

# COVID Procedures in Guatemala

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**Introduction:** COVID procedures and protocols in Guatemala vary from department to department (Guatemala's equivalent for state to state/province to province), and we want to help you consider the protocols that are in place in Guatemala and the measures implemented by Impact Ministries. If you, as a guest, feel uncomfortable with these interim measures (that they are either too strict or not strict enough) we would ask you to consider coming on a mission trip or as a Fieldworker with us when the COVID risk is considered stable and the need for protocols is more relaxed/standardized. Guatemala is a developing country, and therefore, the moment you are here, standards and regulations can change from day to day and most certainly will not be consistently applied or applied in the same manner as in the USA or Canada.

## Insurance

It is recommended that all team members purchase COVID-19 medical and travel coverage. A travel agent can assist with finding a policy that offers this type of coverage. **All expenses related to interrupted travel, health care, additional accommodation is the responsibility of the team/team member.**

## International Travel

It is the responsibility of all travellers to research entry requirements to Guatemala at the time of travel plus return travel requirements including in-transit stops. The following links may be helpful for you to stay up to date on requirements as they may change frequently.

Guatemala - [Guatemalan COVID-19 Protocol](#) (Spanish)

United States of America - US Embassy in Guatemala COVID Information [LINK](#)

Canada - Canadian Embassy in Guatemala COVID Information regarding travel back to Canada [LINK](#) and Canada Travel Advisory [LINK](#)

IATA [LINK](#) (Scroll down and select "Air Travel" and specify country)

As of December 10, 2022, all travellers 12 years old and up, arriving in Guatemala must present both of the following:

- Negative COVID-19 test, either PCR or Antigen, within 72 hours of arrival in Guatemala
- COVID-19 vaccine, completed
- Passengers 10-11 years old need a negative covid test

As of October 6th, to become effective at the end of the month, for all flights departing from a Canadian airport, you must be fully vaccinated to board. [LINK](#)

Air travel regulations might vary from airport to airport, airline to airline, but generally accepted requirements are the constant use of a mask, temperature stations and use of hand sanitizer gel. According to experience of travel in January 2021, some airlines fill up flights completely, leaving no space for social distancing, while other flights are considerably empty. The negative COVID-19 test results are scrutinized, especially upon arrival in Guatemala.

It is your responsibility to research the requirements of return to your country of origin, as protocols can change often, and differ from country to country. Impact Ministries will coordinate COVID-19 testing required, but we will ask you to cover the expense.

Clinic Testing Guatemala City: Blue Medical Clinic [Website](#)

- PCR test - Q645 (results in 6 hours)
- Nasal Antigen test - Q325 (results in 1 hour)
- Antigen test - Q295 (results in 1 hour)

Clinic Testing Coban: El Shaddai

- PCR test - Q1,200 (results in 1.5 days)
- Antigen test - Q500 (results in 1 hour)

## Guatemala

In Guatemala, it is necessary that we follow the recommendations of the national Ministry of Health and the regulations mandated by our department and municipality. Currently, a street light system is in place.

- **Red:** 55+ new cases per 100,000 inhabitants in the past 2 weeks
- **Orange:** 25-54 new cases per 100,000 inhabitants in the past 2 weeks
- **Yellow:** 15-24 new cases per 100,000 inhabitants in the past 2 weeks
- **Green:** less than 15 new cases per 100,000 inhabitants in the past 2 weeks.

This system classifies municipalities, departments and the country as a whole. Each color represents different levels of regulations, such as how many people are allowed to meet, time limitations for gatherings, ect. As changes of classification happen, we will need to make appropriate changes to our team itinerary.

## What to Expect...

**Upon entering hotels, restaurants or stores:** mask use will probably be reinforced, temperature checks will take place and hand sanitizer will be distributed. All guests will be required to comply, whenever necessary. Not all restaurants, stores, hotels implement COVID precautions equally. In some cases, recommendations are followed meticulously, in others they are non-existent.

**In Vehicles:** During in-country travel, Impact Ministries vehicles will be utilized. Social distancing within the vehicles isn't possible. Hand sanitizer will be distributed upon entrance into vehicles. Mask use is not required for vaccinated individuals.

**In the Guesthouse:** Upon arrival at the guesthouse, the use of hand sanitizer is required. The use of masks will not be required, unless in a large indoor group gathering area.

**In the Dining Room:** Doors and windows will be open during meal times and tables will be set with enough space to be COVID-19 compliant. Dishes will be sanitized with bleach during the rinsing process.

**At Activities:** We request that all North American guests use a mask during large indoor activities and interactions with locals. Locals may or may not choose to mask. Please note that hospital visits will be suspended until notice due to the risks.

**At the Clinic:** We will require mask use for all team members in the clinic, and similarly social distancing and mask use for all patients.

**In our Church:** Social distancing, hand sanitizer, use of mask and temperature taking is requested. Rio de Vida has chairs set up in family groups.

**During Debriefs:** We will do our best to provide ample space to do debriefs socially distanced if team members desire.

**Bathrooms:** Public bathrooms will be sanitized daily, and private bathrooms will be provided with disinfectant and cleaning supplies so that guests can clean as they see fit during their stay.

### **What happens if I get sick?**

If any guest develops COVID-19 symptoms:

- They will be required to isolate themselves, Impact will provide a space for this
- They will be required to submit to the testing in a health care facility in Coban
  - Cost of Q500 per test
- Dr Rene Rivas, the Guatemalan doctor responsible for Impact Ministries Medical clinic, would serve as a consultant to ensure that the patient receives the best possible care in the best available facility.
  - Blue Medical in Guatemala City - Testing and Doctors
  - What is a typical daily rate in a Covid hospital in Guatemala
- If COVID-19 test results are positive, there may be situations where isolation or quarantine is required depending on guidelines at the time of the STM in Guatemala
- Any costs incurred due to illness will be covered by the person receiving the treatment;
  - lodging, food, in-country travel, change or purchase of new flight ticket, medical expenses, ect.

**Do I have to participate in all activities?**

Due to the complicated nature of COVID and the varied responses to it, Impact Ministries will respect the preferences of team members if they desire not to participate in certain activities. Debriefs, however, will not be considered optional. Ample space will be provided during debriefs so that social distancing can be maintained if so desired.

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*COVID related policies and procedures established by governments, municipalities, airlines and other businesses are constantly changing and at times volatile or contradictory. These changes are out of Impact Ministries control. Please be prepared for any eventuality.*