

May 4, 2020

Dear Governor:

Thank you for the leadership you are providing to your state in light of the coronavirus health and economic crisis. The travel industry, a Top 10 employer in practically every state across the country, is eager to see this vital sector safely return, not only for the important connections it provides, but also for the jobs it creates for your state's workforce.

Clearly, future operations of the travel and tourism industry will look quite different than prior to the spread of COVID-19, so our industry has come together—hotels, resorts, airports, airlines, cruise lines, attractions, restaurants, retail, rental cars, meeting event venues and producers, destinations, tour operators and more—with top medical advisors to identify a set of common health practices for implementation across the travel industry, in every state and territory.

Together as an industry, we are pleased to share Travel Industry Guidance for Promoting the Health and Safety of Travelers, which can be found in the following pages. These recommendations are also in the hands of U.S. Travel's National Council of State Tourism Directors, a body comprised of each state's chief tourism executive. The industry guidance complies with the White House and CDC guidelines for "Opening Up America Again" and will be distributed and implemented across this vast industry to provide travel businesses, large and small, with an overarching set of health and safety practices to utilize and build upon. Not only must we institute these steps to help protect our customers, but we must help to assure the public they can travel again in a safe, healthy environment and communicate what to expect through every point of their journey.

This week, from May 3-9, we also mark the 37th annual National Travel and Tourism Week, an annual celebration established by Congress in 1983. Though the travel industry has experienced extraordinary losses this year, there remains much reason for optimism as we look ahead.

We, as an industry, appreciate the opportunity to share these common guidance with you and work with your administration to rebuild the travel economy. Together, we are committed

Sincerely,



Roger Dow  
President and CEO



# 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 White House guidelines: "Opening Up America Again" and in consultation with public health experts

Prepared by:

**U.S. TRAVEL**  
ASSOCIATION®

Updated May 4, 2020

**C** OVID-19 represents an unprecedented challenge to the travel industry. After 9/11, industry leaders said, “without security, there will be no travel.” The global pandemic adds a new dimension to our age of global travel, demanding a comprehensive response: “Without guidance to promote the health and safety of travelers, there will be no travel, no sustainable reopening of our businesses, and no revival of our economy.”

As we move to the next phase of our response to the pandemic, we must demonstrate leadership to elected officials and public health authorities who will decide when, how and under what conditions travel businesses are allowed to reopen across America. Just as importantly, we must also inspire confidence in travelers by demonstrating travel businesses are appropriately focused on their health and safety.

**To meet these objectives, the travel industry—hotels, resorts, airports, airlines, attractions, restaurants, retail, rental cars, meeting venues, event producers, travel advisors, cruise lines, vacation rentals etc.— has come together, working with health and medical experts, to reach collective agreement on a core set of health and safety guidance that the industry may adapt to their businesses.** They build upon and align with the White House and CDC evidence-based guidelines for “[Opening Up America Again.](#)” This guidance provides our customers with an understanding of the key practices across America’s travel industry.

This guidance reflects the role of the travel industry in promoting the health and safety of our customers and employees. But no industry can overcome this challenge alone. Travelers must also follow health guidelines to do their part to help protect their families and those around them. We must all work together.

The embrace of this guidance by the various segments of the travel industry signals how seriously we take COVID-19 and the threat it presents. Our collective response and desire to tailor this guidance to our businesses demonstrates our industry’s commitment to do its part toward promoting the health of our employees and customers.

This travel industry guidance assumes a phased approach to reopening travel. Our guidance not only directly responds to the COVID-19 threat we face today—it also prepares our industry to handle future threats that may arise. For instance, in the earliest stages of reopening, travel businesses will reinforce CDC travel guidance as to vulnerable individuals. **Travel industry guidance may, of course, evolve and be updated as the nation moves through different stages of reopening, as the science and data become clearer, and as the known efficacy of certain practices progress.**





**Collaborating with medical experts has been a critical component to the development of this travel industry guidance.** Expertise in Infectious diseases, preventative 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 such as employee and traveler physical distancing, hand hygiene, personal protective equipment (PPE) and behaviors before and during the travel continuum.

As this guidance adapts and evolves, the travel industry will continue to seek the input from trusted medical sources to reflect the latest developments within and guidance from the professional health community.

