



Corona Virus Strategy at AIS-Salzburg

Specific Scenarios and Reactions

2020-2021: Toward a Safe, Quality Education

Updated: September 23, 2020

I. Introduction and Purpose

Recently, the AIS-Salzburg Corona Crisis Team met to discuss strategies and reactions to a number of possible scenarios connected with the COVID-19 pandemic. In our discussions, four situations were addressed specifically and, to the extent possible, conclusions were drawn with respect to how the school should address each of these particularly.

Presently, the Austrian national government is mandating specific COVID-19 related restrictions that are in effect nationwide while the Corona Traffic Light System has been pushed into the background due to both lack of legislative support for eventual reactions to specific health risks as well as the superior authority of the government's declarations. Despite this, the school administration remains committed to following our published policies, procedures, and protocols as previously established and tied to the traffic light health risk levels announced. We trust that soon both the federal government and the health experts are able to cooperate to the extent that clear and specific guidelines and measures are put into place.

The school's Corona Crisis Team discussed and established guidelines which addressed each of the following scenarios: (a) Yellow health risk in Salzburg city; (b) Orange health risk in Salzburg city; (c) the advent of a positive test result among our non-resident students or staff, and (d) the advent of a positive test result among our resident students and staff. Although specific reactions to these various scenarios involve the decisions and directives of the local health authorities—to whom our compliance is established by law—there remains a need for additional guidelines that should be clear to all members of our community and be put into effect immediately as well. The determination of specific reactions also requires that the Team and the school administration communicate these to all school community members as soon as possible despite the possibility of eventual amending or updating that may be necessary.

Please read through these guidelines and let the school administration know of any questions or concerns related to these through the office email address (office@ais-salzburg.at) or at tel.: +43 662 824617.

II. Scenarios to Prepare For

Scenario #1: Salzburg City is at Health Risk Level Yellow

As most of you are aware, Salzburg city has been at the Yellow level of health risk according to the Corona Traffic Light System since Friday, September 18, 2020. Despite this, the Corona Crisis Team discussed our previously-published responses at this level for validity and effectiveness and made a number of suggestions:

1.) **Validity and Sufficiency of Present Measures:** The Corona Crisis Team reviewed the school's policies, procedures and protocols in effect for the Yellow health risk determination and generally found them to be sufficient for the protection of our community members. All students and staff are presently masked between class periods and in public areas of the school (excepting outdoors) between 08:00 and 16:00, Monday through Friday. Further, the kitchen staff has implemented masking and sanitary glove requirements for all those passing through the buffet line at all times; seven days a week. Independent student travel is restricted to the Moosstrasse and excludes the city center except on weekends during free time, and all indoor shopping centers or malls are off limits unless accompanied by a school staff member. All resident student requests for weekend check-out to their parents are also being reviewed for health safety and personal food deliveries to the school are not permitted.

2.) **Additional Recommendations:** The Corona Crisis Team additionally recommended the following actions which have been carried out or put into affect very recently:

- a. The Rif Sports Center should be called to confirm that the school's physical education courses do not violate the national government's restrictions of gatherings indoors of no more than 10 persons. This was confirmed as not the case and our courses can meet there as planned.
- b. Further effort and communication should be made to enforce masking, manage appropriate distancing and ensure that proper hygiene is being followed by everyone on campus at all times.
- c. Curfews on weekend evenings (Friday and Saturday) have been reduced to 22:30 for the eldest students.

Scenario #2: Salzburg City at Health Risk Level Orange

The Corona Crisis Team at AIS-Salzburg then reviewed and discussed the measures to be put into effect should the city district go to level Orange as well as possible additional reactions that may be necessary.

1.) **Validity and Sufficiency of Present Measures:** The general guidelines previously determined and published were found to be necessary and valid. These include, alongside those measures already in place at Yellow,: (a) Masking between 08:00 and 16:00 as well as at all times in the buffet line continue; (b) physical education courses and sports team practices at the Rif sports center are suspended and a regular academic schedule is put into place on Wednesdays (beginning at 09:00); (c) off-campus activities on weekends and excursions are postponed; (d) independent travel off campus and weekend check-outs for resident students are suspended; (e) body temperature screening is done each morning for all on-campus community members, and (f) strict maintenance of masking, distancing and hygiene are enforced.

