



בית הספר
לתלמידים מחו"ל
ע"ש רוטברג
Rothberg
International
School

Dear Partners,

As the global spread of COVID-19 ensues, we'd like to share with you the steps we have taken at the Hebrew University to ensure the health, safety, and overall well-being of our students. By way of this letter, our intention is to bring you up to speed regarding COVID-19 in the Israeli context, to detail the measures taken here at the University to protect our students and staff, and to encourage you to communicate with us directly regarding any concerns or questions you may have.

Here are the facts: As of this morning, Israel's Ministry of Health confirmed that fifteen Israelis have tested positive for COVID-19. The majority of these confirmed patients returned from Italy where they contracted the virus, others were passengers on the Diamond Princess cruise ship off the coast of Japan, and four Israelis have contracted the virus after coming into close contact with confirmed patients. *There have been no reported COVID-19-related deaths in Israel to date, nor have there been any reported cases of the virus in Jerusalem or within the Hebrew University community.*

Given its history, the State of Israel is highly skilled in the management of crises and emergency situations of all types, and we are confident in the State's expert ability to navigate the challenges imposed by COVID-19. To date, the country has acted swiftly and decisively, even earning criticism for what was initially considered to be a harsh approach to combating the spread of the virus within its borders. At the risk of diplomatic and economic damage, Israel has gone far beyond other countries in banning entry to visitors from high-risk destinations and imposing strict quarantine measures upon Israelis returning from any of these destinations. Moreover, due to Israel's geopolitical context, the flow of people and goods across its land borders is extremely limited and highly controlled. Most human mobility is thereby restricted to air travel, making it relatively easy for Israel to control the movement of people into the country, and thereby significantly limiting the spread of COVID-19.

We want you to know that the Rothberg International School has activated its Health, Safety & Security Task Force to address the local ramifications of the global COVID-19 outbreak. Our Task Force has developed protocols to address:

- Students arriving from or transiting through high-risk regions
- Mandatory self-quarantine prior to dormitory check-in and class participation, preferably out of country and certainly off-campus
- Immediate isolation and ongoing quarantine support (housing, food, healthcare, medication, etc.) for any student who may exhibit symptoms after moving into the dorms and attending classes
- Medical assessment for any student potentially exposed as a result of the above
- Counseling support for students who experience emotional distress in light of the spread of COVID-19
- Refund policies for inbound spring students from high risk regions who are unable to attend

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- Refund policies for year-long students from high-risk regions who are unable to return from their semester break and resume their studies
- Academic contingency plans to ensure learning continuity

Our Task Force meets daily and, as you can imagine, this list is continuously evolving. This means that there is a team of professionals wholly focused on ensuring the well-being of our community and taking the necessary measures to put these protocols into practice so that students can thrive on our program and enjoy life in Jerusalem. *The health and safety of our students and staff is our number one priority.* As has always been the case, RIS will continue to offer support to students and their families, as well as to you, our partners, 24/7.

Finally, we share your commitment to learning continuity and are currently in the advanced stages of launching our online platform to facilitate distance-learning in the event of any potential large-scale disruptions to on-campus attendance. We are aware that this, specifically, is of concern to our partners. Know that we are busy putting this contingency plan into motion, and that we will share the details with you as we progress.

Given the dynamic nature of this situation, please do not hesitate to reach out to us as often as you'd like. Keri Rosenbluh, Director of Partnerships, can be reached at keriro@savion.huji.ac.il or +972-2-588-2617. Earlier today we sent out a detailed briefing to our students. They have been informed that Sigal Kleynerman, our Director of Student Life, is available via email and phone at sigalkl@savion.huji.ac.il or +972-2-588-2606, and is also happy to meet with them in person in Room 104A in our building. For urgent matters after-hours, students have been encouraged to reach out to the *madrich* on-call at +972-54-882-0217. We are here around-the-clock to offer them our care and support as the spread of COVID-19 continues to unfold, and we stand ready to assist you, our partners, as you assess the situation and navigate your decision-making.

Most Sincerely,

Prof. Noam Shoval
Provost
Rothberg International School

Ms. Yafit Sherer
Vice Provost
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