



To AUSKF Member Federations

June 22, 2020

Guidelines for Resuming Kendo Practice

Dear Members of All United States Kendo Federation (AUSKF),

The new corona virus (Covid-19) pandemic has caused disruptions in our lives, including activities related to Kendo, Iaido, and Jodo. In the email message dated March 16, 2020, we urged your member federations to consider canceling all events and activities requiring physical contact. We appreciate your cooperation in this collective effort to keep us all safe.

While the situations in the United States differ from region to region, we now see some states reopen schools and businesses at different scales on different phases. As you may know, as a result of a significant drop in the number of new cases, the All Japan Kendo Federation (AJKF) has decided to re-open kendo activities as of June 10th, albeit with strict and precautionary measures to reduce the virus risk. While we continue to monitor carefully the ongoing progress in our country, it is time to plan for reopening practices in Kendo, Iaido, and Jodo.

This document provides guidance for your federation and dojo to consider reopening for Kendo, Iaido, and Jodo practices. Our overarching objective is to make sure that members can enjoy practice in a way that reduces the risk of spreading the virus at reasonable levels. The guidelines should be viewed as a set of recommendations but not mandates. Each federation and dojo should establish their own set of rules and best practices, while complying with local and state regulations. Please note that the AUSKF insurance does NOT cover Covid-19 related medical expenses.

With a great amount of uncertainties, including a possibility of the second wave, we will revise the guidelines and recommendations as the situations evolve. In revising the guidelines, the AUSKF will continue to draw on guidance and evidence provided by experts, along with recommendations by the CDC. For latest information on the CDC recommendations, please refer to their [website](#). For prevention, the CDC currently recommends to

- [Maintain good social distance](#) (about 6 feet) -- very important;
- [Wash your hands](#) often with soap and water (If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol);
- [Routinely clean and disinfect](#) frequently touched surfaces; and
- Cover your mouth and nose with a [cloth face covering](#) when around others.

We sincerely hope that these guidelines will be a useful reference and resource to think about a re-opening plan for your federation and dojo. With different levels of virus risk and different state and local regulations, you should establish your own guidelines and protocols. Together, we think about the best possible ways in which we can balance between practicing the art that we have come to love and protecting our members and families from the harm's way. We look forward to seeing and practicing with you in the near future!

Guidelines to Resume Kendo, Iaido, and Jodo practices in the USA

1. Each member federation and dojo may consider resuming kendo, Iaido, and Jodo practices after **July 10, 2020**. Follow the local regulations (State, County, City). Sports gyms and schools may be preparing to re-open with new regulations and guidelines. Please make sure to follow them. Make everyone sign the new waiver provided by the AUSKF insurance committee.

(Who should not practice?)

2. **Do not practice if you have high-risk medical conditions.** Examples are, diabetes, heart failure, COPD, asthma, kidney failure on dialysis, liver disease, immune-suppressed or -compromised individuals, and those taking immunosuppressants, receiving cancer treatment, sever obesity (BMI >40). Consult your physician, and obtain written approval if you wish to participate in Kendo practice.
3. **Do not practice if you have symptoms suggestive of Covid-19.** Examples are, fever (over 100.4 Fahrenheit), cough, sore throat, short of breath, chills, muscle pain, headache, loss of smell or taste, diarrhea, feeling of feverish, etc. If your physical condition seems different from usual, error on the side of caution. Those with family member that has or may have infection, those who has traveled abroad in the area that still has travel restrictions or who has a family member that traveled to these areas should not participate for 14 days.
4. **Be mindful of your age and physical conditions.** Age older than 60 years tend to develop more severe disease and higher mortality. Please consider postponing the start date by another month or so. Elderly people are more prone to both contract and transmit the disease.
5. **Keep the record of names and contact information** of each participant and observer at each practice. Use the attached questionnaire and provide a sign-in sheet. You may consider not allowing visitors from outside your dojo or federation, at least for some time. You may consider not participating in training or events outside your home dojo.

(How should practice be conducted?)

6. **Resume practice cautiously and slowly.** Most of us have not been practicing for more than two months. You may want to consider spending a significant time in warm-ups and cool-downs as members regain their strength and stamina.
7. **Modify the menu and methods in practice** for the new normalcy. Avoid making loud voice in close distance to each other. Avoid physical contact and tsubazeriai as much as possible. Refrain from doing Zarei or touch the floor with your hands. Be mindful of your distancing and avoid physical contact in Kendo Kata, particularly in Kodachi number 3.

(Wear a face cover)

8. **Use a mouth or face shield and/or face mask** designed for sport. Examples are shown at the end. **(Do not use surgical mask or N-95 for kendo practice. You will be suffocated!)** AJKF experiment demonstrated: The mask prevents 90% of saliva spray. Combining with facial shield, 95%. Shield only, 70%. Unfortunately, the more effective they are to prevent transmission of the disease, the more likely they cause heat exhaustion and/or suffocation, so please be careful what protective equipment to use and how to use it.

