Olympic Games & Coronavirus – latest information received by IGF

----as of 24 March 2020 - latest updates in red ----

The IGF will endeavour to provide regular and relevant updates on the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 and the coronavirus (COVID-19) to the IGF Athlete Commission, IGF Medical Commission, IGF Anti-Doping Committee, IGF Competitions Committee, IGF International Technical Officials (ITOs) and IGF Olympic staff with official statements from the IGF and information received by the IOC, Tokyo 2020 and other key Olympic stakeholders.

24 March 2020: IGF Letter to Athletes and Team Officials, IGF Statement – Communication to Media Enquiries and Joint Statement from the International Olympic Committee and the Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee

IGF Letter to Athletes and Team Officials – to access letter, click here.

IGF Statement – Communication to Media Enquiries

The International Golf Federation supports the decision made by the IOC and Tokyo 2020 to postpone the Olympic Games until 2021 given the exceptional environment and the challenges that we are all confronting. We will work with them to address how this decision affects our sport and our athletes and to develop the necessary plans to resolve these. We remain fully committed to providing safe and fair golf competitions and a memorable experience for our athletes when these Olympic games are held in 2021.

Extracts of Joint Statement from the International Olympic Committee and the Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee – to read in full, click here.

“The President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), Thomas Bach, and the Prime Minister of Japan, Abe Shinzo, held a conference call this morning to discuss the constantly changing environment with regard to COVID-19 and the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020.”

“The unprecedented and unpredictable spread of the outbreak has seen the situation in the rest of the world deteriorating. Yesterday, the Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO), Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, said that the COVID-19 pandemic is "accelerating". There are more than 375,000 cases now recorded worldwide and in nearly every country, and their number is growing by the hour.
In the present circumstances and based on the information provided by the WHO today, the IOC President and the Prime Minister of Japan have concluded that the Games of the XXXII Olympiad in Tokyo must be rescheduled to a date beyond 2020 but not later than summer 2021, to safeguard the health of the athletes, everybody involved in the Olympic Games and the international community."


The IGF remains committed to supporting the IOC and Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee to delivering the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games and will work with them over the coming weeks at investigating all scenarios that will enable safe and fair competitions for our athletes.

22 March 2020: IOC Press Release “Health and Safety Paramount as IOC Executive Board Agrees to Step Up Scenario-Planning for the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020” and Open Letter from President Thomas Bach to Athletes

To read the press release in full, click here. To read the open letter to athletes, click here.

Note: a decision is expected from the IOC within the next four weeks, i.e. by 18 April 2020.

Extract of IOC Press Release – to read in full, click here

“To safeguard the health of all involved and to contribute to the containment of COVID-19, the Executive Board (EB) of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) today announced that the IOC will step up its scenario-planning for the Olympic Games 2020.

These scenarios relate to modifying existing operational plans for the Games to go ahead on 24 July 2020, and also for changes to the start date of the Games.

On the one hand, there are significant improvements in Japan where the people are warmly welcoming the Olympic flame. This could strengthen the IOC’s confidence in the Japanese hosts that the IOC could, with certain safety restrictions, organise Olympic Games in the country whilst respecting its principle of safeguarding the health of everyone involved.

On the other hand, there is a dramatic increase in cases and new outbreaks of COVID-19 in different countries on different continents. This led the EB to the conclusion that the IOC needs to take the next step in its scenario-planning.

A number of critical venues needed for the Games could potentially not be available anymore. The situations with millions of nights already booked in hotels is extremely difficult to handle, and the international sports calendar for at least 33 Olympic sports would have to be adapted. These are just a few of many, many more challenges.
Therefore, further to the study of different scenarios, it would need the full commitment and cooperation of the Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee and the Japanese authorities, and of all the International Federations (IFs) and National Olympic Committees (NOCs). It would also require commitment from, and collaboration with, the Rights-Holding Broadcasters (RHBs) and our TOP Partner sponsors, as part of their continued and valued support to the Olympic Movement, as well as cooperation from all the Games’ partners, suppliers and contractors. It is in this spirit of the Olympic stakeholders’ shared commitment to the Olympic Games, and in light of the worldwide deteriorating situation, that the IOC EB has today initiated the next step in the IOC’s scenario-planning.

