



SKYDIVE CITY WILL NOT HOST THE 2020 USPA SKYDIVING & PARACHUTING NATIONALS
DUE TO COVID CONCERNS

Zephyrhills, Florida, August 1, 2020 – Due to the Covid-19 pandemic in Florida, Skydive City Zephyrhills has advised the United States Parachute Association that the 2020 USPA Skydiving & Parachuting Nationals will not take place at Skydive City as planned beginning October 30, 2020.

“We have agonized over whether to conduct the Nationals because we have been so excited about making this the best competition,” said DZOs Joannie Murphy and Susan Stark. “We sought and considered the opinions of competitors, those necessary to execute the Nationals, and skydiving health professionals.” With USPA’s help, we released a survey of past competitors and received over 450 thoughtful responses. Our decision is guided by balancing the risks of conducting the competitions, social responsibility, and our obligations to competitors who wish to compete. Our judgment is fighting our desire.

Substantial uncertainty about the state of the pandemic in November, and unforeseeable government reactions to it, make it impossible to predict whether we will even be able to conduct the Nationals at that time. Florida ranks among the highest Covid-19 incidence and death rates of any jurisdiction. Right now, gatherings of more than 50 people are prohibited. Government mandates, including quarantining and travel restrictions, are flip-flopping and unpredictable. There is talk of a Florida or federal shutdown. Various states now require long quarantines on arrival from other states. Several times, Florida, with little notice, has changed how we can operate our non-aviation business, including lodging and outright closure of food service. Reactions to covid-19 flares have caused skydivers and pilots to re-think their comfort with skydiving. Competitors once certain to attend have angst about attending, signaling a likelihood to bow out – even as others are committed and continue to train hard. Volunteers and some in ground support roles have backed out or flagged that they may back out. Skydiving health care professionals generally oppose conducting the Nationals. It is increasingly difficult to predict whether factors outside of Skydive City’s and the industry’s control are likely at any time to impose cancellation, or de facto cancellation, on the Nationals – even if we have strong plans to mitigate uncertainties and robust protocols to reduce the risk of infection.

Skydive City Zephyrhills was honored to have been chosen to host the 2020 Nationals. It is with the deepest regret that we are even in this circumstance. We are most appreciative of all the guidance and perspective from the skydiving community that helped us come to this conclusion. We appreciate your patience with us. We are saddened and share the deep disappointment of many.

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