



## American International Women's Club of Geneva

### AIWC 2021 COVID Protection Plan

#### Modified and Updated, 26 November 2021

This document is the COVID Protection Plan ("the Plan") pertaining to the operations of the American International Women's Club of Geneva ("AIWC") during the COVID pandemic.

Every part of this Plan is derived from the directions, rules, and guidance of the Swiss Federal [1] and Geneva Cantonal[2] governments. The AIWC, as a registered non-profit organization operating in Geneva, Switzerland, is required to follow the governmental directions, or risk significant fines of up to CHF 10,000.

This document modifies the "September 16, 2021 Plan", modifications based on recent changes to Swiss federal and Geneva cantonal guidance, member feedback, and our experience as an organization.

#### Summary of Changes

This Plan applies to the AIWC, whether in the Clubrooms, or at an AIWC-sponsored or AIWC-organized activity or event outside the Clubrooms.

**\*New** Masks must be always worn indoors. The only exceptions are for medical reasons. (A certificate from an authorized medical or psychology professional must be shown.)

**Masks may be removed when eating or drinking BUT only when seated.**

**\*New** Consumables are permitted in the Clubrooms ONLY when seated. Masks may be removed when seated and only when consuming food or beverages.

**\*Continuing\***

In accordance with new governmental and cantonal directives, from September 13th until January 24, 2022 a COVID Certificate is required for all indoor activities. Certificates and IDs will be scanned and checked by the Welcome Desk staff or Board members and Friday Activity leaders who are trained in the procedure. The President and Administrative Director will have joint responsibility for all communications connected with this protection plan.

A Covid certificate can be in the form of:

- *Details of your Covid vaccination stating that you are fully vaccinated, as of at least 1 week ago (Pfizer, Moderna) or 4 weeks ago (Janssen). ;*
- *Details of a recent negative Covid-19 PCR test from within the last 72 hours OR a rapid antigen test, from within the last 48 hours.*
- *Details proving that you have recovered from the virus, from no more than 180 days ago.*

**\* Addendum to Protection Plan modified and updated November 26 2021.**

***In line with the directives of the Swiss federal government, entrance to the Clubrooms is allowed with a Pass Sanitaire, certificate of recovery from COVID in the past 180 days or proof of negative COVID test. From 6 December, the validity of such tests has been reduced to 24 hours.***

- \* The requirement of the Covid Certificate means that social distancing is no longer required
- \* There is increased emphasis on ventilation. Always open the windows fully and ensure that there is a draft.
- \* AIWC activities that take place indoors at a restaurant remain subject to the rules in place for the venue/restaurant.
- \* Informal drop-in to Clubrooms to browse the library, pick up something or do business with the office continues.
- \* Rooms to be always ventilated during activity sessions
- \* Plexiglass screen will remain in place at the Welcome Desk
- \* Masks are no longer required for outdoor activities

## **Background**

The AIWC has modified its operations over the course of the Coronavirus pandemic, beginning in March 2020. Please see **Appendix A** for further background and history.

## **Guiding Principles**

The following principles have been modified to incorporate the Club as a whole:

1. The health and safety of all AIWC members and guests participating in AIWC activities or events, within or outside the Clubrooms, is of paramount importance.
2. Activities/events in the Clubrooms, and on-site access to the Clubrooms, should be maximized.

3. We will follow the directives and recommendations of the Swiss federal and Geneva cantonal governments. (More information about the situation in Switzerland can be found on the Swiss Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH) website: [www.bag.admin.ch](http://www.bag.admin.ch) ).
4. We will maintain flexibility in scheduling, and flexibility in use of space, within the Clubrooms.
5. All Club members using the Clubrooms will be asked to assist in keeping the environment healthy for all. For example, not attending the Club when sick, assisting with cleaning the physical environment between groups, and accommodating changes in the frequency and scheduling of activities.
6. Regularly scheduled activities in the Clubrooms should take priority for use of space. If a group needs to have an occasional business meeting and there is no space or time available on the schedule for the Clubrooms, a video conference meeting should be considered.
7. When participating in AIWC activities and/or events, including visiting the Clubrooms, it is presumed that all individuals are assuming responsibility for their own safety. The AIWC will follow the recommended Swiss guidelines to optimize member safety; however, the ultimate responsibility is placed on the individual.

This Plan continues to attempt to balance these principles, to optimize access of all members and guests to AIWC activities, AIWC events and to the Clubrooms, and keep everyone safe and healthy at the same time

## 2020 AIWC COVID-19 Protection Plan – November 2021 Update

### General

The following measures apply to all AIWC members, guests, visitors, and leaders for AIWC activities/events whether occurring within or outside the Clubrooms.

