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**Rules to be applied for the organisation of road cycling competitions
in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2023**

**UCI WorldTour – UCI Women’s WorldTour – UCI ProSeries
Class 1 and Class 2 races**

**UCI Road World Championships
Continental Road Championships
UCI Nations Cup**

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As the new road cycling season begins, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly decreased in the vast majority of countries. However, the virus at the origin of this infectious disease (SARS-CoV-2) is still circulating and is constantly mutating, which raises the risk of new variants. **It is, therefore, necessary to update race organisation protocols.**

Since last year, many events have changed the characteristics of the pandemic and the conditions for organising road races. A complete document on the current state of knowledge on the COVID-19 pandemic (updated 6 January 2023) is now available on the official ([UCI website](#)).

The main new findings are the following,

- The permanent circulation of SARS-CoV-2, with the risk of mutations and the emergence of new variants.
- The excellent vaccination coverage of the peloton (riders and team members).
- The risk of viral transmission persists, despite a full vaccination program.
- The very fast spread of the Omicron sub-variants, without severe forms of the disease.
- In athletes, the risk of viral myocarditis, a serious risk of localisation of the virus, seems to be completely ruled out.
- The efficacy of a 3-dose vaccine program (2-doses + 1 booster dose), or a 2-dose vaccine program associated with one or more confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infections on immune responses against the latest SARS-CoV-2 variants.
- In contrast to humoral immunity (through neutralising antibodies), excellent protection against the disease through the cellular immunity has been confirmed, post vaccination or natural infection.

The above suggests that although the risks of the appearance of new variants still remains, the health risks remain very low in the peloton thanks to the cellular immunity induced by vaccination and recent common infections.

All these findings make it necessary to update the rules for the organisation of road races implemented from the 2020 season by making them considerably lighter. As in past years, the rules apply to all UCI road races of the UCI WorldTour, UCI Women's WorldTour, UCI ProSeries, Class 1 and Class 2, Continental Road Championships, UCI Road World Championships and UCI Nations Cup. They concern the Elite and U23 categories, Women and Men, and the Junior categories for the Continental and UCI Road World Championships.

These Rules shall apply to all Events taking place from 20 January 2023 until they are repealed by the UCI Management Committee. This document is a "living document" which must be updated regularly, taking into account new scientific knowledge on the pathogenicity of the virus and its variants. This provision is more important as the situation of the pandemic is rapidly evolving. Any amendments to this protocol will be published without delay and will be immediately applicable, unless otherwise specified. A consolidated version containing the latest amendments in force will be published on the dedicated webpage of the UCI website as soon as practicable ([UCI Website](#)).

This document comprises five main sections,

- General considerations for the organisation of Events during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic, which still constitutes a threat to sports competitions.
- A section that outlines the practical requirements or recommendations to be implemented by organisers and teams in order to prevent the risks of contamination.

- A summary of how to manage confirmed cases of COVID-19 during events.
- A section that explains the protocol's adaptations according to the pandemic's severity.
- A section that deals with the exchange of information between the Organizers, the Teams and the UCI.

A. General considerations

As a preamble, it is recalled that:

- 1. Where they are more stringent** than the rules set out in the UCI protocols, regional and national health regulations prevail over the requirements and recommendations of the present document; conversely, where regional or national health regulations are less stringent than the UCI regulations, the latter shall apply.
- 2. One of the essential determinants of health conditions** for the organisation of events is the vaccination coverage of the peloton. More than 98% of the riders and team members have received a complete vaccination program (2 injections for the RNA vaccines and one injection for the Janssen vaccine from Johnson & Johnson). In addition, the vast majority of riders received at least one booster shot or had at least one episode of COVID-19 following vaccination; in young subjects with no specific risk factors, the protection from immunisation (notably through cellular immunity) is sufficiently effective to avoid a second booster shot.
- 3. Immunisation from vaccination and infections** prevents any severe form of the disease. Moreover, asymptomatic or moderate forms predominate in young athletes, with no detectable risk of viral myocarditis.
- 4. For 2023, the conditions for the organisation of competitions will be based on two general principles,**
 - a. A health pass, vaccination certificate or negative COVID test will no longer be required before participation in competitions neither for Teams, nor for UCI and ITA personnel, nor for organization personnel.**
 - b. All measures put in place by the organisers, within the teams, and applicable by the UCI officials and commissaires will be considered Mandatory (MAN), Recommended (REC), or Desirable (DES), depending on the pandemic situation in the country (see chapter D of the present document).
 - c. The organisers must publish the pandemic situation on the UCI website the week before event (see chapters D and E).
 - d. The general evolution of the pandemic will be rigorously followed by the UCI medical service, and the characteristics of the latest variants identified.

B. Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 contamination

It is ensured thanks to counter-measures implemented ahead of the event, before, during and after the races.

1. Pre-event measures

- **Appointment of a COVID-19 Coordinator for the event**

A competent person in public health may be appointed by the event organiser. This COVID-19 Coordinator must have up-to-date knowledge of the requirements and recommendations put in place by the national (or regional) health authorities to ensure the safety of sporting events. He/She is responsible for the following:

- Assessing the pandemic severity in the region, ahead of the competition (see chapters D and E of the present document);
- Sending the protocol for the management of suspected COVID-19 cases to the Event organiser, including all the steps of patient management until the diagnosis;

- **Ensure that the accommodation where teams are staying is adequate to prevent the risk of COVID-19 infection**

The accommodation arrangements shall enable distancing between teams with measures such as grouping each Team on a single floor (or a wing of the hotel) and a reserved and independent dining room, whenever possible. In addition, the event organiser must inform each hotel of the required preventive measures (room cleaning, physical distancing, hand washing, wearing a mask during service, etc.).

The Event organiser will request that hotel staff abide by the rules in force for cleaning and disinfecting furniture and objects.

- **Inform the teams of the health regulations in force** in the territory of the event if specific counter-measures are still in force.

- **Offer biology laboratory resources to the teams.**

The rapid diagnosis of COVID-19 cases is essential to limit the spread of the virus. For this reason, the organisers will provide logistical support to the teams by offering the contact information of laboratories that can perform COVID diagnostic tests (recent generation antigenic tests or PCR).

2. Counter-measures to be taken before races

Clinical monitoring for all team members (support staff and runners) must be carried out under the responsibility of the team doctors. In order to diagnose cases of COVID-19 as soon as possible, the team doctors may use antigenic tests and can rely on the organisers to have access to a competent laboratory.

3. Counter-measures to be taken during races

- **Health monitoring of the peloton**

- During stage races, medical follow-up is imperative, looking for clinical signs suggestive of COVID-19 and under the responsibility of the team doctors.

- The specific case of the Grand Tours. These long road races (3 weeks of competition) must benefit from special provisions,
 - ✓ The clinical follow-up should be strict within each Team (riders, staff, guest members, etc.)
 - ✓ According to the situation of the pandemic as the event approaches, a mandatory antigenic COVID test could be carried out on rest days for all team members (riders, staff).

- **Wearing a face mask**

Facemasks are a valuable tool to reduce community transmission when used in conjunction with NPIs, including physical distancing, hand washing, and room ventilation.

For riders and team members, facemasks may be required to be worn in enclosed, poorly ventilated areas, depending on the pandemic situation.

- **Arrange the common areas accessible with accreditation to allow for physical distancing (min 1.5 m between people), especially,**
 - in the media area, arrangement of workspaces,
 - in official areas,
 - in VIP areas, impose the wearing of individual masks.

- **Provide waste bins for contaminated items to allow for the safe disposal or storing of all hygienic materials.**

- **Adapt the registration procedures** to ensure physical distancing.

- **Limit access to the start area** as much as possible. Only allow access to essential people, with compulsory facemasks. Riders must wear the facemask until a few minutes before the start.

