

The Samaritan's Purse Travel Health System serves employees, family members, and volunteers who travel internationally on behalf of Samaritan's Purse to provide spiritual and physical aid to hurting people around the world in Jesus' Name.

Because of the global nature of our work and the large number of international travelers, the Travel Health team, managed by Samaritan's Purse chief medical officer (CMO), is needed to support international travelers as they serve. The Travel Health team provides destination-specific information on health risks, disease prevention, and recommended vaccines. Additionally, a Travel Health provider is available 24/7 for any health-related questions or needs you encounter before, during, or after ministry-related travel.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

What is the purpose of Travel Health?

The purpose of the Travel Health team is to ensure that all international travelers are well informed of the destination-specific risks and recommended prevention measures as they travel. Travel Health also provides 24/7 access to the on-call Travel Health provider for support and to link travelers to timely care when needed.

Why do we need Travel Health?

As Samaritan's Purse continues to serve those in need around the world, we are working in even more challenging places. The Travel Health team is needed to ensure that all international travelers are prepared and supported as they serve.

What will Travel Health look like for me?

Initially, a member of the Travel Health team will contact you by email and ask you to complete Travel Health onboarding. Travel Health onboarding involves verifying your contact information and date of birth, and completing the Travel Health Notice and Vaccination Attestation. After onboarding, you will receive emails before and after your trip. If there are any health-related concerns regarding your travel, you may receive an email from the Travel Health team with additional information. If you have any health-related questions, you have 24/7 access to the Travel Health provider by phone, Signal, WhatsApp, or email.

How do I report my travel to receive pre-trip health information?

Most ministry-related travel will be reported automatically via the Pre-Travel Authorization (PTA) system. In the event a PTA is not required, your ministry point of contact will ensure the trip is reported and that you receive pre-trip health information. If you ever have questions about the current outbreaks or disease risk where you are traveling, please do not hesitate to contact the Travel Health team for support.

Does this apply to domestic (U.S.) ministry-related travel?

No. Travel Health was created to meet the unique needs of people traveling internationally on behalf of Samaritan's Purse.

TRAVEL HEALTH INCIDENT REPORTING

How do I report a medical incident?

The medical incident should be reported directly to CMO Travel Health by phone, WhatsApp, or Signal at +1-828-616-9393 (available 24/7) or email CMOTravelHealth@samaritan.org.

What is considered a reportable medical incident?

A reportable medical incident is any travel-related injury or illness that occurs during, or is evident after, international travel on behalf of the ministry. This also would include a medical emergency during travel. Reportable medical instances could include, but are not limited to:

- Symptoms such as fever, flu, cough, shortness of breath, body aches, vomiting, and diarrhea could represent a serious travel-related illness (examples: malaria, dengue fever, typhoid, severe COVID-19, or others noted in the Risk Advisory and Recommendations document you receive prior to travel)
- Injury requiring medical attention, such as an animal bite, broken bone, joint injury/dislocation, or physical trauma

Why should I report travel-related health concerns to an employer?

The purpose of Travel Health is to ensure travelers are well-informed and prepared for international travel, to link travelers to medical service options, and to help prevent similar health-related incidents from occurring to others traveling internationally for the ministry. Reporting a medical incident enables the Travel Health team to help travelers obtain appropriate medical care while on the field and advise on potential next steps as necessary. Travel Health will maintain the confidentiality of the information you share and only ask for information needed to help the traveler obtain the medical care needed.

What if there's a delay or I forget to report a medical incident?

If there is a delay or you forget to report a medical incident, you should still report that an incident has occurred, even if the medical incident resolved satisfactorily. This will enable Travel Health to track patterns of illness and injury in order to identify potential health risks that may impact current or future travelers.

Do I need to report an incident for someone else?

It is preferred that the person with the injury, illness, or health emergency report the medical incident directly to Travel Health. If the person is unable to self-report the medical incident, a travel companion, field colleague, or the employee's direct supervisor is encouraged to report the incident as soon as possible to the Travel Health team so they can help the traveler obtain appropriate and timely medical care. Only share information pertinent to the incident and communicate directly with Travel Health.

Do I need their permission to report a medical incident involving them?

No. If you believe that a reportable incident has occurred, you do not need the person's consent since international travelers are informed of Travel Health procedures through the Travel Health Notice acknowledgment and consent process.

If I am on personal travel, do I report a medical incident?

You do not report a medical incident to Travel Health if you are on personal travel. Only a medical incident while traveling internationally for Samaritan's Purse would necessitate reporting as part of Travel Health.

What if my spouse or a family member who is traveling with me has a medical incident?

All adult travelers will be enrolled in Travel Health prior to their international travel. This includes nonemployees, such as spouses, other family members, and volunteers. Adult travelers should report their own medical incidents, if possible. In the case of family members traveling, a minor's adult parent or guardian should report a medical incident on behalf of the minor.

What happens after I report an incident?