#### 1. Illness, Quarantine and Self-Isolation

1.1 Members must not attend an AIWC activity, event, or the Clubrooms if they are showing any symptoms or signs of illness.

1.2 Members must not attend an AIWC activity, event, or the Clubrooms if they are required to quarantine (related to travel or related to contact with a known case of COVID-19) according to the Swiss government rules. This includes quarantine related to travel to any of the high-risk countries or areas as defined by the Swiss government (list updated bi-weekly at: <https://www.bag.admin.ch/bag/en/home.html>).

1.3 Members must not attend an AIWC activity, event, or the Clubrooms if they have been diagnosed with COVID-19.

#### 2. Physical Distancing

2.1 Proof of Covid Certificate means that social distancing is no longer a requirement.

2.2 Bridge: When playing bridge, Plexiglas is no longer required but social distancing must be maintained. Tables must be 1.5 m apart.

#### 3. Masks

3.1 Masks must be worn by all members at an AIWC activity or event indoors even if they have received the COVID vaccination unless they are exempt for medical reasons and can provide a certificate from an authorized medical or psychology professional.

3.2 Members and guests must wear masks according to the government and cantonal regulations as follows

3.3 Outdoors masks are no longer required

3.4 At AIWC Activities/Events occurring in indoor public venues, members must adhere to the Covid rules of that venue

3.5 Masks must be worn to cover the nose, mouth, and chin. A mask will be provided if members/guests do not have one.

#### 4. Ventilation

4.1. Ventilation and improved airflow are increasingly being recognized as a critical factor in preventing transmission of coronavirus. Windows should be opened as much as possible, either continuously or intermittently (if too cold or windy), during indoor AIWC activities and events in the Clubrooms.

4.2 Fans are not helpful and may in fact may worsen the dispersal of virus around a room. Fan use is therefore discouraged unless it is for managing a too hot room, and windows are wide open to the outdoors.

## **5. Hygiene: Hands, Respiratory Etiquette**

5.1 Members are asked to wash their hands using soap and water, or sanitize using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, upon arrival at an AIWC activity or event, or at the Clubrooms. Frequent hand washing/sanitizing is encouraged for the duration of an activity/event or visit to the Clubrooms. This applies even if member(s) have received the COVID vaccination.

5.2 Members should wash/sanitize their hands before serving themselves food or drinks or using shared serving implements or shared containers of beverages.

5.3 Members should practice “respiratory etiquette”: Sneeze or cough into a tissue, or the crook of your elbow or sleeve. Immediately dispose of a soiled tissue in a covered garbage can. Wash or sanitize hands immediately thereafter.

## **6. Contact Lists**

6.1 All members and guests participating in an AIWC activity/event must pre-register online through the website calendar. This generates lists of participants to allow for Public Health tracing of contacts in the event of a COVID exposure at an AIWC activity or event.

6.2 Members and guests must also sign the sheet provided when they arrive in the Clubrooms. Contact lists will be kept by AIWC for 14 days, after which they will be securely destroyed.

## **7. Shared Food and Beverages**

Indoor dining with participants from numerous households is now permitted in Geneva.

The AIWC has decided based on current directives to permit activities that involve sharing food and or beverages indoors **provided that member is seated. Once seated masks may be removed for eating and drinking.**

Outdoor AIWC activities/events that involve eating or drinking are permitted under current cantonal rules. These could occur at an outdoor restaurant terrace, or in a public space such as a park.

## **ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR ALL AIWC ACTIVITIES/EVENTS**

### **1. Responsibilities of the Activity/Event Leader(s)**

Canton Geneva requires all our activity leaders to remind participants about this Protection Plan when their group meets. Reminder must include hand sanitizing, ventilation and masks. This could be done verbally at the start of the activity or event, or in writing in advance (for example, via e-mail).

### **2. Participant Limits**

Proof of Covid Certificate means that there is no limit on the number of participants for any given activity. However, any Activity leader is at liberty to set a limit depending upon the nature of the Activity.

## **ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE SPECIFIC TO OPERATIONS OF THE AIWC CLUBROOMS**

## 1. General

1.1. The Clubrooms are open to members and the public Monday – Thursday from 09.00 – 16.00

1.2 The Welcome Desk is staffed by volunteers from 09.30-13.00 and 13.00 -16.00. The volunteers have been trained in how to use the Covid Certificate Checker App.

