This document is specific to track & field and is supplemental to the general Return to Activities Protocol. It is imperative that track & field hosts adhere to any protocol outlined below or in the general Return to Activities Protocol. If your facility has rules in place that are stricter than those provided by Special Olympics, those local rules are to be used.

BEFORE PARTICIPANT ARRIVAL

- Ensure venue is disinfected, especially restrooms, entry ways, gathering areas, and other high traffic areas.
- Disinfect any tables & chairs used for check-in and/or any other function.
- Distribute hand sanitizer to the various stations or to all coaches or both.
- Sanitize all track & field equipment, including shots, mini-javelins, rakes, relay batons, stopwatches, measuring tapes, cones, and all other equipment to be used.
- Collect COVID-19 Code of Conduct from all attendees (coaches, volunteers, county management, etc.).

PARTICIPANT CHECK-IN

- Check-in area must be setup so that social distancing can be maintained.
- Check-in area should be setup outside to reduce bottlenecks and close-quarter interactions.
- Athlete Medical Forms must be checked as usual.
- Check that each participant has a COVID-19 Code of Conduct on-site.
- Hosts must follow the “Onsite Screening Protocol for COVID-19” as outlined in the Return to Activities Protocol.
- Collect COVID-19 Code of Conduct from all attendees (players, coaches, county management, family, etc.).
- At meets, only head coaches should approach the check-in table of volunteers. Head coaches and County Coordinators are responsible for COVID protocol check-in prior to traveling to the meet.

BEFORE PRACTICE

- Make regular announcements to reinforce the importance of PPE, hygiene, and social distancing.
- Grouping up should be discouraged. Direct participants to an area for any team/rules meeting.
- Designate a space for each athlete to set their gear that is at least 9 feet from another athlete’s space.

LOCKER ROOMS

- Locker room use is strongly discouraged.
- If locker rooms must be used, limit capacity and stagger times that groups are allowed inside.
- Prior to use, coaches should make players aware that all protocols are still in place inside the locker room.

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

- All participants must have their own shoes and/or towels (no sharing).
- All participants must have a water bottle or be provided with a sealed bottle of water.
- All participants should have their own bag/backpack for their water, clothing, shoes, towels, other personal items and a labeled container for their mask (ex: ziploc bag) while participating in the activity.
DURING PRACTICE AND MEETS

- Before practice or the meet begins, all participants should sanitize their hands.
- Masks not required during the workout or competition.
- All participants must wear a facemask when they are not actively participating. Warm-ups are considered active participation.
- Coaches are required to wear a mask at all times.
- Participants should be reminded to refrain from touching their face. If noticed doing so, they should be directed to re-sanitize their hands.
- For practice, it is recommended to utilize a training plan that focuses on fitness and individual skill development to allow as much social distancing as possible.
- All participants should refrain from spitting or projecting any type of nasal waste during activity.
- You should have additional water to distribute as needed, provided:
  - The person distributing the water is utilizing PPE and following proper sanitation procedures.
  - The water is in a sealed container.
  - One person is handling the water and participants are not permitted to reach into the water reservoir.
  - Community water coolers should be removed from the area.
- No high fives, handshakes, or other direct contact.
- Make regular announcements to reinforce the importance of PPE, hand hygiene, and social distancing.

PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Assign participants to a particular group. Participants include athletes and coaches.
- Group assignments should be consistent from practice to practice.
- Rotate groups from event to event. If an athlete in a group does not participate in an event, when at that event station, the athlete should use the time to stretch, use the restroom, hydrate, or relax.
- Groups should not interact with other groups.
- Keep groups as small as possible, maintaining the 4:1 athlete to coach ratio.

MEET CONSIDERATIONS & REQUIREMENTS

USA Track & Field created the following event designations.

- **LEVEL 1 – LOW RISK**
  - Standing Long Jump and Running Long Jump
  - Softball Throw, Shot Put and Mini-Javelin Throw, if each athlete has their own implement (softball, shot or mini-javelin). If this is not possible, all 3 events move to Level 2.
  - Sprints and walks in lanes (400 meters and below) if every other lane is used.
    - On an 8-lane track, odd lanes or even lanes are used, but not both (no more than 4 per race).
    - On a 9-lane track, odd lanes are used (no more than 5 per race).

