



MONTEVERDE INSTITUTE
INSTITUTO MONTEVERDE

COVID-19 Pandemic Protocols

Monteverde Institute



The Monteverde Institute values the health and well-being of our community, including neighbors in the Monteverde zone, staff, academic program participants, other visitors and collaborators, service providers. Community health hinges on collaboration. Our operations reflect our organizational commitment to promoting and protecting community health, and we thank every person who participates in MVI programs or visits our campus for behavior reflecting a personal commitment to health and collaboration.

If you have questions regarding these protocols or a course with the Monteverde Institute, please contact mvi@mvinstitute.org.

Photo credit (accessed 20 October 2020):
<https://fineartamerica.com/featured/2-misty-cloud-forest-gregory-g-dimijian-md.html?product=face-mask>



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INTRODUCTION

In response to COVID-19, the Monteverde Institute (MVI) has amended our health and safety protocols to address transmission reduction and case management. The MVI employs strict health and safety regulations to minimize risks in all our activities and facilities. These protocols are in effect until further notice by the MVI direction.

The Monteverde Institute has created an environment in which spatial and physical protections are employed as effective tools for the minimization of COVID-19 (and other disease) transmission. In all of our operations, we monitor and strictly adhere to Costa Rican Health Ministry regulations and guidelines:

<https://www.ministeriodesalud.go.cr/index.php/vigilancia-de-la-salud/normas-protocolos-y-guias>. We also follow guidelines put forth by the World Health Organization (WHO), U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center, and our local Caja Costarricense de Seguro Social and Costa Rica Ministry of Health professionals. These guidelines are based on the most recent understanding and conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic and will be updated accordingly.

Regarding partnered programs with universities, schools, and other educational programs, such as those with travel agencies:

The MVI recognizes that every program is distinct and each sending institution will have their appropriate set of protocols. The MVI and the sending institution will jointly review the implementation of protocols and procedures to arrive at mutual understanding and approval of the specific program protocols. Sending institution protocols are considered a priority and will be followed to our best ability under Costa Rica standards and law. MVI requires full vaccination against COVID-19 for all international program participants and staff members.

It is important to note that the COVID-19 protocols are implemented *in addition* to all our standard health and safety protocols (available on our website and handbooks). In our effort to protect each MVI contact, staff member, visitor, and service provider must agree to follow the MVI established operational guidelines, and program participants will also be obliged to act within these protective norms. Many of the preventive measures recommended by health experts require collaboration among people, and we will remind all that **COVID-19 prevention is a team effort**.

The most up-to-date version of these protocols can be found on our website:

<https://monteverde-institute.org/protocols.html>



GLOSSARY

Alcohol gel: hand sanitizing gel containing at least 70% alcohol

Antibody test: detects the body's immune response to an antigen, such as those produced in response to SARS-CoV2 infection; used to identify previous infection

Antigen test: detects proteins associated with the virus; used to diagnose active infections or to confirm a negative PCR test result

Asymptomatic: showing no symptoms while infected with or after recovery from the disease

Close contact: being near (<1.8 m, 6 ft) an infected person for more than 15 minutes

Cohort: group of people from different social bubbles who work, study, or otherwise come together regularly to interact throughout the day, separately from other such groups

Confirmed case: laboratory confirmation of SARS-CoV2 infection from PCR-RT, or a person with COVID-19 symptoms who lives with a person who has tested positive for SARS-CoV2 (epidemiological link; CR definition)

Contact: a person who has had close contact with a confirmed case of the disease

Contact tracing: process of identifying, assessing, and managing people who have been exposed to a disease; in the current pandemic a person (contact) who had close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 will be tested or monitored for symptoms, and quarantined for 14 days after exposure

Coronavirus: a family of viruses with crown-like spikes (coronas), seven of which seven are known to infect people. In addition to the COVID-19 disease, coronaviruses cause some colds (along with rhinoviruses) and other respiratory syndromes (SARS, MERS).

COVID-19: coronavirus disease 2019; the disease associated with SARS-CoV-2 infection

COVID-19 symptoms: cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, and new loss of taste or smell are the most common symptoms of COVID-19

Disinfectant: a cleaning substance that kills the infectious agent (the SARS-CoV2 virus in this case)

Face shield: a clear plastic sheet worn in front of the face optionally worn to complement the required mask; not approved to reduce transmission of the virus but provides additional protection against ocular contact with the virus

False-negative: a COVID-19 "not detected" test result from a person who is infected with COVID-19; certain types of test have higher incidences than others

Hand-washing protocol: cleaning the entire surface of both hands with soap, water, and friction, drying hands with a paper towel, using the paper towel to turn off water and open door, and disposing of paper towel without touching the wastebasket

Incubation period: the time between exposure to the infectious agent and the onset of symptoms (2-14 days for SARS-CoV2)

Isolation: separates sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick

Mask: a disposable surgical mask approved for use in medical settings or a multi-layer reusable cloth (cotton and anti-fluid) face covering; covers the mouth and nose completely and leaves no gaps at the sides (see Mask Specifications and Protocols)



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PCR test: polymerase chain reaction test; detects identifying pieces of the virus itself; used to diagnose active infections

PPE: personal protective equipment

Probable case: a suspected case that is unconfirmed due to an inconclusive test result or no test

Quarantine: separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick and to prevent the spread of disease by asymptomatic cases (14 days from exposure with no appearance of symptoms in CR)

Rapid / antigen test: detects proteins produced by the SARS-CoV2 virus, present in a person who is currently infected

SARS-CoV2: severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2; the name of the infectious agent that causes COVID-19

Sneeze and cough protocol: sneezing or coughing into a disposable tissue and disposing of it in a wastebasket, or when a tissue is unavailable sneezing or coughing into one's elbow

Social bubble: a group of people who live together and are regularly in close contact

Social distancing (social distancing): maintaining at least 1.8 meters (6 feet) distance from people outside your social bubble

Suspected case: a person who is suspected to have the disease due to showing symptoms of the disease and/or history of potential contact with a person infected with SAR-CoV2

Additional terms can be found at the following urls:

<https://www.yalemedicine.org/stories/covid-19-glossary/>

<https://www.kff.org/glossary/covid-19-outbreak-glossary/>

MVI requires full vaccination against COVID-19 for all international program participants and staff members.



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MVI COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS

The MVI has implemented measures in our facilities that comply with regulations and guidelines from the Costa Rican government and honor the requests of our partner institutions to the degree possible, along with other public health recommendations, best practices based on available information, and logistical considerations for international travel. We maintain communication with local and national authorities to determine current mitigation measures in our community.

The following regulations apply to all persons (staff, visitors, community members, service providers, delivery drivers, students, faculty, officials, and anyone else) who enter MVI facilities (buildings, campus, reserves) or participate in MVI programs, courses, or activities:

MONTEVERDE INSTITUTE COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS
WEAR A MASK, AND WEAR IT WELL: Until further notice, proper use of an approved mask is required while in the MVI facilities, on campus, and in MVI activities. See below for full mask specifications and protocols.
WASH YOUR HANDS: All persons are required to wash their hands before entering MVI facilities or participating in activities, using the protocol described in the glossary and posted at handwashing stations.
PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING: A 1.8-m (6-ft) social distance is recommended between all persons and is required for all persons not from the same social bubble. If distancing is not possible, it is critical that everyone wear a mask.
AVOID TOUCHING YOUR FACE: Wash your hands before touching your face to minimize the chance of the virus entering your respiratory system.
KEEP YOUR HANDS TO YOURSELF: No personal contact or physical salutations.
COVER YOUR COUGH (and sneeze): Whenever possible, cough/sneeze into a disposable tissue, dispose of it in a closed wastebasket, and wash your hands; otherwise, cough/sneeze into the inside of your elbow.
CLEAN UP AFTER YOURSELF (and before): When possible, and always when dictated by specific protocols, clean and disinfect surfaces before and after touching them.
MONITOR YOUR HEALTH, ISOLATE IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS: The MVI prohibits the entrance to its facilities, activities, reserves, and campus of anyone who is COVID-19 positive, restricted to quarantine or isolation, or those presenting COVID-19 symptoms (fever, sore throat, cough, headache, difficulties breathing, chills, loss in sense of smell and/or taste, runny nose, or diarrhea). We encourage medical consultation for any of these symptoms and will facilitate this whenever possible.
PLAY BY THE RULES: Abide by current Costa Rican regulations and MVI protocols for the COVID-19 pandemic, emergency situations, or other instances where personal and public safety protocols are deemed important by government officials.



Mask Specifications and Protocols

Remember that any person infected with the SARS-CoV2 virus can spread the disease, even if they do not have symptoms or have been vaccinated. For this reason, the proper use of an approved mask is always required on MVI's campus, inside MVI facilities, and during MVI activities at any site. Proper use of an approved mask by all persons is essential to reduce disease transmission. Refer to Appendix A for more mask information resources.

Masks must cover both a person's nose and mouth (from bridge of nose to under chin), with no gaps at the sides, and must be worn accordingly. Masks must be placed and worn using a head harness that can surround the head or be attached to the ears.

Minimum specifications for approved masks (Costa Rica Ministry of Health):

- Cloth masks must include at least two layers of fabric, one cotton and one anti-fluid
- Disposable, single-use, multi-layered anti-fluid procedural or surgical masks that do not allow the passage of light, air, or water

Not acceptable:

- Single-layer fabric (such as bandanas)
- Face shields (if used for additional protection, must be combined with an approved mask)

Wash your hands before and after touching your mask (or use alcohol gel if soap and water are not available) and **avoid touching the mask fabric.**

Cloth masks can be worn for **up to six hours** before being replaced.

Disposable masks can be worn for **up to three hours** before being discarded.

Replace or wash your mask regularly (ordinary laundry detergent or soap, preferably unscented, is sufficient). If your mask becomes **wet, dirty, damaged, or visibly contaminated**, immediately change it for a clean, dry mask. Replace a cloth mask with a clean one. Store dirty masks in a sealed plastic bag if they cannot be washed or discarded immediately. Discard a disposable mask, in a wastebasket with a lid whenever possible.

Do not share masks. Do not handle a mask someone else has worn. Do not remove your mask to speak to someone.



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MVI COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS for MVI Facilities Use

The MVI reserves the right to close its facilities to the public during pandemics or more localized disease outbreaks, following official information from the Costa Rican government and Ministry of Health.

In recognition of the importance of achieving herd immunity, COVID-19 pressure on Costa Rica's health system, and the protection provided by vaccination even when COVID-19 is contracted, the Monteverde Institute requires that all international participants be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 prior to program commencement. The final dose of the vaccine must be administered at least two weeks prior to program commencement. Vaccination status will be requested by MVI with other participant information, and by the Costa Rican government in the HealthPass that must be completed to enter the country. At this time, we do not accept participants with vaccine exemptions. This policy applies to all MVI international programs (including internships and research affiliation) beginning on or after October 15, 2021. For the reasons cited above, the Monteverde Institute also requires all staff members and contracted personnel be fully vaccinated against COVID-19, effective December 31, 2021.

The MVI administration and building management will maintain updated written protocols regarding building and people management, including personal safety rules, social distancing facilitation, cleaning requirements, building/room capacity restrictions, event management, contact tracing, and emergency response measures including the quarantine, isolation, transport, and care of COVID-19 exposed, suspected, or infected persons.

Personal precautions

- Abide by **MVI COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS** listed on page 9 (mask use, hand washing, social distancing, etc.)
- **Hand washing** (and optional additional hand sanitization with alcohol gel) is required upon arrival, before entering the kitchen, and upon departure of the bathrooms, as well as at a person's discretion, and when dictated by signage or instructed by MVI staff, program leaders, or any program participant.
- **Signage:**
 - Visitor rules are posted at all entrances of the MVI.
 - Building and room people capacity limits are visibly posted.
 - Mandatory mask use and hand washing signs are throughout the building, with emphasis at entrances, kitchen and eating areas, classrooms, and bathrooms.
 - Proper cough and sneeze methods are illustrated on signage throughout the building.