9. See Appendix for an example of a mask made of tenugui and a face shield.
10. For Jodo and Iai, Kendo Kata: Please wear mask and/or cover your face with face shield etc. The instructor should avoid physical contact with students, and everyone should be wearing mask, take a break before they get short of breath.
11. **Avoid heat exhaustion.** Wearing mask/ shield WILL cause retention of heat and humidity over your face and neck. Take frequent breaks. For example, 15 minutes of Keiko, then take a break taking your MEN off for 5 min. Change to dry mask. Wet mask can suffocate you! Keiko should be limited up to one hour.

(How do you keep the dojo clean and reduce the risk of infection?)

12. **Ventilate the dojo and limit the number of practitioners.** Keep windows and doors open to maximize airflow. Depending on the size of the practice space, limit the number of members that are actively practicing.
13. **Establish and follow the cleaning protocols.** Have hand sanitizers ready at the entrance of the Dojo, and make sure everyone uses that prior to entering the Dojo. If possible, purchase a digital, non-contact thermometer and check the body temperature of members before entering the dojo. Frequently sanitize any equipment, doorknobs, doors, windows in the venue. Change your clothes at home to avoid changing in crowded locker rooms or bathrooms where it is difficult to keep 6 feet distance, or it is poorly ventilated and sanitized.
14. **Do extras to reduce the risk of infection.** Do not share equipment (Shinai, Bokuto, Iaito, Jo, tenugui, towel etc) with others. Do not wipe off your sweat on your face with hands or Tenugui. Bring a clean towel and keep in your bag for use. Bring your own sanitizers and wipes. Bring your own water bottles and drinks. Do not share. Do not drink from water fountains.

(How do you minimize risk before and after practice?)

15. **Wash and/or sanitize your hands and feet,** before and after the practice. Do not touch your face with unclean hands, towels, etc. Wash with soap and water for more than 20 seconds, and/or sanitize with 60-80% alcohol spray or hand sanitizer.
16. **Change your clothes at home** to avoid assembling in the changing room at the same time. Avoid use of locker room or bathroom when crowded, unable to keep 6 feet distance, and poorly ventilated or sanitized.
17. **Wash/ sanitize your equipment after each practice.** GI, hakama, Tenugui, mask, Shinai should be taken home each time, washed /sanitized. The Kendo gears, especially Men, Kote and the face shield, have to be sanitized with alcohol spray. Bring plastic bags to place the equipment separately after practice.
18. **Comply with the new norms in social distancing.** Avoid direct contact, limit the number of people gathering to 10, maintain at least 6 feet distance from each other, and wear a mask while commuting to and from dojo in public place. Parents and observers in dojo should wear face coverings whenever they are at the facility and in close contact with a non-family member. Avoid buffet style party, group dinner, and refrain from excessive conversation. Do not share or serve the drink or food with others. Avoid facing each other. Sit or stand without

facing each other, keeping 6 ft. distance. Cover your cough or sneeze. Do not shake hands or hug. Avoid car-pooling.

(What do you do when you have or suspect Covid-19 infection?)

19. **Report to your dojo and federation officials.**
20. **If a member exhibits symptoms during practice, he/she should immediately be separated and sent home** or to a health care facility depending on the severity of the symptoms. They should not be allowed to return to activity until they have met the CDC criteria to discontinue home isolation.
21. **Anyone with close contact with a person exhibiting symptoms should also be separated and sent home** and should follow CDC guidelines for self-monitoring and procedures for community related exposures.
22. **Any areas, surfaces, or shared objects used by a sick person should be closed off and not used until after cleaning and disinfecting.** If possible, it is recommended to wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting.
23. **Notify local health officials, staff, and family members immediately of any lab confirmed case of COVID-19** while complying with local state and privacy and confidentiality laws as well as with the Americans With Disabilities Act.
24. If 3 or more dojo members test positive for COVID-19, work with state and local health care officials about continued operation of the sports league.
25. See CDC's guidelines regarding "When You Can Be Around Others After You Had Or Likely Had COVID-19".



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Appendix:



An example of making kendo face mask. Fold the tenugui in half. Suture a string (Same length as the regular tenugui) on the top of the folded tenugui. May add ear sling if desired. Replace with dry one before it is soaked. Wash it after each practice.



An example of face shield. Place it inside your MEN. Needs to be cleaned / sanitized after each practice.



Eye Shield. Placed inside your MEN. Needs to be cleaned / sanitized after each practice.



Mouth shield to be used in combination with Eye shield. Needs to be cleaned / sanitized after each practice.

(Copied from AJKF guideline with permission from Dr. Miyasaka)