Dear colleagues,

Over the last months, we have been closely monitoring, evaluating and anticipating the COVID-19 situation, following specific country instructions, issuing guidance for UNESCO staff.

The current situation remains quite difficult to evaluate, some countries have lifted lockdown measures, whereas in others, preventive measures remain strict, or are again becoming more strict. In Paris, there has been a recent increase in COVID-19 cases. Ensuring the health and safety of all personnel remains our primary concern.

We must remain careful and continue to respect these preventive measures put in place in the different locations where UNESCO is active. Local measures, either to the use of masks, or specific travel restrictions, including quarantine in some countries, will be most likely part of our daily concerns, for the coming months, and quite probably, until at least the end of the year.

In this context, I wish to inform you of the following measures applying to UNESCO personnel in Headquarters, from 1st of September, until further notice. Specific guidance for Field Offices is indicated at the end of this message.

On measures related to official or personal travel, including quarantine measures, from and to France, UNESCO will follow the host country guidance. This information is updated daily and available via:  
https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/Actualites/L-actualites-du-Ministere/Attestation-de-deplacement-et-de-voyage

**Presence at Headquarters – Telecommuting**

It is recommended that staff density should not be higher than 50%, per Sector/Division. Therefore, telecommuting is recommended where the tasks of the staff member can be carried out effectively through such arrangements. In cases where continuing telecommuting is approved, a combination of working from home, and working from the office is strongly advised. Suggested modalities would be 2 to 3 days in the office, and the rest telecommuting. Practical arrangements (days of work at home/days of work in the office, specific tasks, distance from home to workplace etc.) will be defined between the concerned staff and the direct supervisor.

**Telecommuting requests will be approved by the relevant Director of Division or Bureau in HQ. Staff must register their request in TULIP from 1st of September under “Telecommuting”**.

It is likely that these arrangements will remain in place until the end of the year, though we may need to adapt, depending on the evolution of the sanitary situation, and on the requirements of work.

Full time telecommuting may be approved between 1st September, until the end of the year, in exceptional situations such as individual health situations (approved by Medical Service) and exceptional difficulties related to individual staff circumstances (approved by Director HRM).

**Telecommuting from outside of the duty station is not permitted**, unless there are very exceptional circumstances, which must be approved by Director HRM.
HRM are finalizing a new teleworking policy in the coming weeks. Specific questions on telecommuting can be addressed to a.grisar@unesco.org.

While travelling from and to Headquarters, staff should respect the measures put in place on public transport or taxis. Preference should be given to travel during off-peak hours if possible, always, after consultation with your supervisor, therefore, office working hours will be kept flexible. Whenever possible try to explore the use of alternative means of transport. Additional bike space will be made available in the bike park, situated below building III.

**Office space**

The presence of staff must be carefully planned in order to ensure that preventive measures are duly respected. The guiding principles that will apply are that each staff member should respect a physical distance of 1.5 meters in all conditions, in offices, open spaces, meeting rooms, workshops, etc ... Managers are responsible for ensuring that these measures are applied and colleagues from the Division for Operations (ADM/OPS) are available to assist with optimizing office spaces. Managers should facilitate the arrangement of rotational working schedules or allowing flexible office hours for staff that share offices, where the 1.5 meters distance cannot be respected.

**Visitors to Headquarters**

External visitors will be allowed. In order to allow tracking, all visitors will be registered at the entrance. The library and archives reading room will be open from September. The UNESCO gift shop will also re-open as of September.

Visitors will be required to wear masks, and if possible be received by the person they want to meet at the reception counter. Please avoid unnecessary visits, take the shortest way to and from your office. No temperature checks are envisaged.

The organized group visits to UNESCO will remain cancelled until end September, at which time this will be further reviewed. UNESCO crèche will reopen on Monday, 7th September.

**Ensure secure work at Headquarters**

Following the host country new measures regarding the COVID-19 epidemic, the use of masks is now mandatory. Masks must be worn within the premises of Fontenoy and Miollis/Bonvin, in all circumstances, except within the catering facilities, or when a person is not sharing his/her office. This measure applies for all staff and all persons entering the premises.

Every time staff enter the Office premises, they should wash their hands. Sanitation gel is available at key entry points of the building. A hand wash with soap is as effective as hydroalcoholic gel.

Re-useable masks are available for staff (all types of contracts) at the Mail Service (Situated at the Delivery Area Fontenoy) during working hours.

Ad hoc meetings or gatherings in corridors or internal or external common areas should be avoided.
The use of elevators is discouraged, unless necessary. Try to take the elevators to go up, and the stairs to go down. In the staircase, please remain on the right.

