



**ATHLETICS
INTEGRITY
UNIT**

ATHLETE ADVISORY: ANTI-DOPING AND COVID-19

Introduction: As the global situation related to the SARS-Cov-2 (COVID-19) pandemic continues to evolve, the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) is regularly monitoring the situation based on updated expert information and guidelines from the World Health Organisation (WHO), World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) and from other reliable sources.

The AIU continues to review and adapt its anti-doping testing plans day by day to ensure that we are appropriately balancing considerations of public health and the health of athletes against the need to ensure the integrity of the testing in strict compliance with the World Athletics' Anti-Doping Rules and Regulations.

This advisory is aimed at summarising the preventive measures the AIU has put in place to ensure the on-going protection of athletes and Sample Collection Personnel (SCP) while we increase our anti-doping testing activities over the coming weeks. The advisory also serves to remind athletes of their responsibilities and the disciplinary consequences for failing or refusing to submit to doping control without compelling justification.

Anti-Doping Testing: Where testing remains possible, SCP acting on behalf of the AIU will continue to observe the applicable national or local legislation/regulations and/or national government or local health authority recommendations with respect to the measures in place for the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keeping the health and safety of athletes and SCP as a priority, the AIU has put in place the following set of enhanced measures in collaboration with its testing service partners:

- There will be a reduced number of SCP used for out-of-competition testing (without compromising the no notice-nature of such testing) and steps will be taken to ensure that they do not belong to any risk category or vulnerable population per the guidance received from WADA.
- Steps will be taken to ensure that only SCP who are healthy and do not have any symptoms that may be related to COVID-19, however mild, conduct missions on behalf of the AIU.
- SCP will try wherever possible to reduce or eliminate the use of public transport or air travel for testing missions.
- SCP will in each case assess athlete and situational health prior to commencing a sample collection session.



- SCP will maintain as far as practical a minimum distance of one-meter (or a greater distance if stipulated by the relevant national health authority) between themselves and an athlete.
- Some specific situations may not allow for the recommended distance to be maintained at all times. For example, blood collection, space limitations and/or the need for direct observation of urine sample provision are acceptable reasons to make temporary allowances for a lesser distance.
- SCP will strictly refrain from shaking hands with athletes or their representative and should avoid any other direct contact. The athletes and their representatives will be advised to follow the same.
- SCP will wash their hands and ensure athletes wash their hands in accordance with the applicable guidelines.
- SCP will ensure that all biohazardous material is disposed of safely and taken away by the SCP at the end of the sample collection session.
- SCP, as far as possible, will use the following equipment during the sample collection session, as per the instructions below:
 - (i) **Gloves:** SCP will wear gloves throughout the sample collection process and the athletes will also be given the choice to wear gloves.
 - (ii) **Face masks:** Where they are available, SCP will wear face masks during the sample collection process.
 - (iii) **Cleaning/Disinfecting products:** Where available, the SCP will carry additional products such as: disinfecting wipes, disinfectant spray and/or appropriate concentrations of isopropyl alcohol, hydrogen peroxide or sodium hypochlorite (i.e., bleach), for appropriate use.

For more information about the safety measures to be taken, athletes should refer to:

[Annex A](#)

Athlete Responsibilities: Until further notice, athletes should immediately inform the AIU if they have contracted COVID-19, if they are in a period of self-isolation or quarantine (and, if so, for how long), if they have any COVID-19 symptoms or if they have vulnerable persons present at their nominated location (and, if so, how many and for how long). Prompt communication of this information to the AIU will greatly help us readjust our testing plans accordingly.

This information should be sent confidentially to a dedicated e-mail address:

covid19@athleticsintegrity.org



Personal information shared with the AIU will be treated strictly confidentially and will only be accessible to the AIU staff on a need-to-know basis. Medical information will be reviewed by a member of AIU staff who is medically qualified.

Athletes may be requested to provide proof of (i) their self-isolation or quarantine or (ii) the presence of any vulnerable person(s) at their nominated location. Prior to each test, SCP will ask athletes a series of questions to check if the athlete, or anyone at the testing location, is sick or is experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms and whether it is safe proceeding with the test.

Athletes answering “yes” will be asked to fill in a questionnaire with additional questions which will be reviewed by the AIU. If an athlete purposefully provides any information which is inaccurate or incorrect in completing the questionnaire, the matter may result in an investigation by the AIU into Tampering or Attempted Tampering in accordance with the Rules.

Disciplinary Action:

The athletes are reminded that the sanction for failing or refusing to submit to doping control without compelling justification is a period of ineligibility of four-years.

Should an athlete refuse or fail to be tested, or not complete the sample collection process after notification, or should they not be able (or willing) to provide a sample due to an alleged lack of protective measures, the SCP will ask the athlete to explain in detail why he/she does not agree to submit to doping control and record the athlete's explanation in writing (using a Supplementary Report Form if necessary).

If a potential refusal or failure to submit to sample collection is submitted to the AIU, the standard results management process will be followed under the Rules and the athlete will have the opportunity to submit an explanation, including any reasons why they believe their refusal or failure to complete the process was justified.

The information provided during the results management process will be considered when:

- 1) the AIU determines if a potential anti-doping rule violation should be asserted and
- 2) the disciplinary panel hears the case.

Athlete Questions:

For RTP athletes with any further questions, they can write to info@athleticsintegrity.org for further guidance. The athletes are also advised to refer the latest [WADA Q&A](#) relating to anti-doping and COVID-19.