



General Covid-19 Prevention Procedures

Planning for departure:

- SACI highly recommends for all students to book a SACI Group flight for Spring 2021 travel in order to help with all their travel needs during Covid. Should a student decide not to take the SACI group flight, they will be responsible for making sure they arrive in Florence in a timely manner. Please note that at this time public transportation to your final destination is prohibited. Students should plan to take flights landing at Florence Peretola airport as the final destination. Please check with your airlines that there will be no covid-restrictions on your connecting flight to Florence.
- Given the unpredictability and evolution of the pandemic, it is highly recommended for students to purchase an insurance policy that will cover not only health matters (the Italian health system is generally very good and very affordable) but also possible changes of dates for flights, etc. SACI offers an extensive insurance plan through iNext. For more information on SACI and iNext's insurance policy please go to the following link: <https://saci-florence.edu/student-life/preparing-attend/health-insurance>. If a student already has an insurance policy or gets health insurance - which is mandatory for studying in Italy - through their study abroad office as part of their program cost, they may want to check what is included or if they would like to supplement their policy.
- If a student belongs to a group that is considered at high-risk for Covid-19 complications, SACI recommends that they check with their doctor before committing to travel, especially if they have any pre-existing health conditions or any known immune deficiency.
- Students will be required to undergo a Covid test 48/72 hours before departure and provide the written negative results of that test. After the test and before departure, we recommend taking all necessary precautions to avoid any possibility of contamination. A second test will be required upon arrival in Florence (see "What is happening upon arrival?" section below for further information).
- For updated regulations and guidelines from the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding foreigners entering the Italian territory, please see: <https://www.esteri.it/mae/en/ministero/normativaonline/decreto-iorestoacasa-domande-frequenti/focus-cittadini-italiani-in-rientro-dall-estero-e-cittadini-stranieri-in-italia.html>
- Among the things students should pack, we strongly recommend bringing a laptop if possible. Should a lockdown occur while in Italy that would prevent access to SACI facilities or if quarantine is required in Italy or elsewhere, having a laptop will allow students to follow courses remotely and to complete some or all coursework online.
- SACI also suggests packing a sufficient supply of masks and hand sanitizer. Most airlines require passengers to wear a mask for all flights. When in Italy, students will be able to

purchase additional masks easily, but it is helpful to have a few masks handy to cover the first few days.

- In order to travel to Italy, students must bring the following documents with them when traveling to Florence:
 - 2 letters of confirmation of enrollment:
 - Confirmation of Enrollment from the student's home institution
 - Confirmation of Enrollment from SACI),
 - Institutional partnership letter from AACUPI (provided by SACI)
 - A copy of the Italian Ministry of University decree (MURST letter) (Provided by SACI).

Upon arrival:

- Upon arrival in Florence, students will immediately be required to undergo an additional Covid test that must be negative in order to be able to access SACI facilities. If the test is not provided by the Italian public healthcare system directly at the Florence Peretola airport, then testing will be scheduled (cost covered by SACI) with a professional health-care organization in Florence. If a student opted for SACI housing and tests positive upon arrival in Florence, but shows no symptoms, they will not be allowed to access SACI facilities but will be able to self-isolate in their room for a time period deemed necessary by the Italian health authorities. Students who are required to quarantine will be provided with the Italian health system assistance and, if hospitalization is needed, all health care costs for treatment will be covered by the Italian government.
- At the moment (September 2020), a quarantine of 14 days is still required in Italy for certain countries including the United States. However, there are positive signs to think that, by January 2021, students who would be able to show 2 negative Covid tests (one done 48/72 hours prior to departure and the second one done upon arrival in Italy) will be exempted from the 14-days quarantine. Should this mandatory quarantine not be removed by the Italian authorities by then, students will be allowed to quarantine in SACI housing (or independent housing), while following SACI activities and courses remotely for 14 days. Upon arrival, all students will be provided with specific information on policies and procedures regarding Covid-19 at SACI, in Florence, and Italy in general.

