



# PLAYER Q&A UPDATE AUGUST 4, 2020

**WESTERN & SOUTHERN OPEN  
AND US OPEN**

As a follow up to the WSO & USO Player Q&A that was shared on July 22, 2020 the USTA received additional questions from the WTA & ATP Tours. This document updates and expands on the July 22 Q & A.

## CONTENTS

<b>COVID-19 VIRUS IN NEW YORK</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<i>What is the status of COVID-19 in New York City?</i> .....	4
<b>TRAVEL TO NEW YORK</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<i>How and when can players and their support teams enter the US?</i> .....	4
<i>What happens if I get to the airport, but they will not let me board the plane, even though I know my name is on the approved US Government Visa Waiver List?</i> .....	4
<i>What happens if a player or support staff person arrives in the US and the customs officer won't let the player, coach or family member into the US?</i> .....	4
<i>Are there any travel restrictions for players and support staff already in the United States traveling to New York?</i> .....	5
<i>Do players and their support staff need to quarantine for 14 days upon arrival?</i> .....	5
<i>Can players' travel originate from an airport that is different than the country/airport provided in the form given to the USTA?</i> .....	5
<i>If a player is traveling from a New York mandated self-quarantine state, can they share a room with a member of the same household/family as opposed to each having a separate room?</i> .....	5
<b>TRAVEL BACK TO EUROPE</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<i>When will players get confirmation on the ability for players to travel to Europe from the US, prior to players going to the US?</i> .....	5
<i>Do players need a special/specific visa to get into countries during this time, or is it just a case of them having their name cleared?</i> .....	5
<b>PCR COVID-19 TESTING PROTOCOLS</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<i>What type of PCR test will the WSO &amp; USO medical teams be using?</i> .....	6
<i>Is the PCR test the deep one or less invasive?</i> .....	6
<i>When do players and or their support staff need to arrive for their tests?</i> .....	6
<i>Is it possible for a support team member to arrive during the Cincinnati week if they can only be in attendance for the US Open?</i> .....	6
<i>What is the timeline for test results to come back?</i> .....	6
<i>When will players and their support team be tested? Day 1</i> .....	6
<i>When can players go on site to practice?</i> .....	7
<i>How often with players and their support staff be tested?</i> .....	7
<i>What happens if a player tests positive?</i> .....	7
<i>If a player is sharing a hotel room with a permitted guest i.e. coach, fellow player, or family member, who tests positive, will the player be automatically withdrawn?</i> .....	7
<i>If a player's coach or family member is staying in a separate hotel room and this person tests positive, will the player be automatically withdrawn from the competition?</i> .....	8
<i>What if a player arrives on August 15-18 and tests positive, can they stay in the hotel, recover and then play the USO?</i> .....	8
<i>What are the protocols for players or their permitted guests who have previously tested positive for COVID-19?</i> .....	8
<i>Will the USTA cancel the US Open if a certain number of players test positive during the event? How will the USTA decide if there are too many positive test results that could jeopardize the event and the health of other players and staff?</i> .....	8
<i>Is it mandatory for a player to pull themselves out if they do not feel good?</i> .....	8

<i>How will players know if they've been exposed to someone who tests positive? What is the protocol for contact tracing? .....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>What happens If a player or permitted Tier 1 guest leaves the bubble? .....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>If a player or permitted Tier 1 guest leaves the bubble, do they need to stay isolated in their room before they depart? Do they need to be tested? .....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>If a player or coach tests positive and they want to leave, will this be permitted or will they need to remain in the hotel? .....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>If a player tests positive, will the hotel room be covered by the US Open for the time the player is being isolated? .....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Do the players and their support team need to be tested before they depart the official hotel? .....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>What are the testing protocols for players and their guests staying in approved private homes? .....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Do players need to be tested in their home country prior to travelling or will the tournaments test players on arrival? .....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Will there be protocols in place advising against close contact between doubles players, e.g. high fives? .....</i>	<i>10</i>
<b>US OPEN COMPETITION OPERATIONS .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<i>How will Singles Prize money be distributed for those that withdraw on site after the draw is made? .....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>If a player tests positive for Covid-19 and is forced to withdraw from the competition. How will the withdrawal be treated? .....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Can a player take the 50% first round compensation if he/she tests positive prior to their first-round match? .....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>When is the deadline for me to change my doubles in case my partner is Covid-19 positive? .....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>What is the alternate rule at the US Open? .....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>If first round compensation is allowed and there is no LL in the USO, will the players receive 100% compensation like it is on the ATP tour? .....</i>	<i>11</i>
<b>PLAYER SERVICES &amp; EXPERIENCE .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<i>Where are the player hotels? .....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>How many rooms can the players have at the Official Player Hotels? How many guests are players allowed to bring into the hotel? .....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Are players permitted to rent private housing? .....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>What if a player wants to arrive before August 15th and stay in one of the official hotels? .....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>How many guests are the players permitted to bring on-site and use the official transportation shuttle? .....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Will players, their guests and Tour support staff be able to ride the same shuttle between the official player hotels and the USTA BJK National Tennis Center? .....</i>	<i>13</i>
<b>PLAYER EXPERIENCE .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<i>If you lose early, can you still go on-site to practice? .....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>A player has two individuals accompanying them—both of whom could be designated as coaches. If the individual who is designated as Coach for the Cincinnati week leaves the bubble can the second person—who would have been using a Guest credential during Cincinnati—be designated as the Coach for the US Open? .....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>What is the daily food allowance for players? .....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Can players drive themselves to the hotel and/or the site? .....</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>With the addition of a new fitness area, will players be designated a specific fitness area to use or will they have access to all areas? .....</i>	<i>14</i>