- **Adapt the feed zones;**

These areas will be secured to make them safer, not accessible to the public, to enforce physical distancing rules.

- **Regulate** the use of organisation and team vehicles.

In order to reduce the risk of contamination in the confined spaces of vehicles, it may be important to,

- Require masks to be worn in all vehicles,
- Ventilate the vehicle interior by keeping the windows half-open (depending on weather conditions).

- **Limit access to the finish area** as much as possible.

Only allow access to the "end of the finish line" area for essential people (1 to 2 people per Team, a few photographers). Depending on the pandemic situation, facemasks may be required in the finish area.

4. Counter-measures to be taken after the races

- **Adjustment of the awards ceremony;**

It may be justified to

- Restrict the number of athletes to receive prizes at one time;
- Require riders, and any other person involved, to wear a mask during the ceremony;
- Place the podium blocks 1.5 m apart;
- Create 1.5 m pre-podium boxes in which riders can wait their turn to stand on the podium;
- Create a self-serve option where riders can collect their medals after hand sanitising;
- Limit the number of photographers according to national health regulations. Also ensure that accredited persons wear their protective masks correctly.

- **Adapt the anti-doping station and procedures**

Depending on the local pandemic situation,

- A physical distance must be maintained between the anti-doping personnel and the riders, both inside and outside the station;
- Apply the specific procedure for doping controls, as set out in the Appendix.

C. Medical management of suspected COVID-19 cases

The medical management of riders suspected of COVID-19 is the responsibility of the team doctors (when they are present at the race) or the race doctors. Two situations should be considered,

1. Suspected COVID-19 case in a team with a physician present.

The team physician,

- Is responsible for the diagnosis based on clinical arguments supported by the results of a COVID-19 test (antigenic or rapid field PCR);
- Can rely on the race doctor to contact a biology laboratory;
- Must inform the race doctor and the president of the commissaire panel of the COVID-19 case. He must also inform the race doctor in order to apply the national COVID-19 regulations (quarantine rules);
- Must isolate the patient from the rest of the Team as soon as possible, reinforce the medical surveillance of the Team and the preventive measures (wearing a mask, distancing oneself).

2. Suspected COVID-19 case in a team without a doctor present.

- the race doctor is responsible for the medical management of the COVID-19 patient(s);
- the race doctor implements all the actions reported above in point 1.

3. Decision-making after confirmation of a COVID-19 case.

- **During all Events, except the Grands Tours**

In the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case, the physician in charge of the patient shall report all relevant information to the Event organiser and the president of the commissaire panel. The race doctor is responsible for taking the appropriate measures for the event upon consultation with national health authorities. The decisions for quarantine remain under the sole competence of the national health authorities.

- **During the Grands Tours**

In the event of a COVID-19 case within a team (riders or team members), confirmed by a COVID test, the decision to isolate and withdraw from the race will be taken in a collegial manner by the team doctor concerned, the event doctor and the UCI medical director, based on clinical elements available and the results of the COVID test. The conclusions of the medical expertise will be transmitted to the UCI, the president of the commissaire panel and the organisers.

D. Application of these measures depending on the pandemic severity

1. Assessment of the pandemic severity

The persistence of the risk of contamination by SARS-CoV-2 during mass sports events still requires the event organisers to carry out and share an analysis of the pandemic situation.

This pandemic severity assessment aims to determine the overall risk of spread of the SARS-CoV-2 during the event and to implement appropriate counter-measures to mitigate that risk.

