



The COVID-19 pandemic has caused widespread disruptions to global supply chains and daily life. However, as economies reopen, businesses of all sizes are taking steps to enable a safe return to work. Restarting operations requires a high-risk approach, careful planning, and knowledge sharing to ensure that staff are properly prepared to implement new protocols and that the delivery of high-quality service is not further disrupted. This guide presents recommendations developed in partnership with industry leaders for customer facing businesses—particularly in the Travel & Tourism sector to operate safely. It is intended to complement and not replace guidance from public health organisations and relevant authorities.

ENSURING OPERATIONAL READINESS

When readying your business for reopening, there are a wide range of actions that need to be taken to ensure the safety of employees and guests. Among those actions, it is essential to have the following:

- Knowledge and access to the latest health and safety guidance from local, national and international authorities.
- A COVID-19 Prevention Plan, which includes considerations for infection prevention, cleaning and disinfection guided by health experts and governmental authorities.
- Protocols and guidelines for ensuring staff health, including provisions for health checks when appropriate.
- A stay-home policy for anyone displaying symptoms of COVID-19, in line with the latest guidance from the World Health Organization.
- Protocols to promote physical distancing, which may include:
 - modifying workstations;
 - work from home policies; and/or
 - staggered arrival, departure and break schedules.
- Adequate supply of hygiene products, such as soap and sanitiser, for staff and guest use.
- Appropriate personal protection equipment where required by local authorities.
- Provisions for high- and low-tech solutions that limit physical contact and enable automation wherever possible.
- Suppliers and partners who understand and follow the health and hygiene protocols implemented by your establishment.
- A [business continuity plan](#) in place that details how your business will respond to other social, economic or environmental crises that may arise.

PREPARING YOUR STAFF

Staff members' active participation in and adherence to your business' COVID-19 Prevention Plan will be vital to its success. Whenever possible, adopting [family-friendly business continuity measures](#) should be undertaken. Your employees should also:

- Know the signs and risks of COVID-19 (see page 3).
- Have knowledge and access to the latest health and safety guidance from local, national and international authorities.
- Provide training on new or revised business procedures and targeted guidance on how to address situations where guests are not complying with protocols.
- Understand and offer access to the tools and resources needed to enable your staff to implement the guidelines set out in your business' COVID-19 Prevention Plan.
- Feel confident communicating and operationalising your business' COVID-19 Prevention Plan.
- Know your business' Safe Travel leaders who promote adoption of health and safety protocols and monitor staff well-being.

DELIVERING A SAFE EXPERIENCE

While delivering a quality service is essential, safeguarding the health and safety of employees and guests must be a core component of any reopening plans. Your COVID-19 Prevention Plan should:

- Implement enhanced and more frequent sanitation, disinfection and deep cleaning practice, especially for high-frequency touch points and high-traffic areas.
- Reduce participant capacity limits in venues, as appropriate, to enable physical distancing.
- Minimise physical contact and face-to-face transactions where possible using non-traditional or automated procedures.
- Promote online bookings over in-person reservations where applicable.
- Share traveller and guest guidelines and requirements prior to arrival whenever possible.
- Collect information about guest health by using questionnaires or digital tools where appropriate.
- Encourage and normalise mask use and adoption of other Safe Travel measures among staff, clients, suppliers and partners.

Be sure to check in with staff regularly to ensure that new protocols are being followed and revise or refine any processes to better suit your business needs and to align with the latest guidance from local authorities or public health agencies.

REBUILDING TRUST AND CONFIDENCE

Consumer trust is becoming even more important in the COVID-19 era. To ensure that guests feel secure using your services, take the following steps:

- Communicate up-to date Safe Travels Protocols to travellers and guests through your business' digital and physical channels.
- Integrate and highlight new technologies that facilitate a touchless experience and distancing.
- Inform guests about support available if questions or concerns arise.
- Update and refine protocols regularly in line with guidance from local, national and international authorities.
- Leverage the knowledge in your network by exchanging experience and advice with members of your local business associations, sectoral associations, chambers of commerce, partners and suppliers.

