



Capability Statement

Gaza

Tailored Risk Management

Nearest centre of medical excellence

Note: Due to the collapse of healthcare infrastructure and lack of internationally recognised Centres of Medical Excellence (CMEs) in Gaza, stabilisation and transfer to external facilities is required.

For critical cases, recommend international evacuation through the Rafah Crossing (subject to border access and security clearance) towards:

Cairo, Egypt - Equipped with multispecialty tertiary care hospitals, including trauma, cardiology, paediatrics and intensive care units. Often used for emergency medical evacuations from Gaza.

Amman, Jordan - Offering high standard healthcare in trauma, orthopaedics, internal medicine and surgical specialties.

Important: On the ground stabilisation is often required before transfer. Nasser Medical Complex (Khan Younis) and MSF/ICRC field hospitals in Rafah and Deir al-Balah serve as primary triage and trauma care hubs.

No facility in Gaza can be considered safe for prolonged treatment. Clinical stabilisation should occur only under protective escort and with contingency planning for immediate onward evacuation.

Medical evacuation options

<p>1</p> <p>Emergency Extraction to Home Nation for Treatment</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Emergency Extraction to Closest Specialist Treatment before Repatriation</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Ground/Maritime extraction to stabilisation/treatment (In- country no fly)</p>
<p>Gaza’s airspace remains closed to all civil aviation due to security restrictions and the absence of any functional airport. All outbound medical transfers must occur overland via Rafah Crossing (Egypt) or in limited cases via Erez Crossing (Israel). Patients are stabilised at field hospitals and transported by ground convoy to Cairo, where international flights can be arranged. Border clearance is unpredictable and delays may last days. Fixed schedules are not guaranteed. Erez Crossing is reserved for high-priority humanitarian exemptions and subject to Israeli permit approval. It is not available for routine or private use.</p>	<p>Given the collapse of Gaza’s medical system, patients are frequently evacuated to Cairo for definitive care by ground ambulance. Private hospitals offer surgical, ICU and post-operative care. Entry to East Jerusalem hospitals (Makassed, Augusta Victoria) is possible via Erez Crossing but rare and requires COGAT coordination. Onward referral to Amman or EU destinations should be arranged from Cairo following stabilisation. Early planning is essential due to limited border access, no willingness of providers to enter the region and the unpredictability of crossings.</p>	<p>Ground convoys operate sporadically and only during ceasefire windows. Ambulances and mobile clinics operate in field conditions, often without reliable navigation, fuel, or communications. Mobile trauma stabilisation units operated by PRCS, WHO and MSF are currently active in Rafah, Khan Younis, and central Gaza, depending on security conditions. Exact GPS locations are updated daily via OCHA 5W dashboards and should be requested via secure operational channels prior to initiating any ground movement. Treatment is limited to basic damage control and pain management. Any evacuation attempt requires liaison with UN OCHA, Egyptian Red Crescent, and local security actors. Maritime evacuation is not possible. Gaza’s coastline is blockaded and lacks operational port facilities. No rotary or fixed-wing aviation can enter Gaza. All extraction must rely on ground transfer to Rafah or Erez, under conditions of significant operational risk.</p>

Vaccination Requirements

Vaccine	Advice
Routine vaccines recommended (up to date)	Chickenpox (Varicella)
	Diphtheria-Tetanus-Pertussis
	Flu (influenza)
	Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR)
	Strongly recommended due to the recurrent outbreaks and disrupted immunisation.
	Gaza is currently under a CDC Level 1 Global Alert for Measles
	Travellers are at risk if not fully vaccinated at least two weeks prior to departure or have not had measles in the past. All international travellers should be fully vaccinated against measles with the MMR vaccine, including an early dose for infants 6–11 months.
COVID-19	Polio - Strongly recommended, as Gaza is currently under a CDC Level 2 Global Polio Alert
	Required for stays over 4 weeks. Gaza is a cVDPV2 outbreak zone. ICVP, 'Yellow Card' documentation may be required due to ongoing transmission.
	Shingles
Hepatitis A	Strongly recommended for all travellers, waterborne risk is high due to water contamination and limited food safety regulations
Hepatitis B	Recommended, particularly for those with exposure to blood or bodily fluids and unsterile equipment. Gaza lacks consistent sterilisation protocols.
Typhoid	Recommended due to compromised sanitation particularly for field work and operations
Rabies	Strongly recommended due to the rising presence of rabid dogs in shelters and urban ruins. Immediate medical attention is required in case of a bite or scratch, as post-exposure prophylaxis is not available.
Cholera	Recommended for responders, long term or high risk deployments, as outbreaks have been reported in Gaza
Yellow Fever	Required if transiting from endemic countries