2.) **Academic Programming Adjustments:** Further, the administration would decide if academic courses meet on Saturdays during this period in exchange for an earlier departure for the next following vacation period. If so, the normal Monday schedule would be put in place on Saturdays with no electives meeting on that day. The Corona Crisis Team recommended that Saturday academic coursework would be put into effect at least one week after the start of an Orange health risk determination so that all could be informed adequately beforehand.

3.) **Additional Recommendations:** The Corona Crisis Team also made the following additional recommendations:

- a. Teachers should include a greater amount of material online over the Google Classroom platform to accommodate those non-resident students who would prefer to remain home for the time being. Although this would not be full online instruction per se, it should be sufficient for understanding what materials were presented and discussed in the courses, giving the motivated student the opportunity to

maintain their level of learning at a standard sufficiently equal to those students who are physically present.

- b. The possibility of group COVID-19 testing should be explored with the local health authorities and, if possible, implemented throughout the period of level Orange on a regular basis.
- c. A significantly varied schedule of on-campus activities and events should be scheduled to maintain positive attitudes and dispositions to counter the negative effects of such a local campus isolation period.
- d. An increased level of awareness and communication of the local health risks and further determinations made by the Austrian government or health officials by the school administration.
- e. Lastly, the Corona Crisis Team recommended that frequent meetings of the team be scheduled to discuss the possible further deterioration of the health risk situation and decide under which conditions the school administration should consider or actively promote the sending of resident students home to continue instruction online.

Scenario #3: A Positive COVID-19 Test Within Non-Resident Staff or Student Body

The Corona Crisis Team considers the following reactions as necessary and reasonable should this situation arise:

- 1.) **Communication:** The school administration would inform all community members immediately of a positive infection within the non-resident staff or student body. This would be done by mass emailing from the front office.
- 2.) **Contact Authorities:** The school administration would contact the local health authorities immediately if contact had not previously been established.
- 3.) **Legal Obligations:** As a legal duty, **the administration would then follow and enforce any and all requirements put in place by the local health authorities immediately.** The authorities would likely proceed in the identification of those persons the infected individual was in contact with recently and mandate testing be carried out on such persons. Since our school organization does not include classes in the Austrian sense, this may mean that the authorities would require a broad level of testing within the community. It is to be expected that during the period between testing and the results being communicated, the authorities would require that all those tested be isolated as well as possible either at home (in the case of non-resident students and staff) or within the school campus (in the case of resident students and staff). It can also be expected that this period of isolation could last between 24 to 48 hours before test results are available. Once any further spread of infections is known, the school administration would put into effect any and all further requirements of the health officials.
- 4.) **Instruction Suspension:** From the moment it is clear that a positive test has been reported within the school non-resident community, the administration would suspend instruction and require that all non-resident students stay at home until the health authorities declare that instruction can begin again. During this period, the administration would contact select non-resident administrators and staff members who would be required to move on campus to help supervise and direct the resident students alongside the resident staff. All such personnel would be required to present a recent negative test result before accepting such responsibilities. Provisions for these staff members' full-time residency during such an event would be provided by the school administration and their personal approval for this period of residency gained in written form. This would be subject to the health authorities' approval.
- 5.) **Follow-Up:** If the result of testing demonstrates that no resident students or staff or any non-resident instructional faculty members are positively infected, instruction would be re-instated including the maintenance of any relevant health risk policies, procedures and protocols established by the Corona Crisis Team and administration. However, if the results of testing indicate further positive infections within the resident staff or resident student body, the administration would require all instruction to move online for the

time being, follow all requirements of the authorities with regard to isolation and/or quarantine and only return to face-to-face instruction in the classrooms when allowed to do so.

6.) **Further Recommendations:** The Corona Crisis Team recommended that it be emphasized to all parents and guardians of resident students that **any departure from the school or Salzburg under conditions of isolation or quarantine as established by the local health authorities would a violation of law** and this is not something that the school administration would be able to change or control in any way.

Scenario #4: A Positive COVID-19 Test Within Resident Staff or Student Body

1.) **Communication:** The school administration would inform all community members immediately of a positive infection within the resident staff or student body. This would be done by mass emailing from the front office.

2.) **Contact Authorities:** The school administration would contact the local health authorities immediately if contact had not previously been established.