The IOC will, in full coordination and partnership with the Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee, the Japanese authorities and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, start detailed discussions to complete its assessment of the rapid development of the worldwide health situation and its impact on the Olympic Games, including the scenario of postponement. The IOC is confident that it will have finalised these discussions within the next four weeks, and greatly appreciates the solidarity and partnership of the NOCs and IFs in supporting the athletes and adapting Games planning.

The IOC EB emphasised that a cancellation of the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 would not solve any of the problems or help anybody. Therefore, cancellation is not on the agenda."

**Extracts of Open Letter from Thomas Bach to Athletes** – to read in full, click here

After the IOC Executive Board meeting, IOC President Thomas Bach wrote to the global athlete community to provide them with an explanation of the IOC’s approach. In the letter, Bach stated that safeguarding the health of everyone involved and contributing to contain the virus is the fundamental principle.

“Human lives take precedence over everything, including the staging of the Games. The IOC wants to be part of the solution. Therefore we have made it our leading principle to safeguard the health of everyone involved, and to contribute to containing the virus.”

“ What we all share, however, is tremendous uncertainty. “

“This uncertainty stems from the fact that, at this moment, nobody can really make fully reliable statements about the duration of this fight against the virus. This is true for sport, science, the media, politics, and all of society. Therefore also the IOC can unfortunately not answer all your questions. This is why we are relying on the advice of a Task Force including the World Health Organization (WHO).”

“On the one hand, there are significant improvements in Japan where the people are warmly welcoming the Olympic flame. This could strengthen our confidence in our Japanese hosts that we could, with certain safety restrictions, organise Olympic Games in the country whilst respecting our principle of safeguarding the health of everyone involved. On the other hand, we have seen a dramatic increase in cases and new outbreaks of the virus in different countries on different continents. This is why we have to undertake the next step in our scenarios.”

“Our basis of information today is that a final decision about the date of the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 now would still be premature.”
“A decision about a postponement today could not determine a new date for the Olympic Games because of the uncertain developments in both directions: an improvement, as we are seeing in a number of countries thanks to the severe measures being taken, or a deteriorating situation in other countries.

Contrary to other sports events, to postpone the Olympic Games is an extremely complex challenge. Just to give you some examples:

A number of critical venues needed for the Games could potentially not be available anymore. The situations with millions of nights already booked in hotels is extremely difficult to handle, and the international sports calendar for at least 33 Olympic sports would have to be adapted. These are just a few of many, many more challenges.”

“I wish, and we all are working for this, that the hope so many athletes, NOCs and IFs from all five continents have expressed will be fulfilled: that at the end of this dark tunnel we are all going through together, not knowing how long it is, the Olympic flame will be a light at the end of this tunnel.”


IGF Statement on Freeze of World Golf Rankings

“In light of the ongoing health crisis related to the Coronavirus Pandemic and necessary cancellation of golf tournaments worldwide, the International Golf Federation fully understands and supports the immediate freezing of the men's and women’s official world golf rankings in order to protect their integrity.

This decision effectively freezes the ranking system for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games until such time as the world ranking systems recommence, given that the Olympic Golf Ranking System for men and women is based upon them.

The qualification system for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games commenced on 1 July 2018 and will conclude on 22 June 2020 for the men and from 8 July 2018 through to 29 June 2020 for the women, with players accumulating World Ranking Points over a two-year “rolling” period. This has proven to be a fair and equitable system and despite the freeze, we believe that the system remains fair to all athletes who are vying for qualification to the Tokyo Olympic Games.

We have discussed this with the IOC, which fully supports the decision.”

