

Inbound Fulbright Programs (Foreign Student, FLTA and Visiting Scholar) COVID-19 Testing Guidance

The U.S. Department of State prioritizes the health, safety, and well-being of Fulbright Program participants. As the COVID-19 global pandemic continues, the Fulbright Program has adopted policies for participants who need COVID testing. Below please find the current guidelines for COVID-19 testing when it is required for international travel and/or by host institutions and communities.

Participants with COVID symptoms: The Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) covers participants while they are on program in the United States. If a participant has COVID symptoms, they should contact a medical provider. Under the ASPE health benefits program, COVID symptoms are treated as any other illness. If recommended by a medical provider, ASPE should cover the cost of diagnostic COVID testing and any required treatment. Normal ASPE procedures must be followed as outlined in the ASPE Benefits Guide available here: <https://www.sevencorners.com/gov/usdos>. In some cases treatment for diagnostic COVID testing and treatment may also be covered by host university insurance. ASPE does not cover dependents.

Participants without COVID symptoms: Currently, ASPE does not cover COVID testing for participants who are asymptomatic (not exhibiting COVID symptoms). This includes testing required for domestic and international travel and testing to meet host university or local community requirements. The Fulbright Program anticipates that most host institutions will provide COVID testing should they require it, or that free or low-cost testing will be available in the host community. In certain situations, the program will provide reimbursement for the cost of COVID testing for asymptomatic participants. Please see below for additional information about circumstances where COVID testing may be required before, during, and at the end of your program.

The following policies are in place from December 1, 2020 through March 1, 2021.

TRAVEL AND COVID-19 TESTING

Travel to the United States to begin a program:

Before traveling to the United States, please determine any testing required for travel (by the airline or your host institution). Any testing for you and your accompanying dependents prior to arrival in the United States is your logistical and financial responsibility. Reimbursement will not be provided.

Upon arrival in the United States:

Before arriving in the United States, participants must determine any testing and/or quarantine requirements for your host institution and community as well as any other area you may transit through prior to arriving in your host community. You should contact your host university to confirm any state, local, or host university requirements. The Fulbright Program assumes that your host institution or community will provide any COVID testing that is required for asymptomatic participants. If testing is required, and free or low-cost testing is not available to you, contact your IIE advisor for possible reimbursement.

Departing the United States at the end of a program:

As you prepare to depart the U.S. at the end of your Fulbright Program, it is critical that you confirm and schedule any mandatory COVID-19 testing required for departure from the United States, including for transit through a third country. You should also confirm any testing and/or quarantine restrictions needed upon arrival in your home country. Testing is often required within 48-96 hours before departure, but COVID testing is not readily available in many areas of the United States, so schedule your testing accordingly. When testing is required prior to departure, the Fulbright Program will reimburse the cost of one test for each for you and your dependents to facilitate your return home.

Testing for non-essential travel:

At this time, domestic and international travel for non-essential reasons is strongly discouraged and any travel, other than at the end of a program, is at the participant's own risk and expense. Testing required for optional travel for you and your accompanying dependents is your logistical and financial responsibility. Reimbursement will not be provided.

COVID-19 TESTING DURING THE EXCHANGE PERIOD**Routine (asymptomatic) testing:**

Many U.S. universities have regular testing protocols in place in order to allow scholar access to campus facilities. If testing is not provided free of charge by the university or host institution, many cities, counties, and states have free or low-cost testing programs that Fulbrighters may utilize.

If testing is required, and free or low-cost testing is not available to you, contact your IIE advisor for possible reimbursement.

Testing after possible COVID-19 exposure:

If you have come in contact with an individual with COVID-19, contact a medical provider. Even if you are asymptomatic, testing is recommended and may be required. In such cases participants are encouraged to utilize testing options provided through their host universities or local communities. Again, many cities, counties, and states have free or low-cost testing programs that Fulbrighters may utilize.

If testing is mandated, and free or no-cost testing is not provided, you should contact your IIE advisor for possible reimbursement. The cost of any testing required for dependents is the financial responsibility of the participant, including through the dependents' private insurance.

OPTIONAL TESTING

Neither ASPE nor the Fulbright Program cover optional COVID-19 testing -- without COVID symptoms -- for general comfort and peace of mind. The Fulbright Program will not reimburse participants for elective tests taken without cause and/or the recommendation of a medical provider.

Please contact your [IIE advisor](#) with any questions.