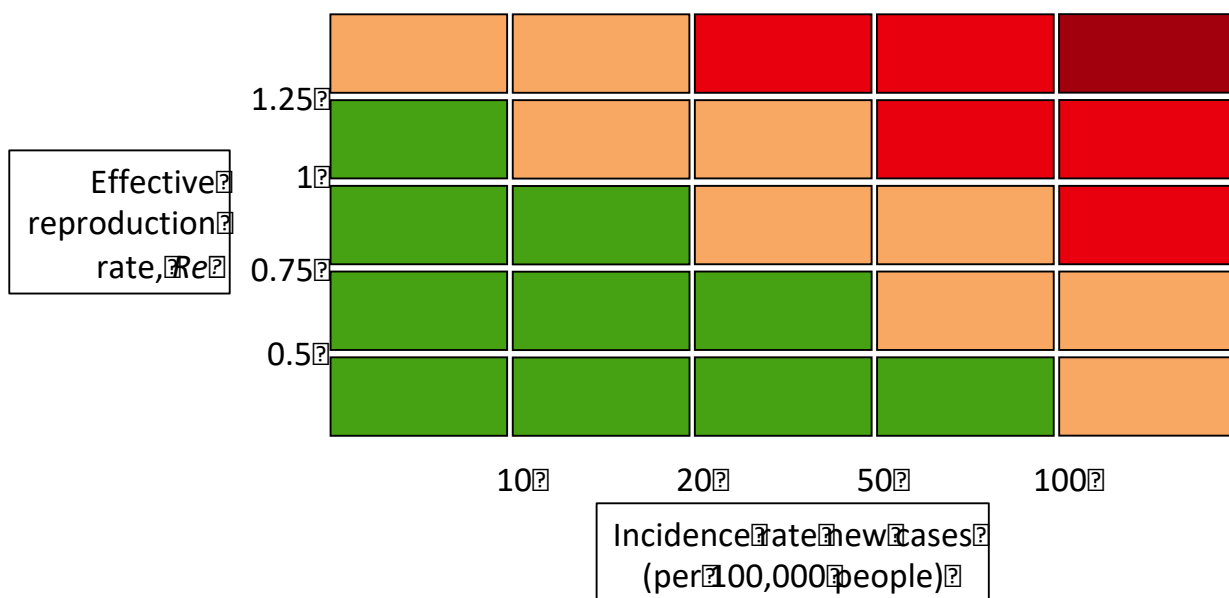
- **Assessment criteria**

Organisers can either contact local or national health authorities, or consult certain reference websites (e.g. <https://ourworldindata.org/coronavirus#explore-the-global-situation>), to characterise the updated situation of the pandemic based on the following two criteria,

- Number of confirmed COVID-19 cases per 100,000 people during the last seven days at the regional or national level;
- The effective reproductive number (Re), which is an excellent parameter to characterise the human-to-human transmission of the virus. Re represents the number of people on average that a single infected individual may contaminate around them.

- **Characterisation of the pandemic.**

Local or national authorities make decisions regarding the organisation of sports events. However, the organisers must inform the teams and the UCI of the local and regional conditions of the pandemic. To do so, they will use the colour code proposed by the ECDC, characterising the severity of the pandemic based on the following figure.



2. Enforcement of the various measures according to situation of the pandemic.

Actions to be implemented according to the pandemic severity, i.e. **green area (low risk)**, **orange area (moderate risk)** and **red, dark-red areas (at risk)**, are shown in the following table.

MAN-org, mandatory for organisers; MAN-team, mandatory for Teams; REC, recommended; DES, desirable.

	Dark-red, Red areas	Orange areas	Green areas
1) Preparation above the event			
Appointment of a COVID-19 Coordinator	MAN-org	REC	REC
Team hotels	MAN-org	REC	DES
Information about COVID rules in the country	MAN-org	REC	REC
Offer biology laboratory resources to the Teams	MAN-team	REC	DES
2) Procedures before the event			
Pre-Event health checks; - regular clinical examination	MAN-team	REC	REC
3) Protection during the event			
Medical monitoring of the personnel	MAN-team	REC	REC
Wearing facemasks in closed areas	MAN-org	REC	DES
Ensure physical distancing in communal spaces (media center, VIP areas, etc.)	MAN-org	REC	DES
Provide waste bins	MAN-org	REC	DES
Adapt the registration procedures	MAN-org	REC	DES
Restrict access to the start area	MAN-org	REC	DES
Adapt the feed zones	MAN-org	REC	DES
Regulate the use of organisation and Team vehicles	REC	DES	DES
Restrict access to the finish area	MAN-org	REC	DES
4) Protection after the event			
Adjustment of the awards ceremony	MAN-org	REC	DES
Adapt the anti-doping procedures (in accordance with the document in Annex)			
anti-doping personnel with gloves and facemasks	MAN-org	MAN-org	REC
riders and staff facemasks	MAN-org	REC	REC

