

DHAMMA PAKASA COVID INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS

10/10/2021

We are pleased to be resuming courses at the Illinois Vipassana Center. Due to the escalating Covid-19 case count, combined with the transmissibility of the Delta variant, we have set in place the following safety measures to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 virus. We recognize the inconvenience this may pose for some, and ask for your understanding and patience. We understand that these requirements may be too restrictive for some individuals, who may choose not to apply at this time. We look forward to relaxing these measures when they are no longer necessary.

All of the following procedures will be necessary each time a student or server applies to come to the Center:

1. **PROOF OF VACCINATION** - Applications will be processed only when vaccination documentation is received. Please email a photocopy of one of the following documents to registration@pakasa.dhamma.org.
 - a. Completed Covid-19 vaccination card (both sides), or
 - b. Covid Immunization record from your state's Immunization Registry.
2. **COVID SCREENING AND INFORMATION INTERVIEW** - You will be contacted by email and/or phone to set up a phone appointment. This interview will give you a chance to ask questions and get additional information.
3. **2 WEEKS PRIOR TO ARRIVAL AT THE CENTER** - please be as sure as you can be that you and all your household members and close contacts:
 - a. Have not tested positive for Covid-19,
 - b. Have been free of any Covid-related symptoms, and
 - c. Have had no close contact with anyone who is known to have Covid.
4. **7-8 DAYS PRIOR TO ARRIVAL** - you must:
 - a. **Take a Covid PCR test** (Polymerase Chain Reaction) 7-8 days prior to arrival (not within 7 - 8 days but exactly 7 - 8 days prior)
 - b. **Email a photocopy of your negative PCR test to** registration@pakasa.dhamma.org as soon as you receive it.
 - c. **Self-Quarantine** for purposes of admission to the Illinois Vipassana Center, "self-quarantine":
 - Applies to you and all your household members and close contacts,
 - Extends for the entire 7-8 day period of time between taking the PCR test and your arrival at the Center,
 - Includes all the above requirements (see item #3 above) and also,
 1. **Masking and Social Distancing:** Practicing CDC recommended procedures for wearing a mask and social distancing of at least 6 feet with anyone (regardless of vaccination status) outside of your immediate household, **and** being reasonably certain that other members of your household are also maintaining the same degree of safe practices.

2. **Avoiding Risky Situations:** Such as public transportation, crowded indoor and outdoor areas, travel to high Covid incidence areas, and/or eating, drinking, exercising, working or socializing with others who are not practicing masking and distancing precautions, **and** being reasonably certain that other household members are also maintaining the same degree of safe practices.
5. **WITHIN 24 HOURS OF ARRIVAL** - All participants must take a **Covid Rapid Antigen test within 24 hours of arrival at the Center**. You will need to bring proof of your negative PCR test with you when you come to the Center. If you would like to know where you can get a free drive-through rapid test near the Center, you can send a request for this information to registration@pakasa.dhamma.org.
6. **TRANSPORTATION/COMMUTE TO THE CENTER**
 - a. **Private Vehicle:** All course participants must travel to the Center via private transportation, alone in a private vehicle or with a member of their immediate household. Participants may also ride share with **one** other student or server who has been accepted to the same course.
 - **NOTE:** Rideshare partners will both be sent home if one of them arrives with Covid-like symptoms or cannot show proof of negative Covid test results (see #7 below).
 - **Travel Distance:** Driving time to the Center from home may not exceed 6 - 8 hours, stopping only for gas, food and bathroom breaks. Please do not eat at indoor restaurants on the way to the Center, and practice masking, distancing and hand washing precautions as needed.
7. **BRING WITH YOU TO THE CENTER** - course participants must be symptom-free and present the following documentation on arrival at the Center:
 - a. **Proof of a negative Covid Rapid Antigen test** taken within 24 hours of arrival at the Center.
 - b. **Emergency Contact Information** (name, relationship to you, and phone number) for someone within driving distance of the Center who can assist you should you need help to leave due to illness or some other circumstance.

*** No one can be admitted to a course without the above documentation***

In the Event of a Positive Covid Test: Any student or server applicant, even if vaccinated, who tests positive for Covid-19 on any of the above tests cannot come to the Center until they are completely non-symptomatic and have completed a quarantine period per the CDC's recommendations (See the CDC and Illinois state links below on quarantine). At that time, students are welcome to apply to attend another course or work period and will also need to follow all of the above guidelines before being allowed to come to the center.

AT THE CENTER

1. Anyone who arrives with, or develops **Covid-like symptoms** while at the Center, will be asked to leave without undue delay.
2. **Masking and Social Distancing While at the Center:** All students will have private accommodations and bathrooms. Everyone at the Center for a course must wear a suitable mask and maintain a distance of at least six 6 feet wherever other people are present, **indoors and outdoors.**
 - a. **Mask Guidelines:** It is important that everyone wear a mask that has been shown to be effective and that fits fully and securely over the mouth, nose, chin and cheeks. In this interest, please wear masks with at least 3 layers of protection such as: disposable surgical style masks, 3-layer cotton masks, 2-layer masks with filter inserts, N95 or KN95 masks, or wear 2 masks to achieve 3 or more layers (see CDC link below on appropriate mask types). We also ask those with beards to consider shaving or trimming the beard closer to the face to achieve a good mask fit.
 - b. If you are unable to bring a mask that meets these guidelines, we will provide disposable surgical style masks for your use during the course.
3. **Items Necessary to Bring for Covid and Center Conditions** (other standard items to bring to a course are included with the acceptance letter). **Please bring sufficient face masks and other personal protective equipment for your own usage throughout the course including:**
 - a. personal toiletries
 - b. bed linens (2 sheets, pillow & pillowcase, blanket)
 - c. meditation cushions and shawls
 - d. bath linens (towel & washcloth)
 - e. reusable water bottle
 - f. fever thermometer (optional)
 - g. oximeter (optional)
4. **Special Dietary Accommodations:** Due to the extra demands on servers, at this time we are unable to accept anyone with special dietary requirements. Please let us know if additional foods are medically necessary.

WORK-PERIOD AND BETWEEN COURSE SERVERS: All Work-Period or Between-Course Servers must also be vaccinated. Limited exceptions to some testing and self-quarantine requirements may be allowed on a case-by-case basis depending on individual circumstances and conditions at the Center.

WHO TO ASK

If you have any questions, please contact registration@pakasa.dhamma.org.

REFERENCES:

Illinois Department of Health information on Quarantine:

<https://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/community-guidance/quarantine-guidance>

CDC information on quarantine and isolation:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html>

CDC Vaccination information on Pfizer, Moderna, and Janssen/Johnson & Johnson:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines.html>

CDC information on how to protect yourself and others from Covid-19:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

Information on PCR Tests:

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/covid-19-diagnostic-test/about/pac-20488900>

Information on how to select and use masks:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/types-of-masks.html>

Information on the Delta variant:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/delta-variant.html>