This follows a letter on the golf qualification system for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games which the IGF Executive Director sent to all National Olympic Committees and National Federations on 20 March 2020. To access the letter, click here.
WADA Press Release

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) issued a press release stating that it has published updated guidance for anti-doping organisations in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. To read the full press release, click here.

“The updated ADO guidance covers a number of areas that may be affected by COVID-19.”

“While the document provides guidance specific to athletes, WADA is developing another resource that will address some specific concerns raised by athletes, which we aim to publish early next week and which will be adapted over time.”

Updated COVID-19 Guidance Document for Anti-Doping Organisations (ADOs)

Click here to access the guidance document.

This document is intended for World Anti-Doping Code signatory anti-doping organisations such as the IGF. The updated ADO guidance covers a number of areas that may be affected by COVID-19, including the provision of whereabouts information, sample collection and transport to laboratories, sample analysis, education programs, investigations, result management, therapeutic use exemptions, compliance and other activities and obligations covered by the World Anti-Doping Program.

20 March 2020: IOC Coronavirus Update: Summary of the Global Call with Athlete Representatives

The IOC Athletes’ Commission, the IOC President and a number of IOC directors held a call on 18 March 2020 with over 220 athlete representatives to answer their questions, hear about the challenges the athlete community is experiencing, understand their varying personal circumstances and identify how best the IOC and the Olympic Movement can support them at this exceptional time.

Extract of the summary – click here to access the summary in full on the IOC platform Athlete365

“ The number-one priority in decision-making around the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 is the health and safety of the athletes and everyone involved and to support the efforts to contain the outbreak of COVID-19.

The advice of a dedicated task force formed in February by the IOC, the Japanese authorities, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, the Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee and, very importantly, the World Health Organisation (WHO) is key in all decisions taken with regard to the delivery of the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020.”

Foreward by Kirsty Coventry, IOC Athletes’ Commission Chair: “Many athletes have no access to training facilities and some athletes cannot even leave their houses. We recognise and understand the enormous challenges that so many athletes have in their daily lives at the moment. This is an
extraordinary situation that is requiring extraordinary solutions and solidarity from everyone so that we keep not just ourselves but our community safe.

We are looking at ways in which we can support all athletes going through stress at this time. We are looking at other ways we can support you virtually on Athlete365.”

“As an athlete community we should be looking at ways to help each other during these difficult times.”

“Olympic Games Tokyo 2020

As we all know the situation continues to change on a daily basis, and it is not the right time to make drastic decisions. No doubt there is a massive challenge ahead of us but for now, we remain committed to Tokyo 2020, which is due to start in about four months’ time on 24 July.

The task force is monitoring the ongoing situation 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We will adapt as needed, as our responsibility, based on the guiding principles, to you and to society, is protecting everyone’s health and containing this virus.

We will be realistic in our analysis, optimistic in our commitment, and responsible in our actions, putting athletes first in each step and decision.

“Qualification

Many qualification events have been postponed or cancelled. A number of sports have suspended their international calendars. Many countries have suspended sports events, put in place a maximum number of people who can gather together and limited international and, in some cases, domestic travel.”

“...57 per cent of the athletes have qualified for Tokyo 2020, and these quotas will remain in place. Anyone who has already qualified will not lose their place.

For now, there are three months until the end of the qualification deadline. We know many events have been cancelled or postponed. Where it is possible for any scheduled qualification events to take place safely and credibly ahead of the qualification deadline of 30 June, they may still go ahead, but only if they provide fair access to all athletes and teams and also if the athletes have had the chance to properly prepare for them.

In cases where this is not possible, a fair and credible process will be put in place using previous results, including the rankings that exist in a number of sports, or results from events that have already taken place. Where necessary, additional athlete quotas may be granted in exceptional circumstances and this will be examined on a case-by-case basis.

