Skiing and Snowboarding amid COVID-19: Guidelines - DRAFT

This document is a draft distributed for global review from 08 to 12 July 2020.
It is not ready for use. The text of this document will be reviewed, improved, formatted, and designed and it is expected to be published 21st of July. If you have comments and suggestion use the review template provided at:
https://www.adventuretravel.biz/covid19guidelines-review/

We're on a Team

The COVID-19 pandemic has entered a new phase, travel is restarting, and travelers want to travel, and companies want to operate while minimizing COVID-19 contamination risk. ATTA Activity Guidelines for Adventure Travel have been developed jointly by ATTA, Cleveland Clinic, and a cohort of operators.

The **Skiing & Snowboarding amid COVID-19: Guidelines** were designed to be used together with
Adventure Travel COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines

While the current knowledge (June 2020) indicates that the risk of the coronavirus being passed on to others outdoors is reduced when people maintain social distancing, operating under these Guidelines should only be undertaken after thorough risk and safety assessment and compliance with existing destination government guidance.

These guidelines are intended to be a flexible framework for ATC's (adventure travel companies) to use in reopening. Companies should tailor their actual policies and practices based on their unique operations, applicable laws, regulations, and health standards in their locales, and consult with their own legal, safety, and financial advisors to develop a reopening guide for their situation.

These guidelines are not intended to be an exhaustive list of possible actions nor are they meant to encourage ATC's to resume operations before they are ready to do so. These guidelines are designed to be used as a supplement to ATC's current risk and crisis management plans, operating procedures and protocols, legal documents (e.g., terms and conditions and liability waiver), and customer trip materials – not as a substitute.

Note: This is a living document. As international and national restrictions and Public Health guidelines evolve, this document will also evolve to reflect new advice and changes to guidelines when they emerge. Guidelines have been developed in line with the most recent information coming from international and national sources related to health, tourism and outdoors activities. We welcome you feedback any time: covid19guidelinesreview@adventure.travel

Disclaimer: The information contained within these operational guidelines may change from time to time due to the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic. It must not by itself be relied upon in determining obligations or other decisions. Users of this document must independently verify any information on which they wish to rely. It is expected that all business owners and management will have familiarized themselves with governmental, health authority, and regulatory guidance prior to re-opening and will have implemented all relevant requirements. Adventure Travel Trade Association does not assume, and expressly disclaims, any legal or other liability for any

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Skiing & Snowboarding

Skiing and Snowboarding naturally include social distance, however, there are often concentration zones and high-traffic areas where COVID-19 transmission risk is higher. Thus, in planning, one should consider protocols for active skiing and snowboarding, and protocols for concentrated spaces such as lifts, warming areas, and other skiing and snowboarding related facilities.

Additionally, protocols differ between isolated or wilderness ski activities and developed pistes or resorts.

1. **Group Management**

    a. Consider the context of where skiing & snowboarding take place - developed resorts tend to be more congested, thus more layers of protection should be applied.Alternatively, backcountry skiing & snowboarding tend to have minimal exposure to COVID-19 risks.

    b. When skiing & snowboarding, favour small groups, FIT or household units. Strive to keep trip participant numbers as low as reasonably possible.

    c. Physical distancing does not need to apply to household units.

    d. Physical distancing should be practiced as much as possible if the group involves more than one household unit. Operators should promote the shared responsibility for distancing.

    e. Consider using face coverings when in situations of higher risk of virus transmission. Examples include: when using transportation, renting or fitting equipment, during close-proximity instruction, in lines, lifts or gondolas, on crowded slopes where distancing is difficult to maintain, and when taking a break from the elements in heated areas where people congregate.

2. **Pre- Arrival, Instruction and Briefing**

    a. Have screening actions in place. Before joining the activity ask guests to self-assess their physical condition and self-screen their risk profile. Inform guests that if they have symptoms, however mild, or are in a household where someone has symptoms, they are advised to stay at home.

b. In longer and remote tours, consider additional pre-trip recommendations and screening, such as suggesting steps to limit exposure to COVID-19, questionnaires, or testing.

c. Screening and monitoring measures should be extensive for staff members.

d. Set clear standards and boundaries for COVID-19 health and safety measures and guest participation. Make relevant information about the activity available, such as, the risks involved and the measures you are taking to manage COVID-19 risks. Ensure guests understand the risks and what is expected of them to participate.

e. Provide ample access to hand washing facilities and sanitizer. Ask that guests sanitize hands when entering any building or facilities, before starting activities and as often as needed throughout the activities.

   i. Note: sanitizer contains ethyl alcohol which has a lower freezing point than water. If sanitizer is kept outside during sub-freezing temps, it can cause serious skin damage if applied. Strive to keep sanitizer above 0C/32F.

f. Adapt your briefing to avoid the need to get close to guests when possible. For example, while issuing and fitting skis, boards, and boots.

g. Strive for physical and social distance at the beginning and at the end of tours, always favoring open and well-ventilated spaces.

h. When closer contact is required consider the use of face coverings.

   i. note: face coverings for cold conditions that have holes for breath are common. Ensure face coverings used are adequate for COVID-19 precautions.

3. **Transport**

a. The use of vehicles to transport clients includes a higher degree of COVID-19 transmission risk. Measures to mitigate risk should be used whenever possible; open vehicle windows, provide space in between passengers and have passengers wear face coverings. Consider the use of face shields or the use of private vehicles for transportation as additional measures.