IMPLEMENTING ENABLING POLICIES

While much of the responsibility of reopening will depend on your actions, governments have an important role to play in the safe reopening and re-energisation of businesses in the Travel & Tourism sector. Make your voice heard by calling on governments to:

- Work collaboratively within the sector and other governments as new legislation is developed.
- Implement consistent, outcome driven and practical protocols to facilitate mass adoption.
- Communicate transparently about policy changes, providing advance notice where possible.
- Enhance promotion of low-risk Travel & Tourism opportunities to prospective clients and guests.
- Create incentives and provide direct support to boost Travel & Tourism.
- Provide financial relief to the sector through grants, and the reduction or delay of taxes, fees and charges to stimulate demand.





KNOW THE SIGNS

According to the World Health Organization, the most common symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- > Fever
- > Tiredness
- > Dry cough

These **less common** symptoms are usually mild and develop gradually:

- > Aches and pains
- > Nasal congestion
- > Runny nose
- > Sore throat
- > Diarrhea

People with fever, cough and difficulty breathing should seek immediate medical attention.

KNOW THE RISKS

While about 80% of people recover from COVID-19 without needing special treatment, around 1 in 6 people do become seriously ill and develop difficulty breathing. To reduce your risks of contracting COVID-19, take precautions to combat the spread of the virus when interacting with others.

Those with these underlying medical problems are more likely to develop serious complications due to COVID-19:

- > Cancer
- > Chronic kidney disease
- > Obesity
- > Sickle cell disease
- > Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- > Weakened immune system from organ transplant
- > Heart conditions
- > Type 2 diabetes



People with these conditions may be at an increased risk of severe illness resulting from COVID-19:

- > Moderate to severe asthma
- > Hypertension or high blood pressure
- > Liver disease
- > Neurological conditions, such as dementia
- > Cerebrovascular diseases that affect blood vessels and blood supply to the brain
- > Type 1 diabetes
- > Cystic fibrosis
- > Pregnancy
- > Smoking
- > Thalassemia
- > Weakened immune system from blood or bone marrow transplants, immune deficiencies, HIV, corticosteroid use or use of other immune weakening medicines

LIMIT YOUR RISK IN THE WORKPLACE

- > Communicate any symptoms of illness to your employer as soon as they start to present.
- > Follow stay at home guidelines and encourage others in your workplace to do the same.
- > Avoid contact with clients and guests if you have symptoms of COVID-19 or if you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days.
- > Practice physical distancing by staying at least two meters or six feet apart from clients, guests and co-workers whenever possible.
- > Wear cloth face coverings over your nose and mouth whenever possible.
- > Wash or sanitise your hands often, especially when coming in direct physical contact with clients or guests.
- > Follow appropriate cleaning and sanitation protocols as guided by your employer.
- > Learn and adhere to your employers Safe Travels Protocols and be a Safe Travel leader by training and communicating guidance to others.

LEARN MORE

While these are the baseline measures that any business can take to reduce risk when reopening, the World Travel and Tourism Council's Safe Travels Protocols have been developed with industry leaders from businesses in the travel and tourism industry. For more in-depth guidelines, please view the Safe Travels Protocols for your industry or visit the [Safe Travels website](#).

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ABOUT THE PUBLISHERS

The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) is the institutional representative of 45 million businesses in more than 100 countries with a mission to make business work for everyone, every day, everywhere. Visit www.covid.iccwbo.org to access ICC's COVID Response Portal to access trusted advice on COVID-19 for businesses, policy makers and chambers of commerce.



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The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) is the global authority on the economic and social contribution of Travel & Tourism. WTTC promotes sustainable growth for the Travel & Tourism sector, working with governments and international institutions to create jobs, drive exports and generate prosperity.



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Please note: This guidance was last updated in July 2020 based on information provided from the World Health Organization (WHO). As public health authorities learn more about COVID-19, recommendations may change. Be sure to check the WHO's [COVID-19 Portal](#) regularly to ensure that you are aware of the most accurate and up-to date information.