We know the next step is to provide all athletes with certainty on Olympic qualification as quickly as possible. Now the principles have been established, we will finalise any necessary changes to qualification events and qualification systems by the first week of April. This will be done in consultation with your athlete representatives. We fully recognise the very serious challenges many athletes are currently facing in their preparation, training, travel and daily lives.”
“Anti-doping

The International Testing Agency (ITA) and World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) continue to focus on safeguarding the Olympic Games from doping in these exceptional circumstances. There is a dedicated pre-Games testing task force (consisting of IFs and NADOs with WADA and coordinated by the ITA), which is monitoring the testing of Olympic athletes and will ensure that any gaps in testing are addressed in the lead-up to the Games and in testing at the Games themselves. There is also a new programme in place to store the pre-Games samples, organised by the ITA and funded by the IOC, which means that over the next 10 years any new tests that detect prohibited substances for a longer period of time can be used (as is already the case for anabolic steroids).”

19 March 2020: Tokyo 2020 Update to International Federations on Restrictions Related to Entry to Japan as Preventative Measures to Contain the Spread of the Novel Coronavirus

As a reminder, all updates and up-to-date information on travel restrictions, flight operations and screening across the world can be found here on the SOS International website.

Update from Tokyo 2020 on Japan: “As of 19 March 2020, those who have visited following countries or areas within 14 days of arrival in Japan will not be permitted to enter Japan except under special circumstances:

China: Hubei/Zhejiang Province
Republic of Korea: Daegu/Gyeongsangbuk-do (Gyeongsan-si/Andong-si/Jeongcheon-si/Chilgok gun/Uiseong-gun/Seongju-gun/Cheongdo-gun/Gunwi-gun)
Iran: Qom/Tehran/Gilan/Mazandaran/Isfahan/Alborz/Markazi/Qazvin /Semnan/Golestan/Lorestan Province
Italy: Lombardia/Veneto/Emilia-Romagna /Marche/Piemonte/Valle d’Aosta/Trentino
Alto Adige/Friuli Venezia Giulian/Ligurian Province
San Marino: All region
Switzerland: Canton of Ticino / Basel-Stadt
Spain: Navarre / Basque Country / Community of Madrid / La Rioja Province
Iceland: All region

“Regardless of nationality, the Government of Japan is also imposing some restrictions after the entry.”

“All persons entering Japan from following countries/regions, with or without symptom of illness, will be requested to stay for 14 days at a place (such as hotel) designated by the quarantine station chief, and not to use public transport such as train, bus and taxi including those from airports. Therefore, it is necessary to arrange accommodation for 14 days from the day of arrival and private transport from airports to accommodation prior to entering to Japan.

From midnight on 9 March to the end of March 2020(JST): China (including Hong Kong and Macao) and Republic of Korea

From midnight on 21 March to the end of April 2020(JST): Schengen member states* and Ireland, Andorra, Iran, UK, Egypt, Cyprus, Croatia, San Marino, Vatican, Bulgaria, Monaco and Romania
*Schengen member states: Iceland, Italy, Estonia, Austria, Netherlands, Greece, Switzerland, Sweden, Spain, Slovakia, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Norway, Hungary, Finland, France, Belgium, Poland, Portugal, Malta, Latvia, Lithuania, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg

These measures will also apply to the following cases:

- Anyone who is entering to Japan from countries/regions listed above via a third country.
- Anyone who is entering to Japan from a third country via countries/regions listed above.

Upon arrival, accommodation for 14 days and transport from the airport needs to be registered to the quarantine station chief.”

17 March 2020: Communique from the IOC regarding the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020

This document was unanimously accepted by all Summer Olympic International Federations and it was agreed that it should serve as a point of reference for all media requests.

To read the full communique, click here – main excerpts:

“The communique sets out the principles established by the IOC Executive Board (EB), together with their implementation in cooperation with all the stakeholders concerned.”