The Travel Health team will link the traveler to medical care if needed, helping the traveler obtain appropriate assistance in a timely manner.

Do I have to follow the recommendations of the Travel Health team?

The traveler can choose whether to use the linkage to medical care that the Travel Health team can facilitate. Travel Health is a resource to provide the best possible individualized assistance on a case-by-case basis regardless of the traveler's international location.

DATA MANAGEMENT

What data will be collected?

Travel Health collects and processes personal data consistent with the Samaritan's Purse Privacy Notice at samaritanpurse.org/our-ministry/privacy-policy. This includes basic demographic information that for employees is already in PeopleSoft and that volunteers are required to provide on their application. If an employee's job does not require international travel, the information will be kept as inactive. Only people identified as international travelers will have an active record. For those with an active record, the only additional information collected will be an annual vaccination attestation concerning vaccinations considered to be *highly recommended* for international travel, with an option to provide status information on *advisable* vaccinations.

How secure is my data?

Data will be housed on the internal Samaritan's Purse platform called the Ark. Access will be securely controlled to ensure that data privacy is strictly maintained.

Who will have access to my data?

Your point of contact will have access to general information related to travel and facilitate the completion of annual vaccination attestations. Points of contact will be trained to manage this general information. Only Travel Health staff will have access to specific information, such as your vaccination status and reported incidents.

Will my information be shared?

Information shared with Travel Health is strictly confidential and will only be shared on a need-to-know basis to provide support, such as after a travel-related injury or when a medical evacuation is needed.

Does this process violate my medical privacy?

No. Travel Health is not a medical record, and protected health information is not being stored.

NOTICE

May I opt out? What if I decline to complete the Travel Health Notice?

It is expected that all international travelers complete the Travel Health Notice. Employees will be asked to acknowledge the Notice and nonemployees will be asked to acknowledge and consent. Not signing the Travel Health Notice may impact your ability to travel on behalf of the ministry.

VACCINATION ATTESTATION

What is the annual Vaccination Attestation?

All travelers (employees and nonemployees) will be asked to provide an annual Vaccination Attestation noting their vaccination status for vaccines that have been determined as *highly recommended* for international travel. They will have the option to note vaccinations deemed *advisable*. This will help the Travel Health team ensure you are not being placed at undue risk during travel and facilitate access to appropriate medical treatment in the case of an illness or injury.

Why do I need to have a certain vaccination?

International travel increases the risk of exposure to diseases that are not normally encountered in domestic work. That is why Samaritan's Purse has developed lists of vaccinations that are highly recommended and advisable for people traveling on behalf of the ministry. These lists, while not comprehensive, are based on Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and World Health Organization recommendations, as well as recognized best practices. In addition to protecting the traveler, vaccination also protects those we serve. Many populations we serve do not have adequate access to vaccines, and an unvaccinated person can easily bring a disease into an at-risk community and cause great harm.

Can I still travel internationally if I do not have all of the vaccines listed on the Vaccination Attestation?

Samaritan's Purse does not mandate any vaccinations. The highly recommended vaccines are encouraged to protect you and those you serve. Not having some vaccines may affect your ability to travel only in specific circumstances, such as an outbreak of a disease you are not protected against at your destination country or when the destination country requires a specific vaccine for entry or exit.

What if I have a medical exemption or other accommodation for one or more of the listed vaccinations?

Samaritan's Purse does not mandate any vaccination or medication. Therefore, exemptions are not necessary.

What if I prefer not to be vaccinated?

Samaritan's Purse does not mandate any vaccinations. It is suggested that you discuss any vaccine concerns with your healthcare provider. While all vaccinations carry some risk of side effects, the short-term and long-term health risks associated with vaccine preventable diseases are much greater than any risk associated with vaccination.

Why should I have to take these precautions if I do not feel it is necessary?

An unvaccinated person can easily bring a disease into an at-risk population and cause great harm.

Do combination vaccinations overload the immune system?

No, vaccines only use a small part of the immune system for a short period of time while the body builds immunity to the disease. Even when vaccines are given in combination, the immune system is not overwhelmed.

Are fetal cells used in vaccine development?

Cell lines from aborted fetal tissue collected over 40 years ago may be used in the design, development, and testing of some vaccines, but no newly collected aborted fetal tissue is used in development of any vaccine. Specifically, mRNA vaccines are not manufactured (design and development) using fetal cell lines but do use fetal cell lines for testing. Today there are many alternative vaccines that have been developed without the use of aborted fetal cells or tissue. No final vaccine contains fetal cells or tissue.

Is COVID-19 vaccination required?

No, the COVID-19 vaccine is not required. It is listed as an advisable vaccine, and may be indicated if you have certain risk factors. You are encouraged to discuss vaccination with your health care provider.

For additional information, please contact the Chief Medical Office on-call staff:
+1 828-616-9393 (available 24/7) | CMOTravelHealth@samaritan.org