Cleaning services have been reinforced. To help the cleaning staff, we advise colleagues to adopt a “clean desk policy”, leaving the desks clear of any paper when leaving the office. Cleaning services are provided outside of normal working hours. For any issues regarding cleaning please use START.

All staff having flu-like symptoms, should stay at home and seek medical advice. Please inform the medical service as soon as possible in case of Covid 19 contamination. Medical service can be reached by e-mail: service.medical@unesco.org or phone 01 45 68 08 67.

The external spaces (Jardin Japonais, smoking tolerated zones) can be accessed, provided that the physical distance is respected.

Sports facilities in Miollis can be used again, providing respecting the protocols of the different sports and the overall preventive measures. Further information will be provided in due course.

The use of gloves is only recommended for a small number of personnel based on their function, such as staff handling ID documents, bags or other items from visitors or staff.

The Consultative Committee on Health, Safety and Ergonomics (CCHSE) has been meeting over the last months, on issues related to the COVID-19 crisis, and will provide advice as needed.

Catering

This exceptional period has profoundly transformed the catering services of UNESCO. After its reopening on May 11, 2020, the services were brought together on a single site - Fontenoy – and with a reduced offer adapted to hygiene, safety and physical distancing measures to meet the challenges. On the classic offer (self-service, bar, restaurant) attendance has tremendously decreased and expected future trends suggest a profound transformation of this offer is needed.

A transitional period begins from September 1 until December 31, 2020. The traditional catering offer will continue, but it will be limited to the Fontenoy site based on a culinary offer identical to that which existed before the crisis but with a new service point on the Terrace of the Japanese Garden. The restaurant with the menu card will reopen in October 2020 and the event offer will still be possible by reservation and quote. The necessary COVID-19 health measures for both the guests and for the staffs will be observed without exception. In this transitional period, a period of reflection and market consultation will also begin, aimed at incorporating innovations and new offers that meet needs and new expectations.

Small Meetings

Small Meetings are meeting held outside of meeting rooms managed by ADM/CLD.

Meetings and gatherings on premises can only take place if the requirement of 1.5-meter physical distance can be applied. Where possible, internal meetings should continue to take place online. If a face-to-face meeting is to take place, please limit the number of participants and the duration to hour to avoid long face-to-face meetings.
Meetings, conferences and events

To the extent possible, meetings should remain virtual. In cases where a virtual meeting is impossible, for example certain statutory meeting, physical meetings may be held as of 7th of September. However, these physical meetings will be subject to capacity and hygiene limitations.

We are continuing to invest in tools allowing improved virtual and hybrid meetings, to allow better services for small and larger meetings.

Until further notice, the following sanitary measures will apply for all physical meetings and events; organizers are responsible informing the participants of these measures, and if necessary, reminding them.

1. The maximum seating capacity of each meeting room has been established and needs to be respected. For all meetings, and all side-meetings of any conference or events, the installed distancing measure of 1.5 m between seats is to be respected.

2. All participants must wear masks, already when entering UNESCO premises. This is also an obligation for event organizers and professionals (artists, exhibitors, technicians, service providers, volunteers...).

3. Specific hand sanitizers will be available at the entrance of each meeting room. Additional costs related to other Covid-19 preventive measures (additional cleaning, microphone covers, signage, …) will be charged to the conference organizers.

4. For France, the host country restrictions, notably regarding the quarantine provisions for people travelling from a specific list of countries to France must be respected. The organizers should maintain a list of detailed travel and contact information for possible contact tracing, if necessary. This information is constantly updated and available via: https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/Actualites/L-actu-du-Ministere/Attestation-de-deplacement-et-de-voyage

Missions

Critical missions may resume, on specific approval of the ADG/Director of the Sector/Bureau. The Travel unit is available to provide specific country advice, please contact travel-headquarters@unesco.org.

Presence in Field Offices and Institutes outside France

As indicated in our previous messages, some staff will continue teleworking after 1st of September and until further notice, Heads of Field Office shall plan return to work in close consultation with host governments and the UN Country Team, consulting Headquarters as necessary. Staff, in Field Offices, who continue to telecommute must records their requests in TULIP under “Telecommuting”

Specific guidance, including the provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) will depend on the office and the specific country or regional circumstances. General guidance is to follow the lead of country, and UNCT. Physical distancing and regular handwashing continue to be
the most effective precautionary measures; it is also widely considered that the use of masks serves to protect others around the wearer, and therefore where advised, masks should be used. We discourage the use of public transport.

As always, you can reach the coronavirus coordination team at coronavirus.coordination@unesco.org for any questions you may have, and consult the COVID intranet site https://unesco.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/en-us/pages/covid19.aspx which is updated on a daily basis.

My thanks and appreciation to all staff for their understanding and cooperation during this continuing challenging period.