

## **Church Trip Illness Response Policy**

*Applies to: Summer Mission Project, Kenya Mission Trip, Montreat Youth Conference*

*Reviewed by: Session and Church medical advisers*

As we prepare for meaningful experiences through mission and fellowship, the health and safety of all participants remain a priority. The following policy outlines our approach to managing illness, including but not limited to COVID-19, during church-sponsored trips.

### **Assumption of Risk**

By registering for and participating in a church-sponsored trip, all individuals (or parents/guardians for minors) acknowledge and accept the inherent risk of exposure to contagious illnesses such as, but not limited to:

- COVID-19
- Influenza (Flu)
- Common Cold
- Strep Throat
- Measles
- Other communicable viruses

While we will take reasonable precautions to minimize exposure, no trip can be completely risk-free.

### **Church Responsibilities**

The church will provide:

- A limited supply of COVID-19 rapid tests
- A supply of disposable face masks for general use
- General support and pastoral care in the event of illness
- Basic first aid resources

Church staff and volunteers will attempt to mitigate health risks through thoughtful planning, access to basic supplies, and on-site response to illness. However, staff and volunteers are also responsible for coordinating many aspects of the trip and cannot guarantee the prevention of illness or exposure. Each participant assumes personal responsibility for their health while attending.

### **Participant Responsibilities**

To ensure the health and safety of the group:

- All participants must be vaccinated for Covid-19.
- All participants must complete a health screening questionnaire prior to departure.
- Any individual showing symptoms of contagious illness (fever, cough, vomiting, etc.) should not attend until cleared by a medical professional.
- Participants with chronic health conditions must provide necessary medical information and emergency contact details.
- Individuals are expected to bring personal supplies including masks, hand sanitizer, and any necessary medications.
- Participants should be prepared to wear a mask if symptomatic, or if advised by leadership due to exposure risks.

### **If Illness Occurs During the Trip**

- Church staff and Church Volunteers will assess the situation and provide basic care, including isolating the participant when appropriate (or possible) and administering a COVID-19 test if available and necessary.
- In consultation with guardians (if the participant is a minor), leadership will determine the best course of action for care and recovery.
- Minor illnesses (e.g., headaches, mild colds) will be treated with basic first aid and rest.
- Serious illnesses or medical emergencies will require transportation to the nearest healthcare facility.
- If a contagious illness is present, all participants will be advised of necessary precautions and medical recommendations.
- If the illness is determined to be serious or requires prolonged isolation, it is the responsibility of the individual (or their parent/guardian) to coordinate and finance transportation home.

### **Travel & Return to Group Participation**

- Re-entry into group activities may be dependent on the resolution of symptoms or a negative COVID-19 test, at the discretion of trip leadership.
- In cases of confirmed contagious illness, the church may require remote participation or early return home to protect the larger group.

### **Acknowledgment**

By signing up for and participating in any of the church's mission or conference trips, individuals and families acknowledge understanding of this policy and accept the responsibilities and risks involved.

Participants Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_