

COVID-19 MITIGATION STRATEGIES FOR GALLOP & GORGE 8K ROAD RACE

Introduction:

This information is intended to provide guidance on safely operating the Gallop & Gorge 8K road race as COVID cases rise and fall in the Carrboro community and other areas of central North Carolina. We also strongly recommend that participants/runners and volunteers become vaccinated with one of the FDA-approved vaccines prior to race day.

This entire event will be conducted outside, including registrations (online only), bib/packet pickup at Fleet Feet or on-site on race morning, and award announcements. The risk of outdoor transmission has been estimated to be nearly 20 times lower than indoors, and occurs so infrequently that outdoor transmission events – particularly when social distancing or using masks – are rarely described in the medical literature.

Recent reports and surveillance work has demonstrated that outdoor transmission comprises as few as 0.1% of all transmission events. The virus spreads primarily through respiratory droplets and aerosols that are released into the air while talking, laughing, coughing, and breathing. Outdoors, droplets and aerosols are dispersed rapidly, resulting in a lower risk of transmission to others. The risk of transmission at outdoor gatherings is dependent on things such as:

- The amount of time spent in close contact with others;
- The number of people at the gathering, the ability to socially distance, and the use of face masks.

On the day before the race, we will send an email to all registered participants, reminding them to follow our planned COVID mitigation strategies on race day and to self-monitor on race morning for symptoms of a possible COVID infection that should preclude their participation.

Pre-race:

In recent years, 95+% of our race registrations occur online. This year we will accept only online registrations, through the end of the day on Wednesday, November 24 (registration cutoff will occur at 9pm), with bib pick-up on **Thursday** morning at Fleet Feet Sports - Carrboro (outdoors). **NO race morning registrations will be allowed.**

Early packet/bib pick-up will occur at Fleet Feet Sports in Carrboro on **Tuesday**, November 23 from 4 – 6:30pm and **Wednesday**, November 24 from 10am – 6:30pm in an outside tent. All volunteers will be asked to wear masks, and we will post signs also asking runners/individuals to wear masks when picking up bibs and encouraging social distancing when queuing to pick up bibs. Hand sanitizing stations will be available in the tent area. We will alert all registrants to the need to wear a mask when picking up their bibs in the registration confirmation email that will be sent to all runners.

Race morning:

In addition to posting the COVID mitigation strategies on our Cardinal Track Club website, and sending a copy to each registered participant in the week before the race, on race morning we will periodically announce parts of the protocol during to the participants and spectators before and during the race.

As in past years, we will use rental porta-johns located in the gravel parking lot at the corner of Main and Roberson Streets, and we will have a hand-sanitizing station and remind runners to social distance in lines and to wear their masks.

On-site in the parking area at Fleet Feet and around the start/finish area, we will recommend that ALL participants and spectators wear a mask and socially-distance themselves whenever they feel that it is necessary for them to do so.

For the Gallop & Gorge 8K, the race start line will be mid-block on Weaver Street, in front of Weaver Street Market, stretching across both lanes of the roadway. To avoid crowding at the start line, we encourage non-competitive runners to seed themselves further back from the start line, leaving room for competitive runners to “toe the start line”. Runners should give themselves the separation distance that they are individually comfortable with, and we will use a chip-start mat to give all runners their NET running times – although awards will be based on gun time (as we have done each previous year).

Face masks are not required when running on the race course. However, we strongly recommend that all runners continue to wear their face mask up to the actual start of the race, and then to pocket their face mask for reuse at the finish line, or discard the mask in an appropriate waste receptacle – NOT ON PUBLIC ROADS OR PRIVATE PROPERTY.

Running in large groups that stick together for the race is discouraged, if possible. In general, because of airflow and dispersion afforded by being outdoors, as well as the limited duration that any two participants spend near each other on the course, the probability of transmission during racing is strongly reduced.

Volunteers wearing masks and disposable gloves will staff the water station along the course.

Post-race:

Bottled water will be available to runners after crossing the finish line on a self-serve basis. We will actively encourage the wearing of masks and social distancing by all participants and spectators, as they depart the finish area.

Post-race refreshments will be limited to bottled water and pre-packaged, individual snacks, requiring no preparation by volunteers. We will encourage appropriate social distancing and queuing in one direction only at the refreshment table.

As we did at this year’s Carrboro 10K, we will forego an actual award presentation ceremony at this race, in an effort to encourage runners to participate, but not congregate. Results will be posted, with those in attendance encouraged to socially distance themselves and wear masks. Actual award pickup will take place at Fleet Feet Sports immediately after the race (outside) and during the next week.