners as far as reasonably possible.

1. You will need to review the risks and actions on a regular basis to understand how effective they are and what may need to change. This should be done at regular intervals and also in line with any changes to government, Athletics and site specific guidance.
2. Whilst CGA recommends that all clubs appoint a Covid-19 co-ordinator. The responsibility of the co-ordinator is to produce, implement and review Health and Safety protocols and risk assessments. This should be jointly carried out by key club members who all have a responsibility in this area.
3. You should liaise with any site owner/operator to ensure your protocols/RA comply with any site specific restrictions or protocols that are in place.
4. Some of the following points will be relevant for virtual runs and challenges.
5. The points in the Risk Assessment below will need to be reviewed as and when government/CGA/local guidance is updated or change of Alert level.

Risk Assessment Considerations for all clubs

Hazards	Who might be harmed	Setting	Consideration for mitigation
Lack of Awareness around Covid-19	This could include athletes	All settings or Activities	Communication with all members/athletes prior to accessing club activities. Onsite signage to re-force key messages and protocols
Spreading of Covid-19 through contact	Think about who might be harmed in each section	Access to buildings	Signage is in place and access limited or denied. Hand washing and sanitising point in visible places
		First Aid	Who has access to first aid supplies Do you have PPE available? What is the threshold for athletes dealing with their own injuries? In an emergency and evacuation we must ensure that all procedures comply with Covid-19 guidelines.
		Registration/end of training session	Signage, Social Distancing, limited numbers or stagger start for smaller groups. Register all attendees for each session
		Meeting point	Social Distancing- does the meeting point allow for social distancing between club members. If not the venue must be changed. Limit the number attending training sessions in line with alert level regulations.
		Changing Facilities/ Toilets	Limit access to or close these facilities. Add Signage Members attend training in the training cloths and go home in the same clothing.
		Routes	Routes must be safe and have less public as possible. The route must allow for social distancing between each other. If not consider changing the route, limit number of runners or times of the session
		General	Social Distancing Group Management Hygiene Signage How protocols are implemented.

5. Track and Field guide and Risk Assessment

- In all cases normal coaching practice with risk assessment and high-quality practice should be adhered to as well as implementing any requirements around social distancing and hygiene.
- All coaches, leaders, athletes, and runners should ensure they have followed government hygiene rules including washing hands and cleaning any equipment prior to use.
- Coaches, leaders, athletes, and runners should ensure they maintain social distancing appropriate for the activity.
- It is everyone's responsibility (athletes/parents/coaches) to NOT attend club training sessions if they have symptoms (or suspect they have symptoms), or tested positive for Covid-19, or have come into contact with someone who has tested positive for Covid-19.
- Coaches and athletes using the same facilities must come to an agreement and set up a roster to keep to protocol of maximum number of athletes, coaches and assistance inside the sport facilities during a training sessions.
- Equipment such as rakes and measuring tapes should be managed by dedicated individuals for a particular session – i.e. one athlete or the coach and cleaned between one athlete's series of jumps or between sessions.
- Athletes should ensure they maintain social distancing at all times with any other athletes or coaches as well as any other coaches and athletes using adjacent space.

6. Road Running Guide and Risk Assessment

- Clubs and runners should adhere to all restrictions that may be placed on a public space by the owner of the facility.
- Clubs and runners should ensure they carry out standard safety procedures (e.g. phones, route planning, etc).
- Clubs should have standard club membership or session forms in place (Coaches would be expected to have a signup sheet/register for normal activity).
- Clubs and coaches should update athletes, parents and volunteers on risk assessments and operating procedures due to Covid-19.
- It is everyone's responsibility (athletes/parents/coaches) to NOT attend club training sessions if they have symptoms (or suspect they have symptoms), or tested positive for Covid-19, or have come into contact with someone who has tested positive for Covid-19.
- Coaching ratios and delivery should be in line with the coach or leader qualification held and within government guidance around the number and location of gathering of groups. The Alert level 2 gathering regulation is 50 people or alert level restrictions at the time of the activity.
- All clubs should have risk assessments in place for club activity as standard. This is an ideal time to ensure your standard risk assessments are up-to-date and meet your current requirements.
- Should there be elite events per invite be approved by CGA and ASA, prize money must be included.
- The start of any activity must be staggered to allow for small groups of athletes.
- The number of people including support staff must be in line with the alert level regulations and no spectators maybe allowed.
- For Covid-19 specific risk assessments you could simply add to your existing risk assessments to ensure they cover Covid-19 related hazards, or produce a specific document relating to Covid-19. There is no right or wrong approach for this and it will depend on your circumstances.
- The tables below will help you to write risk assessments for your club/activities around Covid-19 and the points should be highlighted on your risk assessment template:

7. Safety Tips for Virtual Running

Since the announcement of the National Disaster all physical road races were cancelled or postponed till further notice. Under alert level 1, competitions and races are still not allowed. We are however anticipating that the motivation by ASA together with these risk assessment framework a positive feedback will be received.

The plan is to in future create a physical race for elite and the mass participation through Virtual run. The combination of the two concepts will ensure that we are gradually back to normal athletics activities.

Almost all the above guidelines will be applicable to both virtual and physical running activities. We have highlighted some of the tips for runners to note when taking part in a virtual race:

- Central Gauteng Athletics will be publishing official sanctioned Virtual Race fixtures. Please ensure that you participate in a sanctioned virtual race.
- As per the World Athletics regulation, no ear phones must be used when running especially in the public areas with potential hazards.
- Check the weather for the time you plan on running. If there are thunderstorms in the area, do not run outside. Change your scheduled run time.
- Avoid extreme heat/humidity running to avoid heatstroke – run earlier in the day, on shaded paths, and close to water as long as it is within safe temperature and humidity zones.
- It is very important to wear the right clothes on a run. Take into consideration the weather before selecting your clothes – and dress in clothes that are ideal for temperatures 10 to 20 degrees hotter than outside.
- Always tell someone when you are going for a run. Tell them when you are leaving, your planned route, and when you are expected to return.
- If you live alone, contact the person you told you were going for a run when you return to let them know you have safely returned.
- Run, jog, walk your own race at your own pace.
- Please be aware of your surroundings. Be aware, use crosswalks when crossing roads and look both ways. Obey normal traffic laws.
- Plan your run. Water fountains or sources may not be available along your route, so please come prepared.
- Do not run if you do not feel well.
- Permanent licensed runners will be covered for insurance when training or participating at a sanctioned virtual race.

8. Disclaimer

The information contained in this guide is given in good faith and any liability to you or any third party which may arise out of the reliance by you or any other party of the contents of this guidance is hereby excluded to the fullest extent permitted by law.

CGA and its professional advisors accept no duty of care or liability for any loss, whether caused by negligence or otherwise, to any person acting or refraining from actions as a result of any material in this guide. We would strongly recommend that you consult professional advisors on specific issues before acting or refraining from action on any of the contents of this guidance.

This guide has been prepared by Central Gauteng Athletics for clubs and runners for safe returning to athletics activities.