

Changes to Hosting Realities (COVID-19 Edition)

AFS Philippines - December 2020

INFORMATION	QUESTIONS	PARTNER ANSWERS
ARRIVAL INFORMATION	Will participants need to provide any COVID-19 RELATED TESTING? If yes, or yes, depending on their country of origin, please note to which sending countries this applies. Please be specific as to test type and the time frame required (before or after arrival).	<p>The Philippine government requires all passengers arriving in the Philippines to take a mandatory RT-PCR test for COVID-19.</p> <p><i>*All arriving passengers are required to undergo government mandated RT-PCR (swab) testing procedures and you can expect to be in the terminal for around 3 hours. The test costs approximately a minimum of Php 4,000 (\$80) and subject to change without prior notice. You may opt to pay in cash (PHP or USD) or credit/debit card. ATMs are available inside the terminal. Please do note that even if participants already have a negative test result before boarding the plane in their home/sending country, they will still be subjected to a mandatory swab testing in the airport upon arrival in the Philippines.</i></p>
	VISA - Are there specific changes to the visa process?	<p>The Philippine government has suspended all visa issuance until further notice.</p> <p>AFS PHI may still accept participants, but are all subject for the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA)'s approval.</p>

		<p>AFS Philippines is currently engaged with the Department of Foreign Affairs and its VISA Division to be able to grant visas to our expected participants/students. As of this writing, the issuance of visas to foreign travelers is still suspended with very limited exemptions. The DFA already acknowledged the request of AFS PHI to include our exchange students/participants (for SH21) to the said exemptions given that we would be able to provide the necessary documents they need.</p> <p>Pursuant to <i>Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases</i> rules, the Department will process the request for exemption only upon satisfaction of the following requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An endorsement letter from an appropriate national government agency (Department of Education for AFS school-based participants), signed by its head, addressed to the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, is obtained; and 2. Complete and accurate details (and its corresponding supporting documents) of the following information: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. names, nationalities, and passport details of the foreign national/s (copy of passport data page); b. company or organization and position/designation of the foreign national/s; c. visa information of said nationals (and the visa validity) (copy/image of visa card, BI indorsement, and/or visa stamp on passport), if any; if none,
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		<p>which Philippine Embassy/ Consulate will foreign national/s lodge their visa application if request is granted;</p> <p>d. reason/purpose for the entry of the foreign national/s; and</p> <p>e. contact details of the foreign nationals or the designated focal person (telephone number, mobile number [preferably linked to Viber, WhatsApp, or WeChat] or email address).</p>
	<p>Will there be a QUARANTINE period? If yes, or yes, depending on their country of origin, please provide information to which sending countries this applies, place, duration, and those responsible for the supervision of students during this period as well as consequences students will face if they do not abide as expected during this period. What are expected costs? Has it been included in the transfer price or will there be a separate charge?</p>	<p>Passengers arriving at any international port of entry in the Philippines will be subjected to 14 days mandatory quarantine at a hotel that must be accredited by the Bureau of Quarantine. i.e. Nichols Airport Hotel (partner hotel of AFS Philippines).</p> <p><i>During Quarantine</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● AFS Philippines Staff will only be monitoring the students virtually during this period. AFS Philippines will assist in finding an accomodation for quarantine depending on availability. i.e. Nichols Airport Hotel (a partner hotel of AFS PPhilippines) ● Guests are strictly prohibited from leaving their rooms during quarantine. The hotel staff will leave food and drinks outside the door. ● Food deliveries are allowed but the participant should make sure that these are already paid for. You may use phone applications such as Grab, Lalafood, and Food Panda for food deliveries.

		<p>Again, the hotel staff would just bring the delivered items outside your door.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While in quarantine, wait for the Philippine Red Cross to email the results of the swab tests. Test results are released after 5 to 7 days. You may also check the website and type your barcode and passport numbers to check your result. • Foreigners are advised to complete the 14-day quarantine with negative RT PCR (swab) result before leaving the hotel • If results come back positive, somebody from the government will contact you and bring you to another facility for isolation. AFS Philippines will be in touch with our participants and government officials pertaining to the isolation and medical management. <p><i>Non-Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW), students, exchange visa participants and returning residents must shoulder all expenses for quarantines and required RT PCR Test for CoVID-19 upon arrival in Manila.</i></p>
	<p>Provide info on what to expect in LOGISTICS / ORIENTATION which may change due to COVID-19 precautions, e.g. will all orientations be virtual? If there are group gatherings, will there be special guidelines?</p>	<p>Orientations will be conducted virtually. Staff and volunteers will support the participants remotely. AFS staff will be in touch with the participants and the hotel receptionists will also check with the participants from time to time. Participants are encouraged to keep and maintain an open communication with our AFS and hotel staff. AFS PHI office is located 30- 45 minutes away from</p>