4. **On the Slopes**

a. Favour choosing less crowded slopes, tracks, and areas to minimize your exposure to other people or groups and to be able to spread out.

b. Favour choosing areas where it will be easier to maintain social distancing due to topography, difficulty level, and track and snow conditions.

c. When crossing with other people or groups, try to maintain ample space. If distancing is not possible (for example accessing a lift or gathering to warm up), consider using face coverings.

d. Prepare for interaction with people external to your group. Often people socialize and chat on lifts, huts or stops - remember they might not know, or be following, the same health and safety standards that you require of your group.

e. Adapt your procedures to be able to maintain social distancing while helping guests with basic skiing tasks such as clipping skis or demonstrating maneuvers.

f. When closer contact is required consider the use of face coverings.

g. Provide ample access to sanitizer. Ask that guests sanitize hands when entering any building or congregating, before starting an activity, and as often as needed throughout the activity.

   i. Note: sanitizer contains ethyl alcohol which has a lower freezing point than water (-174 degrees F). If sanitizer is kept outside during sub-freezing temps, it can cause serious skin damage if applied. Strive to keep sanitizer above 0C/32F.

h. Lower the possibility of first aid or evacuations by toning down the skiing or snowboarding difficulties or challenges. Ensure difficulty level does not exceed skills and ability of guests.

i. When administering first aid, some distancing methods need to be adapted or cannot be used. Use Personal Protective Equipment - PPE such as face coverings and gloves.

j. Consider the need for defining additional COVID-19 evacuations protocols.

5. **Dining**

   a. Distancing: consider alternatives to provide spacing, such as ample guest seating and spaced tables , offering private or outdoors eating locations, and scheduled meal times.

   b. Prevent surface contact where needed, for example:

      i. Identify high use areas and touchpoints, such as; workstations, tables, menus, doors, utensils, condiments.

      ii. Clean high use areas and touchpoints often with a rigorous enhanced sanitation regime.

      iii. Prevent contact in high use areas when possible. Identify high use areas and clean often.

   c. Food and beverages should be served by staff members who are trained and observant of precautions.

d. Consider serving individually served meals rather than buffet or self-service.

e. Consider how meals are transported, covered, and consumed. Attempt to individually pack food items and cover meals with a reusable lid. For food samples, consider how the customer will handle and consume safely.

f. Ensure food safety and restaurant cleaning is in line with local official guidance.

g. For further information on food handling see [Culinary Experiences amid COVID-19 Guidelines.](#)

h. For further information on food preparation in the field see [Camping amid COVID-19 Guidelines.](#)

6. **Lodging**

    a. FIT or household groups should be favoured to promote distancing. Avoid members of separately booked groups or groups from more than one household unit sharing bedrooms.

    b. Attention to increased levels of sanitization and disinfection, distancing and screening measures should all be implemented in accordance with hotel, local, and official guidelines.

    a. For further information on lodging see [Small Lodges amid COVID-19: Guidelines.](#)

7. **Other indoor spaces**

    a. If skiing or snowboarding in developed areas, ensure that COVID-19 procedures and standards are adequate for your operations.

    b. It is important to promote air quality with ample ventilation in heated or enclosed areas, such as day shelters or public outdoor areas. Promote natural airflow or use areas with particulate air filters. Ventilation systems should not re-circulate air inside buildings and instead promote air renovation. Consider additional ventilation in the hours the facility is closed.

    c. Capacity planning, clear information and marking, and active management are important measures to make distancing viable. Consider such factors carefully based on recommended standards, for example Alpine Activities Guidelines for coronavirus (COVID-19) by Victoria State Government.

    d. Consider measures for when weather is poor and demand increases, as people tend to congregate more, and spend more time re-warming and re-energizing.

8. Equipment

Enhancing sanitation is a key part of mitigating COVID-19 risk. When at all possible, participants should avoid sharing equipment and should care for and carry their own personal equipment.

a. Each person should have their individual equipment (e.g. boots, boards, skis, poles) for the duration of the tour.

    i. Cleaning of gear that comes into contact with skin (e.g. boots, clothing) is a standard good practice and can be employed to reduce surface contact.

    ii. Encourage guests to size and choose equipment with minimum handling; then encourage them to carry and care for their selected personal equipment.

b. Skiers and boarders could be advised to bring their own equipment whenever possible, as opposed to renting.

c. Consider sanitizing any gear that could be a vector for COVID-19 transmission.

d. Use recommended methods for cleaning and sanitizing that have been determined to kill the COVID-19 virus, such as, appropriate rest time in between uses, or using soap and water or bleach solutions. Follow manufacturer's instructions and the recommendations of official health and safety agencies.

e. If support staff cares for client gear or shared gear such as skis, food preparation and eating utensils during the trip, consider requirements to prevent cross contamination and promote sanitation in the field.

9. Facilities and sanitation

a. Identify and establish cleaning and sanitation schedules and procedures for common spaces, such as day shelters or public outdoor areas.

b. Prevent surface contact where needed, for example:

    i. Identify high use areas and frequently touched areas, such as tables, counters, lift handles, handrails.

    ii. Increase sanitation in high use areas and touchpoints, such as handles, doorknobs, switches, coat hangers, etc.

c. Use recommended methods for cleaning and sanitizing that have been determined to kill the COVID-19 virus, such as, appropriate rest time in between uses, or using soap and water or bleach solutions. Follow manufacturer's instructions and the recommendations of official health and safety agencies.

d. Consider implementing safe-handling procedures for personnel who use cleaning products to clean equipment to prevent harm from chemicals or cross-contamination.

10. Additional resources

a. [ATTA COVID-19 Guide for the Adventure Travel Industry](#)

a. Cleveland Clinic

    i. [Return to work amid COVID-19: A Cleveland Clinic Guide](#)

    i. [COVID-19: Creating a Safe Workplace](#)

    ii. [Advice on Reopening Business: Frequently Asked Questions](#)

b. [Alpine Activities Guidelines for coronavirus (COVID-19)](#) by Victoria State Government.