3.) **Legal Obligations:** As a legal duty, **the administration would then follow and enforce any and all requirements put in place by the local health authorities immediately.** The authorities would likely proceed in the identification of those persons the infected individual was in contact with recently and mandate testing be carried out on such persons. This may mean that the authorities would require an expansive level of testing within the resident and non-resident school community. It is to be expected that during the period between testing and the results being communicated, the authorities would require that all those tested be isolated as well as possible either at home (in the case of non-resident students and staff) or within the school campus (in the case of resident students and staff). It should be expected that this period of isolation could last up to 48 hours before test results are available. Once any further spread of infections is known, the school administration would put into effect any and all further requirements of the health officials including isolation and quarantine measures.

4.) **Instruction Suspension:** From the moment it is clear that a positive test has been reported within the school's resident community, the administration would suspend instruction and require that all non-resident students stay at home until the health authorities declare that instruction can be instituted again. During this period, the administration would contact select non-resident administrators and staff members who would be required to move on campus to help supervise and direct the resident students alongside the resident staff. All such personnel would be required to present a recent negative test result before accepting such responsibilities. Provisions for these staff members' full-time residency during such an event would be provided by the school administration and their personal approval for this period of residency gained in written form. This would be subject to the health authorities' approval. It should be assumed that any resident student or staff that tests positive would be isolated and quarantined for a minimum of 14 days with further testing likely.

5.) **Follow-Up:** If the results of testing indicate either a single or multiple positive infections within the resident staff or resident student body, the administration would require all instruction to move online indefinitely, follow all requirements of the authorities with regard to isolation and/or quarantine and only return to face-to-face instruction in the classrooms if and when allowed by the authorities and under prescribed conditions.

6.) **Further Recommendations:** The Corona Crisis Team recommended that it be emphasized to all parents and guardians of resident students that in such a case, **any departure from the school or Salzburg under conditions of isolation or quarantine as established by the local health authorities would a violation of law** and this is not something that the school administration would be able to change or control in any way.

The Corona Crisis Team considers the situation in which a resident student or staff as positive a very serious situation in which our priorities should be to do anything and everything necessary and required under the authority and supervision of the health officials and their representatives here in Salzburg. Although such a situation cannot be predicted, the Crisis Team emphasized that all of our measures, policies and procedures are designed to prevent exactly such a situation. Should it occur despite our best efforts, the Team recommended that the administration take the time and effort to consider the following:

- a. At level Orange—whereby the possibility of infection within the resident staff is relatively high—the administration should consider sending the resident students home and begin online instruction before such an outbreak occurs within student body or staff. Particularly, the administration should act if one or more of the following conditions describe the health risk situation in Salzburg:
 1. positive infections are reported within the families and/or close social contacts of our non-resident students or staff here in Salzburg
 2. the number of infections continues to rise dramatically in Salzburg despite the restrictions imposed at Orange level
 3. Salzburg’s hospital bed capacity is reaching a critical level due to new positive infections.
 4. Salzburg’s health officials recognize and communicate that local infections cannot be identified as belonging to recognizable clusters any longer and that infection is widespread and generally uncontrollable by conventional means.
- b. If a positive infection is confirmed within the resident student body and staff, the administration should again, strongly consider—after all test results are known and all measures required are put into effect—that the continuation of on-campus instruction be discontinued and an appropriate date, determined following communication with the health authorities as well as the parents of resident and non-resident students, be decided upon to affect resident student departures with continuation of instruction online. Consideration of when instruction on campus should resume should also be carried out and a determination made, if possible, at the time of suspension of instruction and the departure of the resident students.
- c. It should be made clear to all members of the school community that if health risk level Red is declared in Salzburg city, the school administration would immediately begin sending resident students home and initiate online instruction. For those students who could not depart immediately, continued provision of room and board would be guaranteed until such time as departure is possible. The administration should also consider when or under what conditions it may be possible to resume face-to-face instruction and invite resident students to return to campus and communicate this to the community as soon as possible.

Addendum:

The following administrators and staff members would be asked to move on campus with the advent of scenarios #3 and #4 (above) for the length of any isolation or quarantine period provided approval by the health authorities is forthcoming:

- Headmaster
- Health coordinator
- Dean of Students
- Other volunteers from the resident or non-resident staff

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