

## **Chevron Houston Marathon Race Day Cancellation / Alteration Policy**

It is the primary goal of the Chevron Houston Marathon to ensure a safe event for all involved. We will not expose participants or the community as a whole to undue risk as a result of staging our event. There may be times when we feel it is unsafe to proceed with the race. While we recognize the aspirations and commitment of those that have entered the race we will make decisions about the race based on the participation population as a whole. Furthermore, if the community resources are threatened we will act to protect them from unnecessary stress.

Specifically, when weather or other physical conditions present a danger to participants as a whole, we will maintain the right to cancel the race. Less threatening conditions could result in an alteration of the course or race length to promote a more safe result for the participants. These conditions will be recognized as “an act of god” and will not result in the refunding of race entry fees or future race credits. The staging of a race of this magnitude results in substantial expense prior to the actual race itself. Thus, in the event of a forced cancellation of the event, it is very likely that the financial impact on the race would not be any different than if the race was held without compromise.

The Medical Director and Race Director will make decisions regarding the cancellation or alteration of the race. Prior to the race the Medical Director will apprise the runners of weather conditions and advise on how to adjust to them. The Race Director will describe any course modifications. In the event of a course evacuation, marathon personnel or city of Houston police will direct runners to designated shelter areas to await transport to the George R. Brown Convention Center.

Although unlikely in January, the threat of Hurricane or tropical storm could prompt the cancellation of the event for all participants. Severe thunderstorms with the threat of lightning that are threatening the course and are forecasted to continue throughout the day of the event may also result in cancellation of the event for all participants.

High heat and humidity measured in accordance with the American College of Sports Medicine’s recommendations for participation in endurance events could result in cancellation or alteration of the race for **non-elite runners** as outlined below. The measurement system is based on the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT), which has been used for many years in the Houston marathon to determine heat risk to runners. It is calculated by an equation that includes ambient temperature (20%), relative humidity (70%), and radiant heat (10%). The stratification of risk is as follows for runners in shoes, shorts, and a shirt:

WBGT Range	Flag	Risk	Recommendations: Race	Recommendations: Participants
>82 F (28 C)	Black	Extreme	Cancel race	Do not run
>73 – 82 F (23-28 C)	Red	High	Shorten race or alter course	Slow pace; heat sensitive should not run
>65 – 73 F (18 – 23 C)	Yellow	Moderate	Ensure adequate fluids and cooling	Slow pace as heat increases
>50 – 65 F (10 – 18 C)	Green	Low	Proceed as planned	Be alert for changing conditions
< 50 F (10 C)	White	Variable	Warming stations Shorten race in wet and windy conditions. Cancel if conditions are severe	Slow runners beware Protect head and hands Stay dry

Conditions that entail high risk place a burden on the community health care system inclusive of emergency medical transportation and emergency room capacity. This burden encroaches on non-participants safety and must be recognized as an unnecessary and ill-advised situation. The Chevron Houston Marathon will not knowingly place the community in such a position.

In the event of warm conditions, runners must realize that the single most influential behavior in preventing heat stress is to slow pace. [Hydrating and using water to cool does not prevent heat stress if pace is not adjusted.](#) Chevron Houston Marathon provides fluid every 1.5 miles on the course. There are more than adequate amounts to ensure proper hydration under favorable conditions. Additional fluids will be deployed as necessary; but it should not be assumed that fluid availability would be limitless due to logistical constraints entailed in such distribution.

All runners should be discerning of their own fitness level in their decision to enter the marathon. Runners should be considerate of their fellow participants behind them who will also require additional fluids. **It is strongly recommended that all runners slow their pace and reduce their risk to heat stress when conditions warrant.** The Chevron Houston Marathon asserts that each runner assumes this responsibility when entering an event with the potential risks that a marathon presents. Furthermore, it encourages all runners to cooperate with directives given during the race by event personnel and to assist in the safety of their fellow competitors particularly at times when conditions are less than ideal.

The Chevron Houston Marathon is committed to the safety of all its participants and will not sacrifice the safety of any one.