		the hotel/ airport. Should there be emergencies, our hotel staff will respond immediately and our AFS staff will personally travel to the hotel.
SCHOOL REALITIES	What are current plans? Will classes meet in-person every day? Are hours reduced? Will there be classes online? What tools will be needed, e.g. laptops?	<p>The Philippine Government (IATF) is set to announce if they will allow in-person classes by January 2021. For the moment, all schools in the country are observing distance/online learning. Participants are highly encouraged to bring a laptop/ipad/smartphone which they can use for their online learning or possible blended learning.</p> <p>As of this date, a partner school in Puerto Princesa is open to hosting participants for SH21. The school is implementing an online learning method but also holds community activities and immersion. The community is reported to have no active COVID-19 cases. Hence, in-person activities with safety precautionary measures observed are done.</p>
DAILY LIFE ACTIVITIES	What will be the possibilities to meet with friends, do sports, use public transportation, etc. Include information on any new guidelines within your country about such activities.	18 years old and below are already allowed in public establishments (mall/park) but must be accompanied by legal guardian/parents. To enter most establishments like malls, parks, convenience stores, government offices, all are required to wear face masks and face shields, or else entry will not be allowed. School and sport activities are not yet being held but participants can go to the parks, gym, recreational sites as long as safety protocols and maximum people capacity are observed. Public transportations such as Grab cars, trains/mass transit, buses, taxis, jeepneys, and tricycles are already available, however, limited and not in all areas. Filipino teenagers usually hang out and catch up with each other in coffee

		shops and cafes, going to the mall, and open parks in the neighborhood.
PACKING LIST	<p>What should the participant consider packing especially in regards to masks and other items recommended for safety?</p> <p>Will a laptop be required for school for example?</p>	<p>The use of face mask and face shield is still strictly imposed by the National Government and Local Government Units (LGUs).</p> <p>Participants are advised to bring hand sanitizer or alcohol hand rub or spray, sanitizing wipes, cloth/ washable and disposable face masks especially during travel and quarantine. These necessities are widely available in different stores in the Philippines.</p> <p>Since most schools are still practicing distance/online learning, having a personal laptop, ipad, smartphone that can accommodate Zoom/Google Meet/Microsoft Teams is highly encouraged.</p> <p>Laundry services in hotels and quarantine facilities might not always be available. We encourage participants to have enough clothes to wear during their quarantine stay.</p>
INDEPENDENT TRAVEL	<p>Will independent travel be allowed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Yes, as outlined in our Country Information booklet b) Yes, with some new restrictions c) No <p>If 'Yes, with some new restrictions', please comment on the new restrictions. For</p>	<p>Independent travel is still highly discouraged as most places in the Philippines would require foreigners/travellers additional requirements (e.g. negative swab test result, medical certificate, etc.).</p>

	example, will it be allowed within the host country? Outside of the host country borders?	
NATURAL FAMILY VISITS	<p>Will visits from natural family and friends be allowed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Yes, as outlined in our Country Information booklet b) Yes, with some new restrictions c) No <p>If 'Yes, with some new restrictions', please comment on the new restrictions. For example, will the decision be made on a case by case basis? Will visits only be allowed at the end of the program?</p>	This is highly discouraged to minimize the risk of both the host family and the participant from getting infected by CoVID-19. Students must still observe the community quarantine restrictions set by the Philippine government.
PROGRAM TERMINATION	<p>Will Program Releases be allowed at the end of the program?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Yes, as outlined in the Country information booklet b) Yes, with certain restrictions c) No 	No. Program Release is not allowed.

<p>General Safety Precautions</p>	<p>What are the general safety precautions? E.g. social distancing, wearing mask, hand washing/sanitizer, greeting volunteers or host family upon arrival, etc.</p>	<p>The usual quarantine protocols are still to be observed by all participants.</p> <p>The minimum health protocols known as the 7 Commandments, include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. wearing of proper face masks; 2. wearing of face shields; 3. no talking and no eating in public transportation and similar settings like confined areas and crowded places; 4. adequate ventilation (use of exhaust systems, air purifiers or keeping windows partially open); 5. frequent and proper disinfection; 6. symptomatic or COVID-19 positive must be isolated; 7. appropriate physical distancing. <p>On top of these guidelines, we encourage our participants to observe the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Refraining from physical gestures (i.e. hand shakes, pag “mano”, kissing the cheeks “beso-beso” when meeting with people) b. Having adequate sleep, eating nutritious food, taking vitamins, doing daily exercise to increase the body’s immune system
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