E. Exchange of information.

In order to promote the exchange of information necessary for the organisation of competitions, a secure cloud storage space is open by the UCI, **intended to inform the Teams** about the pandemic situation in the region or country in which the races are taking place. This space is open to organisers and is accessible to Teams for consultation.

The organisers must upload at the latest 14 days before the event at the following link, <https://uciofficiel.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/UCI-Medical/EmCGQQHXrY5PIVAsql5A8YABelaZ-eJtOAWczUBUKX1TqA?e=4fGdcj> information concerning:

- a. the phase of the pandemic** as the competition approaches, including the values of the two criteria reported in paragraph D.1., as well as the "colour" of the geographical area,
- The total number of new confirmed COVID-19 cases per 100,000 people during the last seven days;
 - The effective reproductive number (*Re*);
- b. the summary of the risk mitigation measures** put in place.

F. Regulatory provisions.

Any subject or entity failing to implement the MAN (mandatory) measures may be fined by the Disciplinary Commission between CHF 1,000 and CHF 10,000. The Disciplinary Commission shall determine the amount of the fine, considering all the circumstances and in particular any aggravating or mitigating circumstances. Furthermore, art. 12.2.005 of the UCI Regulations shall apply in case of a repeated offence.

Any subject or entity that defrauds, cheats or acts unfairly when submitting the information required under this protocol to the UCI shall be sanctioned in accordance with article 12.4.008 of the UCI Regulations.

In case of failure by the event organiser to implement the necessary measures under this protocol, the UCI may request specific measures to be taken within a set deadline (if the defaults are remediable). If the defaults are either not remedied within the set deadline or not remediable before the Event, the UCI may:

- Determine that the Event shall be withdrawn from the UCI International Calendar if the Event manifestly fails to implement adequate preventive measures*;
- Determine that any other events organised by the Event organiser under the period of application of this protocol be withdrawn from the UCI International Calendar if the Event organiser fails to prove its capacity and willingness to implement adequate preventive measures at such other events *;
- Refer the matter to the UCI Disciplinary Commission to consider the imposition of a fine;
- Refer the matter to the UCI Management Committee or Professional Cycling Council to consider appropriate measures that may be taken with regard to future registration of the Event on the UCI International Calendar.

* These measures may be decided by the UCI Medical Director (or on his behalf), considering the objectives of this protocol. These powers have been delegated by the UCI Management Committee under article 47 par. 2 and 4 of the UCI Constitution.

ANNEX



IN-COMPETITION TESTING SPECIFICITIES DURING COVID-19 ROAD RACES

1. SAMPLE COLLECTION PERSONNEL (SCP) (including DCO, BCO, Witness, Chaperone)

Given the current evolution of the pandemic, the personnel listed above are no longer subject to specific rules for vaccination or negative COVID test before to anti-doping controls. As for other COVID countermeasures, the specific provisions listed below will be recommended or made mandatory depending on the severity of the pandemic (see paragraph D.2 of this document).

The organiser will bear the additional costs for the witnesses and the chaperones.

2. SUPPORT PERSONNEL

To be consistent with the SCP, the following personnel present at the Event will be subject to the same protocol. This applies to:

- Drivers for the SCP if they are required by ITA.
- Attendant to the doping control station.

The organiser will bear the additional costs.

3. DOPING CONTROL STATION (DCS)

A DCS must be provided by organisers as per UCI Testing & Investigations Regulations (UCI TIR).