Special Precautions:

- CDC Level 1 Global Alert (*Measles*):**
As of May 2025, the CDC has issued a Level 1 Global Health Alert for *Measles*. Gaza is considered high risk due to disrupted vaccination services, large-scale displacement and overcrowded shelters. All travellers must be fully immunised with two documented doses of the MMR vaccine. Infants aged 6–11 months should receive an early dose prior to entry.
- CDC Level 2 Travel Health Notice (*Polio*):**
Gaza is subject to a Level 2 CDC Travel Health Notice for Poliovirus due to confirmed cases of circulating *Vaccine-Derived Poliovirus Type 2 (cVDPV2)* in Khan Younis and Deir al-Balah. Ongoing wastewater surveillance indicates transmission. Travellers spending more than four weeks in Gaza must receive a documented IPV booster before departure, recorded in an ICVP ('Yellow Card'), in accordance with WHO regulations.
- Airborne and Droplet Infections (*Measles, Tuberculosis, COVID-19, Hantavirus, MERS*):**
Measles transmission is heightened in Gaza's overcrowded shelters. *Tuberculosis* remains a regional risk, with delays in diagnosis and treatment likely due to healthcare collapse. Long term personnel should consider pre- and post-travel TB screening.
COVID-19 is endemic, with low testing and treatment capacity. All personnel should be fully vaccinated and boosted.
Hantavirus, though not officially reported, may occur due to rodent infestation in abandoned buildings; exposure arises through inhalation of aerosolised droppings or urine.
Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) is a rare but serious respiratory illness with sporadic cases in the region. Risk remains low but clinicians should maintain awareness for flu-like symptoms in returned travellers.
- Vector-Borne Diseases (*Leishmaniasis*):**
Cutaneous Leishmaniasis is endemic in surrounding areas and may spread into Gaza, particularly in camps or damaged housing with sandfly exposure. Use at least 60% DEET-based repellent, sleep under treated nets, and wear long sleeves when outdoors. No vaccine is available.
- Water and Foodborne Infections (*Cholera, Typhoid, Hepatitis A*):**
Waterborne disease risk is extremely high. *Cholera* has not been officially declared but is considered imminent due to open defecation, flood runoff, and widespread sewage contamination. *Typhoid* and *Hepatitis A* are both endemic and regularly reported. All food should be cooked thoroughly, water must be treated or bottled and hand hygiene strictly maintained.
- Zoonotic Hazards (*Rabies*):**
Rabies is a credible risk in Gaza due to the rise in stray animal populations and absence of mass vaccination campaigns. Pre-exposure vaccination is recommended for responders and field workers. Post-exposure prophylaxis is generally unavailable. Any bite or scratch requires urgent medical evacuation.
- Bloodborne Infections (*Hepatitis B, HIV*):**
Due to lack of reliable sterilisation and strained hospital conditions, there is elevated risk for *Hepatitis B* and *HIV* transmission via unregulated injections, transfusions or surgical care. Travellers should carry personal medical kits where feasible and avoid invasive procedures unless essential. PEP for HIV is not available in Gaza.
- Environmental and Hygiene Hazards (*Leptospirosis, Air Quality*):**
Standing water and inadequate drainage significantly increase the risk of *Leptospirosis*, especially following rainfall or flood events. Avoid walking barefoot, wear protective clothing during cleanup, and

disinfect wounds.

Air pollution is consistently poor due to smoke, dust and destroyed infrastructure. Particulate-filtering masks (N95/FFP2) should be worn during exposure to rubble, fires or poor indoor ventilation.

- **Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR):**

Antimicrobial Resistance is rising due to

unsupervised antibiotic use, poor diagnostics and weakened infection control. Skin and GI infections may be difficult to treat with first line agents. Medical responders should confirm pathogen sensitivity where possible, practise antimicrobial stewardship, and adhere to hygiene protocols.

