

## **Corona Update: Latest Information**

Date: April 25, 2021

Dear AIS-Salzburg Community Members;

Although we are very pleased to share that the Austrian government has announced a plan for the opening up of restaurants, hotels, and cultural institutions and generally reduce the restrictions that have been in place for roughly a half-year, we are also saddened by the fact that this easing of restrictions will not occur until May 19, 2021—one day before our Commencement Exercises and only 10 days before the end of our school year. A case, perhaps, of too little too late...

The situation here improves daily and over the past two weeks, what once provide a factual basis for stronger restrictions and increased measures, has now become the foundation for an opening up and a return to a more normal life.

As of Wednesday, May 19, throughout Austria, hotels, restaurants, cafes, shops and all other stores will be able to invite guests accommodated and served. A negative test requirement will remain in place for the time being, but all those with a negative self-test (less than 24 hours old), a negative test at a test station (less than 48 hours old), a single or completed vaccination (at least 22 days previous), or proof of recovery from Covid-19 (within the past 6 months), will be allowed to enjoy a visit to a restaurant or a stay in a hotel. Of course, masking and distancing requirements will remain in place.

At the national borders, however, the situation is not quite so rosy: The government will maintain the present testing quarantine restrictions in place through the end of June, 2021 or until the European Union agrees upon the establishment of a 'green pass' which will allow those who have been vaccinated, tested negative or recovered from Covid-19 to move freely without restrictions. Best guesses at this time predict that a green pass may be in place as of early July, but not before.

### **1. Current Situation**

In Salzburg city and province, the restrictions presently in place will be maintained through May 19 minimally. All hotels and restaurants, cafes, etc. remain closed in the meantime. Masking and distancing is required in all public places and indoors outside of the home whenever two people are present. Shops and grocery stores are open as are hairdressing salons (appointments with proof of negative test). Curfews are in place from 20:00 to 06:00 and those who can work from home are encouraged to do so. Public schools are open to secondary level students for two days per week; on the other three days, instruction and learning is online.

To date, there is no indication that the numbers of positive infections nor the 7-day incidence rate in Salzburg give cause not to agree with the easing of restrictions to go into place on May, 19th. The local and provincial governments will reserve the right to impose restrictions on movement and mandatory testing in regions or towns in the province where the infections warrant this.

Here are the latest numbers:

Number of pos. infections nationwide in the past 7 days:	@ 2,250 per day/average
Nationwide incidence rate per 100,000 over the past 7 days:	182 (was 233.8 on 08.04)
Population group with highest infection rate:	Ages 45-54
Incidence rate: Salzburg (province) per 100,000 over past 7 days:	191.1 (was 229.4 on 08.04)
Incidence rate: Salzburg (city) per 100,000 over past 7 days:	190.3 (was 231.6 on 08.04)

Vaccination doses received in Austria:	2,798,424 (was 2,033,085 on 08.04)
Registered vaccinations in Austria (total):	2,798,424 (was 1,773,606 on 08.04)
Registered double vaccinations for immunization:	779,722 (was 494,463 on 08.04)
Total vaccine-eligible population (over 16):	1,157,564
Percentage of total vaccine-eligible population vaccinated:	26.8% (was 16.49% on 08.04)
Registered vaccinations in Salzburg (province):	157,024 (19.4% of over 16 yrs.)

#### *Commentary:*

Presently, those over 65 as well as police, fire, and members of other emergency assistance organizations are being vaccinated. The government also stated that all those who would like to get the vaccine will be able to do so starting in June, 2021 with the hope that the goal of a 60-70% vaccination rate can be achieved in July, 2021.

All teachers in Austrian schools, including all employees at AIS-Salzburg have received the first vaccination dose at this time and await an appointment for the second.

## **2. AIS-Salzburg and Present Conditions**

Frequent self-testing in schools and at AIS-Salzburg continue in accordance with government requirements. There continue to be no plans to shut down schools in Salzburg city or province. We do not expect any further lockdown requirements or regulations to be put into place in the coming weeks which would compromise instruction on campus through the end of the present trimester and school year on May 27th.

## **3. Commencement Exercises and Other End-of-Year Events**

Despite some uncertainty, it appears that no adjustments will need to be made to the calendar from now through the end of the school year. This includes our Commencement Exercises on May 20th as well as departure of the Junior High Students (grades 7 and 8) as of May 22nd and final exams from May 24th through 27th.