In addition, organisers shall:

- Ensure a spacious Doping Control Station (DCS) in order to ensure the recommended social distancing (at least 1m) can be respected. If the existing waiting room is not spacious enough, please, consider setting up an appropriate area for the athletes before the sample collection starts.
- Provide premises that can be ventilated
- Ensure the premises are cleaned and disinfected daily before use.
- Provide disposable gloves. While gloves are not a substitute for hand hygiene, sample collection personnel (SCP) shall wear gloves throughout the sample collection process and athletes are also given a choice to wear gloves
- Provide disposable face masks (medical face masks or non-medical masks or face covering); they shall be made available to the athlete, supporting personnel and SCP during the sample collection process.

- Provide alcohol-based hand sanitiser
- Provide disinfecting wipes and/or disinfecting spray
- Fence the area and provide someone to prevent non-authorized persons from entering. Only one person is allowed to accompany the athlete.
- Provide waste bins for contaminated items to allow for the safe disposal or storing of all hygienic materials such as masks, gloves, etc.

4. DOPING CONTROLS IN HOTELS

- The same prerequisites as listed above apply.
- Before conducting a doping control mission in a hotel, the DCO shall ensure that the tests can be conducted in a ventilated and spacious room to respect social distancing. If not possible, a minimum number of persons shall be present in the room; i.e. the athlete, the DCO, the BCO and if necessary, the Team Doctor.
- The team doctor and the SCP (DCO and chaperons) must regulate the arrival of athletes in the waiting room where multiple athletes of the same Team are tested. This will reduce the number of athletes in the same room.

5. NOTIFICATION PROCESS

- Chaperons will be responsible for notifying athletes.
- It is the rider's responsibility to remain within the direct observation of the Chaperone at all times from the notification until the completion of the sample collection procedure.
- Once notified, riders must report immediately for sample collection unless there are valid reasons for a delay, as per Article 5.4.4 of the UCI TIR.
- In the event where the control would take place outside the DCS, such as in hotels (specific rooms or in rider's/doctor's room), as detailed before, only one athlete and one support personnel may be present at a time. When multiple riders are tested in hotels, notification will be done in a sensible manner, bearing in mind the no-advance notice aspect of these controls.

6. SAMPLE COLLECTION PROCESS

- In between athletes, the surface where sample collection will take place must be cleaned using disinfectant wipes or disinfectant spray, including all materials to be used.
- SCP must wash or sanitise hands, wear new gloves for each athlete, and wear a face mask.
- Athletes and supporting personnel (soigneur, doctor, etc.) are recommended to wear a face mask in enclosed, poorly ventilated areas or depending on the pandemic situation.
- Social/physical distancing is maintained as much as possible.
- The number of persons present during the control session will be limited to a minimum i.e.:
 - It is not necessary for organisers to provide a doctor/nurse to witness the miction; the DCO will exceptionally ensure the task if he/she is of the same gender. However, if not of the same gender, organisers will be asked to provide a doctor/nurse.

- Only one person is allowed to accompany the athlete in the DCS area during the sample collection process. It is recommended that athletes present themselves at the DCS alone.

NOTE: Some specific situations may not allow 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 allowances for closer distance temporarily.

7. COMPLETING SAMPLE COLLECTION SESSION

- SCP must ensure that all discarded items/waste are disposed of in the appropriate bins for medical waste material.
- SCP instruct the athlete to clean their hands.

8. OTHER CONTROLS SUPPORTED BY ITA

- TRAMADOL:
 - Controls will be conducted in the Doping Control Station following the existing procedure at the end of events selected by the UCI, including the supplementary sanitary measures described above.
 - The Tramadol Sample collection procedure may be amended if the circumstances so require.
- X-Ray Bike Check:
 - The ITA will support the UCI in their program as much as possible, given the circumstances.
 - The chaperone will wear masks and gloves when attaching the tag to the rider's bike and will do their best to respect social distancing.