



MEDIA RELEASE

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2021 World Transplant Games Cancelled

HOUSTON, Texas – With an abundance of caution and concern for the health and safety of the athletes, and travel-related concerns due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2021 World Transplant Games, scheduled for May 29-June 5, 2021 have been cancelled.

The announcement was made jointly by the Harris County – Houston Sports Authority and the World Transplant Games Federation.

World Transplant Games Federation President **Chris Thomas** said it was with a heavy heart the announcement was being made.

“For more than 40 years the World Transplant Games have celebrated the gift of life and given recipients the opportunity to work towards a personal best in their sporting endeavours,” Thomas said.

“Unfortunately, the advice from the medical community, together with our Games Review Committee is that it is very doubtful a World Games can take place in just 12 months’ time. The health and safety of the world’s transplant population will always be our first priority and in partnership with the Houston Sports Authority we will mutually respect that advice. As a Federation we are also very conscious of the financial impact COVID-19 may have had on transplant recipients and their subsequent ability to attend a World Games.”

The 2021 Games would have been the first held in the United States in 41 years and the event was expected to draw more than 4,000 participants from around the world.

The Sports Authority CEO **Janis Burke** said Houston, which held the 2014 Transplant Games of America, was looking forward to working with the local medical and transplant community to host an epic World Games next year.

“Although a global pandemic has presented challenges to us as a host city, we are still committed to the mission of increasing awareness for transplantations worldwide,” Burke said. “With that same goal in mind, we’ll organize a virtual event next year which will allow everyone the opportunity to participate in an international athletic activity. It will also benefit the World Transplant Games Federation which relies on the Games to help fund its operations and important donor messaging initiatives.

Houston is planning a ‘5k Anyway’ event to allow everyone to connect while social distancing, celebrate, and give back to the International Federation that plays such an important role in the world of transplantation. We hope to log enough kilometers to virtually circle the globe and shine a spotlight on a world-wide celebration.”

The Federation will continue to review the COVID-19 pandemic with a view to locking in the 2022 World Transplant Winter Games and the next Summer Games in 2023.

For more information on the 5K Anyway, go to <https://wtg2021.com/> .

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