



## **Protocol for the National Benevolent Association Coronavirus – COVID-19 Staff Procedures**

### **Introduction**

The emergence and spread of the respiratory disease, coronavirus, or COVID-19 as designated by the World Health Organization, requires organizations to respond in ways that express concern for its employees, partners, and the broader community in which it engages. The NBA, like so many organizations, takes seriously our national and global connections and our mission to create communities of compassion and care. An approach of compassion and care also includes our internal NBA community and how we both lead others and support one another.

This protocol serves as a guide for workplace safety, employee travel, and leave policies for the care of self and immediate family. The health and safety of all NBA employees is a priority. NBA reserves the right to adapt this protocol in any way due to current CDC recommendations or other issues that impact this plan.

Along with our partners, the NBA also created an overall document related to COVID-19. Here is the link to this resource:

<https://www.nbacares.org/care-resources/concerning-the-coronavirus-outbreak>

### **Workplace Safety**

The NBA is committed to taking reasonable and necessary steps to ensure a healthy, safe working environment. We encourage all employees, including XPLOR residents, to stay informed with accurate information about COVID-19, with special attention to each employees' geographic location. If you have any questions, please contact Dani Cartwright, Vice President of Operations, at [dcartwright@nbacares.org](mailto:dcartwright@nbacares.org). Two links for timely overall information:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>



## **What are the symptoms of coronavirus infections?**

The symptoms depend on the type of coronavirus and how serious the infection is. If you have a mild to moderate upper-respiratory infection such as the common cold, your symptoms may include:

- Runny nose
- Headache
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Fever
- Overall, not feeling well

## **Some coronaviruses can cause severe symptoms. The infections may turn into bronchitis and pneumonia, which cause symptoms such as:**

- Fever, which may be quite high if you have pneumonia
- Cough with mucus
- Shortness of breath
- Chest pains or tightness when you breathe and cough
- Severe infections are more common in people with heart or lung diseases, people with weakened immune systems, infants, and older adults.

Follow best practices related to prevention. You may be able to reduce your risk of getting or spreading an infection by:

- Washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoiding touching your face, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick.
- Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces that you frequently touch.
- Covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue. Then throw away the tissue and wash your hands.
- Staying home when sick.
- Seek early medical help if you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, and share your travel history with healthcare providers.



## NBA Operational Considerations

During a widespread outbreak, the NBA may need to take preventative steps such as:

- Sending symptomatic employees home
- Health screenings for those who might have been exposed
- Implementing quarantines for employees returning from high-risk areas
- Limiting face-to-face meetings
- Allowing for deployed work from home
- Temporarily shutting down operations

### **Temporary Closures and Cancellations:**

Though it is not expected, should NBA Operations need to be suspended for a period due to ill staff in multiple locations, the President & CEO will determine this need and make the announcement. NBA teams are well-equipped to cover for each other and anticipate that in most circumstances, this type of coverage can occur.

Should an outbreak rise to the level where community and government officials are asking people to distance themselves from social gatherings, the NBA will be fully prepared to participate.

### **Remote Offices:**

A majority of employees of the NBA work as deployed staff and not in the main St. Louis office. Each employee is encouraged to be vigilant about recommendations and requirements from local officials concerning the need for social distancing to break the spread of the contagious virus. For those who work remotely, unless a person is ill, work should continue as normal while being mindful of the recommendations of health officials in the staff person's geographical area.

### **St. Louis Office:**

Employees who work in the St. Louis office drive from a variety of communities into work. Each of these communities may make recommendations about social distancing that would suggest the need for an NBA employee to work from home for a period of time. In addition, the NBA will want to communicate and possibly coordinate with Union Avenue Christian Church given the use of shared space.

They, too, will be heeding the advice and counsel of local health and medical officials to determine whether they will limit or cease services for a period of time. If that happens, the NBA St. Louis office may participate in the cessation of work in our office



space as required/requested by local health/medical officials and in coordination with the staff and congregation of Union Avenue Christian Church.

Timely and proactive communication with a staff person's supervisor will facilitate a smooth transition into a "work from home" period. Employees are encouraged to keep up with their local community's recommendations and engage in a continuing conversation with their supervisor about any need to work from home.

**Decision Making:** The NBA President, Chief Financial Officer and Vice President of Operations will together determine that the office will close and for how long, should it become necessary. This decision will be communicated in a timely way to all staff, St. Louis based and deployed for their information.

### **XPLOR Houses:**

Each XPLOR house is in a location where local health and medical officials will be monitoring the outbreak of contagious illnesses in their locale. Each XPLOR house is hosted by a team of community and congregational members who are engaged in care for the wellbeing of XPLOR residents.

Should a community locale recommend/require a shelter-in-place time to provide social distancing to prevent further spread of a contagious illness, NBA encourages the host team to comply with the local health and medical officials and to ask the XPLOR residents to remain in the XPLOR house for the length of time recommended.

We do not anticipate closing an XPLOR House in lieu of shelter-in-place.