## 2. Hygiene Measures

2.1 Alcohol-based hand sanitizer is available in each room, as well as at the Clubrooms entrance.

2.2 Members must wear masks indoors. Masks must be worn to cover the nose, mouth, and chin. Masks must be worn by all members, even if they are already vaccinated against COVID.

2.3 Ventilation to the outdoors is important. Windows should be opened as much as possible, either continuously or intermittently (if too cold or windy), during indoor AIWC activities and events in the Clubrooms.

2.4 Fans are not helpful and may worsen the dispersal of virus around a room. Fan use is therefore discouraged unless it is for managing a too hot room, and windows are wide open to the outdoors.

## 3. Clubroom Cleaning

3.1. The cleaning company will continue to clean the Clubrooms on Tuesdays and Fridays.

3.2. The cleaning company has informed us that their procedures comply with Swiss guidelines and they will continue to use a special disinfectant which we purchased for their use as well as ours.

3.3. In addition to the professional cleaning of the Clubrooms, and to establish good habits, enhanced cleaning of high-touch and high-traffic areas will occur, as follows:

3.3.1. **Room Used by an Activity/Group:** At the end of the meeting/activity, all leaders will leave time for the group members/participants to tidy and clean the room. They are asked to do the following at the end of the meeting/activity:

- Leave windows open to continue to let fresh air into the room.
- Use the cleaning supplies in the box provided in the room, use disinfectant spray and a clean cloth (or paper towels) to wipe down the following surfaces:
  - Door handles
  - Light switches
  - Tables
  - Chairs – the metal frames of fabric chairs, and the seats and frame of hard surface chairs

**4. Common Areas and Office:** This includes kitchen, bathrooms, hallways, and office. Office volunteers will be asked to use disinfectant spray and a clean cloth (or paper towels) to wipe down the following high-touch areas before Club opening, during the day, and after Club closing:

- Computer Mouse and Keyboards

- Phones
- Photocopier control panel
- Office desk surfaces and chairs, Welcome Desk surface and chairs
- Countertops and other handles in kitchen
- Faucets
- Toilet flush handles only

Cleaning gloves are provided in each cleaning box and may be worn when cleaning. If used, please wash gloves with soap and water before removing. Wash hands after removing gloves. Used cleaning cloths should be put in the bin outside room 9.

## **5. Planned Activity Groups and Events**

5.1. As much as possible, activity groups in the Clubrooms will be scheduled at the time and in the room(s) they are used to. However, to accommodate as many groups as possible using the Clubrooms, some groups may be asked to meet less frequently, or in a different space from before March 13, 2020.

5.2. The AIWC Activities Director will maintain the Master Schedule of groups and will be the main point of contact for all activity leaders.

5.3. To allow sufficient time for airing and cleaning of rooms between groups, activities will not be scheduled “back-to-back”, but rather with at least 15 minutes between groups.

5.4. The following is the process for all activities:

Activity leader will send out a message to group members asking them to sign up via the website calendar. Members who do not have access to the internet, or who need assistance, may also sign up for an activity by calling the Welcome Desk.

Potential AIWC members who want to try out an activity can be registered by e-mailing [aiwcactivities@gmail.com](mailto:aiwcactivities@gmail.com) or calling the Office. The prospective member will be informed of the relevant portions of this Protection plan at the time of registration.

- Once the maximum number of participants has been reached, participants will be added to a waiting list.
- Cancellations must be made 24 hours prior to the event to allow a waitlist to be activated. In extenuating circumstances where 24-hour notice is not possible, please contact the Club Office as soon as possible.
- Online sign-up will close 24 hours prior to the event; however, phone sign-up will remain open (through the Office) up to the time of the activity if spaces remain.

## **6. Informal Get-Togethers/Meeting Friends**

If a member, or members, wish to drop-in to browse the library books, pick up something, or do business with the Office, they should call ahead to the Office to make sure the Clubrooms are not overly crowded. They will need to sign in upon arrival and their contact details will be kept for 14 days. Mask wearing is compulsory.

### **Conclusion**

This plan is a “Living Plan” and will necessarily need to be updated and modified as the coronavirus pandemic evolves.

Respectfully submitted,

AIWC COVID-19 Task Force Members – **Appendix F**

## **Appendix A – Background to this Plan**

The World Health Organization declared a pandemic related to the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) on March 11, 2020. At the same time, increasing numbers of coronavirus cases were already being seen in the Geneva region, indicating spread in the community. The AIWC Clubrooms closed to members and visitors on March 13, 2020, and all AIWC activities and events were cancelled.

