



**The American College of the Mediterranean &  
The Institute for American Universities (ACM-IAU)**

**COVID-19 Preparedness Plan**

*Updated May 2022*

***Subject to change without prior notice***

**INTRODUCTION AND GOALS**

ACM-IAU's goal is to provide a safe learning environment for its students, faculty, staff, and administrators. In the face of an evolving COVID-19 pandemic, ACM-IAU is implementing plans to best respond to the needs of its community. Through transparent protocols and measures, ACM-IAU's goal is institutional preparedness that inspires confidence in international education amongst partner universities, students, and families. ACM-IAU successfully resumed in-person programs in fall 2020 and is confident it can continue to safely offer in-person programs (with in-person teaching). We implemented a vaccine mandate for all students in January 2022 and continue to enforce mask-wearing and sanitary protocols in all our facilities, while ensuring social distancing, testing, and contact tracing when necessary. ACM-IAU bases our COVID-19 protocols on best practices in the United States along with the guidance of national and local government officials and health professionals in France and Spain. We reevaluate and update our COVID-19 Preparedness Plan every semester. It is important to note that governments around the world are continuously updating regulations, local restrictions, and entry protocols as the COVID-19 situation evolves. ACM-IAU regularly monitors these updates and adjusts our policies and protocols accordingly.

**PLAN**

**1. Vaccination**

The U.S. [Center for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov) encourages all international travelers to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 prior to travel. To continue to support the health and safety of the ACM-IAU communities abroad, ACM-IAU requires all program participants to be fully vaccinated. Vaccination is the key to providing a healthy and safe learning environment. ACM-IAU considers a student fully vaccinated if they have received a complete set of injections, including booster shots if eligible. Students are required to submit proof of COVID-19 vaccination to ACM-IAU prior to the program start date.

ACM-IAU also highly encourages ACM-IAU faculty, staff, administrators, and homestay hosts abroad to be fully vaccinated.

Currently, France and Spain allow entry to fully vaccinated travelers, defining fully vaccinated to include a booster shot no later than nine months after completing a full vaccination series.

## 2. Travel

**France:** When boarding a direct flight to France, all students should adhere to the entry requirements related to the country from which students are traveling (“green,” “amber,” “red,” or “scarlet” country list; a map of country classifications can be found [here](#)). Travel and entry requirements can change with little notice. As of February 2022, fully vaccinated students traveling from a “green” country, which includes the United States, must present proof of vaccination prior to boarding and a sworn statement they do not have symptoms of COVID-19 nor contact with someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19. As rules for countries differ it is highly recommended that students avoid booking flights that have layovers in a country other than France (layovers within France are OK). Students are responsible for the cost of all testing related to entry requirements, obtaining a French vaccine pass, as well as the cost of testing required to return to their home country.

**Spain:** Effective September 6, 2021, U.S. citizens can travel from the United States to Spain if they show proof of vaccination. Please read more detailed information on the [Spain Ministry of Health’s website](#). Additionally, students traveling from the United States will need to present the QR code generated through the [Spain Travel Health Portal](#) prior to boarding their flight to enter Spain. U.S. citizens who are traveling to Spain from a country that is not the United States should make sure they follow the guidance published by Spanish authorities on their local [Spain Embassy website](#). It is highly recommended that students avoid booking flights that have layovers in a country other than Spain (layovers within Spain are OK). Students are responsible for the cost of all testing related to entry requirements, obtaining an EU COVID certificate, as well as the cost of testing required to return to their home country.

## 3. Testing Protocols

**During Program:** Students will be tested upon showing COVID-19-related symptoms or if they are contact cases, following the guidelines recommended by local and national health authorities. ACM-IAU sites maintain a supply of self-tests students can use if they are showing symptoms or suspect exposure to COVID-19.

If a student receives a positive test, ACM-IAU will enact self-isolation and contact tracing protocols recommended by local health officials. We will work with the student and host family to identify the best approach. Although sanitary protocols regularly change, ACM-IAU is guided by the principle that a student will never be kept in an unsafe situation. When self-isolation is required, students may be relocated during the self-isolation period, and if so, students will not incur any costs. Students in self-isolation will be able to continue their studies remotely, assuming their health allows them to do so.

**After Program:** Students returning to their home country at the end of the program may be required to present a negative COVID-19 test upon entry. Currently (May2022) students returning to the United States at the end of their program are required to present a negative COVID-19 viral test result taken no more than 1 day before travel from their host country. Students are responsible for the cost of this test. If a student tests positive and is unable to travel on their scheduled flights, ACM-IAU will facilitate extended housing arrangements and will support students 24/7 until they are able to depart. Students will be responsible for the cost of this extended housing.

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**For homestay hosts:** ACM-IAU recommends to all host-families that they perform self-tests upon showing COVID-19-related symptoms. If a host receives a positive test at any point during the semester, the residing student may, if needed, be removed from the homestay and placed in an alternative homestay, residence hall, or apartment at no cost to the student. ACM-IAU will work with the student and host family to identify the best self-isolation approach.

**For faculty/staff/administrators:** ACM-IAU recommends that all administrators, faculty, and staff test upon showing COVID-19-related symptoms. If anyone receives a positive test, ACM-IAU will enact quarantine and contact tracing protocols recommended by local health officials.