“The IOC remains fully committed to the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020, and with more than four months to go before the Games there is no need for any drastic decisions at this stage; and any speculation at this moment would be counter-productive.

The IOC encourages all athletes to continue to prepare for the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 as best they can.

“The IOC has confidence that the many measures being taken by many authorities around the world will help contain the situation of the COVID-19 virus. In this context, the IOC welcomes the support of the G7 leaders as expressed by Japanese Prime Minister Abe Shinzo, who said: “I want to hold the Olympics and Paralympics perfectly, as proof that the human race will conquer the new coronavirus, and I gained support for that from the G-7 leaders.”

“We will continue to act in a responsible way and have agreed the following overriding principles about the staging of the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020:

1. To protect the health of everyone involved and to support the containment of the virus.
2. To safeguard the interests of the athletes and of Olympic sport.

The IOC will continue to monitor the situation 24/7. Already in mid-February, a task force was set up consisting of the IOC, the World Health Organization (WHO), the Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee, the Japanese authorities and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government.

The purpose of the task force is to ensure coordinated actions by all stakeholders.”
“The IFs will make proposals for any adaptations to their respective qualification systems based on the principles outlined above. The adaptations need to be implemented sport by sport because of the differences between qualification systems. The IOC has already put in place an accelerated procedure to solve this situation. Any necessary revisions to the Tokyo 2020 qualification systems by sport will be published by the beginning of April 2020 and communicated to all stakeholders.”

13 March 2020: Message from IOC on Greek leg of the Olympic Torch Relay

“We fully understand this decision taken by the Hellenic Olympic Committee (HOC) in association with the Greek Ministry of Health. The handover of the Olympic Flame will happen as scheduled on 19 March 2020. The International Olympic Committee confirms its full commitment to the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020. For more information on the situation with the Greek leg of the Olympic Torch Relay, please see the press release of the HOC.”

13 March 2020: Update from Tokyo 2020

Tokyo 2020 IF Services sent an update in response to the World Health Organisation Director-General’s remarks on 12 March.

“As we have done thus far, the Organising Committee, the International Olympic Committee and the International Paralympic Committee will monitor the situation carefully while seeking the advice of the World Health Organisation.

We will continue to coordinate our response with the Government of Japan, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and other stakeholders as we prepare for a safe and secure delivery of the Tokyo 2020 Games in July this year.”

12 March 2020: IOC Statement, Update from the IOC and Letter from ASOIF

Extract of the IOC statement on the Olympic flame lighting and the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 (for full IOC statement, click here)
“With the lighting of the Olympic flame in Olympia today, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) confirms its full commitment to the success of the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020. We remain absolutely in line with our Japanese hosts in our commitment to delivering safe Olympic Games in July this year.”

Letter from the IOC to update Summer Olympic International Federations on the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) – excerpts:

“WHO position on COVID-19

As you are no doubt aware, the World Health Organisation (WHO) yesterday declared that COVID-19 has become a pandemic due to the speed and scale of transmission rather than the severity of the disease.

You can find the full WHO Director-General’s opening remarks at the Mission briefing on COVID-19 - 12 March 2020 here.”

“Communication with athletes

As part of our ongoing efforts to keep athletes informed on the impact of COVID-19, the IOC continues to publish the latest information and advice on the Athlete365 public platform.”

“Tokyo 2020 qualification system impacts

We understand the significant challenges faced by athletes and sporting organisations, particularly in terms of travel regulations and the varying restrictions on the organisation of events which continues to change daily.

As a result, we are focused on assisting IFs to address any challenges and in particular the delivery of Olympic qualification events. Our goal is to help find consistent and credible solutions to replace any missed opportunities for athletes.

In doing so we want all athletes to have fair access to qualification events and for qualification to take place on the field of play and working with you to create fair alternatives to lost qualification opportunities. This includes working closely with IFs to approve any necessary changes to the dates and locations of events and any necessary adaptations to the qualification systems.”