The AIWC reopened its Clubrooms in a limited capacity after June 6, 2020, as part of Switzerland's "phase 3" easing of COVID-19 restrictions. A COVID-19 Reopening Plan was approved by the AIWC Board, and the Clubrooms reopened in a limited fashion with new hygiene practices on June 16, 2020 (please see "Clubrooms Reopening Plan" dated June 2, 2020 for more details).

The AIWC reopened its Clubrooms, activities, and events fully on August 31, 2020, with protocols in place to ensure compliance with Swiss federal and Geneva cantonal rules and ordinances regarding COVID-19 (see "September 2020 Plan" dated July 12, 2020 for details). Highlights of the "September 2020 Plan" included:

- Opening hours restored to Monday through Thursday, 09:00 through 16:00.
- All rooms open in the Clubrooms except the cloakrooms
- Room capacities and overall Clubroom capacity set using Swiss guidelines of 4m<sup>2</sup> per person, and activity groups limited to the number of participants permitted in the room.
- Advance sign-up for all activities to ensure room limits not exceeded.
- Physical distancing of 1.5m or masks required at all times (masking required in all common areas such as hallways).
- Continued enhanced cleaning, with high-touch areas being disinfected between groups, and our regular cleaning company twice weekly.
- Maintaining list of all persons entering the Club in case contact tracing needed.
- Opening the windows to circulate fresh air as much as possible.
- Further evolution of Welcome Desk routines and training of volunteers.
- Continued restrictions on sharing food and beverages.

Since then, Switzerland (and indeed the world) has been through several phases of increased and decreased restrictions. The AIWC has developed a "Protection Plan" for Club activities each time the restrictions change. This is the tenth version of the Protection Plan

## **Appendix B - Protection Plan for the Clubrooms**

### **Reception Area and Hallways**

- Leave main door open when office/WD are staffed to avoid hand contact with handles.
- Notice informing guests about the rules to follow, including mask wearing and hand sanitizing posted in a prominent location.
- Hand sanitizer is available on front desk and in all rooms.
- Masks are required indoors at ALL times. Masks must cover the nose, mouth, and chin. Masks are required despite the vaccination status of the member.
- Provide disposable face mask if guest requests one.
- Member/guest contact information will be collected through registration via the website calendar for all activities and events.
- Disinfect all surfaces following cleaning procedures noted in *4. Clubroom Cleaning*, item 4.4.2, *Common Areas and Office*.

### **Office**

- Disinfect all surfaces following cleaning procedures noted in *4. Clubroom Cleaning*, item 4.4.2, *Common Areas and Office*.

### **Rooms 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, Kitchen (dining area) and Library**

- Chairs and tables are set up ensuring 1.5m when seated.
- Disinfect all surfaces following cleaning procedures noted in *4. Clubroom Cleaning*, item 4.4.1, *Room Used by an Activity/Group*.

### **Babies and Toddlers Room**

- Disinfect all surfaces following cleaning procedures noted in *4. Clubroom Cleaning*, item 4.4.1, *Room Used by an Activity/Group*.
- Regularly wash smaller toys by placing in dishwasher with a water temperature of 60 degrees Celsius.
- Regularly disinfect larger toys with disinfectant spray and allow to air out for several days

## **Appendix C - Cleaning Supplies and Procedures**

The following cleaning and personal hygiene supplies are provided by the Club:

### Cleaning Supplies

- Cleaning cloths and paper towels
- Reusable gloves
- Disinfectant spray

### Personal Hygiene Supplies

- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Disposable face masks
- Disposable gloves
- Facial tissues

Hand sanitizer will be placed in each room as well as at the Welcome Desk. Disposable masks and gloves are in the Office. Facial tissues are available at the Welcome Desk.

### Cleaning Procedures

- A box containing cleaning supplies and detailed instructions will be placed in each room as well as the Office.

## **Appendix D - Protection Plan Summary for Members**

These guidelines apply to the AIWC Clubrooms, and to **ALL** AIWC activities and events, whether at or away from the Clubrooms. **Entry to AIWC Clubrooms is by the production of an approved Covid Certificate.**

A Covid certificate can be in the form of :

- *Details of your Covid vaccination stating that you are fully vaccinated, at least 1 week ago (Pfizer, Moderna) or 4 weeks ago (Janssen). ;*
- *Details of a recent negative Covid-19 PCR test from within the last 72 hours OR a rapid antigen test, from within the last 48 hours.*
- *Details proving that you have recovered from the virus, from no more than 180 days ago.*

**Furthermore masks must be worn inside Clubrooms. They can only be removed when eating or drinking while seated.**

Please do not visit the Clubrooms or participate in any AIWC activity or event if:

- You are showing any signs of illness, or
- you are supposed to be in quarantine (related to travel or COVID exposure), or
- you are supposed to be self-isolating, as per Swiss government guidelines.

