

# COVID-19: Policy & Protocol

Thailand (July 12, 2022)

## Quick Summary of the Outbreak

1. The novel Coronavirus disease was declared a pandemic on March 11, 2020.
2. For daily reports about the situation, please visit these links on the WHO website:
  - <https://covid19.who.int>;
  - [www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports](http://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports)

## Symptoms of COVID-19

According to the CDC, people with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. Anyone can have mild to severe symptoms. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

This list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as it learns more about COVID-19. Older adults and people who have severe underlying medical conditions like heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19 illness.

(Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>)

## The Current Situation in Thailand

1. According to the World Health Organization, there have been 4,546,854 confirmed cases of COVID-19 with 30,859 deaths reported as of 11 July 2022.
2. After months of strict travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Thailand is gearing up for a return to normalcy by easing some travel restrictions and quarantine requirements and allowing normal tourists to enter the country.
3. Healthcare facilities in Thailand can become quickly overwhelmed in a healthcare crisis. Limited hospital capacity throughout Thailand could result in life-threatening delays for emergency medical care. Although healthcare facilities were overwhelmed a few months ago, there are currently enough beds available for COVID-19 patients. The centralized hospitals in big cities (e.g. Bangkok ...) have been handling serious cases of COVID-19.

## Current Entry and Exit Requirements

1. New entry requirements have been introduced on July 1, 2022.
2. **Fully Vaccinated travelers** will have to show a valid certificate of vaccination. A digital certificate or a screenshot of evidence of your COVID-19 vaccination status should be accepted. Your final vaccine dose must have been administered at least 14 days prior to travel.
3. **Unvaccinated travelers** will have to show a RT-PCR/Professional ATK COVID-19 test result issued within 72 hours before departure
4. The medical insurance policy with at least USD\$ 10,000 minimum coverage **is no longer required** but it is **recommended** to have it.
5. United States citizens should check with the US Department of State for any travel advisory, news, and emergency situations on their website for [Thailand Travel Advisory \(https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories/thailand-travel-advisory.html\)](https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories/thailand-travel-advisory.html).

Main sources: <https://th.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/covid-19-information/>

For more information, please visit these websites:

- Ministry of Health in Thailand <https://ddc.moph.go.th/viralpneumonia/eng/index.php>
- U.S. Embassy in Thailand: <https://th.usembassy.gov/>
- Thailand Embassy in Washington D.C.: <https://thaiembdc.org/>
- US Department of State: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories/thailand-travel-advisory.html>
- CDC page on COVID-19: <https://www.cdc.gov/globalhealth/countries/thailand/default.htm>

## GEI Global Policy

1. We take daily updates from core, factual, reliable sites:
  - [www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public](http://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public)
  - [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/summary.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/summary.html)
  - [www.worldometers.info/coronavirus](http://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus)
  - Further local in-country sites for Thailand
2. We immediately address and action any amendments required to the Company Protocol (see below) arising out of the updates.
3. We follow country-specific guidelines and protocols, and those may supersede our Company guidelines and protocols.
4. We disseminate the Company Protocol to all in-country staff (including all program managers and guides) and we train and update them before the start of every program.
5. We assess program managers and guides prior to each program of their up-to-date knowledge of the available information and their comfort with the Company Protocol.
6. We also have an internal written document of our Company Protocol for all in-country staff on how to operate programs during the global COVID-19 spread.

## GEI Protocol

1. Our staff members are all fully vaccinated. We will as much as possible only work with tourism personnel who have been vaccinated and who have submitted a vaccination certificate to us.
2. We have identified the government-appointed medical facilities/clinics/hospitals in Thailand capable of providing the best available care to our clients if required. These are:
  - **BNH Hospital, Bangkok** – 9/1 Convent Rd, Silom, Bang Rak, Bangkok 10500, Telephone: +66 2 022 0700
  - **Bumrungrad International Hospital, Bangkok** – 33 Soi Sukhumvit 3, Khlong Toei Nuea, Watthana, Bangkok 10110, Telephone: +66 2066 8888
  - **Samitivej Hospital, Bangkok** - 133 Sukhum Vit 49, Khlong Tan Nuea, Watthana, Bangkok 10110, Telephone: +66 2 022 2222
  - **Bangkok Hospital Phuket** - 2/1 Hongyokutis Rd, Tambon Talat Yai, Mueang Phuket District, Phuket 83000, Telephone: +66 76 254 425
  - **Bangkok Hospital Siriroj** - 44 Chalermprakiat Ror 9 Road, Wichit, Mueang Phuket District, Chang Wat Phuket 83000, Telephone: +66 76 361 888

