

Dear future COBS students,

Everybody on a COBS expedition is “crew, not passengers” meaning that everyone must contribute to the community process for successful outcomes. In our current times, that means starting to contribute prior to course, not only with physical and mental preparations, but also by taking Strict Physical Distancing precautions at least 14 days prior to your course. The goal for COBS staff & students is to minimize the chance that they will arrive to course with COVID-19 which would jeopardize their ability to continue course, their crewmates’ ability to continue course, and even the courses of several dozen other students in other crews. This document covers Best Practices for Traveling to Course Start, and Guidelines for Strict Physical Distancing.

BEST PRACTICES FOR TRAVELING TO COURSE START

COBS requires students to arrive to course start via private transportation. Avoid public transport such as planes, trains, buses, rideshares, etc. *at least* 14 days prior to course start.

This means that for many students, they will arrive to course start via a lengthy drive. The following are best practices for traveling to course start:

- Plan out and pack meals ahead of time to limit interactions in restaurants. If you must use restaurants, opt for curbside pickup or drive-thru rather than eating in. Picnics!
- When refueling, disinfect gas pumps and/or sanitize hands before & after handling pumps.
- When stopping to use the restroom, sanitize your hands before entering the building. Avoid touching surfaces/handles as much as possible. As usual after using the restroom, wash your hands with soap & water for at least 20 seconds. Sanitize your hands again before re-entering your vehicle.
- If staying in hotels/motels/Airbnb, etc. check with the provider to ensure that they have strong disinfection procedures for each room.
- Bring a new pillowcase for each night and your own pillow(s) whenever you will be staying on a bed that another person may have slept in (breathed on) the night before.
- Upon entering a hotel room, open the windows, if possible, for 10-15 minutes to circulate fresh air into the room.
- Keep your immune system strong by eating healthy food and staying well-hydrated (this also helps you acclimate to the 10,200’ altitude of the COBS Leadville basecamp!)
- Utilize the below Guidelines for Strict Physical Distancing throughout all your travels:

GUIDELINES FOR STRICT PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Starting at least 14 days prior to course start:

- Restrict activities outside the home, except for urgent medical care. Avoid work, school, grocery stores, house parties, restaurants, and other public areas as much as possible.
- Whenever in public, maintain at least 6’ physical distance and always wear a facemask.
- When indoors in the same room with others who are not part of your normal household unit, wear a facemask and maintain at least 6’ physical distancing. It may also be appropriate to wear a facemask and maintain at least 6’ of physical distance when in the same room as members of your household unit if they are at a higher risk of infection

because of close physical contact with others, contact with high-risk COVID patients such as in medical facilities, interacting with people without facemasks such as at restaurants, or if they themselves do not consistently wear a facemask while in public.

- Restrict non-essential visitors from the interior of your home. If an essential visitor must enter your home (ex. to repair utilities, etc.), ask them to sanitize their hands (or wear gloves), wear a facemask, and maximize ventilation in the rooms they enter.
- Practice strong communicable disease etiquette. Cough or sneeze into your shoulder or elbow, even while wearing a facemask.
- If traveling in a vehicle with people outside your household unit, wear a facemask and maximize ventilation by opening windows, or, at a minimum place air conditioning on non-recirculation mode.
- Clean your hands often with soap & water for at least 20 seconds or clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains 60-95% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. Soap & water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty. Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.
- Avoid sharing personal household items: You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets. After using these items, they should be washed thoroughly.
- Clean high-touch surfaces: Clean all “high-touch” surfaces such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables. Also, clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them. Use a household cleaning spray or wipe, according to the directions on the label.
- If available, use a separate bathroom from other people.
- Monitor your health with twice daily temperature/symptom checks. Seek medical consultation if you have temperatures greater than 100.4° or other relevant symptoms.

If you develop COVID-19 symptoms prior to course you should remain under home isolation (not leaving your residence except for medical emergencies) until the risk of spreading the virus to others is thought to be low. This means that home isolation can stop no earlier than:

- receiving two negative viral tests spaced more than 24 hours apart, OR
- 10 days from when your symptoms started AND your symptoms are improving AND you have not had a fever greater than 100.4° for at least 3 days (72 hours) without fever-reducing medications.

A common theme of strong relationships are clear expectations. This helps everyone know what they can do to help others feel comfortable and get the most shared benefit from the relationship. During the first few days of course, you and your crew will collaborate to determine expectations for life in *your* community, and we encourage you to practice setting clear guidelines with friends and family you may interact with during *at least* the 14 days prior to your course. If making plans with others, tell them clearly what your coronavirus expectations are (for example: “I’m good with hanging out as long as it’s outside and at least 6’ of distance, or, we are all wearing facemasks if we have to be inside.”) Follow through is far easier when discussed beforehand.

Looking forward to going Outward Bound with you soon!