Covid procedures in Florence:

- SACI will follow all regulations and guidelines communicated by the Italian Government – in particular by the Italian Ministry of Education (MIUR, see <https://www.istruzione.it/rientriamoascuola/indicazioni.html>) – and by the Region of Tuscany (see <https://www.regione.toscana.it/-/coronavirus>). SACI's procedures are managed and monitored by our administration and adhered to by all our staff and faculty. For any situation not directly addressed in the present document, SACI will refer to regulations published by the Italian authorities listed above. Important information regarding our health and safety protocols will be communicated to all students, faculty, and staff, and be available on SACI's website. Students are advised to monitor and respect any communications from SACI that may inform them about a change in regulations as the pandemic situation evolves.

- All SACI students are also automatically enrolled in the State Department’s STEP Program for the duration of their time abroad. This ensures that they receive email updates should any major changes take place relevant to Covid-19 or the general health & safety situation in Italy.
- There will be temperature checks at all SACI facilities for anybody entering a SACI buildings, whether a student, faculty, staff, external provider, etc.
- Masks are required at all times inside SACI’s buildings until further notice.
- Classrooms and studio spaces will be designed to meet the social distancing guidelines established by the local public health and safety authorities. Furnishings will be arranged and spaces will be demarcated where possible to remind students to maintain their distance. Although SACI’s students/faculty ratio is generally low with a small number of students per class, where necessary, the ratio of students per class may be reduced even further in order to guarantee appropriate distancing in the classrooms. Whenever possible, classroom windows and doors will remain open to maximize airflow. Heating and air conditioning systems will be sanitized and cleaned according to health and safety regulations.
- In compliance with governmental and regional regulations, SACI’s facilities will be cleaned and sanitized daily during each term. SACI is also establishing protocols for cleaning and managing tools and equipment for studio courses as well as for any possible use of library space and materials.
- More information regarding the procedures in place in SACI facilities can be viewed in the document “Covid Prevention Rules of Conduct in SACI Facilities” [https://www.saci-florence.net/mysaci/files/Orientation_Packet.pdf]. Please note that circumstances might change, and official policies and SACI’s policies will adapt to reflect these changes.

Covid testing in Florence:

- If not provided by the Italian health authorities directly at the airport, SACI will incorporate Covid testing for all students (expense covered by SACI) immediately upon arrival.
- During orientation and in SACI’s welcome packet, students will be provided with the contact information for local health and emergency services as well as with SACI’s 24/7 emergency phone number. SACI staff can also provide students with contact information for local English-speaking doctors and other specialists.
- Covid testing will be made available to SACI students at a moderate cost thanks to an agreement between the Association of American College and University Programs in Italy (AACUPI) and the health assistance organization Misericordia in Florence. Should students contract the virus while in Florence, the Italian national health system will treat and take care of the student at minimum costs, in the same way Italian citizens would be treated.
- During the semester, if a student comes into contact with a person who tested positive for Covid or visited an area considered at risk by the World Health Organization and the Italian authorities, SACI requires that the student will have to self-isolate, undergo Covid testing (at their own expense) and be able to show negative results before being allowed to access school facilities again.
- At any time during the term, students will be able to request a Covid test. In some instances, the test can be done free of charge (e.g. if a student travels by train from/to Tuscany, Covid tests are available (for free by showing your train ticket) in a tent located close to SACI’s headquarters). In other instances, if a student decides to get tested via private medical

laboratories, there would be a moderate fee to pay. The SACI staff will be available to help with scheduling an appointment.

