

Skydive Headcorn Covid-19 SOPs

Safety is always our top priority at Skydive Headcorn. For this reason, we had initially shut down all operations because of COVID-19. While more data has been gathered and new advice released by our government, we have been carefully examining the new information and consulting with trusted medical professionals in our effort to develop a plan for how best to responsibly reopen while also maintaining the safest environment possible for all our jumpers. One of the things we love most about our skydiving family is that we are an incredibly diverse group. This includes people who are immune compromised for a variety of reasons and so more at risk from Covid-19. Even those without extra risk may have household members who are at risk if they bring Covid-19 home. We want everyone to feel as comfortable as possible coming to the Drop-Zone and jumping. We would never want another jumper to pay the price for our own bad decisions. It's one thing if we hurt ourselves but an entirely different thing if we hurt someone else. We already have skydiving rules to protect each other. We will now have some additional rules about face coverings, hand washing and distancing for exactly the same reason. Please help us to continue to make Skydive Headcorn the safest drop zone and facility it can be. The following are the COVID-19 standard operating procedures we will be implementing. **PLEASE READ THE WHOLE OF THIS DOCUMENT CAREFULLY SO THAT THERE ARE NO UNWELCOME SURPRISES WHEN YOU ARRIVE!**

PRIOR TO COMING TO ANY PART OF SKYDIVE HEADCORN

You must contact us to agree your day or days of attendance and must receive confirmation by email or in writing. We can only ensure safe spacing and adequate staffing if we know in advance how many jumpers are attending. If you attend without email/written confirmation, regrettably you may not be admitted to any part of the Drop-Zone. At present, no non-jumping friends, relatives or spectators can attend with you.

Our first line of defence against COVID-19 is minimizing the likelihood that someone who has it comes to the Drop-Zone. Prior to coming to Skydive Headcorn please ask yourself:

1. In the last 14 days, have you been in contact with someone who has symptoms that could be COVID-19 or has had a positive test for Covid-19? *
2. In the last 14 days have you tested positive for COVID-19?
3. Do you now or have you in the last 14 days had any of the following symptoms: Fever, cough, loss of sense of taste or smell, shortness of breath, chills, sore throat, diarrhoea, vomiting or muscle aches and pains?
4. In the last 42 days (six weeks) have you had any of the above symptoms and have mostly recovered but been left feeling still a bit unwell or short of breath? (You should seek medical advice and certification using form 115F, 116 or 116A).
5. Have you travelled outside the UK in the last 14 days to a country that does not have a "Bridging Agreement" with the UK?
6. In the last 14 days have you been disregarding basic social distancing practices in your daily life, e.g. not wearing a mask in busy public places and not staying at least the Government recommended distance (2 metres at the time of writing) away from other individuals when possible? If you haven't been protecting yourself on a daily basis, you are more likely to be carrying the virus even if not showing any symptoms.
7. Do you live in a locality, or work in a facility, which has had a local lockdown order imposed and still in force?

8. While at home, are you in frequent direct contact with individuals whose health is at high risk if they are exposed to COVID-19, such as those in the Governments Vulnerable or Extremely Vulnerable and Shielded groups? If so, consider whether your attendance at the Drop Zone places those household members at greater risk. (Please see the list of conditions at the end. This isn't only about those of us at the Drop-Zone.)
9. Are *you* in one of the Extremely Vulnerable and Shielded groups? The law does not *require* you to stay away from the Drop Zone, but we feel you would be very unwise to attend at present.

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, please do not come to Skydive Headcorn at present. If you are not in one of the Extremely Vulnerable groups but are in one of the Vulnerable groups, you will not be denied entry to Skydive Headcorn. However, you **MUST** take account of the Governments current advice to you on safe distancing and make your own assessment of whether you can remain safe while attending a skydiving operation. Remember, this is not just about a risk of dying from Covid-19. There is also the risk of permanent damage to lungs, kidneys and other parts of the body which may leave you unable to skydive in the future.

*Healthcare Professionals who work with COVID-19 patients *but are strictly protected while at work* will be allowed on the premises even though they answered “yes” to the first question.

WHEN ARRIVING AT SKYDIVE HEADCORN

Everyone coming to Skydive Headcorn will need to check in at the Tandem Meeting Point. You will be met by a staff member at a screening check-in station. The staff member will ask the questions mentioned earlier and will confirm that you have read this document, that you have a personal face cover available and that you agree to the release of your personal contact details to the Contact Tracing Service if they request them. The staff member will then take your temperature. If you prefer to use your own digital thermometer and show the readout to our staff member, that is acceptable. A “yes” answer to any of the screening questions, a failure to have read the whole of this document, not having a personal face cover available, not consenting to release of your personal details to the Contact Tracing Service or a single temperature reading of 37.8c/100f or above will be reason for not being allowed entry to any part of the Drop-Zone.

In the event that you arrive and there is no one at the screening station, wait at the Tandem Meeting Point until someone arrives.

