



Writing Retreat on the Maine Coast  
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## HEALTH & SAFETY AT OUR RETREAT

Your health is exceedingly important to me, and I want to make sure we're all comfortable and safe during our retreat. COVID, as we all know, is a threat we need to take seriously, and since we'll all be sharing a home for a week, and will be in close proximity with one another during meals and group gatherings, we need to be mindful of how best to keep each other safe, and also know what to expect in the event someone is closely exposed to an infected person or becomes symptomatic.

I'm following the current CDC guidelines.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

**Vaccination** Everyone attending the retreat—retreat-goers, chef, retreat staff, and special guests—will have been fully vaccinated and boosted and thus considered “up-to-date” via the CDC recommendations.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html>

**Masks** Masks are not mandatory during the retreat, but if you're more comfortable wearing one during our group gatherings, feel free to do so. There will be N95 masks on hand should you need one, and I do ask that if you choose to mask, you use the N95 mask rather than a cloth mask. If someone gets exposed to a person with known COVID, or develops symptoms of COVID, then that exposed or symptomatic person *will* be required to wear an N95 mask whenever in contact with others, whether in quarantine or isolation. See the “Sickness” section below.

**Dining** We'll be eating together often during the retreat, buffet style, and the large dining room table doesn't allow for distancing during meals. If the weather permits, we might choose to eat together outside on the patio, and if you're more comfortable eating on your own, please feel free to take your meal to your room or another private space.

**Capacity and Physical Distancing** While our retreat house is large, with high ceilings, and the fresh sea breeze provides good ventilation when doors and windows are open, our group gatherings will be in relatively close quarters, with minimal room for physical distancing, so once again, feel free to wear a mask if you wish.

You'll have your own private room, and will be sharing a bath with one other person. In your bathroom, please make a point of washing your hands thoroughly with soap and hot water *before* touching other things in the bathroom, and in general keep your bathroom clean. Hand-sanitizer will be provided in each bedroom.

**Sound Hygiene Practices** I encourage all of us to follow these sound hygiene practices:

- Frequently wash hands with hot water and soap and use hand sanitizer (provided in your room);

- Cover your mouth and/or nose when you cough or sneeze (with a tissue or your inner elbow, not your hand);
- Avoid physical contact that may transmit germs—refrain from shaking hands, hugging, etc., except with explicit permission from the other person and again, wash hands and sanitize frequently.

**Symptom Check** I will have a handheld, no-touch forehead thermometer should you need to check for fever. If you experience any COVID symptoms at all, please inform me right away. Please do monitor your own health throughout the retreat, and if you have any concerns at all that you might have COVID, let me know and we'll take care of getting tests.

### Testing

*Rapid at-home tests* I will have four rapid tests available (and if you have extras at home, please do bring your own). We can always run out and get more as needed.

*Laboratory Tests* For lab tests, the nearest and best place to go is:

Walgreens (testing by appointment)  
226 High Street  
Ellsworth, ME 04605  
207-664-0952

Walgreens has two tests available, by appointment:

*PCR Lab Test* – Results typically available within 48 hours, meets pre-travel testing requirements

*Rapid Antigen Test* – Results available within 2 hours, check with destination to see if this meets pre-travel requirements

To schedule your appointment, visit <https://www.walgreens.com/findcare/covid19/testing>.

**Illness** If you do become ill at the retreat, please let me know right away. I will make sure to alert everyone else. We will follow the CDC quarantine/isolation guidelines (see the accompanying CDC document, *COVID-19 Quarantine and Isolation*, or visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html>) and do our very best to make sure you still have a wonderful retreat experience. We can easily Zoom you into group gatherings if you're in isolation, deliver meals to your room, take you for testing, and do whatever we can to make you as comfortable as possible. We will also reassign your bathroom-mate to a different bathroom.

**Health and Emergency Services** I have a robust first-aid kit on hand for any run-of-the-mill issues that might arise, and will put this in an accessible place for anyone to use.

There is a 24/7 emergency room 1.5 miles (4 minutes) from our retreat house:

MDI Hospital  
10 Wayman Lane  
Bar Harbor, ME 04609  
207 288-5081

If your need for the ER is non-life-threatening, alert me and we'll get you a ride to the hospital right away. If you or someone you're with needs an ambulance, use your cell phone to immediately call 9-1-1 and then alert me.

Thank you so much for caring for each other during our retreat!