# COVID-19 VIRUS IN NEW YORK

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## What is the status of COVID-19 in New York City?

NYC continued another week of having one of the lowest rates of infection in the United States, with approximately 1% testing positive out of tens of thousands of tests being performed daily.

<https://covid19tracker.health.ny.gov/views/NYS-COVID19-Tracker/NYSDOHCOVID-19Tracker-Map?%3Aembed=yes&%3Atoolbar=no&%3Atabs=n>

# TRAVEL TO NEW YORK

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## How and when can players and their support teams enter the US?

The US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has granted 212(f) player waivers to all players and their support personnel whose names were submitted by the ATP and WTA to travel to the US beginning on August 1st. All travelers will still need to have valid travel documents (i.e. passport, visa, ESTA) to gain entry. The approved US government visa waiver list will be sent to all airline carriers throughout the world.

In order to make the process easier on all those travelling to the tournaments, and to facilitate visa appointments at US embassies, the USTA has provided both Tours with a letter of invitation that can be personalized. This letter may also be used for presentation at Customs. NOTE: Customs and Border Patrol will be cross referencing entry into the US against the DHS approved list to grant entry. If your name is not on the approved list provided by the ATP or WTA, you will not be granted entry, even if you have an invitation.

## What happens if I get to the airport, but they will not let me board the plane, even though I know my name is on the approved US Government Visa Waiver List?

The USTA will establish a travel assistance number to assist with issues that you may experience in getting access to board an international flight. The travel assistance number will be provided to the ATP and WTA for distribution through the player portal as soon as possible.

## What happens if a player or support staff person arrives in the US and the customs officer won't let the player, coach or family member into the US?

If the individual's name is on the list that was approved by DHS, the player should call the travel assistance number and the USTA will then contact Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Agency directly to intervene on your behalf. Should the individual be denied entry because they do not have valid travel documents, e.g. an expired passport or ESTA, USTA will not be able to assist. The USTA strongly recommends that players and support personnel fly into John F. Kennedy International Airport, where CBP has been briefed on the arrival of US Open participants.

## **Are there any travel restrictions for players and support staff already in the United States traveling to New York?**

NY State has issued travel guidance that permits players, coaches, training staff, support staff, league staff) to travel to New York for professional sports practice and competitions with no fans on site, see <https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/governor.ny.gov/files/atoms/files/ProfessionalSportsTrainingFacilitiesMandatoryGuidance.pdf>.

Based on the evolving situation in the United States and the low instance of COVID in New York, those traveling from certain states may be subject to additional safety measures. <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory>.

## **Do players and their support staff need to quarantine for 14 days upon arrival?**

Effective August 15, there is no additional quarantine requirement beyond that provided in the WSO & USO medical and operating plan, and this has been confirmed by the New York State Department of Health. However, those entering New York prior to that date must comply with all other NYS Guidelines regarding quarantine.

## **Can players' travel originate from an airport that is different than the country/airport provided in the form given to the USTA?**

Players are allowed to travel to the US with a valid passport from a country other than the country that they originally submitted to the Tours for the waiver to entry into the US.

## **If a player is traveling from a New York mandated self-quarantine state, can they share a room with a member of the same household/family as opposed to each having a separate room?**

As noted in the testing protocols, if someone sharing a hotel room tests positive, both individuals in the room will need to be quarantined/isolated per NY State Department of Health and CDC guidelines. Players who want to share a room with another player will not be permitted.

