



## ATOAI COVID-19 GUIDELINES

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*in association with*

*Travel Operators for Tigers India Wildlife Association (TOFTigers)*



Version: 3.3

Date: 05/07/2020

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## Introduction

Covid-19 has had widespread impact on every facet of society the world over. The travel and tourism industry is no exception, indeed, it may be argued that this industry is the hardest hit of all and global travel is largely at a standstill. However, the world will emerge from this too, and the purpose of these guidelines is to serve as broad recommendations for the safe handling of guests in a post Covid-19 world.

The intended audience for these guidelines are

1. Accommodation providers including hotels, resorts, homestays, fixed camps and mobile camps
2. Outdoor Activity Operators
3. Tour operators

This document is NOT intended to serve as the definitive mandate for these operations, nor is it intended to cover every aspect of accommodation and tour operator businesses. This is a living document that will be continuously updated and where we have focussed on the most common guest touch points, collating publicly information from a variety of sources (*see list of references at the end of this document*).

One should also not expect that following these guidelines guarantees no infection. Current research indicates the below lifetimes for the virus on various surfaces:

Corona Virus Average Retention Time	
On Copper	4 Hrs
On Aluminium	2-8 Hrs
On Cardboard	24 Hrs
On Stainless Steel	2-3 Days
On Plastics	2-3 Days
On Wood	4 Days
On Paper, Glass (upto)	5 Days
On Ceramics	5 Days
On Metal	5 Days

However, present knowledge about this virus remains incomplete and the global pool of Covid-19 research grows by the day. Therefore, it is important that all readers continue to monitor publicly available information for improved guidelines and always follow all government mandates.

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## TRANSFERS AND PICKUPS

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## Receiving Guests

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Protocol for representative or driver receiving guests at the airport or railway station

Greet the guest with a Namaste!

- Person going to receive should wear mask (cotton/reusable/washable) and can use disposable gloves if required, though recommended best practice is to wash /sanitize hands frequently. (Nitrile gloves can be reused after sanitizing)
- Maintain minimum 2m distance from the guest (as or as directed by govt. mandate)
- Check temperature of all guests. Guests running a temperature of more than 100.4°F/38°C should be immediately directed to get in touch with local health authorities. **DO NOT LET THE GUEST BOARD THE VEHICLE.** (*A detailed communication about what will happen in case the Guest has fever should be sent in advance by the Tour Operator/ Hotel to the Guest, clearly mentioning that if the guest has temperature, we will have to inform the health authorities and cannot allow the guest to board the vehicle. Please see suggested template in the Appendix*). No SPO2 check for silent hypoxia
- Follow the state guidelines for downloading/use of app. Checking 'Safe' Status in the Arogya Setu app is recommended prior to entering the vehicle. All the guests must be informed about the app and the procedures at the time of reservation.

### **If the guest has no temperature, proceed with the next steps:**

- Give all guests a mask (if they are not carrying one) and a bottle of alcohol-based hand sanitizer. The cost may be billed to the guest, if necessary.
- Ask them to use the sanitizer immediately and also before touching anything.
- For guests staying for a shorter time like day trips, etc., a sanitizer dispenser can be provided in the vehicle and the driver can dispense the sanitizer onto the guests' hands.
- Inform the Guest that his bags will be disinfected.
- Spray and Wipe down luggage and luggage handles with the disinfectant surface cleaner before handling. The disinfectant should be sprayed and left on the surface for minimum one minute before wiping off with a tissue or cloth. (*see recommendations for disinfectants*)
- Avoid giving water bottles, towels for refreshing, newspaper, etc.
- A communication can be sent to the Guest at the Time of reservation to bring their own refillable water bottle or the Tour Operator/ Hotel can gift an aluminium/stainless steel bottle to guest. This can have the Tour Operators/Hotels branding

Considering all above points are okay, continue to hotel/sightseeing.