3. **PCR testing labs are widely available in Thailand.** We have identified the following testing labs:
  - Bangkok Genome Center (Clinic). Price: USD 70 per person + extra USD 20 for medical certificate (if needed). Payment by cash or credit card. Open daily 08:00 to 16:00.
  - Phyathai 2 Hospital. Price: USD 90 per person + extra USD 20 for medical certificate (if needed). Payment by cash or credit card. Open daily 08:00 to 16:00.
  - Phuket Swab Center Laguna by Bangkok Hospital Phuket. Price: USD 90 per person + extra USD 20 for medical certificate (if needed). Payment by cash or credit card. Open daily 08:00 to 16:00.
4. We provide our clients with available local COVID-19 related information for pre-departure dissemination.
5. **We require that all our guests be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 at least 14 days before travelling to one of our destinations.** Guests who cannot get vaccinated because of a health condition could be exempt upon submission of a medical certificate attesting of the condition. We will review the medical certificate and take a decision on a case-by-case basis. Any further requirements that will be in place such as the submission of negative COVID-19 tests prior to departure and upon arrival will be communicated.
6. We request that our clients ensure that all program participants have adequate travel and medical insurance, including medical evacuation insurance.
7. Hotels and lodges require that we submit scanned passport copies for each program participant in advance.
8. Every GEI Program Manager/Guide (“Guide”) is individually briefed about key health and safety measures for each program. This includes the following:
  - On arrival, all guests are requested to alert the Guide immediately if they have any symptoms typical of a cold or flu at any time during the program. For this purpose, he/she ensures that all guests have access to his/her mobile phone/WhatsApp number and email address.
  - The Guide will also proactively approach any guest who shows symptoms (cough, fever, etc.). Such guest is asked to stay at the hotel, to wear a mask, and to avoid contact with other people as much as possible.
  - During the arrival briefing session, the Guide informs all guests about hand washing: [www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/hand/handwashing.html](http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/hand/handwashing.html).
  - In case of any concern at any time during the program, the Guide organizes an evaluation by a medical practitioner as soon as possible and follows said practitioner’s instructions. He/she will also immediately alert the GEI local office and GEI’s global head office.
  - If the guest is suspected of having, or is diagnosed with, COVID-19, the Guide shall follow the GEI policies and also follow the instructions of the local authorities and health facilities. He/she shall also keep GEI’s global head office informed at all times so that head office staff can alert and communicate with the client and any emergency contacts.
9. **A COVID-19 Safety Officer will be assigned to each program.** The Safety Officer will be responsible for ensuring best practice is followed throughout the program by monitoring behavior, environment, and adherence to agreed hygiene measures. **For groups with up to 20**

**participants, the Program Manager or Guide will play this role and will be supported by other team members who will be on standby in case of an emergency.** For larger groups, the Program Manager or Guide will play this role as well as a second member of our team who will be appointed to be with the group.

10. Specific preventive measures will be put in place and include the following:

- Participants must keep a social distance of 1.5 meters when it is possible to do so.
- Participants should use hand sanitizers regularly and avoid hand shaking.
- Participants must wear a mask in public places or when requested by the Safety Officer.
- Participants must wear a mask when their temperature is being checked
- Masks should meet the following requirements:
  - Have two or more layers of washable, breathable fabric
  - Must completely cover the nose and mouth
  - Fit snugly against the sides of your face and don't have gaps
  - Have a nose wire to prevent air from leaking out of the top of the mask
- It is important to change face masks that cannot be washed or reused at least every day and to dispose safely of any used face masks in a bin bag that is then closed tightly.
- If masks are taken off to eat or drink, it is important to place them somewhere safe to keep them clean, such as in the pocket, purse, or in a paper bag.

**We strongly recommend that participants use N95 masks (if those are available in their country) or surgical masks. We do not recommend that participants use cloth masks as those do not offer sufficient protection. Please note that N95 masks are available in Thailand with various standards, so it is important that participants bring their own.**

- Vehicle configuration and utilization limits will be applied as per industry protocols and per agreement with client.
- Participants will be encouraged to occupy the same seat for the day, if not the whole program.
- Number of occupants on game drive vehicles will be limited.
- Accommodation: **Single rooms will be reserved for all participants unless otherwise instructed. If rooms are to be shared, rooming lists are to be adhered to and not changed during the course of the program.**

11. Personal protective equipment (PPE):

- No PPE (including facemasks) or cleaning/sanitizing supplies will be provided for travelers unless specifically requested and travelers will be expected to bring their own.
- Hand sanitizer will be available on embarkation and disembarkation of vehicles, and at all sites in line with global industry protocols.
- GEI will have on hand a limited emergency supply of face masks should guests need to buy some for themselves. It will be a small supply and guests are generally expected to have enough masks for the duration of the trip.
- GEI will supply face masks and sanitizer for all ground staff and drivers.