## **TRAVEL BACK TO EUROPE**

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### **When will players get confirmation on the ability for players to travel to Europe from the US, prior to players going to the US?**

The USTA, together with the ATP, WTA, FFT, Rome and additional tour events on the calendar are making positive progress with confirming the players' ability to travel to Europe from the US. Ongoing arrangements are being made to deliver onward travel based on ATP & WTA calendars.

### **Do players need a special/specific visa to get into countries during this time, or is it just a case of them having their name cleared?**

It is the USTA's understanding that there is no change to visa requirements-you must still have the appropriate visa for entry into any country. Having your name "cleared" permits entry into a country that certain travelers might have otherwise been restricted from entering.

# PCR COVID-19 TESTING PROTOCOLS

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**TESTING PROTOCOLS—FIRST (4-5) DAYS subject to change based on government guidelines and or the USO Medical Team.**

## **What type of PCR test will the WSO & USO medical teams be using?**

The USTA has contracted with Quest Diagnostics to perform Qualitative Real-Time RT-PCR for SARS-CoV-2 tests on all samples collected from everyone in Tier 1 which includes the players, their support teams, WTA & ATP Tour and USO staff working closely with the players. A PCR test is currently the most accurate available to diagnose people infected with Covid-19.

## **Is the PCR test the deep one or less invasive?**

Quest Labs will be using the anterior nares nasal swab, which is inserted at least 1 cm/0.5 inch into the nose. The Nasal (Anterior Nasal) PCR test has high accuracy, it has been approved by the USO Medical doctors and is less invasive to provide a little more comfort when the sample is being collected.

## **When do players and or their support staff need to arrive for their tests?**

Players and or their guests may arrive from August 15th onwards. Players do not need to arrive at the same as their support team members. Please note that **players and their support staff must arrive a minimum of (4) days prior to their first match.**

## **Is it possible for a support team member to arrive during the Cincinnati week if they can only be in attendance for the US Open?**

Player support team members do not need to arrive with the players. Similar to the players, a support team member must arrive a minimum of (4) days prior to the player's first match to align with the Tier 1 testing protocols.

## **What is the timeline for test results to come back?**

Based on the current testing plan we anticipate results will be returned in 24 hours or less.

## **When will players and their support team be tested? Day 1**

Upon arrival at the hotel on day (1), players and their guests will check in and be directed to the testing room. If there is no wait, players and their support team may get tested right away. If there is a wait, players and their support team will set an appointment time and they will be permitted to rest in their rooms.

## **The PCR anterior nares nasal swab test is mandatory.**

In addition, players and their support team members are encouraged to take the antibody test. The antibody test is not mandatory, but is highly recommended by the WSO & USO infectious disease doctor.

## When can players go on site to practice?

All individuals must remain isolated in their hotel rooms until their first PCR test results come back. This is estimated to be 24 hours or less at this time. Room service can be ordered from the hotel to your room. Training room access is not permitted unless there is an emergency.

Once players receive their first NEGATIVE PCR test results they will be issued a credential and be allowed to board transport and go to the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center (NTC). The same policy applies to the player's guests, once a negative PCR test is received, a credential will be issued.

## How often will players and their support staff be tested?

Approximately 48 hours after the initial PCR anterior nares swab test, players and their guests will be required to undergo a second PCR test. The second test will serve to confirm the results of the first test. Players will have continued full access to the tournament site and resources at the hotel. Depending on the results of the antibody test (if a player or their support team elected to take the antibody test), PCR testing will be based on:

Every **4 days** for those with negative antibodies, or, **those who decided not to take the antibody test**,  
OR,

Every **7-days** for **those with positive antibody results**.

## What happens if a player tests positive?

In accordance with New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and CDC guidelines, if a player tests positive he/she will be isolated immediately and if the player's competition has started, he/she will be automatically withdrawn. The US Open Medical team will oversee the player's treatment plan based on Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) guidelines. Currently, the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) outlines that an infected person must isolate for 10 days and be fever free for 72 hours without the assistance of medication.

## Can players do two or more tests on the same day following a positive test before they are withdrawn?

Per the Centers for Disease and Control and Prevention (CDC) and the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), which oversees the WSO & US Open, there is a single positive PCR test on someone who has not previously been infected of COVID-19, then that person must be isolated for at least 10 days. Ultimately this is a government decision based on the current COVID-19 protocols.

