

Youth Leadership through Sport Program

COVID-19 Protocols

The global health pandemic inspired by COVID-19 has had a widespread impact on individuals, organizations, and governments around the world. Within this document, YLSP seeks to comprehensively outline our mitigation procedures related to COVID-19.

Participant Sign Offs

- Each participant, prior to confirming their participation in a YLSP program, will be provided with an **Informed Consent** sign-off that outlines the information shared in this **Protocol Guide**. This document will also include country-specific details on the current state of the virus spread and local regulations. If the participant is a minor, a parent or guardian must also sign in addition to the participant's sign off.
- Participants will be informed that YLSP cannot guarantee that participants will not contract COVID-19 while on a program. Even participants practicing all recommended YLSP and local disease-prevention protocols remain at risk of contracting the illness. If YLSP becomes aware that a participant is deliberately endangering the wellbeing of the YLSP or host community by flagrantly disobeying the rules and protocols outlined here, or those provided by local health authorities or by the host institution, YLSP staff will take action to remove the participant from the program and send them home.
- COVID-19 protocols will be included in pre-departure materials and orientation sessions for participants. During the program, YLSP staff will have a communication plan in place to regularly update participants on COVID-19 mitigation measures and provide details on potential COVID-19 related program impacts.

Participant Requirements

VACCINATION REQUIREMENT: YLSP requires that all participants are fully vaccinated prior to their program in compliance with CDC recommendations with a type of vaccine that is accepted for entry into the host country, unless any of the rare exceptions apply. Participants must travel with their proof of vaccination. The cost of pre-program vaccination is the responsibility of the participant.

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ENTRY REQUIREMENTS: Following host nation and CDC guidance, travelers may be required to have proof of a negative COVID-19 test before boarding the flight to the exchange country, regardless of vaccination status. For entry into the United States, participants are required to have proof of a negative viral COVID-19 test within 24 hours of flying. YLSP staff will provide the most current country-specific guidance to participants, and verify requirements with the airline(s). We recommend that all participants limit interactions at home and monitor symptoms in the two weeks preceding their departure. Once travel begins, the cost of additional testing will be covered by the program.

AIRLINES AND IN-PROGRAM TRAVEL: While traveling, participants are expected to follow all airline protective guidelines (masks) and practice good hygiene to prevent illness (handwashing/use of hand sanitizer). Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) like masks and sanitizer will be provided by the program.

After arrival in the host country, participants are required to follow all local guidelines and requirements as communicated by trip leaders which may include additional testing and/or quarantine. Specific guidance for social distancing, mask wearing, size of gatherings/indoor dining, etc. will be provided by trip leaders in compliance with local requirements.

The cost of in-program testing and/or quarantine will be covered by the program.

COVID-19 AND RELATED QUARANTINE PROTOCOLS:

HOUSING: In an effort to decrease risk exposure, YLSP staff will seek to limit the number of participants who live together and share bathrooms and common spaces. YLSP staff will ensure that all eligible host family members are vaccinated and that the family understands the risk of inviting participants into their home.

YLSP staff will work with selected hotels in advance for an approved quarantine plan including all relevant details (meals, housekeeping, laundry, etc.) should quarantine be needed. Likewise, host family plans will also be created in case self-isolation is required.

INFECTIONS: If a participant should start experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, they must immediately inform the YLSP staff and/or trip leaders and self-isolate in their hotel room or in a private room with their host family until staff are able to provide the participant with a COVID-19 test. If the test is positive, a quarantine plan will follow according to the most recent host nation guidance.

Should a participant test positive for COVID-19, the staff will ensure close contacts within the group self-isolate and are tested as soon as possible. Staff and trip leaders will assist those who test positive with a self-isolation/quarantine plan and a plan for obtaining medical care if needed. Positive COVID-19 cases will be required to quarantine based on the public health guidance. Close contacts of the positive participant may be required to quarantine even if vaccinated, depending on the local public health guidance.

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MEDICAL TREATMENT: Should infection symptoms be serious enough to require a visit to or admission to a hospital, YLSP trip leaders/staff may not be authorized to accompany participants to hospitals due to strict regulations regarding COVID-19 requiring transportation via ambulance. YLSP staff/trip leaders will travel to the hospital separately to assist with check-in, etc. The travel insurance provider will be consulted for any additional guidance. Quarantine expenses will be covered by the program for all participants who may need to self-isolate.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS: Should quarantining or medical treatment within the group significantly affect the itinerary of the program, staff will notify the ECA Program Officer and U.S. Mission to discuss contingency planning per ECA Standard Operating Procedures.

HOST PARTNER PROCEDURES AND POTENTIAL CLOSURES: Each local host partner/organization will be required to have sufficient COVID-19 measures and protocols in place. Each local host will need to share their COVID-19 protocols with YLSP staff prior to hosting. Participants are advised that they may be required to wear masks when in buildings and classrooms. Outbreaks among the participant group may necessitate suspension of in-person activities or early termination of the program. During such times, activities may be offered to participants virtually, when possible, so that content delivery will not be delayed.

SUBAWARD ORGANIZATIONS: A section on required COVID-19 protocols and procedures will be included in all subaward agreements assuring compliance with YLSP policies.

PROGRAM DISTURBANCES: Given the potential for periodic outbreaks of COVID-19 around the world, YLSP participants will be expected to behave as a local person would in the event of such circumstances (e.g., respecting local shelter-in-place restrictions). In the event that personal illness, local conditions or travel restrictions prohibit a participant from departing the host country as anticipated on the standard program end date, participants are advised that YLSP will make arrangements for the extension of housing, supervision, and insurance coverage in coordination and with the guidance of the ECA Program Officer.