TRAVEL
in the **New** *Normal*

Industry Guidance for Promoting the Health and Safety of All Travelers

Developed based on Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and in consultation with public health experts

Prepared by:

U.S. TRAVEL
A S S O C I A T I O N ®

The U.S. travel industry has been following rigorous, industry-wide health and safety guidance originally published in May 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Developed in close collaboration between medical experts and travel leaders, our guidance has enabled multiple segments of the travel industry to welcome guests safely and responsibly and keep the travel workforce protected. The guidance has been updated regularly to reflect the latest science-based recommendations. Since its publication, additional medical research has confirmed our original guidance can effectively prevent the transmission of the virus.

In recent months, the science and data have become clearer and the known efficacy of certain practices has progressed, as have developments with vaccines and newly discovered mutations. During recent months, multiple variants of the virus that causes COVID-19 have been documented in the United States and globally during this pandemic. These variants seem to spread more easily and quickly than other variants, and may increase the number of cases worldwide. However, with several authorized vaccines now available in the United States, studies suggest that antibodies generated through vaccination recognize these variants and protect against them with varying levels of efficacy. Vaccination is yet another protective layer against COVID-19 and, paired with preventive measures in health and safety, offers the best protection from COVID-19.

The clearest lesson learned from last year is that responding effectively to COVID-19 is a shared responsibility requiring a multi-layered approach. We must all work together. Travelers must do their part by adopting safe travel practices and following science-based guidelines to help protect themselves, the health of their family and all those around them.

The following updated guidance underscores the essential role the travel industry plays in promoting the health and safety of our customers and employees. It was developed in collaboration with all segments of the travel industry—hotels, resorts, airports, airlines, attractions, restaurants, retail, rental cars, meeting venues, event producers, travel advisors, cruise lines, vacation rentals etc.— who, with input from public health experts, reached agreement on a core set of health and safety guidance for the industry to adapt to their businesses. This guidance builds upon and is aligned with CDC evidence-based guidelines for travel during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The travel industry's embrace and implementation of this guidance demonstrates how seriously we take COVID-19 and the threat it presents. While we have made tremendous progress in reopening travel businesses and welcoming our customers, we still have a long way to go before travel fully recovers from this historic challenge. By recommitting to these effective practices and continuing to work together, we can accelerate travel's rebound and get more Americans safely traveling again.

VACATION RENTALS

DINING

LODGING

ATTRACTIONS and ENTERTAINMENT

TRANSPORTATION

MEETINGS and EVENTS

AIR TRAVEL

CRUISES

During their journey, travelers will encounter many parts of the travel eco-system. This guidance aims to provide consistency in the approach to safety employed by travel brands and destinations during the customer experience.

Collaborating with medical experts has been a critical component to the development of this travel industry guidance. Expertise in Infectious diseases, preventive and occupational medicine led to the various facets of the travel experience being viewed through a lens of how best to minimize the spread of COVID-19.

Using a layered approach to health and safety, the guidance reinforces various combined measures, chiefly mask wearing, employee and traveler physical distancing, hand hygiene, personal protective equipment (PPE) and behaviors before and during the travel continuum.

The travel industry continues to seek input from trusted medical and public health sources to reflect the latest developments within and guidance from the professional health community.

This document has been developed based on CDC guidance and in consultation with these public health experts:

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For the most up-to-date **COVID-19 resources and information** for the industry, visit: **ustravel.org/ReliefResources**

CREATE **TRANSMISSION BARRIERS:** MOST IMPORTANTLY, **WEAR A MASK**

1 Travel businesses should adapt operations, modify employee practices and/or redesign public spaces to help protect employees and customers.

Travel businesses should follow strategies designed to reduce risks of COVID-19 transmission. Strategies should include operational changes, new employee practices or reimagining high-traffic public spaces. Strategies should also align with CDC guidance to build confidence with travelers and industry employees that their health and safety is our top priority.

These strategies should include practices such as:

- ✔ **Wearing masks to protect both the mask wearer and others.** The travel industry strongly urges all travel employees and customers to wear masks. A wealth of information from medical experts makes clear that wearing a mask is a highly effective tool to prevent the spread of infection;

- ✔ **Reinforcing hand hygiene** which can decrease the risk of transmission of respiratory viruses by ~50%;

- ✔ **Encouraging physical distancing by ensuring** by posting new signage to ensure proper separation in lines and common areas, discouraging congregating in crowded areas, reconfiguring public spaces, or limiting the number of employees and customers in various areas;

- ✔ **Thinking creatively to limit staff physical contact with customers** where practical while still delivering superior service, for example, through online ordering, curbside service delivery, automated entrances and other practices;

- ✔ **Utilizing personal protective equipment (PPE)**;

- ✔ **Installing physical barriers,** such as transparent screens to provide proper separation between customers and employees;

- ✔ **Educating both employees and customers about their shared responsibility** to help protect each other in a COVID-19 environment.