### **Community Engagement Sites (CES):**

While we expect most CE sites would comply with local shelter-in-place guidelines, it is possible that some CE sites provide what is considered essential services and would follow a different set of guidelines. Should that occur, the XPLOR resident should be in contact with their worksite supervisor and the host team coordinator to communicate the resident will follow the guidelines to shelter in place.

Links to State Health Departments:

- Washington State Health Department <https://www.doh.wa.gov>
- Missouri Health Department <https://health.mo.gov>
- Ohio Health Department <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/home>
- Texas Health Department <https://www.dshs.texas.gov>
- North Carolina Health Department <https://www.ncdhhs.gov>



- Indiana Health Department <http://www.state.in.us/isdh/>

**Decision Making:** The Director of XPLOR and Executive Vice President will be available to counsel with a host team in any unforeseen circumstances.

**Face-to-face NBA-Sponsored Events:**

NBA-Sponsored Events: Although the NBA does much of its work via telecommuting, there are numerous face-to-face events throughout the year designed to enhance our communication, culture, mission, and values. Each event brings together persons from a variety of locations and they travel to a variety of destinations for these meetings.

Ten (10) days before an event, the staff event planning lead, their supervisor, and an Executive Leadership team member will determine whether an event will occur. The decision team will consider:

- 1) places from which people are departing
- 2) destination for the event and the CDC's current report for that destination
- 3) length of time and exposure at the destination (a retreat center vs a hotel); and
- 4) the trip home for each participant (Does it take them through many airports? What happens if they can't go home because of an airport closure?).

Their decision will be immediately announced to those who are making the trip.

Every attempt to receive travel/lodging refunds should be made by staff and those involved in the event.

**Decision Making:** Staff lead for the event, the supervisor of the staff lead, a member of the Leadership Team in conversation with the President (for a program event the EVP, for a development event the VP for Development and Marketing).



## Employee Travel

As a general rule, the NBA follows the travel recommendations as outlined by the Center for Disease Control and the World Health Organization:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/faqs.html>
- <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/travel-advice>

To date, there is no recommendation to cancel domestic travel plans, but instead to practice healthy hygiene as outlined above in the “Basic Workplace Safety.” The NBA will continue to monitor travel alerts and should this recommendation change, the NBA will update this protocol accordingly.

### **Employees who travel frequently on behalf of NBA**

Travel is a significant part of the NBA’s work life. Those who travel frequently may have questions or concerns regarding prevention and safety for self, and or how to make decisions regarding travel when caretaking for immediate family members who may be affected by illness or disruptions to school, childcare or eldercare services. Such questions and concerns should be discussed with immediate supervisors to determine the specific circumstances regarding a work trip. Also, those who are contracted for particular work with the NBA, are invited to be in consultation with their supervisor/direct report if travel becomes difficult due to health concerns. Some guiding questions may be informative:

- Is this an NBA-sponsored or hosted event? If so, see guidance above.
- What is the purpose of the employee’s travel or event participation? (i.e. staffing an exhibit table, leading a workshop or worship, site visit with a partner, hosting an NBA-sponsored event, etc.)?
- Who else is affected/impacted by the decision to attend or not to attend?
- What is NBA’s responsibility to participants of an NBA-sponsored event if the event is impacted by COVID-19 (e.g. canceled, postponed, or rescheduled).

If travel is for a conference or other large gathering, has the hosting entity canceled or postponed the event? What precautions are offered by the inviting party?

- What alternative arrangements can be made if NBA employee cannot travel?
- How should changes to employee travel be communicated within NBA and to appropriate external partners?

**Decision Making:** Changes to work travel should be considered within the full scope of the NBA’s missional commitments and strategic priorities. Employees must obtain



permission from their supervisors to cancel an already scheduled travel. Supervisors should reference this protocol and the employee handbook as a first step in decision-making. When uncertain regarding the best decision in any circumstance, supervisors should consult Human Resources. Some decisions may warrant further conversation with or among the NBA Executive Leadership Team.

Alternatives to travel:

- As appropriate, reschedule site visits, one-on-one meetings, or NBA-sponsored small group gatherings as soon as the threat has ended, or specific circumstantial needs are resolved.
- Consider utilizing technology (video conferencing, conference call, etc.) to fulfill workshop or leadership commitments.
- Consider who else within NBA (or partner organizations), as appropriate, may travel instead.
- When possible, participate in conferences, workshops, etc. online.

#### **Provisions for Stranded Travelers:**

NBA employees who experience interruptions in work-related travel should follow normal business policies as outlined in the NBA Employee Handbook, pages 35-36. For example, if a flight is canceled and an employee requires an overnight stay, the employee “should use due care and use moderately priced hotel accommodations for business lodging.” If there is a question or concern, an employee is encouraged to contact their supervisor for guidance and support.



## Resources

CDC Travel Health Notices:

<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/>

CDC Prevention Recommendations for Event Organizers and Staff:

<https://www.cdc.gov/nonpharmaceutical-interventions/gathering/event-organizers-staff.html>

CDC Prevention Recommendations for Event Attendees:

<https://www.cdc.gov/nonpharmaceutical-interventions/gathering/event-attendees.html>