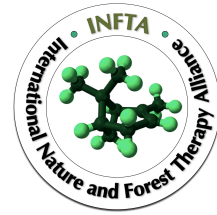




COVID-19 Safe Plan

(last updated November 13, 2020)



This information has been checked for accuracy as at the date and time of circulation.

1. Introduction

The *International Nature and Forest Therapy Alliance (INFTA)* acknowledges the importance of managing all risks within an ongoing review of activities around prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

INFTA recognises the potential spread of the viral respiratory disease COVID-19 at the locations in which business operates and where its staff deliver services. INFTA is, therefore, committed to ensuring the safety of all members, staff, volunteers, participants, stakeholders and the broader community. As such, INFTA is committed to undertaking activities to:

- prevent outbreaks through taking appropriate precautionary measures;
- monitor outbreaks as they occur;
- respond promptly and effectively;
- undertake strategies to minimise the risk of disease transmission; and
- contribute to the rapid and confident recovery of individuals, communities and services.

This COVID-19 Safe Plan is guided by the recommendations of the [World Health Organization](#) as well as relevant federal, state and local bodies where INFTA-Certified Forest Therapy Guides conduct guided Forest Therapy sessions.

2. General Guidelines

INFTA Accredited Training Providers should adopt these guidelines and provide adequate information and guidance to trainees, including a risk management plan.

INFTA-Certified and Accredited Forest Therapy Guides must adopt these guidelines and have to have their own [COVID-19 Safe Plan](#) in place as part of risk management for their business operations and locations where they are contracted to provide services.

2.1 Record Keeping

Contact information must be kept on all meeting attendees and participants at guided Forest Therapy sessions including full name, email address, residential address, phone number, date of walk and time period (time in and time out) for contact tracing purposes for a period of 56 days or other timeline specified by health authorities. Members, staff and guides will ensure records are used only for the purposes of tracing COVID-19 infections and are captured and stored confidentially and securely.

2.2 Hygiene and Cleaning

INFTA members, staff and guides must follow the following protocols and inform contractors, volunteers, staff or participants of expectations before they attend a scheduled appointment. This includes:

- staying at home if they feel unwell
- providing their details for record-keeping and tracing purposes
- washing their hands and/or using disinfectant and/or alcohol-based hand sanitiser upon arrival
- non-contact greetings (no handshakes); greet people with a smile or wave
- wearing adequate face masks during meetings and guided Forest Therapy sessions
- avoiding physical contact with others not in their household
- maintaining required social distancing of, at least, 1.5 m during the entire meeting or session

All members, staff and guides must practise good hygiene by frequently cleaning their hands. Hand washing should take at least 20 to 30 seconds. Wash the whole of each hand, covering all areas with soap before washing with water. If hand washing is not practical, disinfectant and/or alcohol-based hand sanitiser containing at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol are recommended.

2.3 Serving refreshments

Members, staff and guides shall only serve refreshments if allowed at the time. Maintain good practices and follow guidelines set by the location or venue where meetings, gatherings or Forest Therapy sessions are conducted. Any refreshments that are offered will be in environmentally sustainable disposable items in place of reusable items where possible.

2.4 Physical Distancing

All members, staff and INFTA guides shall not attend meetings, gatherings or guided Forest Therapy sessions if they are unwell or notice any flu-like symptoms. Based on current advice, all members, staff and guides must cap the number of attendees and/or participants (including the guide and any assistant/s) and record the relevant personal details of all participants for possible contact tracing. Guides will send out information prior to any guided Forest Therapy session to the participants. In addition, the guides inform all participants at the start of the guided Forest Therapy session about the 1.5 metres distance between persons and ensuring an average hygiene safety area of four square metres per person.

3. Protocols for Guided Forest Therapy Sessions

- INFTA-Certified and Accredited Forest Therapy Guides, volunteers and participants must maintain the required physical distances, wear an adequate face mask at all times and minimise physical interaction with others in the group they guide.
- All participants must pre-purchase tickets - drop-ins on the day are not recommended.
- Forest Therapy activities should be tailored to ensure required physical distancing. Guides must avoid the use of popular locations and narrow trails where physical distance may be compromised.
- Participants must bring their own equipment, mat, blanket, cushion, writing implements, water bottle and snacks.
- Use electronic means instead of paperwork where practical for waivers, disclaimers, feedback and evaluation formalities. If a signature is required, discuss providing a confirmation email instead, or providing a photo of the signed copy as proof. Alternatively, disinfect the pen after individual use.

INFTA-Certified and Accredited Forest Therapy Guides will endeavour to ensure there are protocols for cancelling events and offering alternative online offerings wherever safe and possible.

4. Review and Monitor

INFTA will regularly review the systems of work to ensure they are consistent with current directions and advice provided by health authorities across the regions where services are delivered.

5. Site Specific Guidelines

INFTA will ensure that up-to-date hygiene and infection control advice from the World Health Organization and relevant Government Health Authorities under which INFTA-Certified and Accredited Forest Therapy Guides operate are implemented and communicated to all INFTA Accredited Training Providers and INFTA-Certified and Accredited Forest Therapy Guides.

6. General Health and Hygiene

- wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing nose, coughing or sneezing;
- avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth at all times;
- avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue (or cough into your elbow), then dispose of your tissue immediately and correctly;
- clean and disinfect touched objects and surfaces frequently using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe;
- consider purchasing a pocket-size bottle of disinfectant or hand sanitiser to use at regular intervals.

7. Feeling Symptomatic

Any INFTA member, staff, volunteer, guide in training or INFTA-Certified and Accredited Forest Therapy Guide who feels unwell with what is perceived as the onset of **a cold, flu or respiratory illness** should seek appropriate medical attention immediately, including COVID-19 testing. Staff and members should not attend work. Guides in training and practicum will not be permitted to conduct guided Forest Therapy walks until a negative COVID-19 result is received and symptoms have subsided. INFTA-Certified and Accredited Forest Therapy Guides should establish and follow COVID-19 Safe Plans for their business and/or at locations where they are contracted to guide Forest Therapy sessions.

Any INFTA member, staff, volunteer, guide in training or INFTA-Certified and Accredited Forest Therapy Guide who has been tested positively for COVID-19 has an obligation to inform INFTA that they have tested positively and inform INFTA about the people they have been in close contact with during their infectious period. This information will be conveyed to the relevant authorities. Recommended cleaning and disinfection protocols will commence immediately.