What is new and What Have We Learned?

The most common transmission of COVID-19 occurs through close contact with respiratory droplets from an infected person, generally within about six feet. Though rarer, "airborne transmission" by smaller droplets and particles which can travel further than six feet or remain briefly in the air has also been identified by CDC as a mode of transmitting the virus.

Air ventilation, circulation and filtration systems. Scientific research has found that effective air ventilation can help prevent the spread of the virus. Travel and related businesses should review and, as appropriate, implement the latest published standards on air ventilation and COVID-19 from CDC and the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE).]

CREATE **TRANSMISSION BARRIERS**

2 Travel businesses should consider implementing touchless solutions, where practical, to limit the opportunity for virus transmission while also enabling a positive travel experience.

This could mean implementing touchless or low-touch solutions, along with pursuing technological and innovative practices to further promote safe and enjoyable experiences. Such measures may include adopting contactless technologies or procedures for:

- **Purchasing tickets;**
- **Limiting queues;**
- **Confirming identification;**
- **Checking in / checking out;**
- **Paying for goods and services;**
- **Automating ordering and pick-up for food and services;** and
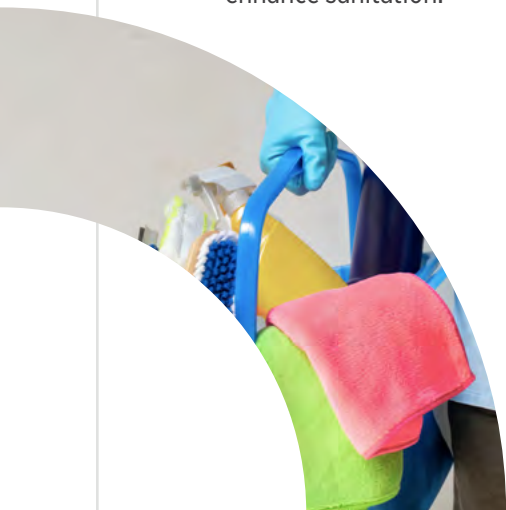- **A broader range of travel and hospitality amenities.**

ENHANCE **SANITATION**

3 Travel businesses should adopt and implement enhanced sanitation procedures specifically designed to combat the transmission of COVID-19.

Protecting against COVID-19 requires heightened sanitation practices. In an industry as diverse as travel, specific practices will vary from one segment to another. **Each travel business will continue to tailor procedures to its own operating environment and the expectations of its customers.** Some will also adopt practices verified by third-party certification services. But sanitation procedures will align with leading public health authority guidelines.

To promote the health and safety of our customers and employees, every segment of the travel industry should deploy **enhanced sanitation procedures** that include:

- ✓ **Establish a policy implementing more frequent hand washing by all employees** and, in the absence of hand washing, make frequent use of an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol);

- ✓ **Sanitizing more frequently, using products and disinfectants that meet requirements for effectiveness against COVID-19;** special attention to high-touch surfaces;

- ✓ **Providing hand sanitizer in public areas** throughout facilities;

- ✓ **Modifying business hours when necessary** to carry out thorough sanitation and disinfection procedures;

- ✓ **Providing new training for employees** on implementing these measures with oversight on execution;

- ✓ **Researching technological innovations** and testing new procedures, as appropriate, to enhance sanitation.

PROMOTE **HEALTH SCREENING**

4 Travel businesses should recomend travel employees get the COVID-19 vaccine in addition to providing health screening measures, isolating workers with possible COVID-19 symptoms and providing health resources to customers.

Travel businesses should **adopt health screening procedures** that require all employees:

✔ **To monitor** their health;

✔ **To get an annual flu shot**;

✔ **To not report to work** if they are ill and/or showing any symptoms;

✔ **To self-isolate if showing symptoms of COVID-19**, if awaiting test results, or if diagnosed with COVID-19; and

✔ **Get an approved COVID-19 vaccine** when available.

