



#TCOYT

# TAKE CARE OF YOUR TRAILS

2020

## COVID-19 Safety Guidelines for TCoYT event organizers

### Introduction

The International Mountain Bicycling Association Europe recognizes that many individuals and communities have been impacted by the current COVID-19 pandemic. Across Europe there have been a variety of approaches and differences in restrictions and national factors which have affected the extent to which populations have experienced 'lockdown' and other measures to limit the spread of coronavirus. Because of this, social distancing is likely to be a requirement for an unknown period.

Outdoor sports participation - and mountain biking in particular - must take a different format for a period time to that which was done previously. However, the outdoors can accommodate social distancing and therefore provides a low risk environment for sport and health enhancing physical activity. There will be a greater desire for access to nature and the opportunity to participate at a local level when lockdown measures or restrictions are or being eased. The use of local trails increased as we have recently observed in various regions.

Outdoor environments have the dual advantage of providing greater health benefits to participants and have a reduced risk of virus transmission in comparison to indoor environments. The combination of physical activity and access to nature will be of significant importance to many people as the situation eases and will support restoration and mental healing. Especially in rural communities, mountain biking is also a key part of the local economies.

Recreational trails are especially important to facilitate the opportunity for people to safely enjoy the outdoors, provide that appropriate management is in place to support safe usage. Therefore, the maintenance, repair, construction and / or clean up of trails and recreational facilities becomes essential due to public need, safety issues with uncompleted work or deferred maintenance.

IMBA Europe does not want to promote any messages in support of trail building and maintenance work that may be contrary to national guidance or legislation. However, we do provide a series of broad guiding principles and recommendations to protect the health and safety of trail work events, group leaders, trail crew members and volunteers while working on recreational trails.

**PLEASE NOTE** These recommendations are indicative and need to be considered in accordance with national policy, legislation and restrictions, and guidance from local stakeholders and land managers.

## **Trail Building & Trail Maintenance**

General trail building & maintenance activities are a low exposure risk activity. As most trail crews are small, working outside of normal exposure to the public, trail building is an inherently “socially isolated” activity. IMBA Europe believes that utilizing best practices in maintaining a hygienic and safe work site can minimize the potential of exposure to COVID-19 for crew members, volunteers, and the general public.

To protect the health and safety of volunteers, while working to follow all public health guidelines, IMBA Europe is adapting the recommendations of the Professional Trail Builders Association (USA) to the situation in Europe for volunteer trail crews that participate in the September edition of the Take Care of Your Trails campaign. This is an evolving situation, and we will continue to monitor and update these recommendations as new guidelines are issued. The efforts of local volunteer groups are aimed to provide the best opportunities for people to be active, engage with nature and local economies to flourish.

## **Basic Infection Prevention Measures**

As appropriate, all group leaders, crew members and volunteers should implement good hygiene and infection control practices. These include but are not limited to:

- In most cases, privacy legislation will not allow you to screen crew members or volunteers at the beginning of a trail work event. However, please recommend self screening at home before joining a work site of volunteer trail maintenance day.
  1. Do you have a temperature above 38 degrees Celsius
  2. Do you have any COVID-19 positive members in your household?
  3. Do you have a cough?
  4. Do you have shortness of breath?
  5. Do you have fatigue or muscle aches?
  6. Do you have a new loss of taste or smell?If one of these questions is answered with yes, please stay at home
- Keep anyone showing COVID-19 symptoms off the work site. Any crew member or volunteer experiencing symptoms should be encouraged to stay home in isolation or, get tested for the virus (if available)
- Encourage proper respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes with the inside/elbow of the arm and away from people, or in a tissue to be immediately discarded, and avoid touching the face. Follow the most updated guidelines for mask-wearing in your area.
- Utilize frequent and thorough hand washing, especially before and after meals, touching your face or after sneezing, coughing. When possible, provide soap and water for hand washing. If soap and running water are not immediately available, alcohol-based hand sanitizers could be an alternative.
- Wear proper personal protective equipment such as gloves or safety vests whenever feasible & required.
- Do not share equipment, including hand tools, wheel barrows, water containers, etc. Any tool that is shared should be disinfected prior to use.
- Practice social distancing by keeping 1-2 meters or more away from others (distance varies by country).

## Work Site Best Practices

Volunteer group leaders should utilize practices that limit potential interactions between volunteers and /or the public, including:

- Prior to trail work event, organizers / group leaders should communicate with crew members and volunteers about possible interactions with infected people, steps to take if they start feeling ill and remind them of proper protection and spread prevention.
- Keep the group size small in case of working with volunteers. Three to five people maximum working at the same site is recommended. Larger number of volunteers can be split up in subgroups. Group size is indicative and need to be considered in accordance with your national or local policy and COVID-19 measures (!)
- Keeping distance during trail work is recommended. The length of a larger hand tool like a shovel, rake, McLeod or shaper tool between two people is a safe reference point.
- Discourage carpooling to/from or within the worksite, ensure distancing, and encourage workers to provide their own transportation where possible. Do not use group crew transport unless necessary. If possible, let volunteers use their bikes to move from one site to another.
- Identify specific locations and practices for daily trash collection and disposal such as paper, hand towels, food containers, etc.
- Close trail sections that are under construction or maintenance during the event to other visitors when allowed by the landowner or manager.
- If a volunteer is experiencing a fever, cough, or shortness of breath, communicate immediately with the group leader or event organizer, have the volunteer remove him/herself from the work area and continue to engage in appropriate physical distancing.

## Equipment Best Practices

Crew leaders/supervisors should maintain practices that limit the potential for cross-contamination of tools and equipment on the work site. Practices include but are not be limited to:

- Assign tools and equipment to a specific employee/volunteer for the day.
- In case of volunteer trail events, let people bring and use their own tools as much as possible.
- At the end of each day, each group leader should be responsible for properly cleaning and returning the tool(s) and equipment to the storage area (only applicable for trail crews that own their tools)
- Wipe down tools and equipment with disinfectant wipes, daily or more often, especially prior to and after a new worker utilizes the equipment.
- Sanitize reusable PPE prior to each use, and ensure non-reusable PPE is disposed of properly.