### *Commencement Exercises - May 20, 2021, 15:00 Kavalierhaus, Schloss Klessheim*

Our lovely graduation ceremony at the Kavalierhaus at Schloss Klessheim appears to be possible and we will be in contact with the people there to work out the details in the coming days. If, as announced, indoor events can take place with the numbers predicted, we will make all necessary arrangements to hold the ceremony there. We will transport all students and staff members at the school to the venue and we hope that as many guests as possible are able to attend. There will likely be distancing and masking requirements in place, but we hope that this will not interfere with the recognition and honor we hope to provide our graduating seniors—sending them on their way with appropriate pomp and circumstance.

For guests who need to cross the border into Austria, quarantine regulations will continue to apply, making this a very difficult proposition. In essence, we understand the requirements to be that those crossing the border would need to spend five days in quarantine before being able to attend our commencement exercises. This will likely be impossible for many: a last unfortunate restriction and consequence of the pandemic. We will, however, try to set up a live feed and videotape the entire ceremony so that as many as possible are able to join us virtually. We will also post a full video for you to watch afterwards; again and again, if you desire.

Senior students are released from the school's liability and responsibility as of the end of the Commencement Exercises following the completion of a check-out procedure if they are boarders. Specific continuation of accommodation and care can be requested by the parents personally by contacting Cassandra Baehler at [cbaehler@ais-salzburg.at](mailto:cbaehler@ais-salzburg.at)

#### *Junior High Student Departures - May 21-23, 2021*

All students in grades 7 and 8 will complete the spring trimester on Friday, May 21st at 15:40. As of that time, they may prepare for their departure and check out of the dormitories with appropriate departure plans received from the parents and approved by the administration. Departures may take place at any time from 16:00 on Friday, May 21st through Sunday, May 23rd. If you have any questions concerning the departure of your child, please contact Ms. Cassandra Baehler at [cbaehler@ais-salzburg.at](mailto:cbaehler@ais-salzburg.at) at any time.

#### *Final Examinations - May 24-27, 2021*

All students in grades 9, 10 and 11 will sit final examinations during the last week of the school year from Monday, May 24th through Thursday, May 27th. The final testing schedule will proceed as follows:

All Period 1 Classes	Final Exam 1	Monday, May 24, 09:00-11:30
All Period 2 Classes	Final Exam 2	Monday, May 24, 13:00-15:30
All Period 3 Classes	Final Exam 3	Tuesday, May 25, 09:00-11:30
(Study Hall - All full- and 5-day boarders)		Tuesday, May 25, 13:00-15:00
All Period 4 Classes	Final Exam 4	Wednesday, May 27, 09:00-11:30
All Period 5 Classes	Final Exam 5	Wednesday, May 27, 13:00-15:30
All period 6 Classes	Final Exam 6	Thursday, May 28, 08:00-10:30

***All day students should please note that the last final examination will begin at 08:00 on Thursday, May 28th.***

Boarding students may check out and depart the school as of 12:00, Thursday, May 28th. The parents and guardians of all 9th, 10th and 11th grade student should communicate their departure plans as soon as these are made with Cassandra Baehler at [cbaehler@ais-salzburg.at](mailto:cbaehler@ais-salzburg.at)

Please let us know if you have any questions concerning any end-of-year events and please inform us if preliminary PCR testing may be required before departure.

#### **4. Commentary**

Despite our regrets that the Covid pandemic was not conquered early enough to allow a full return to normal conditions before the end of the school year, we are very grateful that we will be able to witness the beginning of the end and the promise of a return to normal life this summer. In retrospect, we would like to state that through all the difficulties and inconveniences the pandemic threw at us, our students and staff members maintained an incredible level of compliance and cooperation and generally handled the most serious health crisis in a century magnificently. We are very proud of everyone and thank you all for your support and assistance.

#### **5. Upcoming**

1. **Advanced Placement® testing** on campus: May 3 - 14, 2021
2. **Year-end Awards Ceremony:** May 13, 2021 - Musikerheim (near campus)
3. **Commencement Exercises** at Kavalierhaus, Schloss Klessheim: Thursday, May 20, 15:00
4. **Junior High Student Departures:** Friday/Saturday, May 21/22, 2021
5. **Final Examinations** (all in grades 9-11): May 24-27, 2021 on campus
6. **Departure Days:** May 27 (as of noon), 28 and 29, 2021

Thank you again for your attention and continued support.

Yours,



Paul McLean Headmaster AIS-Salzburg