Prior to arrival you must have topped up your account and sent in digital copies of your docs.

SOCIAL DISTANCING AND PERSONAL SANITIZING MEASURES

Everyone should wear a face covering when social distancing is not possible, when indoors, at manifest or once kitted up. The only time face coverings can be removed is when you are in your personal vehicle or are outdoors, secluded and not speaking with others.

****WE DO NOT WANT TO BECOME MASK POLICE BUT WE ARE GOING TO ENFORCE THE RULES. PLEASE USE COMMON SENSE AND SHOW RESPECT FOR OTHERS**

- If you have to cough or sneeze do so tightly into your arm. If you are frequently coughing or sneezing, you will be asked to leave the premises (even if you feel it is “just hay fever”).
- Please maintain the Government advised minimum distance (currently 1 metre where 2 metres is not possible) from other individuals whenever possible. This includes while you are packing.
- While dirt diving please use common sense social distancing measures that everyone in your group is comfortable with.
- Don’t do practice exits with hand contact, handshakes, high fives or fist bumps. Use body movement to coordinate exits, not loud shouts. If using our exit trainer, sanitise your hands beforehand and afterwards.
- Debrief skydives outside, not in small enclosed rooms.
- When possible, consider jumping with the same group throughout the day and thus limit your number of “contacts”.
- If using DZ packers, consider sticking with the same packer throughout the day, to limit the number of people touching your kit
- If running a packing service, do your best to keep packer-client pairs constant through the day
- Do not enter any buildings unless there is a specific need and you are able to maintain the Government recommended distance (currently 2 metres) from any other persons. Please put money on your account prior to coming to the drop zone or use electronic means of payment and manifesting.
- Please resist taking part in the loving, affectionate physical gestures we normally enjoy including hugs, kisses, high fives, fist bumps, etc. (Sorry about this one, especially when we haven’t seen each other for a while)
- Wash your hands with soap and water before and after every jump, prior to making any transactions at manifest or visiting the office and frequently throughout the day. If you choose to wear clinical disposable gloves, you should either don a fresh set of gloves at every point where you would otherwise be washing/disinfecting your hands or you should wash/disinfect the gloves if you continue to wear the same pair.
- You may be asked to use an alcohol-based spray or gel on your hands or skydiving gloves before boarding the airplane.
- When possible use a barrier such as a clean paper towel to prevent direct contact with shared surfaces including sinks, toilets, water fountains, doorknobs, etc
- In addition, please be sure to provide your own supply of sanitation items including facial coverings, hand sanitizer, sanitizing spray, disinfectant wipes and drinking water. This is the only way to be certain you always have what you need when you need it.

You may enter the Cafeteria to purchase food which must be eaten outside. Once at the DZ you cannot leave and come back. If you do not wish to purchase food and drink onsite, then please bring them with you.

It is a legal requirement of the Covid-19 Regulations that our Campsite and Caravan areas remain closed to visitors. You are NOT allowed to stay overnight at the Drop-Zone at present.

AIRCRAFT PROCEDURES

Time spent together in tight quarters in the aircraft has the greatest potential for spreading the virus while skydiving. Facial coverings may help but will not eliminate the risk. The higher the quality of the face covering and the more consistently it is worn the better the risk reduction. In addition, we need to pay extra attention to how we conduct ourselves in the aircraft.

- Be completely geared up and in the loading area on a 10-minute call.
- Familiarise yourself with the revised seating plan.
- Wash your hands as shortly before boarding the aircraft as possible.
- If you wear gloves, they may be sprayed with a sanitizing agent prior to boarding.
- Regardless of your helmet type, wearing a face covering is required in the aircraft and loading area at all times.
- Make sure your chosen face covering is not at risk of migrating in freefall and obstructing your vision.
- To encourage air circulation the aircraft door will be opened at 1500 feet and left open as long as conditions permit. Be extra aware that your pilot chutes are secure. The door will stay open unless the Jumpmaster signals the door operator to close it.
- Only speak in the airplane if absolutely necessary. Speaking increases the transmission of COVID-19 particles. Speaking loudly exponentially increases the transmission of COVID-19 particles.
- Do not do practice counts, handshakes, high fives, fist bumps, etc. in the aircraft.
- Whilst your first jump should not be a high-performance landing, please be aware of the new rules regarding landings that require a set up turn of more than 90 degrees.
- Briefing the pilot must be from outside the aircraft, or preferably by radio from DZ control.

