

# MT. COTOPAXI: EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

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As there is a potential for eruptions of Mt. Cotopaxi, the Office of International Programs (OPI) at Universidad San Francisco de Quito (USFQ) would like to inform all of our international students and their sending universities/organizations of the following information:

- While we cannot predict when a volcanic eruption will occur or the level of intensity of the eruption if it occurs, the good news is that the USFQ is located in Cumbaya about 50 kilometers from the volcano and is considered a safe zone in case of volcanic eruption.
- The Ecuadorian government has declared an "Orange Alert", which means that all citizens should prepare for an imminent threat of volcanic eruption. During this period of orange alert, daily life will not be affected and classes will continue as usual. However, OPI recommends that all international students carry the following items in their backpacks daily:
  - Face Mask (N-95 mask recommended for protection from ash fall)
  - Goggles
  - Warm sweater or jacket
  - Cereal bars / snack
  - Bottled Water
  - Cash
  - Antibacterial gel
- If Cotopaxi erupts, the Ecuadorian government will declare a "Red Alert", which means that a volcanic eruption is in process. In case of a change from an orange to a red alert during regular class hours, **OPI recommends that all international students stay inside of the University in the same place where they were informed of the eruption.** Classes will be suspended and the parking lot will be closed so that no one can leave the campus by car. The Ecuadorian government will most likely close highways, so it will be chaotic for drivers and closing the parking lot is a way to prevent accidents. Students can leave by foot, but this is not recommended.
- In case the volcanic eruption produces an earthquake in Cumbaya, OPI recommends that all international students find an open space on campus as quickly as possible. Students should walk quickly but pay attention as they go down stairs, always using the handrails, and not enter any elevator.
- In case the volcanic eruption produces ash fall in Cumbaya, OPI recommends all international students remain indoors in the USFQ and use a face mask. Face masks will be distributed to students if they do not have one.

**If any international student or foreign university/organization has a question or concern about Mt. Cotopaxi, please visit us at Casa Tomate 107 or send us an email at [opi@usfq.edu.ec](mailto:opi@usfq.edu.ec).**