**For outside vendors including internship agency personnel:** Any outside vendors with whom ACM-IAU contracts for student services will be pre-screened to ensure they follow local health guidelines. In the event any vendor tests positive, they will be removed immediately from contact with any ACM-IAU students and personnel.

**Contact Cases:** If, through contact tracing or other means, someone in the ACM-IAU community has been identified as having been exposed to the virus, ACM-IAU will engage in the following measures:

- Provide self-tests for use following the guidance of national and local government officials and health professionals.
- Monitor health of individual for COVID-19 symptoms.

Students, faculty, staff, and host families in France are strongly encouraged to download and activate the [TousAntiCovid](#) app (contact tracing app used by the French Government). Spain does not use a COVID tracing app. It remains imperative that students inform the local ACM-IAU staff if they test positive or are presenting any symptoms commonly associated with COVID-19.

#### 4. Health/Vaccine Passes

**France:** France implemented a health pass system in 2021 which became a vaccine pass in January 2022. However, as of March 2022, a vaccine pass is no longer required to enter venues in France, with the exception of healthcare establishments, retirement homes, and establishments for vulnerable and disabled persons. A vaccine pass is simply proof of vaccination. A pass was required to access cultural and entertainment sites, such as cinemas and museums, as well as restaurants, cafes, long-distance transportation (planes and trains) and hospitals. *Students are eligible to [apply for a French vaccine pass online](#) once they receive their long stay student visa.* ACM-IAU staff keeps up-to-date with any possible regulation changes, and students can access the [French government's website](#) to check for any updates. We also advise that students keep a picture or pdf of their CDC proof of vaccination in their mobile device and carry the original with them.

**Spain:** Spain implemented a vaccine pass system in 2021; however, because students are not eligible to apply for the Spanish vaccine pass, they should instead use their CDC proof of vaccination. Since February 2022, a pass is no longer required to access public places in Spain. ACM-IAU staff keeps up-to-date with any possible regulation changes, and students can access the local government's website to check for any updates. In Barcelona (Catalonia), that site is <https://web.gencat.cat/en/activem/restriccions-territorials/catalunya/index.html>. We also advise that students keep a picture or pdf of their CDC proof of vaccination in their mobile device and carry the original with them.

## 5. Facilities Maintenance, Supporting Physical Distancing and Wellness Protocols

ACM-IAU has implemented protocols that help provide a safe learning environment for the entire community, including:

- Limiting access to facilities to only ACM-IAU students, faculty, staff, and administration.
- Spacing desks to facilitate social distancing. Courses with higher enrollments use larger classrooms. ACM-IAU caps course enrollments when needed to ensure adequate social distancing.
- Reducing student capacity in common areas to ensure proper physical distancing; Identify allowable occupancy to control workflow and/or establish maximum attendance.
- Placing markers on the floors to indicate appropriate social distancing.
- Requiring face masks while inside ACM-IAU facilities. ACM-IAU makes required PPE available to personnel and students.
- Installing air purifiers in high-density areas. Classrooms are ventilated between classes.
- Practicing ongoing health monitoring of the community. Students, faculty, and staff should self-monitor their well-being daily. Students are advised to bring a thermometer for self-monitoring. Those experiencing COVID-19-related symptoms are asked to self-isolate immediately and contact the ACM-IAU administration for support.
- Cleaning and disinfecting all building facilities daily. Hand sanitizers and cleaning wipes are available in all facilities, including entrances, common areas, and classrooms.
- Providing signage and informational information throughout facilities (reinforcing good hygiene, awareness of COVID-19 symptoms, protocols to follow, etc.).

## 6. Providing Clear Guidelines for Homestays/Housing

**Homestays:** ACM-IAU pre-screens each host and requires them to follow a set of guidelines for keeping their home clean and disinfected. Hosts and students are required to follow guidance on physical distancing and PPE.

**Independent Apartments/Student Residences:** Each student will receive their own copy of COVID-19 protocols and health-related information.

## 7. Regular Updating of Policies

ACM-IAU constantly monitors the sanitary environment and updates guidelines as needed. ACM-IAU may implement policies, restrictions, and requirements to protect the well-being of the ACM-IAU community. For example, ACM-IAU may prohibit students from traveling outside a certain geographic area or be subject to local self-isolation regulations upon return to campus. ACM-IAU provides regular updates to the community of any changes in our guidelines as well as local and national developments.

## 8. Ongoing Communication with ACM-IAU Community

Paramount to this plan is the constant communication ACM-IAU pledges to execute, as necessary. The ACM-IAU's Dean's Council meets bi-weekly to discuss updates regarding local restrictions and if/how these may affect the ACM-IAU's policies and protocols. These updates are shared with students as well as with partners. Below is an overview of ACM-IAU's communication plan in relation to COVID-19:

*If a student tests positive for COVID-19:* If a student tests positive for COVID-19, the student's home institution will be notified in a timely manner, outlining a plan for medical care, testing, self-isolation/meal delivery, remote learning, and re-entry into the ACM-IAU community.

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*If a students' academic courses are temporarily held remotely:* If a students' courses are held remotely due to faculty member testing positive for COVID-19, the home institution will be notified i in a timely manner and will be provided with the plan for remote learning as well as when in-person instruction will resume.

ACM-IAU's COVID-19 Plan is available on IAU's website ([www.iau.edu](http://www.iau.edu)) and ACM's website ([www.acmfrance.org](http://www.acmfrance.org)).