Facilities management

We have implemented more frequent and thorough sanitation and hygiene measures on campus and in our operations to include practices and products known to kill viruses and other pathogens. For example:

- **Common areas and bathrooms are cleaned more frequently and thoroughly**, using protocols and products that kill viruses and other pathogens.
- **High-touch surfaces are disinfected more frequently** (computer equipment, telephones, remote controls, photocopier, light switches, doorknobs, bathrooms, handrails, grab bars, common spaces, etc.), and disinfectant is provided for users.
- Receptionist, librarian, and lecturers communicate with the public from behind a **glass barrier**.
- All visitors must **always wash hands upon arrival and use a mask**. Hand sanitizer (minimum 70% alcohol) dispensers are placed in all public areas of the building and at outside locations.
- Visitor reception has been moved to the well-ventilated vestibule. All visitors must provide **contact information** in case of need for tracing, and are obliged to inform the MVI if they are exposed to or infected with COVID-19 or any other infectious disease that would put others at risk.
- Reception maintains a **daily log** for offices, library, and auditorium. All people entering the building must indicate their primary location use within the building.
- Classroom, auditorium, eating area **capacity has been reduced to 50%** to allow for sufficient social distancing. Furniture placement and floor markings facilitate this practice.
- A **seating chart** of any event in the auditorium is recommended (for contact tracing purposes). This will allow us to inform persons if they are likely exposed to a person who subsequently is confirmed to have COVID-19.
- To promote **maximum ventilation**, all doors and windows are to be kept open. Operations personnel open doors and windows of common areas, and personnel open doors and windows of their respective workspaces. Anyone using a space should check upon entering, and open doors and windows if necessary.

To facilitate these regulations, the **MVI guarantees access to cleaning and disinfectant products in the facilities**, such as: water, soap, paper towels, disinfectants, min. 75% alcohol solution spray, disinfectant wipes, disposable wipes, hand-sanitizing (70% alcohol) gel, and aerosol sanitizers to all in the MVI facilities and activities.

- **Alcohol gel dispensers** have been placed in different areas of the facilities, including bathrooms, kitchen, eating areas, all classrooms and offices, auditorium, reception, and at all entrances of the buildings. Program coordinators will also provide alcohol gel in activities.



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- **Pedal sinks** are installed in the main access points of the buildings for required handwashing upon arrival.
- All the **bathrooms** have liquid hand soap, paper towels, alcohol gel, alcohol solution in spray bottles to use before and after using the toilet.
- Each common space and office has **disinfectant** (wipes, aerosol spray).
- **Covered, foot-operated wastebaskets** are placed throughout the facilities.
- **Foot operated sinks** are positioned at building entrances.
- Highly visible reminders of **handwashing, cough, sneeze, and greeting protocols** are posted throughout the campus.
- Constant **education and communication** of these protocols is provided through signage, receptionist, staff, coordinators, email, and social media communication channels.
- **Glass barriers** are installed in reception, library, and auditorium lectern for talks.

Access control will be the responsibility of the building operations manager and receptionist. Each staff member and coordinator is responsible for managing room capacity limits.

Room capacity restrictions under COVID-19 protocols are as follows:

Space	Normal Capacity	COVID Capacity
Reception	6	1 behind reception glass barrier 1 in printer area (separate entry)
HR Office	2	1
Spanish office	7	2
Executive director office	9	5
Auditorium	80	15 (recommended) 20 (max. with social distancing)*
Kitchen	12	5
Main dining area and corridor	32	20
Employee dining area	14	7
Library	25	15
Laboratory	10	5
Classroom 1	50	16
Fox Maple classroom 1st floor	30	11 (classes) 15 (talks)
Fox Maple classroom 2nd floor	10	5
Fox Maple garage/workshop	10	5
Tree nurseries (MVI/Calandria)	25	10/15
Open-air classroom	12	6
Executive director assistant office	2	1
Academic director office	4	2



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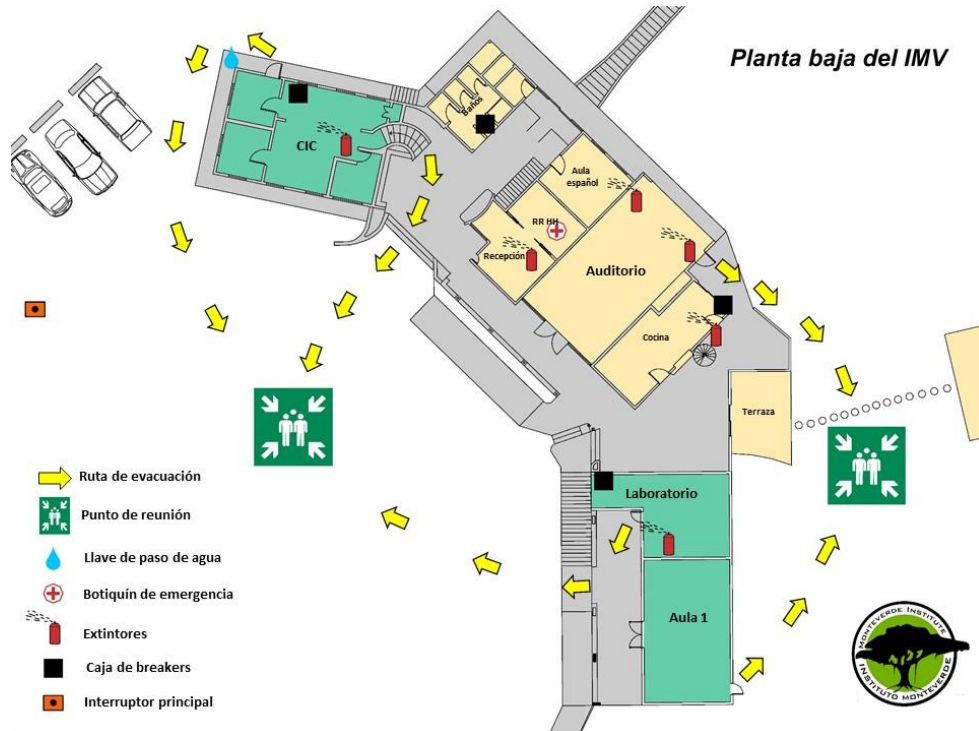
Academic department office	3	3
Accounting office	3	3
CIC supervisor office	3	1
Community outreach office	3	1
Shared CIC coordinator office	10	4
Information technology office	3	1
Bathrooms	5 regular, 1 compost toilet	6 bathrooms

*Capacity is higher if the group is a social bubble.



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MVI Facilities Map





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MVI Protocols for Staff, Visitors, and Providers

***All persons must comply with the COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS (p. 9)
and COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS for Facilities (p. 11)**

MVI COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS REMINDER
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AVOID TOUCHING YOUR FACE: Wash your hands before touching your face to minimize the chance of the virus entering your respiratory system.
KEEP YOUR HANDS TO YOURSELF: No personal contact or physical salutations.
COVER YOUR COUGH (and sneeze): Whenever possible, cough/sneeze into a disposable tissue, dispose of it in a closed wastebasket, and wash your hands; otherwise, cough/sneeze into the inside of your elbow.
CLEAN UP AFTER YOURSELF (and before): When possible, and always when dictated by specific protocols, clean and disinfect surfaces before and after touching them.
MONITOR YOUR HEALTH, ISOLATE IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS: The MVI prohibits the entrance to its facilities, activities, reserves, and campus of anyone who is COVID-19 positive, restricted to quarantine or isolation, or those presenting COVID-19 symptoms (fever, sore throat, cough, headache, difficulties breathing, chills, loss in sense of smell and/or taste, runny nose, or diarrhea). We encourage medical consultation for any of these symptoms and will facilitate this whenever possible.
PLAY BY THE RULES: Abide by current Costa Rican regulations and MVI protocols for the COVID-19 pandemic, emergency situations, or other instances where personal and public safety protocols are deemed important by government officials.

Visitors at the MVI facilities

Every person that enters the MVI facilities **must abide by the COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS** (pages 9 and 11 of this document and posted at each MVI building entrance). In addition to those regulations (mask, hand sanitization, etc.), visitors must:

- All visitors (not including international program participants arriving as a group) entering the facilities must provide their **contact information** on the registration form that is on the table outside of reception, as well as identification of their actual spatial use at MVI, for contact tracing purposes if necessary. On this table, alcohol gel disinfectant wipes, disposable masks, and a pen are available (disinfect any shared writing utensil before and after use).
- If the visit is for an **activity or tour**, and the coordinator of this activity has been notified beforehand, they should give the instructions on the MVI protocols before



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the visitor arrives on campus, including the use of masks and notifying the receptionist.

- All persons using **offices, library, auditorium, or classrooms** at the MVI are responsible to clean their area and equipment before and after use. The MVI will provide a cleaning kit to the person in charge of reserving a classroom. This kit includes information on the protocols to help ensure that the space has been cleaned correctly after its use.
- There are signs at every entrance with **instructions for visitors** (maintained and updated by the operations department).

Providers at MVI facilities

(See separate section for provider operations.) Every person that enters the MVI facilities **must abide by the COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS** (page 9 of this document and posted at each MVI building entrance). In addition to those regulations (mask, hand sanitization, etc.), providers must:

- **Coordinate a delivery schedule** with reception
- **Leave cell phone in vehicle** during delivery, or if it must be carried on campus, do not place the cell phone or other communication device on surfaces, especially worktables or in direct contact with food
- Stay **only the time necessary** for the delivery
- Deliveries of products must be made in the **assigned area** (informed by receptionist)
- The establishment's personnel **clean and disinfect** the product upon arrival and the reception area using products authorized by the Ministry of Health

MVI Staff

Every person that enters the MVI facilities **must abide by the COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS** (pages 9 and 11 of this document and posted at each MVI building entrance). MVI administration will establish remote work mandates and options under the following plans:

1. **Complete closure:** all staff are on remote work or individual outdoor work. One guard or operations staff member will provide a single presence day and night at the facilities, taking all precautions regarding disease transmission.
2. **Remote work mandate:** only operations, maintenance, and guards allowed on site. On-site workers should practice all preventive measures regarding COVID-19 transmission.
3. **Remote work recommendation:** staff members have the option to work from home if their position allows it. They shall give weekly updates on their work to their immediate supervisor.



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MVI Procedure in the case of COVID-19 exposure or infection on campus

Any staff member testing positive for the virus or coming into contact with a confirmed case must notify the Human Resource Coordinator immediately.

Any person that has tested **positive for the SARS-CoV2** must:

- Seek and follow **medical guidance** and Ministry of Health **sanitary orders**
- Enter **isolation/quarantine** and not come to MVI facilities or activities for the duration
- Report their condition immediately to the MVI **Human Resources Coordinator**

In the case of potential exposure at MVI facilities or activities, the Human Resource Coordinator will immediately contact (and confirm receipt) all persons that have potentially been exposed (contact tracing), provide a written notice, and confirm receipt of the information. This includes exposure to a provider, student, visitor, or any other MVI contact. **Confidentiality will be maintained.** The MVI operations and maintenance staff will be notified for additional cleaning by specially trained staff. **Personal protective equipment including gloves, rubber boots, mask, face shield, and smock should be used and disposed of properly after use.** The cleaning person should bathe immediately after the final cleaning and wash their clothes.

Who will be informed?

According to most contact tracing standards, any person who was within 1.8 m of the infected person for at least 15 minutes has been exposed and is considered a close contact, and should be informed immediately. MVI will support official contact tracing procedures of the Ministry of Health.

MVI will inform people in the following categories directly:

- First notifications will be to direct contacts: people that may have been within 1.8 m of the infected person for more than 15 minutes and they will be classified as “exposed.”
- Second notifications will be to all people in the same room as the COVID-19 positive person. If the room was not well-ventilated, or if they were within 1.8 m of the infected person, they will be considered “exposed.”
- Third notifications will be to all people who would have had other types of exposure (halls, well-ventilated rooms, etc.). This group will be informed for precautionary purposes only and they will not be considered “exposed.”



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- All staff will be informed for precautionary purposes and confidentiality will be maintained. The person can share their name directly with colleagues, permit Human Resources to share it, or request confidentiality be maintained.
- The infected person may return to campus when the sanitary order issued by the Ministry of Health is lifted.

Close contacts of an infected person must comply with any Ministry of Health directives (e.g., sanitary order, monitoring for symptoms).