12. Temperature checks and symptoms scanning:

- **Daily temperature checks and visual assessment of any COVID-19 related symptoms will be conducted and recorded by the GEI Safety Officer/guide. In some cases, GEI may ask participants to monitor their temperature and health, and inform the Safety Officer/guide if they are unwell and/or have fever.**
- **If applicable, during the daily monitoring by GEI, the Safety Officer/guide will do the following:**
  - Take every participant's temperature with a handheld thermometer each morning.
  - Assess if a participant is showing any other symptoms of COVID-19.
  - Wear a face mask while doing the readings, and so must each program participant.
  - Have a clip board with a participant list for every day, where the reading of each participant will be recorded, thus always keeping the record up to date.
- If the temperature check by the Safety Officer/guide shows that a person has an initial elevated temperature (37.5 C or higher on the forehead and 36.2 C or higher on the wrist), the test will be repeated 10 minutes later. If the temperature is then still 37.5 C or higher on the forehead or 36.2 C or higher on the wrist, the participant will be sent to his/ her room, and the temperature check will be repeated an hour later by the Safety Officer or by a GEI member of staff. If the temperature is still high an hour later, the GEI Safety officer or GEI member of staff will call the nurse on duty. If the group is out in the field, the participant will be requested to wear a face mask and will be seated on the back seat of the bus, until the temperature check can be repeated an hour later. If the temperature is still high an hour later, the participant will be taken to the nearest hospital for a check-up and medication if needed. The participant will self-isolate. The GEI Safety Manager will decide if a PCR test needs to be taken and will advise the participant accordingly. The cost of the PCR test and isolation room will be at the participants' expense.
- If a participant does not have a temperature but is showing other signs of COVID-19 during the program, he/she will be asked to self-isolate until a PCR test is conducted. If the group is out in the field, the participant will be requested to wear a face mask at all times and will be seated on the back seat of the bus or be taken to the nearest hospital for a check-up and medication. The cost of the PCR test and isolation room will be at the participants' expense.
- **Reminder: Temperature screening will not identify a person who has COVID-19 who is asymptomatic (not showing any symptoms), does not have an elevated temperature as one of their symptoms, or is on medication that reduces their temperature. A person may also have an elevated temperature for other reasons, including a medical condition not related to COVID-19.**

13. All lodges and hotels temperature generally screen their guests daily, upon entering reception & restaurant area(s) and bar(s). In case any person has a high temperature (confirmed 37.5 or higher), he/ she has to go to an isolation room at the hotel until a doctor or nurse can be dispatched to perform the COVID-19 test. The isolation room and COVID-19 test will be for the

guest's own account. The GEI Safety Officer will arrange this together with the hotel as conveniently and economically as possible.

14. **Any travelers who contract COVID-19 while in the destination country will be required to self-isolate or quarantine in line with government regulations at that time. Their participation in their program will be suspended and any costs incurred are to be covered by participants and/or their institution. Travel and medical insurance are compulsory and expected to be in place.**
15. **Positive cases are dealt on a case-by-case basis and may require quarantine (for 14 days) at a hospital or hotel with expenses to be covered by the traveler's insurance policy (including in-patient hospitalization, hospital isolation, hotel isolation, or related quarantine).**
16. **In the event of a positive diagnosis, a decision on whether the other program participants need to be tested and possibly even self-isolated as well is taken together with local health authorities. In general, GEI recommends that program participants get a PCR test done 3 to 5 days after exposure. The PCR tests will be at the participants' own costs. If a participant is positive, isolation rooms will be made available at the hotels and lodges at the participants' own cost.**
17. Furthermore, GEI's global head office will decide together with the client and the local health authorities whether to proceed with or cancel the program.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE: The information and prices provided in this document have been researched carefully but due to the current situation, they change regularly so we cannot guarantee their accuracy. We invite our guests to always check the travel updates and restrictions both in their home country and Thailand before traveling.**