The American Research Institute of the South Caucasus takes Fellows’ safety seriously. Due to the current COVID-19 crisis, Fellows’ travel will resume when travel restrictions are lifted. ARISC will continue to monitor the situation and will work with Fellows to confirm travel plans per guidance from the U.S. Department of State Travel Advisories, U.S. Center for Disease Control Travel Advisories, and the U.S. Embassies in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. Fellows flexibility is requested should travel to any one country not be allowable or advisable. ARISC reserves the right to change Fellows’ country or place of internship.

All Fellows will be required to show proof of COVID-19 vaccination upon acceptance to the program. Exceptions for religious or medical reasons may be considered. However, Fellows should understand that being unvaccinated will limit their participation in this program, due to additional testing and quarantine requirements.

Entry to Armenia, Azerbaijan, or Georgia
Fellows will be required to follow protocol for entry as set by Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. ARISC will inform Fellows of any changes to protocol.

While in Armenia, Azerbaijan, or Georgia
Fellows will be required to follow local regulations and protocol regarding safety to decrease chances of COVID spread. On a daily basis, Fellows will be required to take their temperature and assess their symptoms and report any concerns to the local Resident Director. Fellows will be required to properly wear masks at their place of internship and during all ARISC indoor activities. Partnering local institutions where the Fellow will work on their project will also ensure a safe work environment. ARISC will provide hand sanitizers at ARISC events.

Should Fellows Contract COVID in the South Caucasus
Partnering local institutions where the Fellow will work on their project will be required to report whether any of their employees has contracted COVID and whether the Fellow will need to take a COVID test or quarantine. Fellows who will be in regular contact with one another will be required to do the same.

Should Fellows contract COVID in the South Caucasus, they must immediately notify the local Resident Director. ARISC will follow CDC and local regulations for safety. The Fellow will be required to quarantine and might need to change their lodging situation.
The local Resident Director will check in with them regularly and have them seek medical assistance as needed.

**Return to the U.S.**

Effective January 26, all airline passengers to the United States ages two years and older, including U.S. citizens, must provide a negative COVID-19 viral test taken within three calendar days of travel. Alternatively, travelers to the U.S. may provide documentation from a licensed health care provider of having recovered from COVID-19 in the 90 days preceding travel. Check the CDC website for additional information and [Frequently Asked Questions](https://www.cdc.gov). Waivers to the testing requirement may be granted by the CDC on an extremely limited basis when extraordinary emergency travel (like an emergency medical evacuation) must occur to preserve someone's health and safety, and testing cannot be completed before travel. More information is [here](https://www.cdc.gov) and procedures for requesting a waiver are explained [here](https://www.cdc.gov). There is no general waiver of this requirement for vaccinated individuals.

These protocols may be updated as the situation changes.