Additional staff rules:

***All staff, while working, must comply with the COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS (see p. 9) and COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS for facilities (see p. 11)**

- All MVI staff members must be fully vaccinated by December 31, 2021.
- Staff members are responsible for keeping their workspaces clean and disinfected.
- All staff members have access to WhatsApp, and most have access to email. The Human Resources Coordinator uses both these channels of communication, as well as monthly staff meetings, to provide regular reminders and updates to protocols. Staff members are responsible for checking these channels of communication at least three times per day.
- Monthly staff meetings will be held virtually (Zoom or other equivalent) when the facilities are closed, or a remote work mandate or recommendation is in place. Any staff members participating in the same room must comply with all established protocols.
- It is the responsibility of each person to be informed by official sources regarding the pandemic and associated legislation and official guidelines, including the COVID-19 call center (1322). Staff members with worries or questions should contact human resources or their direct supervisor. Communicating rumors or other unverified information through MVI channels is prohibited.



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Detailed MVI Protocols for Facilities and Campus Use

***All persons must comply with the COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS (p. 9)
and COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS for Facilities (p. 11)**

MVI COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS REMINDER
WEAR A MASK, AND WEAR IT WELL: Until further notice, proper use of an approved mask is required while in the MVI facilities, on campus, and in MVI activities.
WASH YOUR HANDS: All persons are required to wash their hands before entering MVI facilities or participating in activities, using the protocol described in the glossary and posted at handwashing stations.
PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING: A 1.8-meter (6-feet) social distance is recommended between all persons and is required for all persons not from the same social bubble. If distancing is not possible, it is critical that everyone wear a mask.
AVOID TOUCHING YOUR FACE: Wash your hands before touching your face to minimize the chance of the virus entering your respiratory system.
KEEP YOUR HANDS TO YOURSELF: No personal contact or physical salutations.
COVER YOUR COUGH (and sneeze): Whenever possible, cough/sneeze into a disposable tissue, dispose of it in a closed wastebasket, and wash your hands; otherwise, cough/sneeze into the inside of your elbow.
CLEAN UP AFTER YOURSELF (and before): When possible, and always when dictated by specific protocols, clean and disinfect surfaces before and after touching them.
MONITOR YOUR HEALTH, ISOLATE IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS: The MVI prohibits the entrance to its facilities, activities, reserves, and campus of anyone who is COVID-19 positive, restricted to quarantine or isolation, or those presenting COVID-19 symptoms (fever, sore throat, cough, headache, difficulties breathing, chills, loss in sense of smell and/or taste, runny nose, or diarrhea). We encourage medical consultation for any of these symptoms and will facilitate this whenever possible.
PLAY BY THE RULES: Abide by current Costa Rican regulations and MVI protocols for the COVID-19 pandemic, emergency situations, or other instances where personal and public safety protocols are deemed important by government officials.

Reception

Follow all COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS.

- Maximum reception capacity: 3 people
 - 1 receptionist
 - 1 additional person in main reception area
 - 1 additional person at photocopier/printer
- All visitors and those waiting for reception must remain in the well-ventilated vestibule.
- The photocopier/printer area is now accessed from the auditorium.
- The receptionist works behind a glass barrier and follows all Global Guidelines (including wearing a mask).
- Only the receptionist directly accesses the reception desk area, keys, supplies, and the storage closet.



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- When distributing or receiving any material, keys, or other objects, the receptionist cleans the object with alcohol before giving it to the other person, and before receiving and storing returned items.
- The receptionist ensures that visitors understand the Global Guidelines and relevant specific protocols, and that anyone in the greater reception area follows them.

Laboratory

Follow all COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS.

- Maximum laboratory capacity: 5 people
- Hands must be washed (or sanitized, at minimum) before entering and when leaving the laboratory.
- The work area must be disinfected before and after its use, with special attention to high-touch surfaces on equipment.
- Air circulation is guaranteed by opening all the windows and the door, as long as this does not interfere with the equipment being used.
- To avoid having groups of people in this enclosed space, the use of the laboratory must be reserved in advance in reception or coordinated with the laboratory coordinator.

Library

Follow all COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS.

- Maximum capacity: 15 people
- Hands must be washed (or sanitized, at minimum) before entering and when leaving the library.
- The library coordinator works behind a glass barrier and follows all Global Guidelines (including wearing a mask).
- The library coordinator informs every person of the library protocols upon entry.
- When there are more than five people in the library, the library coordinator opens windows to guarantee air circulation. Doors are always open when the library is open.
- Each person is in charge of disinfecting their workspace before and after use. This includes table, chairs, and computer equipment.
- Alcohol gel dispensers and disinfectant are on the central table.
- The five desktop computers are placed according to social distancing guidelines.
- The librarian locates and cleans each book before giving it to the person checking it out and cleans all books that are checked back in before returning them to the shelves.
- Locker keys are available for check-out from the library coordinator, who will clean them before check-out and when returned.



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Auditorium

The auditorium is available for presentations, classes, concerts, and other types of gatherings upon authorization of the MVI direction and when governmental regulations allow gatherings. The auditorium capacity (normally 80 persons) will be operated at reduced capacity as stipulated by government regulations and MVI discretion.

Follow all COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS.

- Maximum capacity 50%: 40 people but MVI recommended capacity is 15. Special permission by MVI direction is required for 20-person capacity with the implementation of extra precautionary measures (e.g. increased ventilation and expansion on to MVI outside corridor).
- The maximum capacity for a group that is a social bubble can be increased to 40.
- Chairs and furniture are adequately spaced to ensure a minimum of 1.8-meter separation between people from different social bubbles.
- Both doors will remain open whenever the auditorium is in use.

Kitchen and Food Preparation

Follow all COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS.

It is critical that everyone always wear a mask in the kitchen and eating areas, except when eating or drinking.

The kitchen is divided into the food preparation area, which includes the stainless steel table, food service refrigerator, stove, deep sink, and associated counter space; and the staff kitchen area, which includes the coffee table, staff refrigerator, microwaves, two sinks, associated counter space, and dish/utensil storage.

Food service areas are the kitchen window/counter, table under the window looking at Fox Maple building, and the coffee/tea station.

Kitchen

Follow all COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS, and standard kitchen and food preparation rules.

- Maximum capacity: 5 people
- Hands must be washed before entering and sanitized upon entering the kitchen for any reason, and before touching any equipment in the eating area (refrigerator, microwaves, coffee and tea station supplies and equipment, food service utensils, etc.).
- It is critical that everyone wear a mask at all times in the kitchen.



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- Only authorized, trained kitchen staff may use the main food preparation area while food is being prepared for the public.
- Non-kitchen staff may use the kitchen only to retrieve, wash, or prepare food.
- Staff using the kitchen must practice social distancing to the extent possible.
- Kitchen utensils must not be used by more than one person at a time.
- All doors are to remain open whenever the kitchen is in use.
- Each person should clean an area before and after using it, and clean all dishes, utensils, etc. used during food preparation before leaving the kitchen.
- The kitchen may NOT be used:
 - For eating
 - For congregating
 - By unauthorized persons

Food preparation and service for the public

In addition to the kitchen protocols above:

- It is critical that everyone wear a mask at all times while preparing food.
- Food preparation is planned to limit the number of staff in the kitchen during food preparation for the public.
- Staff should avoid facing other staff members while working by arranging workstations in a linear fashion.
- The frequency for hand washing while in food preparation/service is: before preparing meals; after using the bathroom; after coughing or sneezing; after being in public areas; touching keys or money; using personal articles or other frequently-touched surfaces such as phones, door handles, etc.; after touching objects that have been manipulated by the visitor (silverware, plates, cups); after interacting with a visitor; before and after taking a break or eating; and after any activity that could have contaminated their hands.
- While working in food preparation or food service, staff members should store their personal articles, such as: cellphones, tablets, pens, wallets, planners, and preferably keep them in storage. If any of these items must be used in the kitchen or food service areas, they must be disinfected, and hands must be washed after touching them.
- Avoid touching the face, the eyes, nose or mouth.
- Keep nails short.
- Hair must be tied back or contained in a hair net.
- Do not use jewelry such as: rings, earrings, necklaces, bracelets, etc.

Lounge, Food Service, and Dining Areas

Follow all COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS. Handwashing, mask use, and social distancing in these areas are paramount. Group photographs including members of different social bubbles and greetings involving physical contact are prohibited. Maximum capacity limits



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and spacing for social distancing are posted and enforced. Each staff member and coordinator is responsible for managing room capacity limits.

Food service protocols for the public

- Wearing a mask is required at all times except when eating or drinking.
- Colored tape on the floor marks proper distancing for in food service areas.
- Visible signage reminds staff and the public to wash hands before enjoying food service and practice social distancing.
- Self-service buffet and salad bars are suspended.
- Food is served directly onto the plate and delivered to the visitor in a way that minimizes contact.
- Surfaces and utensils are cleaned and disinfected frequently.
- Silverware is delivered to the visitor by MVI personnel in individual packaging either paper, cardboard, or napkins.
- Tea is available from kitchen staff.

Furniture arrangement for social distancing

- Tables and chairs are distributed to ensure 1.8-meter-distance between people or social bubbles. Furniture should not be rearranged by visitors.
- In the case of the same social bubble, up to six people may sit together, according to the Costa Rican Institute of Tourism's Protocol for Food Services.

Cleaning and disinfection process in areas of visitor service

- Tables, chairs, and any other items are disinfected by MVI staff after food service, ideally using disposable paper towels.
- The group coordinator or an MVI staff member reminds visitors of the importance of personal hygiene.
- Staff use approved methods of washing and disinfection of dishes, glasses, silverware, cloth tablecloths, napkins, etc.
- Utensils that were not used, but may have been in contact with visitors, should be washed and sanitized.
- Each user should disinfect after each use the containers with seasonings, sauces, and dressings that are kept on the tables, as well as any items at the coffee station (MVI staff also disinfects these surfaces as part of cleaning process).
- Kitchen or other MVI staff wash all kitchen utensils in hot water as part of the sanitizing process.

Rachel and Dwight Crandell Memorial Reserve

- Visitors are welcome to walk on the trails, as long as they go individually or with their social bubble, and practice social distancing.



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- If other visitors are encountered, appropriate social distancing must be respected.
- Visitors entering through the MVI facilities must register at reception, along with applying the protocols of hand washing and wearing face masks as they pass through the campus.

Monteverde Institute / Costa Rican Conservation Foundation nurseries

The MVI coordinator shall review the protocols including the correct use of masks, hand washing, and social distancing. The coordinator will carry a first aid kit that includes disposable face coverings, gel alcohol, disinfectant wipes or aerosol, and liquid hand soap. Although most of the activity is outdoors, the group shall be informed on how to keep social distancing during the activity. Each person is responsible for complying with the preventative measures and the coordinator is required to remind participants of these measures. The coordinator will also set the example by being the first to follow these rules.

- At the beginning of the activity the coordinator must go over the protocols including the correct use of face masks, social distancing, and hand washing, including designating separate workspaces.
- Follow all COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS.
- Maximum capacity in the nurseries: 10 people at MVI, 15 people at La Calandria and work should be distributed to always respect the physical distance of 1.8 meters between people, as indicated by signage.
- Every person who enters the facilities or the nursery must wash their hands upon arrival.
- All participants must wear a mask while in the nursery.
- In the case of using gloves or hand tools such as shovels, these need to be washed or disinfected appropriately after the activity.
- Social distancing should be practiced at all times by all participants.



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Protocols for Monteverde Institute Activities

***All persons must comply with the COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS (p. 9)
and COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS for Facilities (p. 11)**

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Field work

Field work refers to all jobs not on the MVI campus but done by staff from the MVI in collaboration with volunteers from the community or visitors.

- Follow all COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS and the coordinator must wash their hands before the activity, use a mask, and practice social distancing.
- At the beginning of the activity the coordinator must go over the protocols including the correct use of face masks, social distancing, and hand washing, including designating separate workspaces. Each person is responsible for complying with the preventive measures and the coordinator is required to remind participants of these measures. The coordinator will also set the example by being the first to follow these rules.
- Since field activities are held outdoors, social distancing is a very effective and accessible preventative practice with the maximum capacity of 9 people per a 25 m² area.