**This document has been developed based on the CDC and White House “[Guidelines for Opening Up America Again](#)” and in consultation with these public health experts:**

**Infectious Diseases Society of America representative to the Working Group**

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Principal, P3 Health (Prevention, Performance, Productivity)



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

# CREATE TRANSMISSION BARRIERS

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

Travel businesses should adapt or establish a strategy designed to reduce risks of COVID-19 transmission. **Depending on the business, that strategy could include operational changes, new employee practices or reimagining high-traffic public spaces.** Strategies should align with CDC guidance and build confidence to travelers and industry employees that their health and safety is our top priority.

For some businesses these strategies will include practices such as:

- ✓ **Reinforcing hand hygiene** which can decrease the risk of transmission of respiratory viruses by ~50%;
- ✓ **Utilizing personal protective equipment (PPE)** such as masks and gloves;
- ✓ **Installing physical barriers**, such as transparent screens to provide proper separation between customers and employees;
- ✓ **Encouraging physical distancing** 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;
- ✓ **Educating both employees and customers about their shared responsibility** to help protect each other in a COVID-19 environment.



# 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:

- ✓ **Ticketing;**
- ✓ **Identification;**
- ✓ **Check-in;**
- ✓ **Payment** for goods and services;
- ✓ **Automated 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 may 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 may 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 promote health screening measures for employees and isolate workers with possible COVID-19 symptoms and provide health resources to customers.

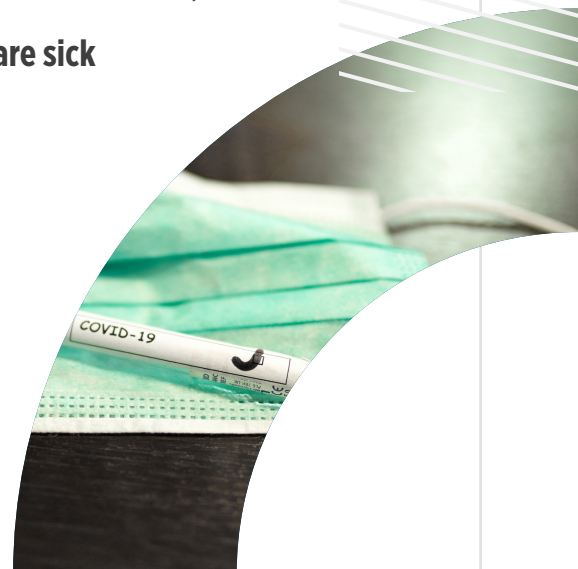
Travel businesses should **adopt health screening procedures** that require all employees:

- ✓ **To monitor** their health;
- ✓ **To not report to work** if they are ill and/or showing any symptoms; and
- ✓ **To self-isolate** if showing symptoms of COVID-19, if awaiting test results, or if diagnosed with COVID-19.

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.

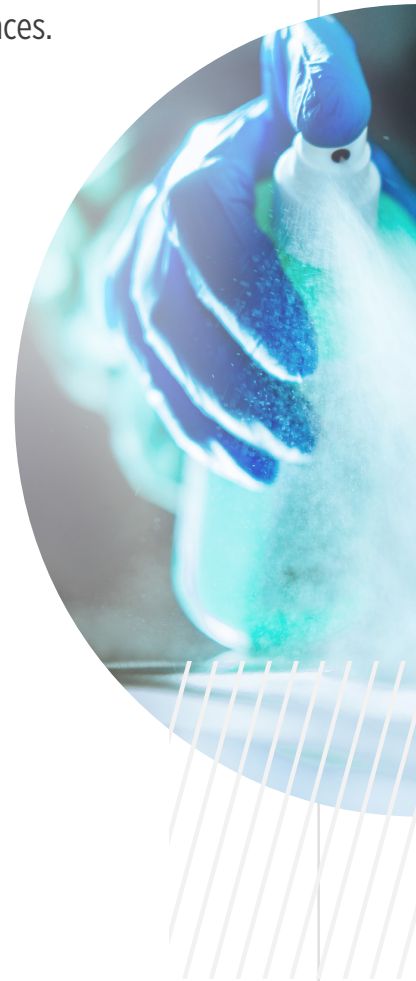




# PROMOTE HEALTH SCREENING

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

Should an employee or customer test 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.



# 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.



# 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 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 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.



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 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 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 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.



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.



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.



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 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 amphitheatres.



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



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.



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.

U.S. Travel Association's

## CEO ROUNDTABLE

U.S. Travel's CEO Roundtable is comprised of 28 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.

# CONTRIBUTING ORGANIZATIONS



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.