- **LEVEL 2 – MODERATE RISK**
  - Softball Throw, Shot Put and Mini-Javelin Throw, if each athlete does not have their own implement.
  - Sprints and walks in lanes if every lane must be used to accommodate a restricted schedule.
  - All distance events, both running and walking (races 800 meters and above).
  - All relay events.

- **LEVEL 3 – HIGH RISK**
  - No events designated as “high risk” at this time.
MEET OFFICIALS & VOLUNTEERS:
• All meet officials and volunteers must always wear a facemask and should wear disposable gloves.

STAGING:
• Meet management must consider numerous factors when planning and scheduling for a track & field meet.
• Considerations include:
  o Allow more time to the schedule, including gaps between events and gaps between divisions within the same event.
  o Add additional event stations. For instance, if a meet usually has 3 softball throw stations, consider 5 stations this year.
  o Erect additional tents for staging.
  o Provide more detail to the meet schedule. For instance, instead of 3 divisions reporting every 10 minutes, schedule exact time for each division.
  o Reduce the number of athletes assigned to each division. Instead of groups of 8, consider groups of 4.
  o Go straight to finals in all divisions. By not hosting prelims then finals, it reduces the amount of time in staging tents.
  o Host meets with multiple sessions, such as a morning session and afternoon session. Athletes compete in one session only: thereby reducing the crowd in half.
• Within the staging tents, social distancing must be maintained. Set chairs with 6-feet between, marking the ground in a way that if chairs are moved, the chair can be returned to its original position.
• Within the staging tents, all participants must wear a facemask. Participants include staging volunteers.
• Staging volunteers must wear disposable gloves due to hip numbers, assisting athletes, etc.
• Staging volunteers or meet officials will inform athletes when facemasks can be removed.
• Athletes should be prepared to dispose of the facemask, place it in their pocket, or hold it by hand during competition.
• Coaches must be prepared to replace disposable facemasks at the soonest opportune time when their athletes complete competition.

THROWING EVENTS:
• Athletes must sanitize their hands before their division competes. Be sure hands are completely dry before competing. Implements must be wiped down between each division.
• If athletes provide their own throwing implement, coaches assume responsibility for compliance. If implements are provided by meet management, then meet officials and station captains assume responsibility for compliance.
• To reduce exchanging of implements among division athletes, consider having athletes throw all 3 attempts consecutively.

RELAY EVENTS:
• Relay teams should provide their own baton.
• Relay team members must sanitize their hands before the race.
• Batons must be wiped down before the race.
• Coaches assume responsibility for compliance unless batons are provided by meet management. At that point, meet officials and station captains assume responsibility for compliance.

AWARDS:
• Participants must wear facemasks throughout the awards ceremony. Participants include awards volunteers.
• Discontinuance of normal awards ceremony protocols is allowed for 2021 meets.
• Meet management should consider awards immediately following competition, even at the field event station or at the finish line.
AFTER PRACTICE AND MEETS

- No congregating after warm-down or at the conclusion of practice.
- Participants should finish practice, put on their facemask, load up their belongings, and head home.
- Players should be encouraged to leave the facility at the conclusion of practices and competition. Use of restrooms as needed is acceptable.
- Social distancing must be maintained while waiting for rides.
- Sanitize all equipment at the conclusion of practices or meets.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

- Social distancing guidelines will be followed at all times if inclement weather forces participants to move inside.
- If adequate indoor space is not available for social distancing, participants should return to their vehicles with facemasks on.

MEALS & WATER

- Meals
  - Meals are strongly discouraged.
  - If a meal will be served, boxed or bagged meals are preferred.
  - Food preparation, packaging, and serving must be done by the caterer or food service staff.
  - Napkins and utensils must be provided and individually distributed to each participant by the caterer or food service staff. Pre-packaged utensils are highly preferred.
  - No buffets or banquet style meals are permitted. Concession stands run by the facility are allowed to serve.
- You may distribute water provided:
  - The person distributing the water is utilizing PPE and proper sanitation procedures.
  - The water is in a sealed container.
  - One person is handling the water and players are not permitted to reach into the water reservoir.
  - Community water coolers should not be utilized.

PENALTIES

- Hosts that do not adhere to these protocols will be suspended from track & field meets for 1 year.
- Participants who do not adhere to these protocols may face punishment up to and including or suspension from Special Olympics activities.
- Additional punishment may be given to County Management as warranted, on a case-by-case basis, according to the Return to Activities Protocol.