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- Groups should be assigned by social bubbles and should maintain social distancing with other groups while doing the task.
- Face masks are recommended at all times and are mandatory when social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Volunteers should arrive at the work site in their own vehicle. If for any circumstances the MVI's vehicles are used, the protocols for vehicle use need to be followed.
- Each person is responsible for taking their own cleaning kit, including face mask and gel alcohol.
- The MVI coordinator will have a first aid kit that includes extra disposable masks, alcohol gel and disinfectant wipes or aerosol. If there is accessible water at the area where the field work is done, then the coordinator should also take liquid hand soap.
- Any equipment used during the field work, such as gloves or shovels, needs to be disinfected or washed once the work is done. In the case of gloves, these need to be washed with soap, and in the case of the shovels, the handle needs to be disinfected with wipes.
- If any of the staff, volunteers, or visitors have symptoms such as, fever, sore throat, cough, headache, difficulties breathing, chills, loss in sense of smell and/or taste, runny nose, or diarrhea, and if necessary, they should contact a medical center. If the coordinator has knowledge that one of the volunteers presents these symptoms, he/she must ask this person to leave the activity, seek medical consultation, and follow all Ministry of Health guidelines.

Tours at the MVI

For visitor service while on the tour of the Monteverde Institute, these are the guidelines that must be followed:

- Before starting the tour, the MVI coordinator reviews the protocols including the correct use of face coverings and hand washing. Although most of the tour is outdoors, the group shall be informed on how to keep social distancing during the activity. The coordinator will promote the compliance of these measures but each participant is responsible for doing their part.
- If a visitor has symptoms such as, fever, sore throat, cough, headache, difficulties breathing, chills, loss in sense of smell and/or taste, runny nose or diarrhea, they are not allowed on the tour and should contact a medical center, if necessary.
- Masks need to be used by all the members of the group at all times.
- The procedure upon arrival is:
 1. Appropriate hand washing and optional additional use of gel alcohol.
 2. Register at reception.
 3. Meet with the tour coordinator.
- Independent visitors need to coordinate their own transportation arrangements to and from the Monteverde Institute.



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- Minimum age is 5 years old to participate in the tour.
- The capacity for the tour is 10 people total, in a maximum of two social bubbles.
- During the tour, there are markings at each stop to identify where people should stand in order to respect social distancing. The coordinator will point these out in each place.
- People on the tour should always stay with the coordinator.
- When the activity ends, follow the proper hand washing protocol before leaving.
- Once the visitors have left, the coordinator needs to notify the cleaning department with the areas that were used. If on a weekend when cleaning staff is not on the campus, the coordinator must clean the bathrooms and follow all the security measures.

Protocols for MVI vehicles and transport

The Monteverde Institute has implemented protocols or use of the vehicles that include instructions for cleaning and disinfecting that comply with those dictated by the Costa Rican Institute of Tourism and the Ministry of Health.

Vehicle maintenance and cleaning

- The maintenance team washes and disinfects all interior and high-touch exterior surfaces at least once each day, in addition to the cleaning that the driver does before and after using the vehicle.
- Special cleaning of areas with constant contact such as seat belts, door handles, steering wheel, etc. is required.
- All vehicles have a visible label with the protocols for cleaning, sneezing, coughing, hand washing, and greeting.
- Each vehicle has visible signage regarding driver and passenger protocols.
- In the case of having transported a person that turns out to be positive for COVID-19, the vehicle will be disinfected by specially trained staff using personal protection equipment, and will be quarantined (out of use) for five days.

Vehicle Driver

- The driver always wears a face mask while in the car and sanitizes hands with alcohol gel before entering and when leaving the car.
- When the vehicle is used by different people on the same day, it is completely disinfected before changing drivers.
- The staff member cleaning the vehicle uses personal protection gear including face mask, face shield or other eye protection, gloves, and rubber boots.
- Before leaving the institute, the driver checks that there are disinfectant wipes and alcohol gel in the car. Driver disinfects high-touch surfaces such as gear shift, steering wheel, window knob, door opener, arm rest, seat, etc. when entering the vehicle and when finished using it.



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- In the case of transporting student luggage, each piece of luggage is disinfected before loading. For tourism transportation companies this is a guideline that the driver must follow; in the case of the MVI vehicles, we ask that the students disinfect, load, unload, and manipulate their own luggage whenever possible.

Transportation with passengers:

- Non-authorized persons are not allowed in MVI-owned or -contracted vehicles.
- Windows must remain open while driving to allow for maximum air circulation in the vehicle. (In the case of the electric golf cart, it is completely open).
- Every passenger must sanitize their hands with alcohol gel upon entering the vehicle and must wear a mask at all times in the vehicle.
- Signage in the front and back of the vehicle regarding passenger safety is easily visible.
- The capacity of the vehicles has been reduced to 50% as follows:

Vehicle	Capacity
Toyota Hilux	2
Electric car	2
Toyota Land Cruiser	5
Toyota Hiace	7

- The Toyota Land Cruiser and the Toyota Hiace are used for student groups, while the Hilux and the electric car are available for individual student transportation.
- All the applicable protocols must be applied to all vehicles.



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MVI Service Provider Minimum Requirements

The MVI, as part of its interest in reactivating activities and working with students and ensuring the health and well-being of those involved, has developed the following basic guidelines, which its providers in the different categories must incorporate in their practices (lodging, food service, tours and activities, and transportation). Each provider will submit to the MVI a copy of their revised protocols to minimize the transmission of diseases in their establishments and services, which will be inspected and approved by MVI logistics and academic department staff. Establishments or operations that do not meet the minimum requirements established herein will not be contracted by the MVI and will receive recommendations to meet the requirements. Once the new requirements are implemented, these providers can resume operations with the MVI upon written notification and MVI inspection and approval.

All MVI service providers must comply with the requirements of, and be certified by, the Costa Rica Ministry of Health, as well as hold operating permits from the respective local government authority.

All providers must abide by the person capacity limit established by the Costa Rica Ministry of Health for the required social distancing. This capacity limit must be posted and enforced by an established protocol.

In addition to the capacity limit, all service providers will adhere to social distancing recommendations which will be visibly posted and enforced, as well as implement furniture placement and floor markings to facilitate social distancing.

Lodging accommodations

- Wear a mask at all times and any personal protection as required according to the activity.
- Maintain physical distance of 1.8 meters from visitors.
- Guarantee adequate water, soap, alcohol gel (at least 70%), disinfectant wipes, paper towels, and no-touch/foot pedal trash cans for guests.
- Must have adequate antibacterial soap in the rooms for the guest to wash their reusable masks every day.
- Visible signs of the protocols for hand washing, sneezing, coughing, and greetings.
- Enhanced cleaning of the facilities, especially rooms (daily), and common areas with special attention to high-touch surfaces such as handrails, controls, switches, doorknobs, sink handles, bathrooms, doorways (minimum twice daily) with products approved by the Ministry of Health.
- Complete washing of all bedding in between users.
- Monitor that social distancing is met in common areas.
- Minimize handling of cash.



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- Provide well ventilated areas for activities.
- Lodging establishments will not hold events, parties, or other social gatherings at their establishments while MVI programs are staying there, and visitation by individuals that are not guests of the hotel will be limited to essential persons.

Food Service

- Only employ persons with current food handling certificate (*manipulación de alimentos*).
- Require masks at all times, and any additional personal protection equipment relevant to the activity.
- Intensify hygiene measures such as hand washing requirements, use and cleaning of uniforms, etc.
- Maintain physical distance of 1.8 meters from visitors. Furniture placement must adhere to social distancing requirements.
- Guarantee water, soap, alcohol, disinfectant towels for guests.
- Visible signs of the protocols for sneezing, coughing and greetings.
- The MVI will not employ, visit, or use buffet-style serving establishments.
- Enhanced cleaning of high contact surfaces such as controls, switches, doorknobs, bathrooms, toilets.
- Employees who, due to their functions, are in close contact with the visitor (such as waiters, cashiers, security staff) and/or food must wear masks at all times.
- Supplies such as toothpicks and straws must have individual packaging and be delivered to visitors upon request.
- Clean and disinfect the table and chairs after being used by visitors, ideally using disposable paper towels.
- Minimize high-touch items: for example, single-serving condiments, single-use/disinfected/electronic menus, and swinging doors should replace shared reusable containers, reusable paper menus, and doors with knobs or handles, respectively.
- Whenever possible, customers should pay for food and services in a manner that minimizes direct contact with providers. When cash payment is necessary, all parties should wash or sanitize hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently high-touch, such as pens and countertops, and encourage customers to use their own pens.
- If it is not feasible or desirable to use disposable utensils, ensure that all non-disposable utensils and dishes are handled with gloves and that hot water and soap are used for washing dishes. Change and wash table linens (napkins, tablecloths) between diners. Employees should wash their hands as soon as they remove their gloves or after handling used utensils or dishes, and must be reminded to not touch their faces with gloves.



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- Make sure ventilation systems are working properly and increase outdoor air circulation as much as possible, for example by opening doors and windows and prioritizing outdoor seating. Do not open doors and windows if doing so represents a health or safety risk (e.g. risk of falling or risk of causing asthma symptoms) to visitors or employees.

Tours and activities

- All personnel and visitors must wear masks during the tour and/or activities.
- Encourage washing, rinsing, and drying of hands according to Ministry of Health protocols.
- Monitor social distancing of 1.8 meters with the visitor and/or social bubbles.
- Guarantee water, soap, alcohol, paper towels for the use of visitors and staff.
- Use disinfection products authorized by the Ministry of Health.
- Establish cleaning/disinfection schedules according to the movements of personnel and visitors.
- Ensure the supply of water, soap, alcohol gel, paper towels, etc. in bathrooms.
- Maintain alcohol gel dispensers at workstations associated with visitor service.
- Carry out frequent training and provide regular updates on topics such as: disinfection, handling of PPE, handling of cleaning products, among others.

Transportation activity

- The driver must use a mask during the whole trip.
- Communicate and enforce the requirement that passengers wear masks during their journey.
- Visibly place sneeze, cough, hand washing and greeting protocols.
- Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces such as handles, railings, seat belts, among others.
- Tourists' luggage must be disinfected before entering the vehicle.
- Promote natural ventilation during the tour. If using A/C, change the filters in case of confirmed COVID between users or vehicle driver.
- The unit must carry cleaning and disinfection products such as alcohol gel, paper towels and liquid soap available to users.
- Protect those responsible for cleaning and hygiene of the vehicle with personal protective equipment.
- Prevent both tourists and drivers from boarding the vehicle if you find symptoms of illness such as fever, sore throat, cough, headache, shortness of breath, chills, loss of smell and/or taste, runny nose, or diarrhea.
- If the unit is used by multiple groups, it must be disinfected at each change.
- The passenger must disinfect their hands with alcohol every time they board the transportation.



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- Handling luggage should be done with disinfecting or alcohol wipes and clean gloves.
- The vehicle must carry a garbage can with a dedicated lid for the disposal of towels, masks, and gloves.
- In units with a bathroom, it should be cleaned and disinfected daily, between groups, and more as needed.
- For long-distance transport: vehicle must have a microphone and speakers (to prevent the coordinator from having to speak loudly as per Ministry of Health guidelines).

MVI Protocols for International Programs and MVI courses

Introduction

Promoting the well-being of students, staff, faculty, and participants in MVI activities is our duty. COVID-19 is one of the greatest challenges that the Monteverde Institute has ever faced, and we have been dynamic, flexible, and proactive in our local response and management of on-site international programs. Our protocols seek to promote the safety and well-being of the students and professors who visit us, and also of our staff, communities, and various collaborators. Since February 2021, we are safely facilitating courses and hosting students, in our facilities and throughout Costa Rica.

As part of this reactivation, we have carefully designed a series of protocols and procedures considering and incorporating regulations, recommendations and guidelines, both from local and international authorities, including: CDC, WHO, Costa Rica Ministry of Health (MS), Johns Hopkins Corona Virus Resource Center, and the Costa Rican Tourism Institute (ICT). Our programs also promote outdoor classes and activities where natural ventilation and social distancing are possible.

The objective of these protocols is to minimize the transmission of SARS-CoV-2. Likewise, we will also respect the protocols and guidelines of the visiting institutions by extending and adjusting our protocols according to the needs and requirements of our visitors when they are stricter than ours, within our abilities and Costa Rican legislation.

We will continually update these protocols, according to the evolution of the pandemic. We will keep our partnering institutions apprised of changes via updates on our website and other communication channels.

Important requirements for tourists entering Costa Rica

Current requirements for entrance to Costa Rica include demonstrating full vaccination against COVID-19 and completion of the online [HealthPass](https://salud.go.cr/) (available at <https://salud.go.cr/>). (Unvaccinated persons must present proof of insurance covering quarantine costs; however, this is irrelevant given MVI's vaccination requirement).