SACI Housing policies and procedures:

- As the Covid-19 pandemic continues to affect the world and SACI continues to face unprecedented challenges, the safety of our students is our highest priority. SACI is committed to implementing health and safety protocols aimed at making all facilities and accommodations provided to students as safe as possible.
- In order to reduce possible risk of contagion, students will be placed in single bedrooms with private bathrooms during the Spring 2021 term at a nearby, comfortable, and safe university residence hall.
- Homestay options will not be available during this term.
- Prior to the student's arrival, rooms will be professionally cleaned and sanitized. During the term, a bi-monthly room cleaning and change of linens is included in the SACI Housing Fee. However, SACI encourages students to clean their room at least 2-3 times a week. All communal areas of the University Residence Hall will be cleaned and sanitized on a daily basis, following all of the most updated hygiene protocols.
- On arrival day, students in SACI housing may be notified about spaced out move-in times to make sure students move in consecutively and apart from each other.
- Students will be required to wear masks in shared spaces such as the kitchen, and to stagger the use of these spaces. Students will need to clean shared spaces with the appropriate products after use.
- Should a student in SACI housing be exposed to Covid-19 during the semester, the student will be able to self-isolate in the same room. Self-isolated students can be provided with meals delivered by the University Residence Hall staff right outside their room (cost to be covered by the student). Food or meals can also be easily ordered online by the student to be delivered to the room. Staff will be able to provide the student with appropriate information and will do everything possible to make the student feel supported.
- For more information on The Student Hotel (SACI Housing), their facilities, and their response to COVID-19 please see <https://saci-florence.edu/student-life/student-housing>.

SACI field trips & individual travel:

- Provided there will be no lockdown or other restrictions affecting field trips communicated by Italian Authorities, field trips will be conducted. In the case of larger classes, trips will be divided into smaller groups. All safety measures such as wearing masks and social distancing will need to be adhered to. For official program travel (class field trips or extra-curricular activities organized by SACI), SACI will plan for chartered vans and coaches wherever possible and limit use of public transportation.
- Individual travel during the term will be allowed within Italy only, avoiding any areas considered at risk by the Italian authorities. For the safety of the student and the safety of others, SACI recommends scheduling international travel after the end of the Spring term, with the likelihood that certain destinations may require a quarantine period upon returning to Italy. Students who are US citizens coming without a visa, are allowed to travel within

Europe (Schengen area) but will have to leave within 90 days after arrival in the Schengen area.

- SACI's staff will monitor individual student travel by enforcing existing policies and requiring students to communicate their travel destinations each time they leave Florence for anything other than a SACI-sponsored field trip or activity. This information will be used to help prevent students from planning trips to areas at risk.
- Students who, against SACI's recommendations, decide to travel during the term outside of Italy or to locations within Italy where there may be a high number of infections, will be required to self-isolate and take a test that will need to be negative before re-entering SACI facilities. Students who breach any SACI rules, putting themselves or others at risk with irresponsible behavior, will be subject to disciplinary action, and if deemed dangerous would include dismissal from SACI.

Living in Florence during the pandemic:

- SACI adheres to all rules for mask wearing mandated by the Italian authorities. These rules depend on the gravity of the pandemic situation and can evolve quickly, even between one town and another. Rules are published on official websites and everywhere in the city, and SACI will communicate them to students every time there is a change. As of October 2020, masks are mandatory in Florence everywhere inside (shops, offices, businesses, etc.) but also outside, except while exercising. In restaurants and cafes, masks are mandatory every time anyone circulates in and out of the restaurant but not when seated at a table and eating/drinking.
- Most cultural sites throughout Italy (including museums and monuments) have re-opened and, should the situation remain unchanged, will remain open. SACI will provide current updates on opening times and safety measures and procedures for all accessible cultural sites.
- Bars, most restaurants, and cafes are open in Florence, following distance rules. Clubs remain closed until further notice. Bars and nightclubs are seen by authorities to be significant transmitters of coronavirus and SACI encourages students to avoid all such fully enclosed and indoor facilities and to maintain social distancing at all times when out in the city, including while dining.
- As of September 2020, health clubs and gyms are open with occupancy closely monitored and a limited number of participants allowed in fitness classes, which must be booked in advance.
- Public transportation in Italy is working regularly. It is mandatory to wear a mask, to keep a safe distance by using only the seats designated for use, and to use a separate entrance and exit. Despite all measures in place, SACI encourages students to limit their use of public transportation.
- It is also mandatory to wear a mask and to keep a safe distance in all shops including grocery stores. Some supermarkets deliver groceries upon purchase above a certain value per order. Many Florentines have adopted this practice as a way of limiting their exposure to supermarkets.