Travel employers and operators should **review their policies** to more easily enable employees to stay home when sick or when possibly exposed to the coronavirus. This could also include, for some, updating sick leave policies and allowing employees to stay home to care for sick family members or to fulfill self-isolation requirements.

Travelers also have a role to play in preventing the spread of COVID-19. To help them fulfill this responsibility, travel businesses should offer appropriate resources to customers to better enable them to monitor and screen their own health, including:

✔ **Signage** communicating COVID-19 symptoms;

✔ **Guidance to local public health resources** in case testing or treatment is needed;

✔ **Materials describing good health practices** to protect themselves and others;

✔ **Communications encouraging travelers to stay home if they are sick** and to postpone travel until they are well.

Additional Consideration

Contact Tracing. Travel businesses should encourage employees to participate in all contact tracing requests from public health officials. Travelers and travel industry employees should also download free applications that anonymously gather data and inform users if they have been exposed to someone with COVID-19.

Telehealth. If health insurance plans cover telehealth services, employers should encourage employees to use them whenever possible. Telehealth enables patients to conveniently seek care from a medical professional from home, eliminating the need to visit a doctor's office or go to a hospital. This lowers the risk of exposure to the virus, while also expanding health care access for patients with COVID-19 symptoms. If travel employers are able, they should select plans that offer coverage for telehealth services.]

PROMOTE **HEALTH SCREENING**

5 Travel businesses should establish a set of procedures aligned with CDC guidance should an employee or customer test positive for COVID-19.

If an employee or customer tests positive, travel businesses should follow an appropriate checklist of actions in response. Travel businesses should follow guidance from leading public health authorities to define necessary actions in these instances.

Additional Consideration

Testing is an indispensable strategy for fighting COVID-19. The travel industry supports broadening the availability of efficient, effective, COVID-19 testing to identify positive cases and prevent people infected with the virus from spreading it. Wider availability of testing would help to keep employees safe and businesses open, boost confidence in safe and healthy travel and allow travel to resume more broadly. Further, the travel industry encourages travelers to understand and observe requirements related to pre-departure and post-arrival behavior to maintain healthy and safe practices throughout the journey.

FOLLOW FOOD & BEVERAGE
SERVICE GUIDANCE

6 Travel businesses should follow best practices in food and beverage service to promote health of employees and customers.

While COVID-19 is not a food borne illness, food and beverage service is an essential and ubiquitous part of the hospitality our industry provides to travelers. When serving food and beverages, travel businesses should follow **FDA's Best Practices for Retail Food Stores, Restaurants, and Food Pick-Up/Delivery Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic** and the National Restaurant Association's **COVID-19 Re-Opening Guidance**.

They should also review the National Restaurant Association's longstanding **ServSafe guidelines** or comparable state program.

TIPS FOR **TRAVELERS**

These recommendations rely on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. By following CDC guidance and advice from state and local public health officials travelers can better protect themselves from COVID-19.

Decide if you can travel safely. Do not travel if you are sick or if you have been around someone with COVID-19 in the past 14 days. If you are at higher risk, consider postponing travel. CDC guidance on increased risk is available here.

✓ **Get an approved COVID-19 vaccine.** Because of limited U.S. supply of COVID-19 vaccine, CDC is providing recommendations to federal, state, and local governments on priority distribution. Contact your local health department for more information on COVID-19 vaccination in your area.

✓ **Wear a mask.** Wearing a mask with two or more layers can stop the spread of COVID-19. Wear it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin. Make sure it fits snugly against the sides of your face. Avoid touching your mask, eyes, nose and mouth. Wear a mask at all times when in public, indoors and outdoors, except when eating, drinking and sleeping.

✓ **Get an annual flu vaccine.** A flu vaccine is an essential part of protecting your and your family's health this flu season.

✓ **Practice physical distancing.** Stay six feet from those who do not live with you, both indoors and outdoors, as even those without symptoms can spread COVID-19.

✓ **Wash your hands frequently.** Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, including after using the bathroom and being in a public place, or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

✓ **Before travel, check information about your destination.** Check health departments for local requirements and the most up-to-date travel information about your destination.

✓ **Maintain healthy travel practices post arrival.** Upon arrival at your destination, continue adhering to safe and healthy travel practices such as wearing a mask and remaining physically distant from others.

A **SHARED RESPONSIBILITY**

Responding effectively to COVID-19 is a shared responsibility. Our guidance reflects the essential role the travel industry must play to help promote the health and safety of our customers and employees. But no industry can overcome this challenge alone.