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Requirements for Course Coordinators

The roll of a course coordinator is to provide content and logistical coordination, maintaining and overseeing all aspects of the groups course itinerary. Course coordinators serve as leaders in terms of logistics, trip flow, activities, cultural adjustment, communication and interpretation, and the health and safety of the participants while they are with the MVI; this includes the application of the Institute's COVID-19 Protocols. The course coordinator is the main contact person between groups, MVI staff and service providers during the course.

- Course coordinators have advanced first aid training and know the MVI emergency protocols, including those for COVID -19.
- The course coordinator must be fully vaccinated and will have a COVID-19 test before receiving the group. Should the test result be positive, MVI will provide an alternate coordinator.
- The coordinator will go over the protocols in the program orientation, every morning, and before activities.
- The coordinator will require all participants to comply with all MVI GLOBAL REGULATIONS and relevant Costa Rican government guidelines, always leading by example.
- The course coordinator will have a first aid kit with extra alcohol gel, liquid hand soap, disposable face masks, along with the regular first aid supplies.
- The course coordinator will be the contact person in the case of a participant presenting COVID-19 symptoms and will immediately activate the MVI emergency response team.
- When not lodging with the group, coordinators will have no unmasked contact with the group. By going home, the coordinator leaves the group social bubble, and therefore must be masked at all times with the group. The sending institution may choose to modify this requirement.

Pandemic policy for itinerary modification, cancellation, and refunds

The MVI and sending institutions collaborate to provide outstanding and safe international study programs. Given that objective, we will work alongside the sending institution in the implementation of health and safety measures, as well as prudent course adjustments, including cancellations, when deemed necessary.

We are partners with the sending institution in our programs and will act accordingly in the event of a cancellation for reasons related to the COVID-19 pandemic beyond our control or yours. We are also partners with our providers, many of whom require payment 30 days prior to the reservation. Given these considerations, we have modified our cancellation policy during the declaration of national emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic:



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- **Eight weeks before** the program we will review any necessary modifications to the itineraries based on government guidelines, university protocols, and service provider policies and operations.
- If a program is cancelled by either party **45 days prior to the intended start date or earlier**, MVI will provide a full refund of funds received.
- If a program is cancelled between **30-45 days** prior to the start of the program, a full refund will be provided less an administrative fee of 10% of the total course cost, not to exceed \$3500, to cover course preparation, reservations, contract commitments, and cancellations.
- If a program is cancelled **less than 30 days** before the start date, we will work to find an equitable solution for all and will refund recoverable variable costs. We will work closely with providers to recover as many costs as possible, some of which may convert to credit for future course services.
- In the event of a program cancellation **after arrival** in Costa Rica, we will support faculty in departure logistics, and adjust the course budget to cover associated costs where possible (e.g. applying unused funds to support departure costs).

Itinerary modifications

The MVI reserves the right to modify itineraries to conform with recommendations and mandates as put forth by the Costa Rica Ministry of Health and other government offices. The proposed itineraries will be fulfilled to the extent permitted by the prevailing public health conditions at the time. The activities on the 2022 itineraries and any social interaction may be more limiting or different, compared to previous years, to promote the safety of all participants. With this mind, course itineraries or activities may need post-arrival alterations to uphold safety and health precautions. The sending institution will be consulted before any change, if time permits, and informed if changes are made without consultation. The sending institution on-site representatives (professors, assistants, etc.) will be included in deciding any necessary itinerary change. Program quality will be a priority, including first and foremost health and safety, and the MVI will strive to replace cancelled activities with academically relevant substitutions of equal quality.

Academic Contingency Plan

Course Participation by Isolated or Quarantined Student or Professor

Student: If a student cannot continue course activities due to isolation/quarantine, the MVI will collaborate with the course professor to facilitate content delivery to the best of our ability. Given that all content cannot be delivered in virtual formats, the MVI will make available a series of virtual learning resources that the MVI has designed, from which the instructor of record can select.



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Professor: The MVI will do everything possible to continue the course without interruption. The course professor and MVI will work together to assign roles and tasks. The MVI course coordinator will be prepared to handle all course programming and instruction will be reviewed between the MVI and course professor to select the most appropriate substitute.

Early program termination

In the case that national emergency conditions are declared, or unsafe conditions, program termination before the designated date may be required. The course termination decision will be made jointly between the MVI and the sending institution. The MVI will do everything possible to facilitate the safest possible termination and return of program participants to their home country.

The MVI will redirect all recoverable costs to facilitate program termination and return of program participants. Costs above and beyond the amount recovered will be the responsibility of the sending institution. The MVI will not assume air transportation costs for participant returns.

General COVID-19 Guidelines for Academic Programs

The following measures and protocols are designed to protect the well-being of students, staff, collaborators, and service providers. Every member of the group must follow all established guidelines at all times.

As each program is distinct, MVI and the sending institution will jointly review the program with regards to protocols and procedures to arrive at mutual understanding and approval of the program protocols, including:

- All international program participants must be fully vaccinated by two weeks prior to the program start date.
- It is important that **MVI's current protocols** are thoroughly reviewed by the sending institution. At the same time, the **sending institution's protocols** should be made available to the MVI academic department no less than 90 days prior to the group's arrival (to allow any necessary modifications to the itinerary or logistical arrangements).
- Pre-arrival requirements such as **Costa Rica immigration requirements** (HealthPass, vaccination status proof) and sending institution requirements.
- COVID-19 **testing** upon arrival is highly recommended for the group to form a social bubble. MVI can provide logistical support, and include arrival testing in the course budget upon request.
- Group cohort and social bubble guidelines on group **social bubble formation**.
- **Lodging considerations and restrictions** (e.g. homestay, number of people per room), including quarantine/isolation plans.
- **Transportation** considerations.



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- **Program activity review** as relates to risk, preventive measures, availability, and feasibility under different pandemic or environmental conditions.
- Enhanced precaution measures should be identified regarding program **participants with compromising medical conditions** who may be at high risk for COVID-19 illness and complications (see examples of conditions in Program Participant Preventive Measures section).
- Prior to the group arrival, the sending institution should provide the **contact information for their emergency support person** and any other person who should be notified in the case of sickness, course disruption, itinerary changes, etc. A contact person should also be identified for specific questions in the case of student isolation, quarantine, and medical care.
- The **student handbook** is required reading before departure, along with these protocols that complement the handbook. The MVI waiver, code of student conduct, and packing list have been updated. See Appendix B. As always, the waiver must be read, signed, and submitted before arrival.
- **Pre-departure orientation** additions: The professor or person in charge of the program will need to give an orientation or provide information on the COVID-19 guidelines that apply to Costa Rica, described in these protocols, to students who are going to travel to Costa Rica. The MVI can support with a remote session, or in the way that the sending institution and teachers consider most appropriate, so that all the information is correctly delivered to the students in advance.

Procedures and considerations prior to visiting Costa Rica

MVI policy is to collaborate as much as possible and to our best abilities with the sending institution's policies and protocols. Important elements to consider when traveling to Costa Rica include:

- In recognition of the importance of achieving herd immunity, COVID-19 pressure on Costa Rica's health system, and the protection provided by vaccination even when COVID-19 is contracted, **the Monteverde Institute requires that all international participants be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 prior to program commencement.** The final dose of the vaccine must be administered at least two weeks prior to program commencement. Vaccination status will be requested by MVI with other participant information, and by the Costa Rican government in the HealthPass that must be completed to enter the country. At this time, we do not accept participants with vaccine exemptions. This policy applies to all MVI international programs (including internships and research affiliation) beginning on or after October 15, 2021. For the reasons cited above, **the Monteverde Institute also requires all staff members and contracted personnel be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.**



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- All travelers while in Costa Rica must follow the national legislation and regulations, including those related to COVID-19. Students must follow the guidelines or measures implemented by the Costa Rican Institute of Tourism and the Ministry of Health.
- Preventive measures must be taken during travel.
- Health and safety are the top priority while providing a high-quality program. Flexibility and cooperation are critical components for successful programs.
- Given the infectious nature of COVID-19, quarantine may be necessary in case of being infected with the virus.
- Each participant (or the sending institution) must consider a budget or insurance coverage for unanticipated costs related to COVID-19 infection during the trip.
- It is recommended for the faculty or course manager to have in their small travel first aid kit for the course: extra masks, alcohol wipes, and alcohol gel.
- The course professor will determine student rooming assignments. MVI encourages consistent rooming assignments throughout the course to minimize unmasked contact. This will consider the bed distribution and maximum room capacity determined by MVI, lodging service provider capacity and protocols, and the sending institution's guidelines.

MVI Academic Program Protocols

The MVI has developed a series of specific protocols for each of its activities and physical spaces on campus. Courses are encouraged to be outdoors as much as possible, or in our well-ventilated classrooms and buildings. Social distancing will be possible in all areas and indicated by markers and general guidelines. Individuals are responsible for complying with all relevant rules detailed in the different sections of this document. Likewise, the course coordinator is aware of each of the protocols and will promote proper understanding of and compliance with them.

Note: The collaboration of every individual is imperative to the well-being of the group. While the MVI has established these protocols and will do all in its power to facilitate their implementation, individuals are responsible for maintaining the required social distance and preventive measures. It is beyond the MVI and its staff's abilities to enforce all these preventive measures without the cooperation of every individual.

Intentional non-compliance or any type of harassment regarding compliance with these protocols is a violation of the MVI Code of Conduct and grounds for disciplinary action as determined by the MVI and sending institution. Failure to comply may result in being withdrawn from the program.



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MVI COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS REMINDER
WEAR A MASK, AND WEAR IT WELL: Until further notice, proper use of an approved mask is required while in the MVI facilities, on campus, and in MVI activities.
WASH YOUR HANDS: All persons are required to wash their hands before entering MVI facilities or participating in activities, using the protocol described in the glossary and posted at handwashing stations.
PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING: A 1.8-meter (6-feet) social distance is recommended between all persons and is required for all persons not from the same social bubble. If distancing is not possible, it is critical that everyone wear a mask.
AVOID TOUCHING YOUR FACE: Wash your hands before touching your face to minimize the chance of the virus entering your respiratory system.
KEEP YOUR HANDS TO YOURSELF: No personal contact or physical salutations.
COVER YOUR COUGH (and sneeze): Whenever possible, cough/sneeze into a disposable tissue, dispose of it in a closed wastebasket, and wash your hands; otherwise, cough/sneeze into the inside of your elbow.
CLEAN UP AFTER YOURSELF (and before): When possible, and always when dictated by specific protocols, clean and disinfect surfaces before and after touching them.
MONITOR YOUR HEALTH, ISOLATE IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS: The MVI prohibits the entrance to its facilities, activities, reserves, and campus of anyone who is COVID-19 positive, restricted to quarantine or isolation, or those presenting COVID-19 symptoms (fever, sore throat, cough, headache, difficulties breathing, chills, loss in sense of smell and/or taste, runny nose, or diarrhea). We encourage medical consultation for any of these symptoms and will facilitate this whenever possible.
PLAY BY THE RULES: Abide by current Costa Rican regulations and MVI protocols for the COVID-19 pandemic, emergency situations, or other instances where personal and public safety protocols are deemed important by government officials.

Procedures and protocols during the arrival and stay in Costa Rica

Note: Tourist and academic activities providers have received guidelines by the Costa Rican Tourism Institute and the Ministry of Health (MS). MVI protocols incorporate Costa Rican Tourism Institute, Ministry of Health, CDC, Johns Hopkins Corona Virus Resource Center, and WHO directives and recommendations at the following links.

<https://www.ict.go.cr/es/servicios-institucionales/material-de-apoyo-coronavirus-sector-turismo.htm>

[https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/php/CDC-Activities-Initiatives-for-COVID-19-](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/php/CDC-Activities-Initiatives-for-COVID-19-Response.pdf?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fcommunity%2Fschoools-day-camps.html#page=46)

[Response.pdf?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fcommunity%2Fschoools-day-camps.html#page=46](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/php/CDC-Activities-Initiatives-for-COVID-19-Response.pdf?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fcommunity%2Fschoools-day-camps.html#page=46)

<https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html>



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Arrival day in Costa Rica

- All participants must bathe and change clothes upon arrival at the hotel before continuing with the welcome activities and protocol review. Travel clothes and mask should not be worn again until washed.
- The group coordinator will be in charge of reviewing the COVID-19 guidelines each morning according to that day's activities when meeting students, as well as each time they enter a new facility. The coordinator, professor, and students will collaborate to see that these measures are followed.
- The coordinator will support the professor in rooming assignment. These assignments will remain the same throughout the trip, as long as the circumstances allow it.
- The coordinator will have in the first aid kit, in addition to the usual: disposable masks, alcohol gel, disposable alcohol wipes, thermometer, and additional bags for clothing exposed to COVID-19.
- If previously agreed upon by the sending institution and MVI, COVID-19 testing soon after arrival will be included in the program itinerary and logistics. The cost of arrival testing can be included in the course budget at the request of the sending institution.