## **Hygiene Measures**

### **Travel-Related Quarantine**

Travelers arriving in Switzerland from certain countries, and some areas within countries, are required to go into quarantine. Refer to the Swiss government website for up-to-date information and list of countries/areas (it changes every 2 weeks): [www.bag.admin.ch](http://www.bag.admin.ch).

### **Illness**

Sick persons are asked not to visit the Clubrooms or participate in any AIWC activity or event. If symptoms develop while with the AIWC, the individual is asked to promptly don a mask, leave the activity/event/Clubrooms, and follow the OFSP's guidance regarding COVID testing and isolation.

Should the individual test positive for COVID-19, notify the Club. The Club will then follow the guidance of the Cantonal public health personnel regarding contact tracing and other measures.

### **Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette**

All members/guests should sanitize hands using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer upon arrival at an AIWC activity/event, and on arrival at the Clubrooms. Use of soap and water for 20 seconds to wash hands is an alternative. Wash or sanitize your hands regularly thereafter.

- Avoid touching your face.
- Cough and sneeze into a tissue or the crook of your elbow. Dispose of tissue immediately.
- Do not shake hands.
- Do not hug or kiss when greeting people.

### **Keep Distance**

Bridge: When playing bridge, Plexiglas is no longer required but social distancing must be maintained. Tables must be 1.5 m apart

### **Wearing Masks**

- Mask wearing indoors is compulsory.
- The mask must cover the nose, mouth, and chin.
- Masks may be removed for consumables provided you are seated.

## **Contact Lists**

The information collected through pre-registration and signing in at the office will be stored securely by the AIWC for 14 days afterwards, to permit contact tracing in the event of a case of COVID-19.

## **Activities and Events at the Clubrooms**

### **Planned and Scheduled Group Activities and Events**

Information and procedures for signing up for activities and events will be published in the weekly Hotline and through the activity leaders.

### **Informal Visits to Clubrooms**

**In accordance with new governmental and cantonal directives, from September 13th until January 24, 2022** a COVID Certificate is required for all indoor activities and **masks must be worn**. Club members are welcome to come to the Clubrooms to browse the library, or to do business with the Office.

## **Cleaning**

All surfaces will be cleaned regularly and adequately after use.

In addition to the professional cleaning of the Clubrooms, members and office volunteers will be regularly disinfecting the high-touch areas in the Clubrooms (for example, toilet flush bars and door handles). Members are asked to wipe down the high-touch areas of the room they have used at the end of their activity. Activity leaders are versed in this procedure, and supplies are in each room.

Ventilation is one of the key ways to prevent transmission of coronavirus. Members participating in an activity in the Clubrooms are asked to keep the windows open as much as possible during the activity to maximize ventilation.

## **Vulnerable People**

All individuals who participate in the AIWC Activities, Events and visit the Clubrooms do so at their own risk. The Club will always follow the Swiss government's guidance and direction regarding the coronavirus.



## **Appendix E - Communication Plan**

With each update to the Plan, and regularly in between formal updates:

- Special Shout Out announcing changes to the Plan.
- Ongoing notices in weekly Hotline outlining reminders, changes to the Plan.
- Announcements on Facebook and Instagram.
- A full copy of each new version of the Plan will be uploaded to the website for all members to access and will be available in the Clubrooms. In addition, the Member Summary version of the Protection Plan, attached as **Appendix D**, will be prominently displayed in the Clubrooms, and made available to the public.

## **Appendix F - AIWC COVID-19 Task Force**

In May 2020, an AIWC COVID-19 Task Force (“Task Force”) was created to review the guidelines from the Swiss government and to recommend plans to reopen the AIWC Clubrooms in compliance with the guidelines.

The final approval of each change to the plan rests with the AIWC Governing Board.

Current members of the Task Force are:

- Maria Stotts -President (as of June 1)
- Clare Nash – AIWC Office Administrator (as of June 1)
- Candy Gibson – AIWC Activity Director (as of June 1)
- Barbara Keith – AIWC Co-Membership Director (as of June 1)
- Jo Kitson – AIWC Co-Membership Director (as of June 1)
- Angie Al Fakhouri – AIWC Member-at-Large (as of June 1)
- Gwen Kataoka and Aurianne Ortai – AIWC Parliamentarian (as of July 1)
- Leisa Weld – AIWC Member
- Sue Garland – AIWC Welcome Desk Coordinator