## If a player is sharing a hotel room with a permitted guest i.e. coach, fellow player, or family member, who tests positive, will the player be automatically withdrawn?

Yes, per New York State Department of Health and CDC guidelines the player will be considered a close contact of the person who tests positive for COVID-19 and will be required to quarantine for 14 days. Based on these government guidelines the USTA does not recommend players share rooms and advises all players to bring player +1. Players are permitted two hotel rooms and they have the choice to bring up to (3) guests.

**If a player's coach or family member is staying in a separate hotel room and this person tests positive, will the player be automatically withdrawn from the competition?**

Not necessarily. New York public health officials will conduct contact tracing with the assistance and support of the USTA medical team. If the player and the person who tests positive were **following social distancing guidelines and adhering to the masking policy**, the player may not have to be withdrawn.

**What if a player arrives on August 15-18 and tests positive, can they stay in the hotel, recover and then play the USO?**

The individual will be isolated in their room, seen by a physician and be allowed to recover in their hotel room and after receiving approval from the USO Chief Medical Officer may continue to prepare for the US Open.

**What are the protocols for players or their permitted guests who have previously tested positive for COVID-19?**

Every player and permitted guest in Tier 1 will undergo a SARS-CoV-2 PCR test as a baseline. A person who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the past may continue to test positive weeks after they have recovered from their infection and are no longer contagious. We therefore are requiring that anyone who has previously tested positive to either send prior to arrival or bring a copy of the laboratory report of the positive PCR test for review by the medical team. We also strongly recommend undergoing SARS-CoV-2 antibody testing. After our medical team reviews all this information with guidance from the local public officials, we may not require further PCR testing unless a person develops symptoms consistent with COVID-19.

**Will the USTA cancel the US Open if a certain number of players test positive during the event? How will the USTA decide if there are too many positive test results that could jeopardize the event and the health of other players and staff?**

There are no guidelines available to determine what number will compel the USTA to cancel the WSO or the US Open. The USTA has been consulting with officials at the NYS Department of Health and the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYC DOHMH) while planning this year's tournament. We will continue to consult with the same public health officials and determine what situations may result in cancellation of the tournaments.

**Is it mandatory for a player to pull themselves out if they do not feel good?**

The WSO & USO Medical plan requires players to monitor themselves for symptoms of COVID-19 daily and report their symptoms to the USTA before arriving at the USTA BJK National Tennis Center.

**How will players know if they've been exposed to someone who tests positive? What is the protocol for contact tracing?**

Contact Tracing is the responsibility of the local Public Health Authority. However, to support contact tracing the USTA has added RFID technology into the credential scanning operation. This will be able to provide the contact tracing information that will aid informing individuals if they have come in contact with an infected individual.



## **What happens if a player or permitted Tier 1 guest leaves the bubble?**

If a player leaves the WSO and/or USO bubble without written permission of the Chief Medical Officer or Tournament Director, the player will be removed from the competition. In that case, the player will receive the points earned from the last round completed and a financial penalty. If a coach or a guest of the player leaves the bubble, then the player's guest credential will be revoked and the guest will be required to leave the hotel within 24 hours. In addition, there will be a fine for a player's guest leaving the bubble and the guest's credential will not be provided for the 2021 USO.

Details regarding the definition of the bubble, the hotel/private home security and monitoring procedures, information gathering to confirm the player or their guest left the bubble without permission and the process to confirm, and the financial penalties will be provided in the near future.

## **If a player or permitted Tier 1 guest leaves the bubble, do they need to stay isolated in their room before they depart? Do they need to be tested?**

Any person who leaves the bubble without permission could be potentially exposed to someone with COVID-19 and so they will need to be isolated from all other Tier 1 individuals. We will require that they stay in their room until they are ready to depart. PCR testing will be offered to facilitate their entry to other tournaments or admission to a foreign country.

## **If a player or coach tests positive and they want to leave, will this be permitted or will they need to remain in the hotel?**

NYSDOH requires that anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 stay in isolation for at least 10 days from the date of the positive test if they remain asymptomatic. If the person develops symptoms of COVID-19, they will need to isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of symptoms, will need to be fever-free for 72 hours without the need for fever reducing medicines, and symptoms need to have markedly improved. The Chief Medical Officer will have the authority to determine if person may leave the hotel after 10 days. Persons in isolation are allowed to leave their hotel room/home when seeking medical care if approved by the doctors.

## **If a player tests positive, will the hotel room be covered by the US Open for the time the player is being isolated?**

If a player tests positive, the USO will cover the costs of their hotel room during the isolation period as determined by the USO Medical team and local CDC health guidelines. This does not apply to coaches and player guests hotel rooms.

