

COVID-19 EDUCATION ABROAD COMMUNITY COMMITMENT

The Office for Education Abroad (EA), the Office for Global Health, Safety and Security (Global Safety), and the Risk and Security Assessment Committee (RSAC) are closely monitoring the impact of COVID-19 and related health advisories, travel restrictions, and government regulations in the countries where we have education abroad programs.

Programs will move forward so long as MSU is confident that your health and safety needs can be met. Please review the cancellation policies for EA and any individual trip arrangements (e.g. flights). Travel during the COVID-19 era continues to require flexible travel plans, and travelers may find refundable travel arrangements or [supplemental trip interruption and/or cancellation insurance](#) beneficial. This supplemental coverage is not required to participate in MSU-sponsored travel. You should review any policy carefully to fully understand the coverage.

Please remember that risk mitigation is a shared responsibility. You must follow the requirements and recommendations outlined in this agreement as well as those issued by your Program Director(s), host institution, program provider and/or local authorities. This is crucial to maintaining not only your health abroad but also the health of your Program Director(s), peers, on-site partners, and members of local communities.

Only you can decide if studying abroad is the right choice for you right now. We hope this agreement and the mandatory pre-departure Spartans Abroad module (in which you will be enrolled automatically) will help you make an informed decision. You are strongly encouraged to discuss your decision with your family, health care professionals, your academic advisor, EA, and Global Safety.

This COVID-19 Education Abroad (EA) Community Commitment is in addition to the [EA Statement of Responsibility](#). In the event of any conflict between the two documents regarding COVID-19 protocols, the EA Community Commitment will supersede.

1. I understand that COVID-19 and its variants are extremely contagious, and there is no guarantee that I or others on my program will not become infected by COVID-19.
2. I am responsible for abiding by [The Spartan Way: Our Community Commitment COVID-19 directives](#); the principles and public health precautions detailed within it also apply to education abroad programs. These include:
 - a. I am required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19, including at least one approved COVID-19 vaccine booster as soon as I am eligible, or have an approved exemption.
 - b. I will maintain proper hygiene and health practices including washing my hands frequently or using hand sanitizer, routinely cleaning and sanitizing my living space, using the bend of my elbow or shoulder to shield a cough or sneeze, and refraining from shaking hands.
 - c. I will follow the advice and directions of my Program Director, host institution/provider, and local public health authorities.
 - d. I will monitor myself for flu-like symptoms (for example, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fever, sore throat or loss of taste or smell). If I experience any flu-like symptoms, I will stay at my place of residence and contact the International SOS 24/7 Assistance Center at +1-215-942-8478 immediately for medical advice and support. I will inform my Program Director and/or host institution/provider.
 - e. If I have been exposed to someone who is ill or has tested positive for the COVID-19 virus, I will stay at my place of residence, and contact the International SOS 24/7

Assistance Center +1-215-942-8478 immediately for medical advice and support. I will inform my Program Director and/or host institution/provider.

- f. I will follow all applicable state and public health guidance, and I will cooperate with public health authorities, including but not limited to contact tracing. I understand that my host institution, provider, or local public health authorities in my host country may require that I participate in contact tracing, COVID-19 surveillance and screening, and/or COVID-19 testing.
 - g. I will adhere to all posted signage regarding COVID-19 protocols.
 - h. I am required to receive a flu vaccination before I depart for my program.
3. I understand that I am responsible for researching, understanding and abiding by all restrictions and regulations for crossing international borders (including returning to the U.S.) that are in place due to COVID-19 or otherwise. This could include submitting proof of vaccination or proof of a negative COVID-19 test. I am responsible for all consequences and financial costs associated with not being able to fulfill entry/re-entry requirements. Consequences for improper or insufficient documentation could include denial of entry, return to the U.S., quarantine, or additional COVID-19 testing. Any costs associated with such will be my personal responsibility.
 4. I understand that I am responsible for understanding and abiding by all local regulations and restrictions relating to COVID-19, including but not limited to those from all levels of government and on-site partners. This could include taking a PCR test within 48 or 72 hours prior to departure, self-quarantining upon arrival in-country or at any point during the program if I feel sick or develop COVID-19 symptoms, providing proof of vaccination, or self-quarantining upon arrival back in the U.S, if advised. I can learn more about local regulations and restrictions by referring to:
 - a. my Program Director, host institution, or on-site provider
 - b. [International SOS](#) (MSU membership # 11BCAS798617)
 - c. [the Department of State/U.S. Embassy](#)
 - d. the host country's Embassy in the U.S.
 5. I understand that any COVID-19 vaccine exemption I may have received from Michigan State University will not necessarily be accepted by immigration officials, local public health officials or my host university. It is my responsibility to research and understand local requirements and to abide by them, regardless of any exemption I may have received. Any penalties imposed, including financial, will be my responsibility.
 6. Should I need to be placed in quarantine during the program, EA, Global Safety, Program Directors and On-site Staff will strive to provide appropriate housing for the duration of the quarantine at no additional cost. However, it is my financial responsibility to pay for any additional costs due to COVID-19 regulations or restrictions, including any costs incurred due to quarantine and associated testing.
 7. I understand that it is my responsibility to talk to my primary care physician or the [MSU Travel Clinic](#) about whether traveling abroad is advisable given my personal health circumstances and personal risk tolerance.
 8. I understand that the program may be suspended at any time (including during the program) should it be warranted by public health conditions. I am responsible for understanding all cancellation policies associated with my participation, including those for flights, housing,

program fee, or travel arrangements. It is my decision whether to purchase supplemental [trip cancellation/interruption insurance](#).

9. I understand that I should not travel if I am sick. I will contact EA (abroad@msu.edu or 1-517-353-8920) immediately to initiate my withdrawal from the program. I understand that, in addition to putting myself, my peers, and other travelers at risk, if I travel despite having COVID-19 symptoms I could be denied boarding on an airplane or entry into a country. Neither MSU nor my Embassy will be able to intervene on my behalf. I understand that I will be held to EA's refund policy should I need to withdraw.
10. I understand that I am required to bring my own face coverings for the duration of the program. I will follow [CDC guidance for selecting an appropriate type of face covering](#).
11. I understand that I have a responsibility to avoid situations abroad that may put myself and others at increased risk for COVID-19. I will carefully review and implement the risk mitigation strategies outlined in the Spartans Abroad module. Potentially high-risk situations include, but are not limited to:
 - a. bars, pubs, indoor restaurants
 - b. large gatherings (indoor or outdoor) including large events such as parties, festivals, sporting events, or concerts
 - c. any crowded places where it is challenging to maintain physical distancing (6 feet/2 meters between people)
12. I understand that, while I may travel independently within and outside of my host country as permitted by my program's schedule, I am responsible for all financial costs or other complications (including delayed return to the program site) resulting from requirements or restrictions due to independent travel. I understand that I must follow all local restrictions and the public health precautions described above while travelling independently.
13. I will follow all requirements issued by MSU, the Ingham County Health Department and the State of Michigan with respect to my return to campus and/or to Michigan.
14. I understand that if I do not follow the requirements outlined in the [EA Statement of Responsibility](#), including this COVID-19 EA Community Commitment, a report may be sent to MSU and I may be subject to disciplinary action on-site and/or upon return to campus, academic consequences, removal from the program, and/or suspension or expulsion from Michigan State University. A description of disciplinary procedures is available online on [Global Safety's Student Conduct While Abroad webpage](#). I understand that I am also subject to the institutional practices of my host institution, if applicable.

I acknowledge that I have had an opportunity to ask any questions I have about this Community Commitment, that I have read and understand it, and that I accept its terms.