

# COVID-19 DZ Recovery Plan Guideline Document

The purpose of this paper is to open dialogue with the goal of generating a Guideline Document for DZ facilities to resume operation. It is not intended to endorse any manufacturer or provide medical treatment.

Wide-spread and fast-result COVID-19 testing is not available. If it becomes available, we can revisit and modify our initial guidelines based upon exposure and the test timing. This will not explore any legal concerns about exposing a DZ employee or customer, but we should develop guidelines that enable a DZ to operate safely, and if a person should develop COVID-19, the DZ can confidently say it didn't come from their operation.

This initial paper will focus on a few high-priority targets from a medical perspective. Tandems appear to be the most significant risk area due to direct contact. Many DZ operations rely on tandem income to survive, so our initial focus should begin there. If we can design a safe guideline for tandems, then AFF and others will certainly be able to jump.

First, each tandem student/member of the public has to be approached as if they have the virus. We've seen a large number of non-symptomatic carriers, and my guess is, it will end up being a much larger percentage than original estimates. While we are not trying to set up surgical operating rooms at the DZ, it is clear that precautions must be developed to prevent exposure and transmission.

Tandem highest risk times are from close physical contact with the student once tandem harnesses are connected in the airplane, until landing. The student and instructor will each need to be suited, gloved, and masked. Keep in mind the student will probably wear their own shoes, which could be a source of contamination.

My first question for the group, is what options will the DZ have available to provide covered suits, gloves, and helmets? Each of these apparel items have their own issues, too.

Gloves: Will they be provided, re-usable and cleaned, or disposable? My impression is the disposable gloves will not hold up in a tandem jump (especially for the instructor) with the friction of pulling handles, toggles, etc. Re-usable gloves will need to be washed or cleaned inside and out after each use. Instead, can use a disposable glove inside the re-usable one? Test jumps could answer if they hold up.

Suits: Existing full-cover suits for students and instructors could be used, but they will need to be washed or cleaned inside and out after each use.

Helmets: Virus spread is also through aerosolized droplets, and this is probably the biggest risk for tandems. The student and instructor should wear a full-face helmet to protect the underneath face mask, and of course, the helmets will need some form of decontamination after use. Only wearing a full face helmet, due to the air circulation, does not provide the level of protection necessary in a close environment. Are the masks stable on the face under the helmet? We may need a few test jumps to answer that. If not, we need a solution. We also need to consider that a student could become sick and vomit, or become claustrophobic and panic in the mask and helmet.

We received information from PIA, the agency representing all parachute, harness, and container manufacturers. It is clear that cleaning or viral disinfecting chemicals can NOT come in contact with any equipment. It seems if we gear up the tandem student and instructor AFTER they have all protective equipment in place, the rig and parachute will not require decontamination unless on landing the protective equipment has failed or the student becomes ill.