



General Guidelines for Group Activities

PATH Intl. expects that all certified professionals and those working toward certification unequivocally honor the [PATH Intl. Certified Professional Code of Ethics](#), including respecting the rights, dignity and well-being of all individuals (human and equine) in activities and exercising sound judgment and professional competence to take proper precautions to prevent the spread of illness (specifically COVID-19) before, during and after activities. This includes:

- Compliance with any orders or restrictions as mandated by local, regional or state authorities.
- A process to clean all surfaces of the tack and equipment used is defined *prior to conducting activities*.
- NO individuals experiencing symptoms related to COVID-19 should be included in center activities.
- The number of individuals convened for the activities does not exceed recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) nor violate any mandates by local, regional and/or state authorities in place at the time of the activity.
- ALL individuals included in the activities are held accountable for following recommended precautions from the CDC and/or local health agencies in regards to personal safety. This includes wearing masks when not able to socially distance.

Thinking Outside the Box, Within Acceptable Parameters

There are a few modifications to “typical” lesson procedures that would be appropriate for centers to implement, including for supervised teaching hours instructors in training.

These include:

- If participant skill levels allow, volunteers can be incorporated into lesson activities at a distance from the participants and still support the lesson objectives. Consider positioning volunteers throughout the arena/activity area and instruct them how, when and where to engage with the participants as a part of lesson activities.
- Participants can be assigned their own family members as volunteers. Bear in mind this may require slightly different training to help the volunteers moderate their elevated level of investment in their loved one(s) and allow the participant to engage and follow instructions on their own.

- It is acceptable to use center staff as lesson volunteers, but ensure they are mindful of waiting for direction and not filling in the blanks for the instructor. Entirely eliminating volunteers from the arena/lesson area is not recommended and should be carefully considered to ensure safety and appropriate emergency response.

Other Things to Consider:

- To avoid mask fatigue, allow for and facilitate “mask down” spaces and time. Encourage breaks when volunteers and center staff can go to designated areas (even if it’s their own vehicles) and take their masks off.
- To reduce strain on instructors’ voices due to talking “through” masks:
 1. Determine parameters (specifically a distance) under which instructors may be permitted to drop their mask and uncover their mouth while teaching. Make sure these parameters are shared and explained to volunteers and families so they understand when and why the instructors may be unmasked.
 2. Consider using a small PA system (even a kid’s karaoke machine could work!) to help amplify the instructor’s voice. A Bluetooth microphone is preferable to ensure that the instructor’s hands are readily free in case of an emergency and any speakers can be outside of the activity area so as not to pose an obstacle to volunteers, participants or equines.
- If equines must be in back-to-back classes, is there a cleaning process between riders and/or handlers?
 1. For saddles: Anything the participant, handler, volunteers or instructor will need to touch to adjust should get a quick wipe down and reins can be changed (don’t forget the billets, girth/cinch, etc.)
 2. For halters and/or lead ropes: Can be changed in between handlers