Departure day in Costa Rica

- From the US embassy in Costa Rica: As of November 8, 2021, all airline passengers traveling to the United States must show proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19, in addition to the existing requirement of a negative COVID-19 test taken within three days prior to flight. Unvaccinated U.S. citizens or Legal Permanent Residents (LPRs) must obtain a negative COVID-19 test one day prior to their flight to the United States. All children between the ages of 2 and 17 are required to take a pre-departure COVID-19 test. If a child is not fully vaccinated and traveling with a fully vaccinated adult, they can show proof of a negative viral test from a sample taken within three days before departure (consistent with the timeline for fully vaccinated adults). If an unvaccinated child is traveling alone or with unvaccinated adults (U.S. citizens or LPRs), they will have to show proof of a negative viral test from a sample taken within one day of departure.
- As part of planning the course, we take into account this requirement and include the necessary testing logistics in the program itinerary. If requested by the sending institution, MVI will include the cost of testing in the program budget; otherwise, testing will be paid for directly by either each student or the sending institution.

Logistics and Service Providers of the MVI

The Monteverde Institute has asked each provider for their protocols, which have been reviewed by a team from the Institute to be sure that all the rules and guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health and the various regulatory entities are met. Likewise, the MVI has a



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list of minimum requirements that different providers must meet to qualify to work with the MVI (see **MVI Provider Minimum Requirements** section).

All MVI service providers must comply with the requirements of, and be certified by, the Costa Rica Ministry of Health, as well as hold operating permits from the respective local government authority.

All providers must abide by the person capacity limit established by the Costa Rica Ministry of Health for the required social distancing. This capacity limit must be posted and enforced by an established protocol.

In addition to the capacity limit, all service providers will adhere to social distancing recommendations which will be visibly posted and enforced, as well as implement furniture placement and floor markings to facilitate social distancing.

Transportation in Costa Rica

Note: Walking will be promoted and facilitated as much as possible. Give the rural nature of the areas in which program many activities are held, walking to sites less than 1-2 km is common.

- Public mass transit will not be used in MVI programs. Public transportation, as in the case of taxis, will comply with the following guidelines.
- The MVI has verified the protocols of our transportation providers and ensures that they meet the operational requirements (see **MVI Protocols for Vehicles & Transport and MVI Service Provider Minimum Requirements**).
- The use of masks while in the vehicle is obligatory. Group participants, coordinator, and faculty must wear masks for the duration of the trip, unless the sending institution and MVI agree upon a protocols including arrival testing of course staff, participants, and driver.
- Whenever possible, students will load and unload their own luggage. Luggage should be disinfected when it changes hands and always before loading.
- Students will be assigned seating based on their social bubbles (reflecting the rooming list).
- Each program participant must disinfect their hands every time they board the vehicle.
- The use of natural ventilation is encouraged when A/C is not necessary.
- Cleaning and disinfection measures have been intensified, especially for high-touch surfaces.
- The driver and coordinator will model and promote the requirements of mask usage, hand sanitizing upon entering the vehicle, luggage sanitization, and all other protocols students are also required to follow.



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- Everyone must follow the protocols for proper mask use, hand washing, sneezing, and coughing, not touching the face, and greetings.

Lodging, laundry, and disinfection of masks

- The MVI has mandated all its lodging suppliers comply with the necessary protocols (see **MVI Service Provider Minimum Requirements**) and promotes compliance through inspections and evaluations.
- Lodging establishments will not hold events, parties, or other social gatherings at their establishments while MVI programs are staying there, and visitation by individuals that are not guests of the hotel will be limited to essential persons.
- Students will maintain their room assignment throughout the trip, to the extent possible, maintaining the dynamics of social bubbles.
- Program participants should always wear a mask in public places or when in a group.
- All participants must bathe every day upon arrival at the hotel, after participating in the daily activities.
- In case of having a cloth mask, the student will be responsible for washing the mask with soap every night upon arrival at the hotel, leaving it to dry and using their second mask the next day. It is advisable to have a minimum of four cloth masks.
- To promote participants having clean clothes for each day and thus reduce the risk of contagion, the coordinator will facilitate laundry service (including providing bags) at least once during the course itinerary. Laundry service will be paid by each student (or the sending institution, if stipulated as such in their policies). Not all the sites to visit offer laundry service (upon request, coordinator will provide information about laundry service availability at the different sites).

Meals

The MVI has established a protocol for food providers based on requirements given by the Ministry of Health and has shared these with the providers (see **MVI Protocols for MVI Activities and MVI Service Provider Requirements**). The coordinator of the group is aware of these protocols and shall verify that these are followed.

- Participants should always wash and disinfect their hands before eating.
- Any program-provided **snacks** will be food that is properly washed, packaged, and/or sealed to reduce risk of transmission.
- **Breakfasts** will be at the place of lodging (unless specifically requested by the sending institution), following the guidelines and respecting social bubbles.
- **Lunches and dinners:** These will be, as much as possible, previously coordinated for service or delivery at the hotel, restaurant, or the MVI campus.
- In case of express orders to the hotel or MVI, the food must come properly packaged and the delivery is done following all hygiene measures.
- Cohort dining: Cohorts will be assigned specific dining times and respect social distancing requirements while seated, in line for food, and disposing trash.



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- Masks are required except when eating or drinking, and proper handling of masks is critical.

Tours and activities

- The policies of each provider have been requested and reviewed (**see MVI Protocols for Activities and MVI Service Provider Requirements**). The specifications of the guidelines vary according to the type of activity. The coordinator will review the protocols for the activities at the beginning of the day.
- Use masks at all times during the activity.
- Respect social distancing between social bubbles.
- Frequent hand washing and disinfecting throughout the day.

Social bubbles, cohorts, and social distancing in the group

The MVI together with the professor/university in charge will define, according to the respective protocols of each institution, the most convenient and safe formation of social bubbles and cohorts.

The MVI proposes the following:

With the aim of minimizing close contact and facilitating contact tracing if necessary, the group of course participants (students, faculty) will be considered a **cohort: a group made up of people from different social bubbles who regularly interact and participate in activities together throughout the day**. Students rooming together will be considered a **social bubble: a group of people living together and in close contact**. For travel and activities, whenever possible, the cohort will be divided into its component social bubbles, with social distancing between social bubbles. Current Costa Rican legislation requires that masks be worn during all group activities.

Each social bubble should respect the 1.8-meter distance as much as possible when the cohort is together. The rooming list will stay the same for all hotels whenever possible in order to maintain the social bubbles. Additionally, any grouping required for activities, travel, dining, etc. will be according to the rooming list whenever possible.

MVI currently requires arrival COVID-19 testing (day of arrival or morning after, depending on arrival time). The course coordinator and driver will also be tested. Arrival testing costs are the responsibility of the sending institution or each participant, unless a request is made for MVI to include costs in the course budget. Home COVID-19 rapid tests are acceptable. MVI will cover the cost of coordinator and driver testing. If a participant tests positive, they will be quarantined until tested by PCR to confirm or rule out infection.

Program Participant Preventive Measures

Health and well-being are a team effort and a two-way collaboration. While the MVI has designed protocols to minimize the risk of COVID-19 and other disease transmission to



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protect course participants, we also require collaboration to not infect MVI service providers and staff.

- **Follow all MVI COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS, vaccination requirement, arrival testing, and home institution policies and protocols.**
- Stay in your room and immediately inform your professor and/or course coordinator if you present any symptoms of COVID-19.
- Clean and disinfect frequently (minimum once a day) touched objects and surfaces with disinfectant wipes/spray, or alcohol using a cloth.
- Always wash your hands with soap and water, especially after contact with public surfaces, and before and after entering any facility.
- Students with compromising medical conditions may be at high risk for COVID-19 illness and complications (including, according to the CDC: chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, chronic kidney disease, heart conditions, immunocompromised state, obesity, severe obesity, sickle cell disease, smoking, type 2 diabetes mellitus). Accommodations for these students will be determined on a case-by-case basis by MVI, the student, relevant sending institution offices, and the course professor. For more information on COVID-19 risk factors, see:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html>
https://www.ministeriodesalud.go.cr/sobre_ministerio/prensa/docs/ls_vs_001_vigilancia_COVID19_%2024092021_v22.pdf

Mask Requirements, Recommendations, and Effective Use

See **Appendix A** and **COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS**. Proper mask use is essential to minimize the risk of transmission to other people and is required in all public places and group activities.

Disposable masks will be available at the MVI and with all course coordinators as back-up, in case of a person lacking an approved mask.

Wash reusable cloth masks with ordinary laundry detergent or soap before first use and after each use, and do not use for more than one day at a time. The hotels will have soap available in the room for each student to hand wash their own masks and place them in the room to dry. The coordinator may also provide soap for the group for this purpose. Each student is responsible for the hygiene and care of their own masks.

Lodging for student groups

Sending institution guidelines will be followed. The professor/sending institution should assign and inform the Institute of the group's rooming list before traveling. In the case of no specific directive, the MVI procedure will be as follows:



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Roommates will form a social bubble that we will try to maintain throughout the program by keeping rooming lists the same. Arrival testing reduces transmission risk among the group.

Minors (under the age of 18)

In the event that the group is made up of mostly minor students, it must have a minimum of three adult leaders from the sending institution. In case there is a suspected or positive student of COVID-19, a teacher or other chaperone will be available to accompany the student(s) in the process of quarantine if necessary. The company of the chaperone is more for emotional support, as they should not be exposed or have physical contact.

In courses where the majority of students are 18 or older, we recommend two sending institution faculty/staff whenever possible.

COVID-19 symptom self-monitoring for course participants

Participants are responsible for self-monitoring their health and reporting any concerns to the course personnel. The MVI course coordinator will provide the following assessment list at the start of the program, as well as daily reminders to students of their obligation to self-monitor and report.

1. Are you experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19?

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

2. Are you experiencing any respiratory symptoms not related to allergies?

3. Are you experiencing any emergency symptoms?

4. Have you been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for, or has or had symptoms of, COVID-19 within the past 14 days?

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/public-health-recommendations.html>

Student and Group Management for Symptomatic, Exposed, or Confirmed COVID-19 Cases

If a participant presents symptoms of COVID-19 (see list and link above) they should immediately inform the professor or course coordinator. The student should be



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quarantined in a private area (see specifications below) until a medical consultation can be obtained, and obtain a COVID-19 test if recommended by the consulting medical professional, desired by student, or required by sending institution protocols. (These costs must be covered by the participant's health insurance or at their own expense.) They should always wear a mask when they are in the presence of other people and maintain social distance of 1.8 m from others.

MVI will, to the best of our abilities, assist a participant desiring to be tested for COVID-19.

The Ministry of Health is the authority in Costa Rica to which any suspected case of COVID-19 must be reported. Every person, while in Costa Rica, legally must abide by all relevant measures stipulated by this institution.

The MVI will help with the logistics as needed along with the professor in charge, always maintaining constant communication with the participating institution, directly or through the professor. Logistics may involve assisting with transportation of the person to the clinic or other medical attention. In compliance with Costa Rican legislation, MVI will follow the Ministry of Health's procedures and guidelines for handling suspected cases (see below).

Participant exposed to SARS-CoV2

If a participant has had close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, or otherwise been exposed to the virus, they should inform the professor or course coordinator immediately. The participant will be closely monitored for COVID-19 symptoms and should increase preventive measures (masking, social distancing, hand-washing).

In the case of symptoms and known exposure, MVI will facilitate access to medical assistance. The MVI will help with the logistics, along with the professor in charge, and will inform the sending institution, directly or through the professor (as determined at the outset of the program). In compliance with Costa Rican legislation, MVI will follow the Ministry of Health's procedures and guidelines for handling suspected cases.