## **Do the players and their support team need to be tested before they depart the official hotel?**

Based on the requirements of the country the players and their support team members will be traveling to, the USTA will assist with the necessary testing and public health certificates.

## **What are the testing protocols for players and their guests staying in approved private homes?**

**Players and all guests staying in a private home** will be required to drive to the Official Player Hotel and submit to the required initial PCR Test. 48 hours after the first PCR test, everyone residing in the home will need to have a second PCR test. Following the first two negative PCR tests, all members staying in the residence will be required to have a PCR test every (4) days unless the medical team determines otherwise.

Players and their entourage guests who are staying in the home will be provided access to the NTC following their first Negative PCR Result.

## **Do players need to be tested in their home country prior to travelling or will the tournaments test players on arrival?**

No medical test is required prior to arrival. The USTA will test all players and their permitted guests upon arrival.

## **Will there be protocols in place advising against close contact between doubles players, e.g. high fives?**

Yes, the USO Medical team will be providing doubles player protocols in consultation with the ATP & WTA medical staff. Information regarding the doubles player protocols will be provided by August 15th.

# **US OPEN COMPETITION OPERATIONS**

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*CURRENT DRAFT SUBJECT TO REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE GRAND SLAM BOARD*

**The following questions and answers regarding Competition Operations relate specifically to the 2020 US Open. Similar questions as they relate to the Western and Southern Open should be directed to the ATP and WTA tours.**

## **PRIZE MONEY**

### **How will Singles Prize money be distributed for those that withdraw on site after the draw is made?**

50% (singles only) if they are within the Tier 1 Bubble hotel/approved private home or USTA BJK National Tennis Center and they are withdrawn from the USO based on a medical certificate from the tournament doctor.

**Note:** If a doubles player is withdrawn from the competition after the draw is made, there is no prize money provided.

### **If a player tests positive for Covid-19 and is forced to withdraw from the competition. How will the withdrawal be treated?**

Once a player has completed one USO singles match, and the player is forced to withdraw due to a positive test this will be treated as a regular medical withdrawal (prize money and points awarded).

## **Can a player take the 50% first round compensation if he/she tests positive prior to their first-round match?**

Yes, if withdrawal occurs after Monday, 12 noon, August 24th 2020 and the player is within the Tier 1 Bubble hotel/approved private home or USTA BJK National Tennis Center.

## **When is the deadline for me to change my doubles in case my partner is Covid-19 positive?**

Consistent with the existing rule and past practices if a partner needs to be replaced this will be permitted prior to the draw, date & time tbc. This will be subject to the team with a replacement partner being a direct acceptance. As for all teams both players are required to have two confirmed negative PCR Tests before the start of the doubles.

## **What is the alternate rule at the US Open?**

A withdrawal before the draw = players from the entry list move up. After the draw = players from the On-site Main Draw Alternate list. On-site Main Draw Alternates are those players who are accepted in the Doubles Draw. The order of the On-site Main Draw Alternates is based on the individual Singles ranking as of the Entry Deadline. "Sign-in" is only necessary on the days when 1st round matches are scheduled.

## **If first round compensation is allowed and there is no LL in the USO, will the players receive 100% compensation like it is on the ATP tour?**

For Singles, per the Grand Slam rule, the player will receive 50%

# **PLAYER SERVICES & EXPERIENCE**

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## **Where are the player hotels?**

The USTA has secured two official hotels that are approximately within (30) minutes of the site.

[Long Island, Marriott](#)

[The Garden City Hotel](#)

The Long Island Marriott is the primary player hotel and we will attempt to place all players + 1 additional room in this hotel. All of the testing, medical and physio services will be located in the Marriott hotel. The Garden City Hotel will be used for potential overflow. There will be a shuttle service between the two hotels. To book hotels:

<https://usopen.formstack.com/forms/usopenplayerinformation>

## **How many rooms can the players have at the Official Player Hotels? How many guests are players allowed to bring into the hotel?**

Each player is entitled to reserve two hotel rooms. The USTA will pay for one room and the second room will be the responsibility of the player. The USO Medical team strongly encourages players to follow the player +1 guideline and not share hotel rooms. However, if the player wishes to bring up to 3 guests and share rooms (maximum of 2 guests per room), they are permitted to do so.

When booking hotels, players will need to indicate if they would like to have a double room.

In addition, there may be the possibility for players to book a third hotel room subject to availability.

