

# Sensitive Approaches for Social Distancing in the Favelas

*Imagens do Povo | Observatório de Favelas*

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**T**he situation we are experiencing, here and around the world, is tragic, the result of the pandemic and the unscrupulousness and perversity of our supposed authorities.

In Brazil, as in other countries, coronavirus continues to scrape away lives in its accelerated infectious progression, favored by the genocidal policies exercised by the federal government, constantly indifferent, viler and viler in its position toward favelas, quilombos, indigenous villages, and the populations that inhabit these territories.

If essential city activities are undertaken by the people that reside in favelas and peripheries — from street cleaning to public transportation, from the delivery of foods and goods to attendance at supermarkets, from pharmacy and hospital work to so many others — then these are the workers that allow the city to exist daily and, as we know, these are the people that are most exposed to infection from Covid-19.

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It is evident that *Stay at Home* as a protective measure and as a means of avoiding overloading specialized health care systems simply isn't possible for everyone, above all for residents of popular territories.

After all, if, for so many people, letting go of work is something unthinkable, then, for those that do stay at home, what is the meaning of staying at home when the street and its sociability dynamics is an unalienable extension of the meaning of daily life in the favelas

and peripheries.

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*Stay at home* for popular territories is, where possible, an act that demands love, solidarity, and generosity in order to care for and protect families, friends, and neighbors and the peripheral territory itself, whose bonds of reciprocity have been present throughout history.

In the anti-racist struggle, which addresses genocidal policies against the Black people of favelas and peripheries in Brazil and around the world, Black movements often emphasize the urgency of combating structural racism — a global public health crisis that long precedes the current pandemic.

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This photo essay, organized by Bira Carvalho, a Rio de Janeiro photographer from Maré, gathers the work of photographers Natalia Perdomo, Igor Freitas, and Renato Errejota.

Our photography shows that distancing, as arduous as it may be, must be done through approximation.

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