Participant with confirmed SARS-CoV2 infection

If a participant has a confirmed SARS-CoV2 infection, they must inform the professor or course coordinator, and cooperate with all reporting requirements and contact tracing efforts, which will be carried out by the Ministry of Health and MVI. The MVI will secure medical assistance, facilitate care, and address patient's needs (see next section).

Positive test results are reported to the Ministry of Health, who will issue recommendations and directives to manage the case. The sending institution's designated emergency contact person will be immediately notified, and the MVI Emergency Response Team will be activated. The program professor(s) and coordinator will be notified. The privacy of the student will be honored while the confidentiality of the person's identity will be maintained. The person testing positive for COVID-19 will be placed in isolation (unless placement in medical facilities is required).



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Fully vaccinated first-person contacts (e.g. roommates) will be closely monitored for COVID-19 symptoms, according to current Ministry of Health guidelines. The management of the confirmed case and the rest of the group will follow directives of the Ministry of Health, as well as the sending-institution, on-site professor, and MVI, regarding protective measures.

The Ministry of Health will conduct contact tracing, and issue directives and recommendations, to be implemented with the support of MVI. All persons are required by Costa Rican law and MVI protocol to collaborate with contact tracing and containment efforts.

During contact tracing (as stipulated by Ministry of Health guidelines), the faculty, coordinator, staff, students, or visitors will be notified, as necessary and appropriate, of the potential exposure and corresponding quarantine and cleaning/disinfection processes. Contact tracing also includes immediate notification to the lodging establishment's administration.

Caring for and transportation of confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19

General procedures

Regarding care for the person suspected or confirmed to be infected with the virus, MVI will follow the guidelines of the Ministry of Health and support the logistics of required transfers to and from medical assistance, accommodations for isolation and/or quarantine periods, food/medical services, and surveillance. Accompaniment of the student is at the designation of the sending institution, preferably by the sending institution's professor, program leader, or assistant. The MVI will make its best effort to provide continuation of the course for the affected student through virtual participation.

In the case of a participant requiring medical assistance or hospitalization, coordination will be agreed upon by the MVI, sending institution, and on-site professor(s). Someone, preferably a sending institution representative (e.g. on-site professor), will assist in the process of mobilization, transportation, and support of the infected person.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) should be used by anyone providing care or transport, or accompanying the person infected with COVID-19. This equipment should be properly disposed of in a sealed plastic bag after use. **Personal protective equipment includes gloves, rubber boots, mask, face shield, and smock, and should be used and disposed of properly after use.**



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The infected person's passport, medical information, credit card(s), airline flight ticket/info, and money should go with them during isolation or medical care. The rest of the person's valuables will be stored at the MVI in a locked and secure area.

Costs of medical services will be at the person's or sending institution's expense, as stipulated by the sending institution. (The budget for certain programs includes additional emergency funds, in which case MVI, in communication with the sending institution, would pay from this budget line item.) If insurance cannot be billed directly, the participant or sending institution faculty/staff will pay for services, and MVI will assist in procuring all necessary documentation for reimbursement.

If the MVI coordinator has symptoms or has been exposed to a positive case

The coordinator throughout the course must follow all COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS and other COVID-19 prevention protocols just as any other participant in the group, including but not limited to arrival testing, maintaining physical distance from students and faculty, and always wearing a mask.

In the event that the coordinator presents any symptoms, is exposed, or tests positive for the virus, the procedure will be the same as with any participant in the course and they will immediately separate from the group. The MVI will have a substitute coordinator for the course on-call, who will be informed of the general logistics of the course, and will give immediate support to promote course continuity, in the case it is needed. The MVI Emergency Response Team will assist with coordinator removal to isolation/quarantine, replacement, and care, as well as provide group support. As in the case of students, the coordinator must comply with the corresponding measures indicated by the Ministry of Health, the sending institution, and MVI.

COVID-19 isolation/quarantine and care logistics

Place of quarantine or isolation

The placement of the person in isolation (in confirmed cases) or quarantine (in suspected cases resulting from exposure) is designated by the Costa Rica Ministry of Health. The MVI will contact this institution to follow its directives and recommendations for each case.

The first option of sites for quarantine or isolation are those provided by the Ministry of Health if these are available. Otherwise, the MVI will facilitate access to a place with the following characteristics:



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- Room with good ventilation, equipped with a bed, bedding, table and chair, covered wastebasket, internet and/or telephone, and visible protocols for hand washing, sneezing, and coughing.
- Private bathroom for exclusive use, covered wastebasket, tissue, bucket, toilet paper, disinfectant wipes, alcohol gel, soap (for hands and clothes), and a spray bottle with a chlorine or alcohol solution.
- A space to do laundry (washing machine and dryer) that is not shared with others, as well as broom, floor mop, kitchen towels or paper towels, and plastic garbage bags.

The person will have daily check-ins with the sending institution or program faculty, MVI, and Ministry of Health.

While the person is in isolation/quarantine, it is he/she who will be in charge of daily cleaning of the space, as well as washing their own clothes, using hot water when possible, or else using a dryer with heat, if they are physically capable of doing so. If they are incapable of performing these functions, specially trained personnel will perform them.

In the case of isolation occurring in the person's current shared room, their roommates will quarantine in a separate room. In the case of isolation in a new location, the previous room will be cleaned and disinfected with all preventive measures taken (see section below).

Suspected and confirmed cases will be isolated according to the condition of the disease state of the patient; the times by the Ministry of Health (https://www.ministeriodesalud.go.cr/sobre_ministerio/prensa/docs/ls_vs_001_vigilancia_COVID19_%2024092021_v22.pdf). Completely vaccinated contacts (at least two weeks since final dose) will be monitored for symptoms, but will not be quarantined unless they develop symptoms.

Cleaning of isolation/quarantine space

Lodging administration will be immediately notified by the course coordinator. Cleaning personnel will be advised of the situation and use proper equipment to protect their health.

The cleaning of the isolation area will be carried out thoroughly before and after its use by personnel of the lodging establishment or, if on MVI premises, by specially trained MVI staff. **Personal protective equipment includes gloves, rubber boots, mask, face shield, and smock, and should be used and disposed of properly after use.** The cleaning person should bathe immediately after the final cleaning and wash their clothes.



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Considerations in the case of more than one person being in isolation/quarantine

As it is possible that more than one person might require isolation/quarantine at the same time, each situation will require consideration and medical consultation. In case of students from the same social bubble who have contracted the virus at the same time, sharing isolation space is a possibility, but individual rooms are preferable. All the measures of hygiene such as bathroom disinfection; protocols for handwashing, cough, sneezing, and check-ins; social distancing when possible; and the use of masks must be followed.

In addition to the Ministry of Health's designated isolation/quarantine facilities, the MVI will have more than one site with the conditions previously described for quarantine / isolation. This is in the case several people are either in isolation or quarantine at the time. Ideally, one of these spaces should have the capacity to host up to four people (roommates in a social bubble) with a minimum of two rooms.

In the event that a great part of a group must be isolated or quarantined, the MVI will follow the recommendations made by the Ministry of Health for managing the situation. The MVI will use the sites that the Ministry of Health indicates are appropriate for this purpose. Ultimately, the MVI will look for a lodging place that has sufficient space and the necessary conditions to locate all the people needing to be in isolation/quarantine, if necessary.

Meals

The Monteverde Institute will be in charge of providing meals to the person in isolation/quarantine while this period lasts. This service will be offered by MVI or with trusted, established providers that comply with COVID-19 prevention protocols and have delivery service. Meals will be left outside of the room with notification to the isolated/quarantined person. Meals will be served in disposable containers which will be disposed in sealed plastic bags, collected by MVI personnel taking full precautions.

Transportation and accompaniment of confirmed or suspected COVID-19 cases

Confirmed or suspected COVID-19 cases will be transported following Costa Rica Ministry of Health guidelines. The following are the general recommendations:

- People positive for COVID-19 will be transferred to their home or place authorized by the Ministry of Health under the fulfillment of a sanitary order for home isolation.
- When it is necessary to transport a person positive for COVID-19, it will be done by the following means:
 - Ambulance: that has a certificate of authorization and one with physical distance or barrier between patient and driver
 - Vehicle authorized by the Ministry of Health: must have a minimum of four doors or a van, to ensure the distance between the driver and the patient, the maximum distance authorized for this trip is 50 km. Prior coordination with the corresponding medical center is required.



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- In the event that the transfer is absolutely necessary, and an ambulance is not available, MVI will help by contracting or providing transportation service that meets the Ministry of Health requirements.
- If necessary and allowed by the Ministry of Health, a person might accompany the patient. This will be designated by the sending institution before the course starts. The MVI order for companion is 1) sending institution personnel, or 2) an assigned medical professional or staff person.
- This companion must comply with all the relevant COVID-19 personal protection and prevention measures, and at the end of the care period of close contact, must follow any Ministry of Health directives.

Protocols for students participating in homestay programs

General information

Program

The goal of the community outreach program is to create an environment where both students and families can learn from each other in a warm and safe space. To achieve that goal, we work carefully to place students in the best possible homestay. We currently work with approximately 120 host families from 6 different communities: San Luis, Monteverde, Cerro Plano, Santa Elena, Los Llanos and Cañitas. In addition, we improve support to host families and students throughout the stay by providing orientation and team-building activities, culture shock training at both ends, and discussion forums on cultural differences.

With this document we want to inform our clients, students and families of the Monteverde Institute's cultural exchange program, the processes we have established to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and the actions to be taken when there is a case of someone suspected of being infected with it during the stay with a Costa Rican family.

If there are questions related to homestay, please do not hesitate to contact Lilliam Zúñiga, email: homestay@mvinstitute.org, phone/WhatsApp: +506 8529-5039

General guidelines

The MVI's COVID-19 policies reflect our commitment to protecting the health and wellbeing of students and families. We request and appreciate the commitment of everyone involved to acting responsibly to minimize exposure to the virus, and reporting any symptoms of COVID-19. Before the entrance of the student, both (family and student) must notify if they have had COVID-19 or any COVID-19 symptoms in the last 15 days. Both students and families must be vaccinated. Students will have a negative COVID-19 test before entering



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homestay (upon arrival to the country, or before entering homestay, depending on program dynamics).

Evaluating committee

Before any homestay activity in person, an evaluation committee will meet, made up of the Homestay Coordinator, the Academic Assistant, the Leader of the Emergency Response Team, and the program Coordinator.

The evaluation includes:

- Review the latest version of the MVI general COVID-19 protocols and guidelines of the Costa Rican government
- Incorporate protocol updates into implementation measures
- Communicate the latest version of homestay COVID-19 protocols to staff, families and students
- Develop the strategy of cultural exchange and / or accommodation in houses according to the needs of the group
- Conduct a risk and previous contagion analysis

For the well-being of all, remember to practice the general regulations of COVID-19 in MVI activities and all public places:

MONTEVERDE INSTITUTE COVID-19 GLOBAL REGULATIONS
WEAR A MASK, AND WEAR IT WELL: Until further notice, proper use of an approved mask is required while in the MVI facilities, on campus, and in MVI activities. See below for full mask specifications and protocols.
WASH YOUR HANDS: All persons are required to wash their hands before entering MVI facilities or participating in activities, using the protocol described in the glossary and posted at handwashing stations.
PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING: A 1.8-m (6-ft) social distance is recommended between all persons and is required for all persons not from the same social bubble. If distancing is not possible, it is critical that everyone wear a mask.
AVOID TOUCHING YOUR FACE: Wash your hands before touching your face to minimize the chance of the virus entering your respiratory system.
KEEP YOUR HANDS TO YOURSELF: No personal contact or physical salutations.
COVER YOUR COUGH (and sneeze): Whenever possible, cough/sneeze into a disposable tissue, dispose of it in a closed wastebasket, and wash your hands; otherwise, cough/sneeze into the inside of your elbow.
CLEAN UP AFTER YOURSELF (and before): When possible, and always when dictated by specific protocols, clean and disinfect surfaces before and after touching them.



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MONITOR YOUR HEALTH, ISOLATE IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS: The MVI prohibits the entrance to its facilities, activities, reserves, and campus of anyone who is COVID-19 positive, restricted to quarantine or isolation, or those presenting COVID-19 symptoms (fever, sore throat, cough, headache, difficulties breathing, chills, loss in sense of smell and/or taste, runny nose, or diarrhea). We encourage medical consultation for any of these symptoms and will facilitate this whenever possible.