Political evacuation options

Gaza remains under an active conflict environment with no functioning airport and limited cross-border movement.

Political evacuations are not feasible by air from within Gaza due to complete airspace closure and absence of a civilian terminal.

Rafah Crossing (Egypt) is the only operational land exit available for international movement. Evacuations through Rafah require coordination with Egyptian border authorities, the United Nations and humanitarian liaison bodies. Access is highly restricted and may be denied at short notice. Movement is typically arranged via pre-approved lists submitted by diplomatic missions or recognised humanitarian organisations. No individual or private civilian departures are permitted without clearance.

Erez Crossing (Israel) is theoretically open to select medical and diplomatic cases but remains functionally inaccessible to most foreign nationals. All movement through Erez must be approved by Israeli Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT). Permits are limited to life threatening cases and humanitarian exemptions.

Out of country hibernation remains the preferred contingency option, with staging to Cairo, Amman, or Jerusalem for subsequent air repatriation. In-country hibernation is not advised given the destruction of critical infrastructure, lack of shelter, and ongoing airstrikes.

Ground convoys remain the only mode of evacuation and must be coordinated in advance

with OCHA, PRCS and relevant embassy protection teams. Evacuation delays should be expected due to security alerts, border closures, and limited transport capacity. All personnel must have up-to-date contingency plans, hibernation kits, and 24/7 access to secure communications.

Assistance from embassies may be delayed or unavailable during periods of telecommunications blackout or restricted movement. Contingency movement thresholds and local safehouse arrangements should be validated and rehearsed regularly.

Passport and Visas

The Gaza Strip is not a sovereign entity and does not independently issue visas. Entry and exit are governed by mainly by Israeli but also Egyptian authorities, depending on the crossing point.

Travellers entering via Rafah must hold a valid passport and an entry permit approved by the Egyptian government. Those attempting to enter via Erez require clearance from Israeli COGAT. All entry processes are non-

transparent and subject to immediate suspension based on security considerations. Visitors should carry physical copies of passports, visas, and all permits, due to frequent power cuts, telecommunications blackouts and loss of mobile access. Passport validity of at least six months is recommended but 3 months is required.

	Visa Required	Passport Required
Other EU	Yes, advance ETA-IL	Valid ≥ 90 days + 1 blank page
USA	Yes, advance ETA-IL	Valid ≥ 90 days + 1 blank page
Canadian	Yes, advance ETA-IL	Valid ≥ 90 days + 1 blank page
Australian	Yes, advance ETA-IL	Valid ≥ 90 days + 1 blank page
British	Yes, advance ETA-IL	Valid ≥ 90 days + 1 blank page

Political considerations

Local closed sources advisors	Limited intelligence and situational awareness are available on the ground in Gaza. Real time updates are accessible only through embedded humanitarian networks and United Nations coordination cells. Foreign embassies do not operate within Gaza, and all intelligence gathering is conducted remotely or via secure liaison from Cairo, Ramallah, or Jerusalem.
Stable political governance	No. Gaza remains under de facto control of Hamas, which is designated as a terrorist organisation by multiple governments. Civil governance structures have collapsed due to conflict, siege and blockade. No unified emergency response authority is operational. Coordination is conducted through a combination of local de facto actors, international NGOs and UN clusters. Elections have not taken place since 2006.
Kidnap and ransom capability	No, while the risk of opportunistic kidnapping is low in the current operational context, the threat of targeted detention, political leverage abductions, or hostage taking during raids or mass arrests remains credible. There is no standing in-country K and R capability.
Significant political events imminent	Yes. Multiple ceasefire negotiations have failed in recent months, and further escalations are anticipated. Efforts by regional actors (Egypt, Qatar, UN) to mediate de-escalation are ongoing but remain fragile. Border policy changes may occur without warning, and evacuation windows are highly sensitive to political developments, including international resolutions or publicised hostage exchanges.
Borders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rafah (Egypt): Operational only for UN-coordinated humanitarian and diplomatic movement. Subject to unannounced closure. - Erez (Israel): Minimal access for medical evacuations and UN-coordinated missions. Closed to private or commercial travellers. - Maritime and air borders: Non-operational. No viable departure options exist by sea or air within Gaza. - Tunnel crossings and informal routes: Severely restricted or inactive. Considered high risk and unsuitable for international personnel under any circumstances.

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