



The Center for Victims of Torture Office Reopening Protocol

Dear US-based colleagues:

July 1 is fast approaching, the date that our US offices will reopen for all staff who choose to work from our offices. The Risk Management Team has been using updated information to create protocols to mitigate risk to staff, volunteers and visitors. Our approach, under the assumption that nearly all US-based CVT staff will be fully vaccinated by July or this fall, is to ensure the safety of the entire CVT community (staff, clients, volunteers, et al). Here is what we have learned, and what we recommend.

Center for Disease Control: The CDC tells us that vaccinated individuals may resume activities without wearing masks or physically distancing, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance. CDC likewise states that unvaccinated individuals, for their safety and the safety of their close contacts and family members, should continue to wear masks, be tested for COVID-19 regularly, and maintain physical distance from others.

Federal, State, Local guidelines, rules and regulations: There are currently no mask mandates in place in the states, cities, or counties where CVT has offices in the US.

Vaccination of CVT staff in our offices in the U.S.:

We had 100% compliance with the vaccine survey in our University Avenue site. The survey showed that very few University Avenue colleagues are not fully vaccinated, and those few intend to be vaccinated very soon. In our US clinics, between 85% - 99% are fully vaccinated. Of those who are not, about 14% intend to be vaccinated. We have not yet compiled the information from our DC colleagues.

CVT US Office Protocols:

Please note that these protocols will change if CDC, or state/local recommendations change. The Risk Management Team will continue to monitor this.

- We ask all staff to observe distancing protocols, and respect differing levels of comfort with physical proximity. (This includes asking before engaging in any physical contact, such as handshaking or hugging.)
- Vaccinated staff and volunteers do not need to wear masks in CVT offices, but may do so if they choose.
- Staff members who choose not to get vaccinated, for medical or other reasons, are required to wear a mask at all times and to observe 6 feet of distance from others when in CVT offices.
- Visitors will be asked to wear masks while in CVT offices. Signs on the doors will reflect this.
- All those in the office, visitors, those vaccinated and those unvaccinated, will practice hand hygiene and reasonable physical distancing.
- **If you feel ill, please do not come into the office. If a close contact is ill, or has tested positive for COVID-19, please do not come into the office. Review the symptoms of COVID-19 on this link, and follow CDC recommendations for medical consultation and/or isolation:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>. Contact human resources or risk management if you have tested positive for COVID-19 or been exposed to a person who has tested positive. This is a requirement in order to protect the safety of all staff and others in office, and to significantly reduce the risks of an in-office transmission, an outbreak and/or temporary office closure.



National Capacity Building Project



CVT spaces

- Facilities staff will determine maximum capacity for conference rooms that are less restrictive than they were for the last year.
- Touch surfaces, such as printers and office machines, may be used and we will continue to use enhanced cleaning on the surfaces and have hand sanitizer available throughout the office.
- Kitchens will have a maximum capacity.
 - o Common use dishes, coffee makers, refrigerators, dish washers may be used.
- Those who sit at front desks, and are potentially exposed to unvaccinated visitors, will have plexi screens and/or other safety features in place. In the University Avenue office, we will ask staff not to use the door by the reception desk as an exit in order to keep density at a minimum in that small entry space.

Buildings with shared common areas

- Masks are not required in the lobbies, elevators or restrooms in buildings where we lease office space, and we can't know whether those using common facilities are vaccinated. Please access the CDC link below so you can make an informed decision about hygiene and masking in shared spaces in the buildings.

Client services staff working in-person with clients and interpreters

- Risk Management will work with clinic managers and the client services director to determine these clinic protocols.

Relevant links:

CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>.

Washington DC: <https://coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance>

Georgia: <https://georgia.gov/covid-19-coronavirus-georgia>

Minnesota: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html>

Thank you all for your patience and assistance during this very difficult year - we ask for more of the same as we begin to come together in our offices this summer. Thank you for your respect for and patience with your colleagues throughout this transition. If we need to make changes based on regulations or common sense, we will do that carefully and with full transparency.