Letter from ASOIF to Summer Olympic International Federations on the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) – to read the letter, click here.
11 March 2020: Update from Tokyo 2020 IF Services

Update from Tokyo 2020 on restrictions on entry to Japan – to read the information contained in the email, click here.

5 March 2020: Update from the IOC, IGF Statement and Presentation from Tokyo 2020

Excerpts from IOC Sports Department letter to Secretaries General of Summer Olympic International Federations:

“COVID-19 update

COVID-19 continues to cause significant challenges for international travel for several countries and has highlighted the need to meet all requirements of the relevant health regulations in all countries hosting sports events. The IOC continues to be in close communication with the World Health Organisation (WHO). The WHO has not declared a pandemic and the cases are still clustered, with the respective national authorities focusing on containment measures.

The following sites which we previously provided remain the best sources of the latest information:

- Coronavirus 2019 – WHO
- Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) situation reports – WHO
- Travel restrictions, flight operations and screening – SOS International
- Destination List - Centers for Disease control and presentation (CDC)”

“Olympic Games Tokyo 2020

The IOC EB received a report on all the measures taken by Tokyo 2020 and the Tokyo and Japanese authorities to address the COVID-19 situation and expressed its full commitment to and confidence in the success of the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020. To support these measures, a joint task force was recently created, involving the IOC, Tokyo 2020, the host city of Tokyo, the government of Japan and the WHO.

To read the full IOC EB statement on the COVID-19 and the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 click here.

The IOC EB also reiterated the importance of all stakeholders being aligned in communications messaging, and in this regard, we remain available to discuss any aspects of messaging and communication with you.”
“Communication with athletes

Keeping athletes informed remains critical in addressing the on-going challenges of COVID-19. To assist with providing clarity to athletes, the IOC is maintaining a page on the Athlete365 platform dedicated to providing information on COVID-19 and advice for athletes. In addition, today the IOC President sent an open letter directly to the athletes. We continue to encourage athletes to speak with their IFs and their respective IF and NOC Athletes’ Commission regarding COVID-19. The IOC Athletes’ Commission also remains available to assist your Athletes’ Commission with any necessary communications.”

See also [IOC Medical Director Q&A](#)

**IGF statement:**

The IGF’s position on Coronavirus is as follows:

The preparations for the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 are continuing as planned. Countermeasures against infectious diseases constitute an important part of Tokyo 2020’s plans to host safe and secure Games. Tokyo 2020 will continue to collaborate with all the relevant organisations that are carefully monitoring any incidence of infectious diseases and will review any countermeasures that may be necessary with all the organisations concerned. In addition, the IGF is in close contact with the IOC, World Health Organization as well as its own medical experts. We have full confidence that the relevant authorities in Japan, will take all the necessary measures to address the situation.

**Presentation from Tokyo 2020**

Tokyo 2020 shared the presentation “[Information to all Tokyo 2020 Stakeholders on COVID-19](#)” with its stakeholders – to access this presentation, click [here](#)

---

**28 February 2020: Letter from the IOC**

Excerpt from IOC Sports Department letter to Secretaries General of Summer Olympic International Federations

“**Information concerning the coronavirus and the preparations for the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020**

The preparations for the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 are continuing as planned. Countermeasures against infectious diseases constitute an important part of Tokyo 2020’s plans to host safe and secure Games.

Tokyo 2020 will continue to collaborate with all the relevant organisations that are carefully monitoring any incidence of infectious diseases and will review any countermeasures that may be necessary with all the organisations concerned.
In addition, the IOC is in contact with the World Health Organization as well as its own medical experts. We have full confidence that the relevant authorities, in particular in Japan and China, will take all the necessary measures to address the situation.

Tokyo 2020 is working in cooperation with the National and International Federations ahead of test events and is following guidance from the Japanese authorities.”

---

**27 February 2020: Interview with the IOC President on the current state of preparation for the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020** – to read full interview, click [here](#)