Travelers also have a responsibility. They must adopt new travel practices and follow science- based guidelines to help protect the health of their family and those around them, including fellow travelers and industry employees.

In the spirit of collective action needed to defeat COVID-19, we urge travelers to do their part and follow government and industry guidance to help protect themselves and others.

By working together, we can overcome the challenge, begin to reopen our economy and responsibly get America traveling again.

CONTRIBUTING ORGANIZATIONS

The following organizations show their support of this travel industry guidance, which will be shared with the entire travel industry and expanded upon by each sector as necessary. These organizations and their members, described below, represent the majority of the $2.6 trillion U.S. travel industry.

U.S. TRAVEL ASSOCIATION®

U.S. Travel Association is the national, non-profit organization with more than 1,100 member organizations representing all components of the travel industry—including transportation, lodging, retail, recreation and entertainment and foodservice—across all travel segments: meetings, leisure, business, incentive and trade shows.

ACRA — AMERICAN CAR RENTAL ASSOCIATION

ACRA is the national representative for over 98% of our nation's car rental industry. ACRA's membership is comprised of over 200 companies that have almost 2.2 million registered vehicles in service in the United States, with fleets ranging in size from one million cars to ten cars.

AAAE — AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF AIRPORT EXECUTIVES

AAAE is the world's largest professional organization for airport executives, representing thousands of airport management personnel at public-use commercial and general aviation airports. AAAE's members represent nearly 875 airports and authorities, in addition to hundreds of companies and organizations that support airports.

ACI NORTH AMERICA — AIRPORTS COUNCIL INTERNATIONAL

The Airports Council International-North America (ACI-NA) is the voice of North American airports, representing local, regional and state governing bodies that own and operate commercial airports in the United States and Canada. ACI-NA is the largest of the five worldwide regions of the Airports Council International (ACI), representing more than 300 airports operating in the United States and Canada and nearly 400 aviation-related businesses.

AAHOA — ASIAN AMERICAN HOTEL OWNERS ASSOCIATION

AAHOA is the largest hotel owners association in the nation representing more than 19,500 members who own almost one in every two hotels in the United States.

Airlines for America® — We Connect the World

Airlines for America advocates on behalf of its members to shape crucial policies and measures that promote safety, security and a healthy U.S. airline industry. We work collaboratively with airlines, labor, Congress, the Administration and other groups to improve aviation for the traveling and shipping public. A4A vigorously advocates on behalf of the American airline industry as a model of safety, customer service and environmental responsibility and as the indispensable network that drives our nation's economy and global competitiveness.

CONTRIBUTING ORGANIZATIONS

AMERICAN GAMING ASSOCIATION

AGA membership includes commercial and tribal casino operators, U.S.-licensed gaming suppliers, financial institutions, destination marketing organizations, food and beverage suppliers, and other key stakeholders in the gaming industry.

Brand USA

Brand USA is the nation's first public-private partnership responsible for promoting the United States as a premier travel destination. Since its founding, Brand USA has worked in close partnership with more than 900 partner organizations to promote all 50 states and U.S. territories to visitors from around the world.

AHLA
AMERICAN HOTEL & LODGING ASSOCIATION

AHLA is the singular voice representing 27,000 members in every segment of the hotel industry including major chains, independent hotels, management companies, REIT's, bed and breakfasts, industry partners and more.

CLIA CRUISE LINES INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

CLIA is the world's largest cruise industry trade association, representing more than 50 cruise lines, from ocean to specialty cruise ships which comprise more than 95% of global cruise capacity. CLIA also represents key suppliers and partners to the cruise lines and 15,000 Global Travel Agency and 25,000 Travel Agent Members who include the largest agencies, hosts, franchises and consortia in the world.

ARDA
American Resort Development Association

ARDA is the trade association for the timeshare industry. ARDA's membership comprises over 500 companies (both privately held firms and publicly traded corporations), which house 5,000-plus individual ARDA members.

DESTINATIONS INTERNATIONAL

Destinations International is the world's largest association of destination organizations with approximately 600 member organizations including almost 6,000 destination professionals from around the globe.

asta American Society of Travel Advisors

ASTA is the world's largest association of travel professionals representing travel advisors and the companies whose products they sell such as tours, cruises, hotels, car rentals, etc.

CONTRIBUTING ORGANIZATIONS

The Events Industry Council's 30+ member organizations represent over 103,500 individuals and 19,500 firms and properties involved in the events industry.

