



buildOn places the health, safety and security of our Trek volunteers as our number one priority. The following outlines some of the key systems in place to support a positive and safe experience for all participants. Please reach out to your buildOn Trek Administrative contact with any questions.

Trek Director, John Sorek at john.sorek@buildon.org

Assistant Trek Director, Volunteer Management, Brooke Ahles at brooke.ahles@buildon.org

Assistant Trek Director, Americas, Danielle Gilbert at danielle.gilbert@buildon.org

Assistant Trek Director, Nepal/Senegal/Malawi, Jharana Bam at jharana.bam@buildon.org

COVID Related Trek + Travel Requirements

This document outlines the Trek and travel requirements as required by both buildOn and the Trek Partner Country. Please see country specific guidelines and additional measures that buildOn takes to ensure the health, safety and security of all Trek participants below.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

[TREK COVID-19 POLICY](#)

[POSITIVE TEST RESULT POLICY](#)

buildOn Policies to Mitigate and Protect Against Sars-Cov2

Full Vaccination and Booster Requirement: buildOn is requiring all Participants to have a full vaccination against the coronavirus in order to participate in Trek. If the participant is due for their booster and there is no medical reason preventing the individual from receiving it, they are required to have the booster at least 2 weeks prior to their Trek.

[CDC COVID VACCINES + BOOSTERS WEBSITE](#)

All international travelers need to have a QR code as proof of vaccine: Most US citizens do not have a QR code for their proof of vaccine. [CLEAR ME WEBSITE](#) is a site where you can get a QR code. Click "DOWNLOAD NOW" at the top of the page (blue banner) and download the app. This will provide you with a digital copy of your proof of vaccination. If CLEAR ME doesn't work for you, you can try the [SMART HEALTH CARD](#) option.

Mask Requirements for Trek: There are two types of masks which are recommended for Trek - the KN-95 mask and the N-95. These masks offer superior protection against airborne virus particles as opposed to cloth, mesh, or simple medical masks. Each participant is recommended to bring enough masks for the Trek as they will likely get dirty and uncomfortable if they are not changed regularly. The general rule is 1 mask per day of travel, including time in airports. buildOn does not require masks to be worn on Trek.

Covid Safety Before Trek: In order to ensure you have the best experience possible we recommend wearing masks, social distancing and if possible try to quarantine at least 1 week before the Trek. This helps limit your exposure so that

you do not get sick before the Trek or get others sick while en route. It is important that you wear a mask while in transit. Wear an N-95 mask and wash your hands frequently.

Testing Requirements for Trek: buildOn has rapid tests on hand or has an identified provider

Physical Distancing on Trek: buildOn is taking steps to increase the physical proximity participants and community members will have with each other while on Trek. We are also holding most events outside, where good ventilation exists and physical space can easily be created and maintained.

Positive Test Protocol: If a participant tests positive while on Trek, buildOn will first ensure the participant is not in an imminent health emergency. buildOn will isolate the participant and prepare to move them to a hotel where they can begin their quarantine. buildOn will alert the participant's emergency contact(s) and review the plan with our medical advisor, International SOS.

If the participant is a **minor**, the above protocol applies with the added step of requesting the legal guardian of the minor travel to the country in order to support their child. Occasionally, teams will have an adult support staff on Trek who can fill this role, with consent from the legal guardians. buildOn will provide support to the minor while the legal guardian(s) are traveling.

[CDC QUARANTINE/ISOLATION INFORMATION](#)

COUNTRY SPECIFIC ENTRY + EXIT REQUIREMENTS

* Please note that these requirements change often so please make sure you confirm the accuracy of this information by checking the links below.

GUATEMALA

Health screening protocols are in place for arriving and departing passengers at La Aurora International Airport and at land border crossings. Any non-resident foreigners presenting symptoms of COVID-19 upon arrival or who test positive for COVID-19 may be denied entry to Guatemala.

[US EMBASSY IN GUATEMALA: COVID-19 WEBSITE](#)

MALAWI

As of June 1, fully vaccinated travelers who have a COVID-19 vaccination certificate will no longer be required to produce a COVID-19 PCR certificate prior to entering the country.

- For travelers who are not fully vaccinated or who do not have a digital COVID-19 vaccination certificate, the government of Malawi requires electronic proof of a negative PCR COVID test no older than 72 hours at the time of arrival and proof of COVID vaccination to enter Malawi.
- Travelers who have not been vaccinated against COVID-19 will be offered a complimentary vaccine at the point of entry. Travelers who refuse the vaccine will be subject to a ten-day institutional quarantine.