Protocols to be followed should a student, staff or instructor within the cohort test positive:

The following are the guidelines listed in the Decree by the Italian President of the Council of Ministers, published in the Official Gazette n. 222 of September 7, 2020, and which SACI will follow:

- SACI will keep a record of everyone who enters the facilities for a minimum of 14 days. Should the school be informed by staff, faculty, students, or Italian health authorities that someone in our facilities has been exposed to the Covid-19 virus, SACI will support all impacted individuals by following the protocol issued by the Italian authorities. This may include assisting the Italian authorities with contact-tracing operations by providing them with the list of students who participated in the same class/activity as the Covid-19 positive individual between 2 days before the manifestation of symptoms and the self-isolation date.
- Any student, staff or faculty member who is confirmed as Covid-19 positive is required to immediately notify SACI's Director of Housing & Student Affairs. The individual, including as well as any student, faculty or staff member who proves to have been in contact with said individual, will have to self-isolate while the school will be required to close and sanitize the classrooms and studios used by the Covid-19 positive individual during the 2 days before the manifestation of symptoms and the self-isolation date. As a precautionary measure, SACI's courses may have to proceed remotely and studios will remain closed for 15 days after the self-isolation date of the Covid-19 positive person or until such time that the Italian authorities deem it safe.
- In case a student, staff, or faculty member shows Covid-19 symptoms while on SACI premises, in classrooms, housing, studios, or during extra-curricular activities, SACI's designated health professional staff will accompany the student to an isolated room and make all necessary arrangements for the individual's assistance including, in the case of a student, self-isolated accommodations, scheduling a test, and any other required procedures to care for the student that is needed. The classroom, studio, or other space where the individual showed symptoms will have to undergo a thorough sanitization process. However, in-person classes and activities will be able to proceed unless the suspected case is confirmed as Covid-positive.
- Any student in SACI housing suspecting to have been infected by the virus should inform the Director of Housing & Student Affairs who will then notify the University Residence Hall that a student may have been exposed to the virus and need to self-isolate. The student will be asked to complete coursework remotely until they are able to leave self-isolation.
- In order to help with contact tracing, the Italian health authorities recommend the use of the Smartphone app "IMMUNI" by all students, staff and faculty.

SACI's protocol if Florence or Tuscany becomes a high-risk area:

If the local region becomes enough of a risk, students will be required to adhere to the local health and safety regulations including a possible lockdown and stay-at-home orders. Classes would take place remotely until restrictions have been lifted. If the crisis is severe and students are asked to return to the United States, SACI staff would work with students and home schools to support their safe departure. Students will be able to complete their semester via distance learning from home in this instance.

SACI's Cancellation, Withdrawal and Refund Policies for Covid-related events:

- Should circumstances force SACI to cancel its Spring 2021 term prior to the beginning of the term, students who have paid the General Program Deposit will be offered the possibility of deferring to a future term. Students who decide not to defer to a future term will be refunded all deposits made.
- If the risk level in Italy requires that SACI suspend in-person classroom sessions, SACI will move to online classes. If the outbreak is not severe and temporary restrictions have been put in place, students can remain in Italy in their apartments and will complete their semester in Italy online. After the end of the term, SACI will refund the unused portion of the Activity Fee. Should students be required to vacate student housing and return home, in addition to the unused portion of the Activity Fee, SACI will refund the unused portion of the SACI Housing Fee. The academic program will continue online and students will receive full academic credit so no tuition refunds will be provided.
- For any other situation not stated above, SACI's *Payment, Withdrawal, and Refund Policy* as published on https://saci-florence.edu/sites/default/files/files/payment_withdrawal_and_refund_policy.pdf always remains valid.

Important Note: As Italian state and local measures are frequently updated based on changing circumstances, the above policies will adapt to these changes as needed. SACI will be sure to inform students of any changes to the above mentioned policies regarding our health and safety protocols and all updates will be posted on the SACI web page (<http://www.saci-florence.edu>).

Updated: October 16, 2020