



ADVENTURE TRAVEL
TRADE ASSOCIATION

TREKKING AMID COVID-19: RECOMMENDATIONS

ADVENTURE TRAVEL COVID-19 HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES

JUNE 2020

INTRODUCTION



Shannon Stowell, CEO
Adventure Travel Trade Association

Health and Safety has always been important in responsible adventure travel. The Covid-19 pandemic adds a layer of risk of a transmissible disease both in daily life and in travel experiences. These guidelines provide a path to an organized and safer reopening for the adventure industry by providing a common set of actions that can be used by a diverse range of travel businesses and suppliers across the industry supply chain.

We created the guidelines in collaboration with Cleveland Clinic, a leading provider of specialized medical care, focused on providing clinical excellence and superior patient outcomes. Cleveland Clinic is a multispecialty academic medical center that integrates clinical and hospital care with research and education. The health system offers 140 medical specialties and subspecialties that draw thousands of patients from around the world. *U.S. News & World Report* consistently names Cleveland Clinic as one of the nation's best hospitals in its annual "America's Best Hospitals" survey, and in 2020, Cleveland Clinic was ranked one of the best hospitals in the world by *Newsweek* magazine.

More information about the ATTA can be found at adventuretravel.biz

More information about Cleveland Clinic can be found at clevelandclinic.org

WE'RE ON A TEAM

The COVID-19 pandemic has entered a new phase, travel is restarting and travelers 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 **Trekking 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.

WE'RE ON A TEAM

These guidelines are not intended to be an exhaustive list of possible actions nor is it 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.

It is intended to be a flexible framework for ATC's (adventure travel companies) to use in reopening. It is meant to be flexible. 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.

This guide is not intended to be an exhaustive list of possible actions nor is it 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 & DISCLAIMER

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 your 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 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 compilation and publication of the contents of this document, Adventure Travel Trade Association makes no representations or warranties, whether express or implied, as to the accuracy or suitability of the information or materials contained in this document. Adventure Travel Trade Association shall not be liable, directly, or indirectly, to the user or any other third party for any damage resulting from the use of the information contained or implied in this document. By proceeding to use this Adventure Travel Trade Association document you are accepting this disclaimer.

TREKKING

Trekking can be a low-risk activity for transmission of COVID-19 due to several factors. Trekking usually takes place in well-ventilated areas, involves little to no gear, is typically done in small groups, is easy to practice while maintaining social distance, is not technical, and does not require close supervision. However, because trekking involves a familiar activity and clients are highly independent, it is necessary that clients themselves be aware of and be committed to observing COVID-19 safety protocols and regulations.



I. Group Management:

- Small groups, FIT or household groups should be favoured to promote distancing. Strive to keep trip participant numbers as low as reasonably possible.
- Physical distancing does not need to apply to household units.
- Physical distancing should be practiced as much as possible if it is a group of strangers. How each individual moves about and mingles in a trek will greatly influence your group's distancing practices – operators should promote the shared responsibility for distancing.
- Consider using face coverings when in situations of higher risk of virus spreading, such as: when using transportation, during close-proximity instruction, when helping each other in harder terrain, when trekking on crowded trails where distancing is difficult to maintain.
- checking temperature.



II. Pre- Arrival, Instruction and Briefing

- 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.
- 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.
- Provide ample access to hand washing facilities and sanitizer. Ask that guests sanitize hands when entering any building or office facilities, before starting an activity and as often as needed throughout the activity.
- Adapt your briefing to avoid the need to get close to guests when possible. For example, while fitting packs and shoes.
- Strive for physical and social distance at the beginning and at the end of tours, always favoring open and well ventilated spaces.
- When closer contact is required consider the use of face coverings.
- their responsibility in compliance to the COVID-19 precautions.



III. Transport:

- 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.



