

Advice to Waka Ama Clubs and Paddlers in relation to COVID-19

9.00am 19th March 2020



As we navigate our way through these challenging times, Waka Ama New Zealand has prepared the following advice for our member Regions, Clubs, and paddlers. Please note this notice is based on the information we have available to us at this time. We will update this as more information comes available and / or when the Government or Ministry of Health updates its advice.

It is important to note that the following are guidelines/advice only and we encourage clubs and regions to discuss and consider their own unique circumstances that may vary from location to location.

Events:

As you are aware, Waka Ama New Zealand has cancelled two of our largest national events; Secondary School Nationals and Long Distance Nationals. This was done in support of the governments COVID-19 containment initiatives and the general wellbeing, health and safety for the public and our wider waka ama community.

We are working with clubs and event organisers who have local events coming up. As per current government advice, events that will exceed 500 participants should be cancelled.

Consideration should be given to the total numbers involved in and around the event; participants, volunteers, officials, spectators, whānau and members of the public (passers by) all are included in the 500 person figure. (not just the paddlers)

Where possible if events are required to be cancelled or postponed, we will try to find a suitable date later in the year which can be reviewed once the COVID-19 situation becomes clearer.

If you are entered into a race and wish to withdraw, please contact your club or contact the event organisers directly.

Waka Ama NZ is happy to offer advice to event organisers regarding general event organisation or providing clarity around the New Zealand mass gathering initiative should you require it.

We will keep our website up to date with any changes to scheduled events www.wakaama.co.nz all information posted on the website will also be put on our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/wakaama/>

How to stay safe at events:

In General:

- Practice Social distancing - no handshakes, hongi, close physical contact.
- covering coughs and sneezes with disposable tissues or coughing/sneezing into your elbow
- Don't touch your face
- disposing of used tissues appropriately in a bin
- washing hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water and drying them thoroughly, or using hand sanitiser:
 - before eating or handling food
 - after using the toilet
 - after coughing, sneezing, blowing your nose or wiping children's noses
 - after touching public surfaces

- try to keep 2 metres away from people who are unwell
- limit alcohol and drug use (as this may affect your ability to adequately follow the advice above).

At a Waka Ama Race

- Wash hands with hand sanitizer or soap when you arrive at the race
- Wash hands with hand sanitizer or soap when you leave a race
- Don't share paddles, but if you must, wipe them down with sanitizer, anti-bacterial spray or soap and water between uses
- No handshakes, hugs, hongi or kisses - Replace those with a nod a wink or a smile
- Practice social distancing - keep clear of other people wherever possible.
- Remember Waka Ama is a non-contact sport
- Be kind to the volunteers and officials, they are all there helping to provide an event for our waka ama whānau to take part in.

At Training

- Wash Hands with hand sanitizer or soap when you arrive training
- Wash Hands with hand sanitizer or soap when you leave training
- Don't share paddles, but if you have to, wipe them down with sanitizer, anti-bacterial spray or soap and water between uses
- No handshakes, hugs, hongi or kisses - Replace those with a nod a wink or a smile
- Practice social distancing - keep clear of other people wherever possible. In a waka, most of the seats are at least 1 meter apart
- Staying away from training if you have any symptoms or are feeling unwell / or if someone in your household is sick.
- Choose to do W1/OC1 training instead of 6man training

If you are being asked to work from home, maybe there is now an opportunity for you to paddle during the day when no one else will be paddling. If you do so , please remember all the usual safety precautions and most importantly let someone know that you have gone out on the water and what time you expect to be back.

Please remember to stay away from training or racing if you have any symptoms / or if someone in your household is sick. You are looking after all of us by staying away.

Individuals and paddlers should consider their own whānau circumstances and make decisions based on that e.g. if they live with kaumatua or people who are immunocompromised they are advised to take extra precautions.

Clubs should look to acquire some antibacterial spray that can be kept onsite at the waka ama club, or ensure that teams /paddlers bring their own.

Clubs should also make sure that these guidelines are circulated to all their members and their wider waka ama community to ensure that all adhere to the safety protocols put in place.

You can stay up to date with the latest information and advice from the New Zealand Ministry of Health here: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>

If you have any direct concerns regarding COVID-19, you can call the dedicated Healthline for free on 08003585453 (or +64 9 358 5453 if you're using an international SIMS)

Finally,

Waka Ama is an important part of all our lives and we want to provide you with as much information as possible so we can all continue to enjoy paddling and enjoy being out on the water.

As the COVID-19 situation evolves and changes, we will keep in communication with you via our website, social media and via direct emails to clubs.

It is a difficult and challenging time for everyone and it is most important that you take care of yourselves and your whānau, especially taking care of our older people and those most vulnerable.

We are all so fortunate to be part of such an amazing Waka Ama Whānau. Please look after each other and do all that you can to help reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Should you have any questions at all please don't hesitate to contact admin@wakaamanz.co.nz, we are happy to help you.

Ngā Manaakitanga

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