## **Are players permitted to rent private housing?**

Yes, athletes are permitted to stay in private housing under certain conditions noted in the Private Housing Protocols and Requirements document. For example:

- ▶ Athletes staying in private housing are permitted this opportunity on the condition that they abide by the safety plan and risk mitigation measures (“Protocols”) contained in the Private Housing Protocols and Requirements document and otherwise communicated to the athlete prior to and during the Tournaments.
- ▶ Athletes are required to have 24-hour security, pay for all costs associated with the 24-hour security and receive approval in advance by the USTA of the nature and type of security. USTA must be provided with access to the external security egress and ingress information for the duration of the time in the private housing.
- ▶ Athletes should not rent a property through other sources or through online room aggregators such as VRBO, Airbnb, or any other publicly available source, or rent townhomes or condos, nor should they stay with local friends as it further distances the athlete from the Protocols and increases the risk of affecting others that they come in contact with during this time. Staying with friends/relatives/others and/or permitting others to visit or stay at the private housing if they are not part of the specific athletes established Tier 1 entourage (and receiving COVID-19 testing) will not be permitted.
- ▶ Athletes must also establish their own stringent safety measures to ensure a safe environment.

For more information regarding private homes please contact: [playerhousing@usta.com](mailto:playerhousing@usta.com)

## **What if a player wants to arrive before August 15th and stay in one of the official hotels?**

When booking the hotel reservation, players should note their request to arrive early along with the date and number of required rooms. Please note that all hotel costs prior to August 15th will be the responsibility of the players and access to testing and WSO & USO player services will not be available until August 15th.

## **How many guests are the players permitted to bring on-site and use the official transportation shuttle?**

All player support team members who are staying in the official hotel or private homes and are part of the Tier 1 PCR testing plan), will have access to US Open transportation and the USTA BJK National Tennis Center.

Access to Arthur Ashe competition areas, locker rooms, dining and lounges will be limited to player +1. And during peak hours, transportation will be prioritized for players +1.

## **Will players, their guests and Tour support staff be able to ride the same shuttle between the official player hotels and the USTA BJK National Tennis Center?**

All players, guests and Tour support staff who are designated as Tier 1 individuals will be permitted to ride the same shuttle.

## **PLAYER EXPERIENCE**

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The USTA will provide the following for the player services and experience:

- ▶ Bus transportation to and from the site.
- ▶ Medical, physio, massage, fitness, recovery services at the hotels and on-site
- ▶ Practice court booking, travel and prize money will all be done via video call or phone to reduce the number of staff on-site.
- ▶ Food and beverage will be available on-site and at both hotels. Players will be permitted to order from UBER eats or other local NY restaurants and have the food delivered to the official hotels
- ▶ Food and beverage will be available to be delivered via mobile app to multiple areas around the USO grounds including outdoor restaurant areas. The on-site food service will provide vegan, vegetarian.
- ▶ On-site there will be a new additional outdoor fitness areas and an expanded outdoor lounge on the South Plaza.
- ▶ Locker Rooms will be limited to 30 players at one time. Players will be encouraged to shower and move to an outdoor or more socially distanced lounge space as soon as possible.

### **If you lose early, can you still go on-site to practice?**

Once you have been eliminated from the competition, you will have the opportunity to go on site and practice subject to availability for those players still in the tournament.

### **A player has two individuals accompanying them—both of whom could be designated as coaches. If the individual who is designated as Coach for the Cincinnati week leaves the bubble can the second person—who would have been using a Guest credential during Cincinnati—be designated as the Coach for the US Open?**

No one is allowed to leave the Tier 1 bubble and come back without the permission of the Chief Medical Officer and or Tournament Director. However, a coach within the Tier 1 bubble may be promoted to the +1 if the original +1 guest leaves.

### **What is the daily food allowance for players?**

Players will receive a total of \$100 per day for food and beverages at the USTA BJK National Tennis Centre. Players will be responsible for all food and beverage costs in the official hotel(s).

### **Can players drive themselves to the hotel and/or the site?**

Players staying at the official hotel will not be able to drive themselves from the hotel to the site. The WSO & USO will provide a shuttle bus service. For those players staying in approved private homes, they will be required to provide their own transportation. The USTA will provide (1) parking pass for the player driving from their private home to the site.

### **With the addition of a new fitness area, will players be designated a specific fitness area to use or will they have access to all areas?**

Players will have access to all fitness areas on-site. There will be social distancing and capacity restrictions in place for the number of players that can be in an area at a time.