

**To:** IAS Stewards  
**From:** Jim Herkert & Kaleb Baker  
**Date:** October 30, 2020  
**RE:** **Updated COVID procedures for IAS stewardship and stewards**

Until we have a mass-produced vaccine, or herd immunity, we will need COVID Procedures for many IAS activities including stewardship on IAS Sanctuaries/lands. These required procedures will be in effect until further notice (possibly a year or more). The COVID situation is dynamic and we will adapt as we go in response to our needs and updated state and federal guidance on safe practices.

This document updates the 8 May 2020 guidance and will be updated as needed to reflect our current stewardship needs and recommended safe health practices.

### ***IAS General COVID Procedures.***

#### COVID and Stewardship

1. The most likely way to get the virus is to be in a confined space with someone who has the virus.
2. Our COVID procedures are intended to minimize the risk of exposure and infection while conducting stewardship activities at IAS Sanctuaries.
3. Science is showing that asymptomatic people may also spread the virus, therefore additional measures are needed to provide the safest work environment for our stewards.
4. Common COVID symptoms include cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, and sore throat. Please visit the [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) for more and up-to-date medical information.

#### COVID Stewardship Procedures

5. All volunteer stewards (and IAS Staff) are required to self-monitor their health prior to participating in any stewardship activity at any IAS Sanctuary. This means a temperature check if you are going to be around other stewards/people (i.e., any chance of you being less than 6 feet from other stewards) and not participating if you don't feel 100% normal. Error on the safe side and stay home if you are unsure of your health status.
6. Stewards should practice social distancing whenever possible. This includes (a) keeping at least 6 (six) feet between yourself and others (b) washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing. If you don't have soap or water, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol, (c) avoid close contact with people who are sick or showing COVID symptoms and stay home when you're sick.
7. Stewardship should be limited to 'experienced stewards' (i.e., people that have worked on our site before) and their work should be limited to activities they have performed before (i.e., this is a not a time to train someone on a new task).
8. The maximum number of stewards allowed on a given site at a given time will be determined by State of Illinois, Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response, Regional Phase Dashboard (<https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/s/restore-illinois-regional-dashboard>). We (Kaleb and Jim) will be monitoring the dashboard and providing updates to all LSCs as appropriate. The lead steward at each LSC can further reduce the maximum number of stewards allowed on the site at

any one time if they feel such a change is in the best interest of protecting the health and safety of their volunteers.

9. Stewards should not car pool to workdays unless they are family that live in the same dwelling.
10. Stewards must wear a face mask whenever other stewards are nearby (within 20 ft.).
11. Face masks must be worn inside any IAS buildings.
12. All coordination of volunteer activities should take place electronically when possible or outside while maintaining appropriate distance.
13. Buildings are confined space for virus transmission. Stewards should only enter buildings when necessary and must wear a facemask, and sanitize surfaces they touch.
14. Bleach solution spray bottles and rags should be made available at all locations. Solution is 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water. Dark spray bottles keep sunlight from degrading bleach.
15. Hand sanitizer should be made available for stewards.
16. Breaks and lunches should be held outdoors whenever possible. No shared snacks or lunches. Everyone brings their own food and drinks.
17. Stewards should use personal tools whenever possible. If stewards are willing/able to use tools they own they are encouraged to do so. If stewards prefer, IAS can loan out hand tools to use for the next months. Stewards can keep these tools in their vehicles and are responsible for maintenance (e.g. keeping loppers sharp). A ring of red electrical tape on the tool can help identify IAS tools, especially if taken off site.
18. Limited mower and UTV use are permitted. Only one person is allowed on mowers, UTVs, and any other vehicle at any time. Stewards who use a mower or UTV need to check the equipment out, use it, and then carefully sanitize it. Keeping a log will help in the unlikely event that we need to conduct contact tracing. Sanctuaries are responsible for maintaining logs.
19. Backpack sprayers are also allowed. Volunteers should follow the same rules for sprayers as they do for mowers/UTVs (i.e., logs, use, then sanitize after use).
20. Power tools (chain saws, etc.) are not allowed under general rules. If you feel you have a need to use a power tool (e.g., a tree has fallen across a trail and you need to use a chainsaw), contact Jim and/or Kaleb before any work is done and we can discuss how to address the problem while also maintaining safe equipment operations and safe COVID procedures.
21. All volunteers shall keep a log of days in which they participated in IAS stewardship. This is another measure to facilitate contact tracing if necessary. Volunteers are responsible for maintaining their own logs.

#### Covered Stewardship Activities

22. The following list of stewardship activities are approved provided that stewards are able to comply with all of the above general procedures:
  - Trail maintenance
  - Control of invasives
  - Native garden/planted tree care
  - Garbage clean-up
  - Equipment and structure maintenance
  - Seed collection and dispersal
  - Research and monitoring

## Request for Exception

23. If you have a need to conduct stewardship not included on the above “Covered Stewardship Activities” list (#1-4), or cannot conduct the necessary stewardship while adhering to the “COVID Stewardship Procedures” (#5-21), contact Jim (309-635-1880) or Kaleb (815-590-6127) and we can discuss how to proceed.