[US EMBASSY IN MALAWI: COVID-19 WEBSITE](#)

NEPAL

- All travelers regardless of vaccine status can receive on-arrival visas at the port of entry.

- Travelers arriving to Nepal by air or land must present a certificate of full vaccination against COVID-19. Travelers who are unable to provide such a certificate, must present a negative COVID-19 test report (RT-PCR, NAAT, Gene Xpert) taken within 72 hours of departure from the port of embarkation.
- All symptomatic travelers may be subject to on-arrival COVID-19 testing.

Fines for Mask Non-Compliance:

The government of Nepal has announced that failure to wear a mask outdoors may result in arrest and a fine. Specific information about potential penalties has not been published.

[US EMBASSY IN NEPAL: COVID-19 WEBSITE](#)

NICARAGUA

[US EMBASSY IN NICARAGUA: COVID-19 WEBSITE](#)

SENEGAL

[US EMBASSY IN SENEGAL: COVID-19 WEBSITE](#)

FAQ

What if I have recently have covid but have recovered?

For international travel, you may need a recovery letter from your doctor that says you have fully recovered from Covid-19. It also needs a signature in ink from the doctor. All letters of recovery need to have:

1. The name of the Trek participant
2. The date they first tested positive
3. A statement that they have fully recovered
4. A signature of the medical provider (not just a stamp)
5. Date on the letter

With the US updating covid entry requirements will I still have to test to leave my Trek country?

The USA has dropped its entry requirement for a COVID test. This means we will not be testing participants before their return trip back to the US. You do not need to bring money to pay for the exit test. However, we would appreciate it if you could get a COVID test within 2 days when you arrive home and report any positive results back to us.

BUILDON HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SECURITY PROTOCOLS ALREADY IN PLACE

Medically Screened Volunteers - Each volunteer is required to receive an examination by their physician to identify any health concerns that buildOn may not be able to accommodate on Trek. If an illness or injury is identified, the condition will be evaluated, and buildOn will work with you and your doctor to develop an action plan if possible. This appointment is documented on the buildOn Medical Form.

International SOS Membership– ISOS is "the world's leading medical and security services company". They provide 24/7 surveillance of potential medical and security threats in all buildOn countries, in addition to

providing pre-Trek support assistance and coordination and treatment support in the event of a medical or political evacuation.

International Health Insurance – All volunteers are covered by our International Health Insurance Policy sponsored by Cigna Global and coordinated by University Health Plans for the duration of the Trek. Our policy covers medical treatment and evacuation, as well as political evacuation support while outside your home country (not including the US). Coverage does not continue in the US; all volunteers are required to have a home health insurance plan to go on Trek. Additionally, our policy includes coverage for lodging, up to 14 days, in the event of a COVID-related quarantine.

Certified Wilderness First Responder Trek Leaders - All buildOn Treks are led by a US based Trek Lead certified as a Wilderness First Responder (WFR). WFR “is the definitive wilderness course in medical training, leadership, and critical thinking for outdoor, low-resource, and remote professionals and leaders.” (wildmed.com)

Advanced First Aid Kit - Each Trek Leader/Manager carries an advanced first aid bag to manage the illness and injuries that commonly occur on Trek.

Katadyn Expedition Water Filter – All non-bottled drinking water on Trek is filtered using the top performing, hand-operated Katadyn Expedition water filter. For more information, see www.katadyn.com.

Emergency Vehicle - A dedicated emergency driver and vehicle are stationed in the village to provide evacuation support in the event of an emergency.

US Embassy Registration - Each team is registered with the US Embassy in their Trek country allowing the Embassy to provide assistance if needed and gives them the ability to contact the team in the event of an emergency.

Telecommunications - Each Trek Leader/Manager carries a cellular telephone that works in the country and in the community. In the event of poor cell reception, Satellite communication devices are on hand which allows them to keep in contact with support staff and ISOS at all times.

Experienced Local Staff - buildOn’s In-country Staff are host country nationals and have extensive knowledge of the country and working in a remote environment. In-country staff provide important safety and security information on the ground, and prepare and support the entire in-country Trek experience.

On-call US Staff Person – Every buildOn Trek is assigned a buildOn On-call staff person who conducts regularly scheduled check-ins with the Trek Leader/Manager and assists with logistics as needed.