SANITIZING PROCEDURES

In addition to the personal safety measures and aircraft protocols, we are also increasing our sanitizing procedures throughout the day:

- At the start of the day and during shut downs, relevant parts of DZ aircraft will be sprayed with an approved disinfectant.
- Counter tops, bathrooms, door handles, aircraft handles, seat belts, door frames, aircraft mock ups and all commonly touched surfaces throughout the facility will be cleaned each morning and frequently throughout the day.
- Hand sanitizing stations have been installed in the kit check / loading areas and in many other places across the DZ.
- Plastic separators may have been installed in some customer service areas and behind the pilots in the aircraft where emergency escape and airworthiness considerations allow.
- If “no-touch” taps are not fitted, please rinse down any taps and sink surfaces after use or use a fresh disposable paper towel to avoid direct contact.
- Use common sense social distancing when using the toilets and washbasins. The shower block is available only to permanent residents of the DZ.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

At Skydive Headcorn our jumpers’ safety is always our top priority. But there is nothing Skydive Headcorn can do to replace the behavioural measures each of us as individuals must take. In the best interest of protecting yourself, your friends, families and communities please abide by all these procedures. Please politely help us to hold ourselves and each other accountable.

CONTACT TRACING

If you discover that you have contracted COVID-19 (or even strongly suspect it and are still waiting for test results) and have been to Skydive Headcorn in the previous 14 days please contact us immediately at jump@headcorn.com, or Telephone: 01622 891670 and leave a message if not answered. We will follow up with contact tracing efforts by notifying other jumpers with whom you shared an aircraft that day. Your name will not be released to the other skydivers by Skydive Headcorn.

If we are contacted by the NHS/Public Health Contact Tracing Service about a visitor to the Drop-Zone who has subsequently developed Covid-19, we will co-operate fully in providing the Contact Tracing Service with names and contact details for all significant contacts identified by our records system.

COVID-19, SKYDIVING AND PERSONAL RISK ASSESSMENT

Skydiving is a contact sport. Please understand that even with all the precautions and safety measures we have taken it is not possible for us to guarantee you that you won't be exposed to COVID-19. By participating in skydiving you already accept a degree of risk and you will now assume an additional risk of exposure to, and contracting of, COVID-19.

A young skydiver has a low risk of dying of Covid-19 but this infection attacks the lungs and a minority will suffer long term lung damage which may restrict exercise or their ability to fly at altitude or skydive. In assessing your personal risks you should consider not just your own health and situation but also that of the people with whom you live. Age, gender, ethnicity, obesity and a range of medical issues can all affect individual risk. The more risk factors that apply, the more you should pause before deciding to attend the drop zone:

Clinically Extremely Vulnerable groups, who require Shielding at home.

Anyone in this group is at much higher risk of severe illness or death from coronavirus and should not attend the Drop-Zone at present. If anyone in your household is in this group, you should discuss with them whether it is appropriate for you to be mixing at the drop zone.

Clinically extremely vulnerable people may include:

1. Solid organ transplant recipients.
2. People with specific cancers:
 - a. people with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy
 - b. people with lung cancer who are undergoing radical radiotherapy
 - c. people with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment
 - d. people having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
 - e. people having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
 - f. people who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs
3. People with severe respiratory conditions including all cystic fibrosis, severe asthma and severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).
4. People with rare diseases that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID), homozygous sickle cell)

5. People on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection.
6. Women who are pregnant with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired.
7. Other people have also been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable, based on their doctor's judgement and an assessment of their needs.

Clinically Vulnerable Groups who should exercise caution

If you have any of the following health conditions, you are clinically vulnerable, meaning you are at higher risk of severe illness or death from coronavirus compared with a completely healthy person, but are not at as high a risk as the Shielded group above. Government advice has already changed so that you are now allowed to return to work but you are still advised to take particular care to minimize unnecessary contact with others outside your household. You will probably recognize the difficulty of maintaining strict 2 metre distancing in most normal skydiving and choose not to attend the DZ for now. However, as Government/NHS advice about safe distancing relaxes, you may eventually feel that you can remain covid secure for the procedures we have in place. If anyone in your household is in this group, you should discuss with them whether it is appropriate for you to be mixing at the drop zone.

Clinically vulnerable people are those who are:

1. aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions)
2. under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (that is, anyone instructed to get a flu jab each year on medical grounds):
 - a) chronic (long-term) mild to moderate respiratory diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis
 - b) chronic heart disease, such as heart failure
 - c) chronic kidney disease
 - d) chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis
 - e) chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), or cerebral palsy
 - f) diabetes
 - g) a weakened immune system as the result of certain conditions or medicines they are taking (such as steroid tablets)
 - h) being seriously obese (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above)
 - i) pregnant women

Other groups which appear to be at some increased risk from Covid-19, but which are not at present included in Government "Vulnerable" lists include male gender, simple obesity (BMI 30-39) and Black or Asian Minority Ethnic groups particularly those of Bangladeshi origin. *The most important non-medical risk factor appears to be age, with those over the age of 80 being at 70 times the risk of those under the age of 40.* The absolute increase in risk for male gender, obesity or BAME groups is by comparison less significant, especially for those under the age of 40.

Skydive Headcorn and all its associated entities and individuals cannot guarantee your protection. If you do not wish to accept the extra risk despite all the safety measures we have taken then you should not participate in skydiving activities for the time being.