

BCGS Preparedness on SARS-CoV-2

BCGS adheres both on and off campus to the SARS-CoV-2 (commonly referred to as “coronavirus”) preparedness and response guidelines published by Freie Universität Berlin, based on §33 and §36 of the German Infectious Diseases Protection Act (IfSG) and specific recommendations by the Robert Koch-Institute (federal agency for disease control and prevention) and the BZgA (Federal Center for Health Education). BCGS staff keeps monitoring the pandemic situation, updates students and faculty, and is available for individual support. Further details can be found in the BCGS COVID-19 Pandemic – Program Protocol.

Students, faculty, and staff are required to

- **maintain a safe distance of at least 1.5 m (~5 feet)** to each other in enclosed spaces, BCGS and FU classrooms are set up in such a way that students can maintain social distancing while seated
- **follow general personal hygiene** guidelines
 - wash frequently hands with plenty of soap and water for at least 20 seconds
 - use hand sanitizers (dispensers are accessible in all university facilities and bathrooms)
 - cough and sneeze inside your elbow or handkerchief
- **wear a medical face mask** (FFP2, KN95, or N95) when around others in enclosed spaces
- **air out rooms regularly** (classrooms 3 x per hour, offices 1 x per hour) to minimize airborne transmission via aerosols
- **wipe their BCGS workplaces with sanitizers** before as well as after use (sanitizers and disposable towels are available in each classroom and office)
- **stay at home or leave campus immediately, if COVID-19 symptoms or exposure**, e.g. raised or high temperature, persistent cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, loss of sense of taste and/or smell
- **contact local practitioner or public health office** by phone (Berlin Corona Hotline 030-90282828), **if COVID-19 symptoms or exposure**, health professionals arrange for coronavirus test, return to campus only after negative test result or implemented quarantine
- **inform BCGS and FU of any confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection** to prevent further infections on campus

General cleaning is carried out by FU contracted specialized companies in full accordance with the applicable hygiene standards, bathrooms are cleaned daily. Frequently touched surfaces in BCGS classrooms, for example door knobs and tables, are cleaned and disinfected before each session by faculty and students.

Signage, posters, and floor/ground markings in entrances, hallways, and bathrooms at the FU remind students, faculty, and staff to adhere to the Corona preparedness and response guidelines.

BCGS strongly recommends to obtain a **COVID-19 vaccination prior to your arrival in Germany**, to take advantage of **free rapid SARS-CoV-2 antigen tests** at several Berlin screening centers including the FU campus, and to install the “**Corona-Warn-App**” on your smart phone.

FU requires students who are not fully vaccinated or not recovered from COVID-19 to provide **proof of a recent negative coronavirus test for in-person attendance**.

BCGS Student Accommodation Providers adhere to the same basic rules and procedures outlined in the German Infectious Diseases Protection Act (IfSG) (see above).



Image Credit: Robert Koch-Institute, Website, April 2021