

# Amani Institute

## COVID-19 Policy for In-Person Global Programs

### Goals of this policy

This policy is designed with two goals in mind. Firstly, to limit the spread of COVID-19. Secondly, to ensure our participants, partners, and staff create a shared understanding of responsibility for maintaining safety. This way, we can build and maintain trust during the course of our in-person work and ensure a thoughtful and collaborative approach to establishing precautions that are appropriate and feasible for our organization and participants.

It is important to note that Amani Institute delivers education for adult participants. Our policies offer a basic set of precautions designed to decrease the health risks in our classrooms and activities but do not attempt to control or direct participants' choices beyond this.

Amani Institute is also a global organization with offices in three countries and programs around the world. With this in mind, our basic policy is designed to be flexible to account for a range of contexts which vary from country to country and program to program. As such, our policy may be less restrictive than what you are familiar with in your country. However, this policy also contains provisions that allow Amani Institute to escalate precautions as appropriate if risk factors change (i.e. if a new variant emerges or a surge occurs).

### Key Assumptions Guiding Our COVID-19 Policies

Our policies are guided by the [World Health Organization guidelines](#) and [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines](#). It's important to acknowledge that the scientific understanding of COVID-19 is continuously evolving, so our protocols will as well.

1. **Incubation Periods and Transmission:** COVID-19 has an incubation period of 5-6 days and sometimes as long as two weeks before symptoms appear. A person generally can transmit the disease up to two days before showing symptoms.
2. However, “symptoms” are not always obvious or noticed. For this reason, if someone tests positive or shows symptoms, we must assume anyone in “close contact” with this person in the last five days could be at risk.
3. **Close Contact:** Close contact is being 2 meters (6 feet) or less away from someone with COVID-19 for a duration of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. Even if you are/were wearing a mask, this is still considered close contact.
4. **Isolation Periods for Positive Cases:** If you have symptoms or a positive COVID-19 test, it’s recommended you isolate for a minimum of 5 days. If you have a severe infection, isolate for a minimum of 10 days and consult a doctor before ending isolation. In either case, you must be fever-free and your symptoms must be resolved for at least 24 hours before returning to our programs.
5. **Isolation Periods for Close Contact Exposures** (no test result or symptoms, yet): If you are vaccinated or have recovered from a recent COVID-19 infection, no isolation is required. However, you should closely monitor for symptoms and get tested.
6. **Immunity Periods:** Immunity for COVID-19 is not well understood or universally agreed upon and may vary depending on the variant and the person's immune response. However, in general, people who have recovered from COVID-19 are provided with a level of immunity for at least six months after recovery.

### **What Amani Institute is Responsible For**

Following is a list of minimum requirements Amani Institute has provided to its teams for global programs. Local teams have ultimate discretion on how to implement these requirements. These precautions may be escalated at the discretion of local staff.

1. **Program Spaces/Venues** must allow for social distancing between participants (6 feet/2 meters). Outdoor space is preferred but not required.
2. **Accommodations for Participants** must allow for single sleeping rooms and private spaces. Single bathrooms are preferred but not required.

3. **Close Contact Provisions:** While close contact will be minimized, it is unavoidable in our line of work, whether it is in workshops that require close-contact group activities (such as Bioempathy) or sharing bathrooms in the offices or in your accommodations. As such, Amani Institute must provide for basic protection and hygiene in these scenarios. Specifically, this includes providing backup masks and hand sanitizer.
4. **Duty to Inform, Remind, and Enforce Policies:** All facilitators and project managers must take necessary steps to ensure participants are aware of the policies and adjustments surrounding COVID-19 (i.e. reading the COVID-19 class rules at the beginning of a program and issuing reminders throughout).
5. **Staff Wear Masks at all Times** where social distancing is not possible.
6. **Continuously Evaluate and Possibly Adjust COVID-19 Protocols** in consultation with participants and in response to changing risk levels, laws, policies, and global protocols.
7. **Follow General COVID-19 Protocol Guidelines Shared Internationally**, using the WHO and CDC as references.

### **What Participants are Responsible For**

1. **Follow Country Laws** (including vaccination and other requirements for travel).
2. **Follow Policies of Local Amani Institute Offices and Program Specific Policies**, if more expansive than our basic policy (these will be stated if different from our basic policy).
3. **Wear Masks at All Times** during program activities where social distancing isn't possible
4. **Notification Protocol:**
  - a. If you test positive, notify program staff and follow their instructions regarding isolation before returning to in-person activities. Program staff will notify the class of the person who has tested positive, so they can respond accordingly (get tested, etc.).
  - b. If you have had close contact with someone who tests positive, notify the program staff before returning to in-person activities. Staff will notify other participants. Follow instructions of program staff regarding isolation or testing.
  - c. If you are showing symptoms (not feeling well), notify program staff and do not return to in-person activities until instructed to do so by staff.

5. **PCR Test:** Every participant must be tested during the first week of the program. This will be paid for by Amani Institute. After that, PCR test requirements are based on the instructions of program staff and local laws. Subsequent tests may not be paid for by Amani Institute.

#### **What We Recommend but Not Require**

- Updating Vaccines and/or Carrying Immunity: In line with the evolving scientific recommendations and our shared public health responsibilities, Amani Institute encourages participants to be immunized (up-to-date vaccination or antibodies through recovery) and carry proof of immunity (i.e. vaccination card or appropriate test results).
- Dialogue with Facilitators: We recommend that program managers and participants create a safe space, facilitate, and foster dialogue where appropriate or necessary to discuss the varying needs and risk preferences of participants in each program.

#### **Escalation – Additional Measures Amani Institute May Take if Contexts Change**

Generally, Amani Institute will follow global and local guidelines as the pandemic continues, responding to varying levels of risk and appropriate measures to safeguard ourselves and our participants as well as the people we interact within our activities. Any changes in COVID-19 policies will be discussed with participants. This may include:

1. Postponing or taking activities online
2. Increasing hygiene rules
3. Increasing testing requirements
4. Instituting routine temperature and symptom checks
5. Increasing mask requirements
6. Other measures not included here.

### **Date & Program Change Policy**

If, due to COVID-19, a program must be delayed or the format shifted from in-person to virtual, Amani Institute will offer a full refund of tuition to any participant who must drop the program entirely due to scheduling. If the cost of the program changes because it is shifted to virtual, a partial refund will be offered for any participants who remain in the virtual program.

Shifting a program to virtual is not guaranteed in every case – some of our programs depend on in-person engagement and will not be offered virtually if they must be canceled.

By default, we cannot guarantee that partial refunds will be offered to participants who choose to remain for portions of the changed program (i.e. if the original program was planned to last 2-weeks, but the dates changed and you can now only join for ten days, you will still be expected to pay full tuition as if you were participating for the full 2-weeks or drop completely in order to receive a full refund).

### **Burden of Responsibility**

Amani Institute will follow the guidelines above for itself and staff for global programs, just as they are required for participants. We aim to provide the safest learning experience we can. However, we acknowledge that, in certain circumstances, COVID-19 cases may arise despite our best efforts. It is ultimately the final responsibility of participants themselves to take necessary precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 outside of their day-to-day participation in our activities (i.e. during free times, evenings, weekends, etc.). Amani Institute will not be held responsible for the conduct of participants or anything happening outside program activities, including travel to the program.