

Small Lodges 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 **Small Lodges 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 inaccuracy, mistake, misstatement, or any other error of whatsoever nature contained herein. The information accessible in this document has been compiled from many sources that are not controlled by Adventure Travel Trade Association. While reasonable care has been taken in the

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Small Lodges

A large majority of Adventure Travel experiences and trips involve some form of accommodation which may be included in the itinerary. Whilst there is no clear definition of a small lodge, these protocols will focus on the likely accommodation that most adventure travel customers use which are lodges, guesthouses, bed & breakfasts, boutique accommodation, and small hotels. Whilst most accommodation providers will have to follow local governmental or official hospitality regulations, it is prudent of the Adventure Travel Company to check that these regulations are being met. Operators can follow these guidelines to assess the viability of the safety of their guests and staff in the accommodation.

1. Group Management

- a. Small groups, FIT or household groups should be favoured to promote distancing. Strive to keep trip participant numbers as low as reasonably possible.
- b. Physical distancing does not need to apply to household units.
- c. Consider offering the exclusive use of small lodges to minimise interactions with other guests.
- d. Where customers will be sharing with other guests who are different household units, ensure there is space in communal areas for distancing measures to be implemented.
- e. Customers in the same group who are not in a household unit should be encouraged to not share rooms together.
- f. Consider distancing measures in dining areas for customers who are in the same group but in different households, such as larger or separate tables and staggered meal times.
- g. Consider using face coverings when in situations of higher risk of viral transmission, such as in enclosed spaces, close proximity, or when using transportation.

2. Pre-Arrival and check-in

- a. Have screening actions in place. Before arrival or before leaving home, 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 stays, consider additional pre-trip recommendations and screening, such as suggesting steps to limit exposure to COVID-19, questionnaires or testing.

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- c. Consider your arrival and check-in procedures. Health screening should take place upon entering the lodging, and minimise close interactions with guests, and consider introducing paperless, money-less, pre-check options.
- d. Daily screening and monitoring measures should be extensive for staff members.
- e. 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.
- f. Provide ample access to hand washing facilities and sanitizer. Ask that guests sanitize hands when entering any building, lodging or facility, before starting an activity and as often as needed throughout the experience or stay.
- g. Events and briefings should accommodate for social or physical distancing. Adapt the spaces and briefings to avoid the need to get close to guests and to increase guests understanding and compliance of the additional COVID-19 measures necessary. Consider holding briefings and gatherings outside whenever possible.
- h. Have procedures for handling customers' luggage.
- i. When closer contact is required consider the use of face coverings.

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. For activity specific transport protocols that may be included with the lodging see [Wildlife Safaris amid COVID-19: Guidelines](#)

4. Bedrooms:

- a. Attention to increased levels of sanitization and disinfection in guest rooms should be implemented in-line with hotel, local, and official guidelines.
- b. Staff to identify cleaning hot spots, or high touch points, and either remove unnecessary items, or have enhanced cleaning or sanitation procedures implemented in line with hotel, local, and official guidelines.
- c. Ensure staff are equipped with appropriate PPE when cleaning, dealing with laundry, luggage, etc.
- d. Have a procedure in place for when a guest or staff shows symptoms of COVID-19, such as employing an isolation bedroom or requiring the use of room service, etc.

5. Communal Areas

- a. Staff should identify cleaning hot spots, or high touch points, and either remove unnecessary items, or have enhanced cleaning or sanitation procedures implemented in line with hotel, local, and official guidelines.
- b. Consider allocating staff to certain communal areas to reduce interactions with guests and staff.
- c. Plan for distancing measures to be implemented in communal areas. Examples may include spacing out chairs or other furniture and have a cleaning regimen for when these are used.
- d. Maintain your company standards of distancing and sanitation when encountering other groups. Often people socialize and chat at communal areas or dining facilities - remember they might not know nor be following the same health and safety standards that you require of your group.
- e. If the lodge has a leisure facility such as a small pool, consult with local official policy as to the procedure for use. Consider the cleaning and disinfection procedures for the facility, and numbers of guests that can use the facility.

6. Dining

- a. Distancing: consider alternative arrangements to provide spacing such as ample guest seating and spaced tables, offering private or outdoors eating locations, or 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, and condiments.
 - ii. Clean high use areas and touchpoints often with a rigorous enhanced sanitation regime.
 - iii. Prevent contact in high use areas when possible.
- 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](#).

7. Activity Equipment

Guests may undertake activities that are run through the establishment such as safaris or wildlife experiences, treks, or water sports. For any activity, enhancing sanitation is a key part of mitigating COVID-19 risk. Whenever possible, participants should avoid sharing equipment and should care for and carry their own personal equipment.

- a. Prevent surface contact where needed, for example:
 - i. Identify high use areas, such as at base, in offices, or inside of vehicles.
 - ii. Clean high use areas often.
 - iii. Prevent contact in high use areas when possible.
- b. Each person should have their individual gear - binoculars, walking poles, watersports equipment, etc.
 - i. Individual gear that is worn next to skin (e.g. helmet, neoprene, sun guards) should be thoroughly washed after each use as a prevention against COVID-19 transmission via surface contact.
 - ii. Require guests to size and select equipment with a minimum handling.
 - iii. Guests should care for and carry their own equipment.
- c. Vehicles should be cleaned before use and guests should have means to sanitise their hands both before and during the activity. If guests are from different household units, consider distancing requirements within the vehicle. For further information see [Wildlife Safaris amid COVID-19: Guidelines](#)
- 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. Consider implementing safe-handling procedures for personnel who use cleaning products to clean equipment to prevent harm from chemicals or cross-contamination.
- f. Consider additional protocols or measures for guests upon return of an activity.
- g. Consider sanitizing any equipment or item that could be a vector for COVID-19 transmission.

8. Additional resources

- a. [ATTA COVID-19 Guide for the Adventure Travel Industry](#)
- b. Cleveland Clinic
 - i. [Return to work amid COVID-19 a Hotel Guide: A Cleveland Clinic Guide](#)
 - ii. [COVID-19: Creating a Safe Workplace](#)
 - iii. [Advice on Reopening Business: Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- c. [WHO COVID-19 management in the accommodation sector](#)
- d. [American Hotels and Lodgings Association - Hotel Cleaning Guidelines](#)

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