PLAY BY THE RULES: Abide by current Costa Rican regulations and MVI protocols for the COVID-19 pandemic, emergency situations, or other instances where personal and public safety protocols are deemed important by government officials.

Accommodation in Houses

After entering the Homestay, the student is considered part of the family social bubble: a group of people who live together and are regularly in close contact. The family social bubble does not include family members or any others who do not live in the house.

Additional Pandemic Guidelines for Selecting Families to Host Students:

Families selected during the COVID-19 pandemic must meet extra eligibility requirements to host students:

- All family members eligible for COVID-19 vaccination according to the current Costa Rican Ministry of Health guidelines, must provide proof of full vaccination, as defined at the time of family selection.
- Residence in the Monteverde district.
- Internet for communication reasons in case of isolation or quarantine (classes, communication with families, MVI, etc.).
- Follow all Ministry of Health guidelines.
- Reporting of any COVID-19 symptoms or infection in the family social bubble in the 15 days prior to receiving a student.
- Commitment to following all COVID-19 prevention guidelines dictated by the MVI and the Ministry of Health, including masking and social distancing when receiving visitors from outside the family social bubble.

Once the families have been selected, an assessment of their levels of contagion risk is made, that is, exposure according to their lifestyles prior to the arrival of the students, with the obligation to notify the Homestay Coordinator if at any time their conditions do not satisfy MVI requirements.

Additional Requirements

For students and families during the stay:

- If a family member or the student has been in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19, they must immediately notify the Homestay Coordinator and follow all MVI and Ministry of Health guidelines.



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- If a family member or student presents COVID-19 symptoms, they must immediately notify the MVI and the Ministry of Health to follow the protocols (see General Protocols page 46, Student and Group Management for Symptomatic, Exposed or Confirmed COVID-19 Cases).
- Contact the Homestay Coordinator immediately whenever there is a question or any uncertainty about protocols.
- Every time a family member (including the student) leaves the home, general COVID-19 regulations must be practiced (masking, social distancing, etc.).
- It is requested not to receive visitors during the students' stay. However, if receiving a visitor is necessary, the MVI COVID-19 General Regulations for the use of MVI Facilities (page 11) sections 3, 4, and 9 must be followed, in addition to all applicable Ministry of Health guidelines. Reminder: anyone who does not live in the family's house is not part of the family social bubble.

Specific to students:

The MVI student information forms will include COVID-19 risk factors, vaccination status/date/type and/or contagion history. Additionally:

- Students must bring their own towels (minimum 2 sets).
- Students must bring their own alcohol gel and masks for their exclusive use (enough to change every 6 hours).
- Masks and their usage must comply with the "Specifications and protocols for mask use" in the MVI COVID-19 protocols.

Specific to families

Cleaning and disinfection measures:

Families must follow guidelines 1 and 2 of the General Regulations MVI COVID-19 for the use of MVI facilities (page 11).

- Ensure enough water, soap, alcohol, and towels.
- Cleaning and disinfection products to be used will be those recommended by the Ministry of Health.
- Protocols posted for high visibility, in English and Spanish: sneezing, coughing, handwashing, and greetings.
- It is recommended to use protective equipment (gloves, masks) in the process of cleaning and total disinfection of the home.
- It will be left to the student to decide who (family or student) will carry out the daily cleaning of their room during the stay.
- The family must ensure the thorough cleaning of their home, intensifying cleaning and hygiene measures.



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Process prior to student arrival at the homestay house.

The regular process will be followed, with some additional considerations:

Normal coordination process:

1. Receipt of student forms
2. Data analysis for each student (restrictions-preferences)
3. Place each student with a family in the area that best reflects the various requirements of each student and course
4. Confirm with the family if they can receive the student
5. Send the student the information of the family with which s/he is staying
6. Deliver the student's information and program itinerary to the family
7. Homestay Orientation
8. Reception with families and students
9. Check-in during the stay.

New points:

- MVI will request verification (Ministry of Health certificate or QR code) of each family member's COVID-19 vaccination status, or indication that the member is not eligible for vaccination. MVI may request re-verification as part of the family selection process.
- MVI will request verification of student vaccination status as part of the required student information.
- The student-family matching process will contemplate, in addition to the normal factors: student and family COVID-19 risk factors; lifestyle-related risk level of family members two weeks prior to the program, and family and student during the program; and sending institution requirements (e.g. some may not allow for unvaccinated minors in the homestay).
- Pre-course communication with families and Homestay Orientation with students will include a review of the COVID-19 protocols and explanation of any updates.
- All MVI protocols and Ministry of Health guidelines will be followed in all activities, considering that the student is part of the family social bubble.

Arrival of the student to the homestay house

Recommendations:

- As a welcome protocol, a process should be in place to inform the student of the procedures and rules that are being carried out at home and require that, if during their stay they present symptoms related to COVID 19, communicate it immediately, so that prompt and timely attention is guaranteed according to the Ministry of Health guidelines.
- Give orientation of the house and location of all supplies to implement COVID-19 prevention protocols (alcohol, soap, disinfectant, etc.)
- Mandatory hand washing upon entering the home.



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- All the people who live in the house must ensure that the cleaning and hygiene conditions of the house are met.

Protocols during the stay

It is always important to remind students of the processes, and MVI will send regular reminders and updates to emails and WhatsApp groups (coordinated between homestay and course coordinator).

Recommendations that should be kept in mind during the student stay, in addition to the recommendations above:

- Mandatory frequent hand washing.
- Families must follow the MVI COVID-19 protocols for Lodging, Laundry, and Disinfection of Masks.
- Change the bed linens at least once a week.
- All the people who live in the house must ensure that the cleaning and hygiene conditions of the house are met.
- It is recommended to use protective equipment (gloves, masks) in the process of cleaning and total disinfection of the home.
- It will be left up to the student to decide who (family or student) will carry out the daily cleaning of their room during the stay.

Possible COVID-19 Symptoms - Before Starting the Homestay

The Monteverde Institute seeks to protect the health of the family and student at all times, so before starting the Homestay the coordinator of the group will check in with the students to verify their health status (risk assessment). The homestay coordinator will do the same with families.

Families will be informed of the degree of exposure students have had before entering the homestay program. Students will be tested upon arrival to the country, and depending on the particular program and time between arrival and homestay, again before entering homestay.

If a student presents COVID-19 symptoms, he/she will be tested before entering the homestay.

Procedure in suspected cases of COVID-19

If a family member presents COVID-19 symptoms within two weeks of the student arrival, the Homestay Coordinator must be notified and the person should be tested (independent of MVI). If the person tests positive, the student will be placed with another family.

For suspected, probable or confirmed cases, the instructions provided by the evaluating health professional or the protocol defined by the Ministry of Health must be followed.



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Steps to follow in case of suspected case:

If a student or family member presents symptoms, MVI must be notified and the MVI-contracted doctor will provide guidance. The protocol for Student and Group Management for Symptomatic, Exposed, or Confirmed COVID-19 Cases applies. Any modifications to this protocol will be agreed upon prior to program commencement, taking into account the evaluation of the MVI-contracted doctor, Ministry of Health guidelines, and sending institution protocols.

The Monteverde Institute will support these processes in whatever way necessary and within the capabilities of the organization. The COVID-19 Isolation and Care Logistics must be followed when relevant.

References

ICT -Costa Rican Tourism Institute. (May 10, 2020). *Costa Rican Tourism Institute*.

Retrieved in August 2020, from ICT-P-01. Protocol for Hosting activities:

<https://www.ict.go.cr/es/servicios-institucionales/material-de-apoyo-coronavirus-sector-turismo.html>

APPENDIX A: MASK INFORMATION RESOURCES

<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/how-masks-can-help-prevent-COVID-19>

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/proper-mask-wearing-coronavirus-prevention-infographic>

<https://www.ministeriodesalud.go.cr/index.php/centro-de-informacion/material-comunicacion/protocolos-ms/coronavirus/mascarillas/4807-recomendaciones-para-uso-de-mascarillas-de-tela/file>

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/coronavirus-how-to-care-for-your-face-mask>

<https://www.ministeriodesalud.go.cr/index.php/centro-de-informacion/material-comunicacion/protocolos-ms/coronavirus/mascarillas/4744-afiche-use-la-mascarilla-correctamente/file>

APPENDIX B: MVI DOCUMENTS FOR PANDEMIC CONTEXT

Packing list additions:

- At least four cloth masks, or if they are disposable, you must make sure to bring at least two for each day of the program, plus an additional one for the day of arrival.



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- Your own small gel alcohol dispenser that you can bring on the flight to refill (the coordinator will always have available to give gel alcohol to students during the program).
- Disposable alcohol wipes for cleaning surfaces.
- Enough changes of clothes to be able to use a clean pair every day, for a few days while having access to laundry, preferably a minimum change for each day of the course, for the short courses. It is recommended that coats or rain ponchos be disinfected with a disinfectant spray (the coordinator will have one) and, as much as possible, and do not mix it with other clothing.
- Laundry bag where dirty clothes should be placed after use each day. Dirty clothes should never be mixed in the suitcase with clean clothes.

Code of Conduct additions:

- Violations of Monteverde Institute Policies now includes: Failure to comply with COVID-19 protocols or related directives from MVI staff, on the MVI campus or during any part of the MVI itinerary at any site.

Participant Conduct and Liability Waiver additions:

- The student participant (or legal guardian if the student participant is not of legal age) hereby releases, waives, discharges and agrees to hold harmless the MVI, its staff, professors, coordinators, directors, and representatives from any liability arising out of or in connection with the student's involvement in program activities including but not limited to, any loss, damage, accident, illness (including COVID-19), medical treatment, kidnapping or injury, including death, that may be sustained by the participant, or any of the property belonging to the participant, while involved with, or participating in program activities including but not limited to traveling to, from or within Costa Rica, while performing assignments, carrying out responsibilities, or traveling during the participant's free time.
- I understand that choosing to travel during a pandemic carries additional risk. I have received, read, and I understand and agree to fully comply with the MVI's COVID-19 protocols, which include all current Costa Rican government regulations, for the duration of the program. I understand that failure to comply with the MVI COVID-19 protocols regulations may result in my expulsion from the program at my own cost, and that failure to comply with Costa Rican government regulations could carry legal repercussions.

APPENDIX C: Guidelines for Determining the Isolation Period Required by COVID-19 Positive Patients

Description	Indication
1. Mild to moderate disease Probable or confirmed case of COVID-19 that does not have dyspnea, or desaturation	Suspend patient isolation by meeting the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10 days after the date of onset of symptoms and



evidenced by oximetry, in a person who does not have immunocompromised.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at least the last day without symptoms (no fever, no respiratory symptoms *) <p>Patients in this category who require hospitalization for concurrent medical or social conditions must be kept isolated at their home or other safe place for a total of 14 days from the FIS, if they leave the hospital before completing that period.</p>
<p>1.1 Mild to moderate disease</p> <p>Probable or confirmed case of COVID-19 who does not have dyspnea, in a person who does not have immunocompromised, or desaturation evidenced by oximetry, who is a health worker, long-stay homes, prisons (officials and deprived of liberty), caregivers of: elderly, immunocompromised and people with disabilities</p>	<p>Suspend patient isolation by meeting the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 days after the date of onset of symptoms and • at least the last 3 days without symptoms (no fever, no respiratory symptoms *) <p>Patients in this category who require hospitalization for concurrent medical or social conditions must be kept isolated at their home or other safe place for a total of 14 days from the FIS, if they leave the hospital before completing that period.</p>
<p>2. Severe or critical illness</p> <p>Probable or confirmed case of COVID-19 in a person with dyspnea, who does not have immunocompromised, and who requires hospitalization either in a general room or ICU, with indication of oxygen therapy or ventilator or hemodynamic support.</p>	<p>Suspend patient isolation by meeting the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 days after the date of onset of symptoms and • with at least the last 3 days without symptoms (no fever, no respiratory symptoms *) <p>Hospitalized patients who have been discharged according to clinical criteria should remain in isolation until the above-mentioned criteria are met.</p>
<p>3. Immunocompromised patients</p> <p>Treatment for cancer, transplant recipients, autoimmune diseases, immunodeficiency, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, long-term use of steroids, use of drugs that affect the immune system.</p>	<p>Suspend patient isolation by meeting the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 days after the date of onset of symptoms and • with at least the last 3 days without symptoms (no fever, no respiratory symptoms *) <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 consecutive negative PCRs in 24 or 48 hours according to the criteria of the treating specialist physicians.