IFA is the world's largest membership organization for franchisors, franchisees and franchise suppliers, representing a community of over 1,400 brands.

IAAPA is the premier trade association representing the attractions industry with over 6,000 member companies from over 100 countries.

IITA is the national nonprofit trade association representing the United States' international inbound travel industry. IITA members include inbound tour operators and suppliers (lodging companies, transportation, destinations, attractions, restaurants, etc.) from across the country.

IAEE is the leading association for the global exhibition industry representing over 12,000 individuals in 50 countries who conduct and support exhibitions around the world. IAEE members are directly involved in the planning, management, and production of exhibitions and buyer-seller events or those who provide products and services to the industry.

The IMEX Group organizes two global trade shows in the meetings and events sector. Meeting industry suppliers from across the world are present at IMEX trade shows. Exhibitors include national and regional tourist offices, convention and visitor bureau, hotels, conference and exhibition centers, cruise lines, airlines, spa resorts, event management specialists and more.

IAVM represents public assembly venues from around the globe, including managers and senior executives from auditorium, arenas, convention centers, exhibit halls, stadiums, performing arts centers, university complexes, and amphitheaters.

Meeting Professionals International is the largest meeting planner and event planner industry association worldwide. MPI has a global community of 60,000 meeting and event professionals in 75 countries worldwide.

CONTRIBUTING ORGANIZATIONS

National Coalition of Black Meeting Professionals (NCBMP) is the preeminent organization for African American association executives, hospitality professionals and meeting planners in all aspects of the meeting planning profession. Its mission is to maximize a greater return on the meeting dollar investment for member organizations, effect positive change in the hospitality industry as it relates to African Americans and our allies, and empower members to become a voice in the hospitality industry on issues that affect the African American community.

The National Limousine Association is a non-profit organization responsible for and dedicated to representing the interests of the private driver transportation industry at the global, national, state, and local level. It is the unified voice of this industry - linking transportation industry professionals from owners and operators to suppliers, manufacturers, regional and state limousine associations.

The National Restaurant Association is the largest foodservice trade association in the world representing more than 500,000 restaurant businesses.

NTA is the leading business association for companies and organizations that serve customers traveling to, from and within North America. NTA represents 700 buyer members (tour operators and travel planners) and seller members (500 destinations and 1,100 tour suppliers).

PCMA is the world's largest, most respected and most recognized network of business events strategists. PCMA's 7,000 members are industry leaders across North America, Europe, the Middle East and Asia.

SISO members include companies, corporations and other for-profit entities that own, produce or provide full-service management of "face to face" trade shows, consumer shows, expositions, conferences and /or similar events as a substantial part of their business. SISO's more than 195 members are a combination of large corporations and small entrepreneurial enterprises that produce over 3,500 events worldwide.

Founded in 1934, Skål International is the only professional organization promoting global Tourism and friendship, uniting all sectors of the Tourism industry with 45 clubs/1,800 members in the United States and 350/14,000 members around the world.

USTOA is a professional association representing the tour operator industry. Its members are made up of companies who provide services worldwide but who conduct business in the U.S.

CONTRIBUTING ORGANIZATIONS

U.S. Travel Association's
CEO ROUNDTABLE

U.S. Travel's CEO Roundtable is compromised of 26 travel executives from America's largest travel companies with revenues in excess of $1 billion.

U.S. Travel Association
Destinations Council

The Destinations Council represents more than 350 destination marketing organization (DMO) and convention and visitors bureau (CVB) members of U.S. Travel Association.

U.S. Travel Association
GATEWAY AIRPORTS COUNCIL

A community of more than 12 of the largest U.S. International gateway airports.

MEETINGS MEAN BUSINESS
Powered by U.S. Travel Association

Meetings Mean Business is an industry-wide coalition comprised of over 60 members who showcase the undeniable value that business meetings, trade shows, incentive travel, exhibitions, conferences and conventions bring to people, businesses and communities.

U.S. Travel Association
National Council of Attractions and Experiences®

The council represents organizations as diverse as national parks, iconic landmarks, shopping centers, entertainment venues, world-class attractions and sightseeing tours, who are also members of U.S. Travel Association.

U.S. Travel Association
National Council of State Tourism Directors

The National Council of State Tourism Directors (NCSTD), a council within the U.S. Travel Association, represents the leadership from all 50 states, the five U.S. territories and the District of Columbia.