IV. On the Trail:

- Favour choosing less popular trails and times to minimize your exposure to other people or groups.
- Favour choosing areas where it will be easier to maintain social distancing due to topography, difficulty level, or trail conditions.
- When crossing paths with other groups, try to maintain ample space. If distancing is not possible (for example in a canyon or thick forest trail), consider using face coverings.
- Prepare for interaction with people external to your group. Often people socialize and chat on trailheads or stops - remember they might not know, or be following, the same health and safety standards that you require of your group.
- Adapt your procedures to be able to maintain social distancing while helping guests with basic trekking tasks such as organizing packs, stretching, or demonstrating the use of trekking poles.
- When closer contact is required consider the use of face coverings.
- Lower the possibility of first aid or evacuations by toning down the trek difficulties or challenges. Ensure difficulty level does not exceed skills and ability of guests.
- 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.
- Consider the need for defining additional COVID-19 evacuations protocols.



V. 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.

- Prevent surface contact where needed, for example:
 - Identify high use areas, such as, at base, office, transport
 - Clean high use areas often, and
 - Prevent contact in high use areas when possible. Identify high use areas and clean those often.
- Each person should have their individual equipment (e.g. pack, water bottle, trekking poles, sleeping bag, mattress) for the duration of the tour.
 - Cleaning of gear that comes into contact with skin (e.g. backpacks, clothing, sleeping bags) is a standard good practice and can be employed to reduce surface contact.
 - Encourage guests to size and choose equipment with minimum handling; then encourage them to carry and care for their selected personal equipment.
- Trekkers could be advised to bring their own equipment whenever possible.
- Consider sanitizing any gear that could be a vector for COVID-19 transmission.
- 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.
- If support staff cares for client gear or shared gear such as group shelters, tents or mattresses during the trip, consider requirements to prevent cross contamination and promote gear sanitation in the field.
- Consider implementing safe-handling procedures for personnel who use cleaning products to clean equipment to prevent harm from chemicals or cross-contamination.



VI. Additional resources:

- [ATTA COVID-19 Guide for the Adventure Travel Industry](#)
- Cleveland Clinic
 - [Return to work amid COVID-19: A Cleveland Clinic Guide](#)
 - [COVID-19: Creating a Safe Workplace](#)
 - [Advice on Reopening Business: Frequently Asked Questions](#)



ADVENTURE TRAVEL TRADE ASSOCIATION (ATTA)

The Adventure Travel Trade Association is a vital leadership voice and partner for the adventure travel industry around the world. Our mission is to **empower the global travel community** to **protect natural and cultural capital** while **creating economic value** that benefits both trade members and destinations. The ATTA community today is a vibrant, thriving, interactive network, over 25,000 members strong and representing 100 countries worldwide. From tour operators to tourism boards, specialty agents to accommodations, all ATTA members share a genuine love for global exploration and a vested interest in the sustainable development of tourism.

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

[Strategic Opportunities For Destination Recovery & Resilience](#)

[Online Education Safety and Risk Management Course](#)

CLEVELAND CLINIC

Cleveland Clinic is a leading provider of specialized medical care, focused on providing clinical excellence and superior patient outcomes. The integrated healthcare system includes hospitals, outpatient clinics and wellness centers across the globe with facilities in the United States, Canada and the United Arab Emirates. In 2021, its newest hospital, Cleveland Clinic London, will open.

Founded in 1921, Cleveland Clinic has grown and evolved both clinically and geographically, becoming home to:

- The world's largest heart valve program and vascular surgery program.
- The world's largest and most specialized urology practice.
- One of the top cancer centers in the US, centered on multidisciplinary patient care.
- The UAE's first and most comprehensive multi-organ transplant program.
- A leader in quality clinical care in Florida, offering easy access from Latin America and the Caribbean.

For patients traveling outside of their home country to a Cleveland Clinic location, Cleveland Clinic's Global Patient Services department provides personalized and compassionate care. This team of international caregivers serves as a point of contact to help guide patients through every aspect of travel and care.

Other select services available to global patients include:

- MyConsult Online Medical Second Opinion program, which gives patients secure, online access to Cleveland Clinic specialists for second opinions and consultations.
- Cleveland Clinic's Critical Care Transport team, an expert team of critical care providers available 24/7 to transport critically ill and injured patients of all ages via ground mobile intensive care unit, helicopter or jet aircraft.

For more information about Cleveland Clinic, visit clevelandclinic.org.





CONTRIBUTORS

HEALTH ADVISOR



Cleveland Clinic

MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS

Switzerland.



JTB Tourism Research & Consulting Co.



G-Adventures

SUPPORTING CONTRIBUTORS