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## Guest Transport

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- The car/coach should be disinfected after every use. High touch areas (door handles, seats, seat backs, steering wheel, power window buttons, door locks, windows, screens, small portable TV screens etc.) should be sprayed with disinfectant surface cleaner. The disinfectant should be sprayed and left on the surface for minimum one minute before wiping off with a tissue or cloth. (*see recommendations for disinfectants*)
- Ensure the driver/crew is wearing protective gear such as 3-layer mask (cotton/reusable/washable), reusable gloves (Nitrile gloves can be reused after sanitizing), etc.
- Guests should be seated in the rear seat in the car. A transparent separation (such as polycarbonate sheet) between the front and rear seats is advised.
- Consumption of food and beverages inside the vehicle is not recommended
- Car should have sanitizer and mask for guest (if they are not carrying one). As before, it may be billed to the guest, if necessary.
- Driver/crew should be instructed to keep conversation to a minimum
- Avoid air-conditioning since the virus can remain in recirculated air. Keep windows open.
- Guests should leave adjacent seat empty in coach or taxi unless it is a family of people travelling together.
- Guest instructions (this may include tour itinerary; safety precautions being taken by the Tour Operator/ Hotel for hygiene and disinfection) to be sent to the guests via Email/WhatsApp in advance or given via Email/WhatsApp at pick up point by the Representative/Driver.
- Alternatively, a vinyl sticker with the hygiene precautions/safety standards can be placed at the back of the front seat.
- The sticker/WhatsApp booklet/Email must cover all the steps being taken by the Tour Operator/Hotel; for safety and sanitization along with the operational norms for restaurants, room service, housekeeping & laundry procedures for Hotels.
- No brochures/Handouts/collaterals to be given to guests as these are touch points. Everything should be sent digitally.
- All curtains and carpets to be removed from the vehicle.
- As far as possible follow pre-planned itineraries with minimum layover at pre-determined stops only.



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## ACCOMMODATION

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## Common Guidelines for All Accommodation

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Hotels/Resorts/Bed & Breakfast/Homestays/Camping are all identified in this document by the term 'Accommodation'

### Reception and Check-in

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#### Entrance

- Temperature and blood saturation checks at entrance should be mandatory for all Guests, unless they have been received by the establishment and already checked as per the previous section. As far as possible, the check should be conducted outdoors before entering the accommodation building itself i.e. reception in the case of a hotel/resort, or the house in case of a homestay.
- Depending on the recommendations of the government health departments and public information about their efficacy, establishments may explore technologies that may be introduced going forward.
- Follow the state guidelines for downloading/use of app. Checking 'Safe' Status in the Arogya Setu app is recommended prior to entering the vehicle. All the guests must be informed about the app and the procedures at the time of reservation.

#### Walk in Guest

- Guests running a temperature of more than 100.4°F/38°C should be advised to go to the closest hospital/medical facility. A signage displaying the accommodation policy for Guests with fever should be displayed outside the establishment, clearly mentioning they are not allowed to enter the establishment. **Do Not Let the Guest Enter the Accommodation**, but provide them a place to wait in safety until the health authorities are alerted. Subsequently, follow the steps prescribed by the health authorities.
- If the Guest has no fever, proceed with the next steps.
- Have a sanitizer dispenser placed outside which can be used by Guests to sanitise their hands. preferred to use contact less methods
- Provide the Guest with a mask, if they are not wearing one, if required (can be nominally priced or included in the cost). This will be applicable till govt. mandates are in place.
- Spray and Wipe down door handles, glass etc., and all touch points after each touch with Surface disinfectant cleaner, if doorman not available the disinfectant should be sprayed

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and left on the surface as per manufacturer's instructions before wiping off. (see *recommendations for disinfectants*)

- Disinfect and clean Guest luggage after informing the Guests. Spray first then Wipe down with surface disinfectant cleaner.

### **Guests with Prior Booking**

- If the Guest is arriving from overseas or another city ensure that detailed information about their travel and medical history since January 2020 is received at time of making the reservation.
- Recommend they purchase Health and Cancellation/Travel Insurance.
- All check-in formalities should be completed online to reduce contact time at the front desk.
- Give safety, hygiene and other instructions to the Guests as per the new SOP

### **Reception**

- For all pre-booked Guests all check-in formalities should be completed online to reduce contact and time at the front desk.
- Guest's travel history from the time of booking to check-in must be provided at the time of check-in
- Guest details to be sent in advance for guest registration along with government approved identity card, any other information required by the Accommodation via Email/WhatsApp.
- Payment for the room etc. can be made in advance to eliminate exchange of bank notes (touch points) or encourage e-payments to be made. Touch screen-based terminals/credit cards should be disinfected after each use with the sanitizer provided at the reception.
- Give safety, hygiene and other instructions to the Guests as per the new SOP via WhatsApp/email in advance or on spot.
- Ensure markings on the floor at reception to maintain Physical Distancing of minimum 2m (or as directed by govt. mandate).
- Ensure Associates are wearing masks. They should be advised not to touch their faces and to practice physical distancing and wash/sanitise their hands regularly.
- Reception needs to be cleaned frequently. Preferable to disinfect with Surface Disinfectant cleaner between guests.
- High touch areas in public spaces include tables, pens, room keys and key cards should be cleaned with disinfectant.
- Keep sanitizers for Guests to use (automatic dispensers are preferred).

- Keep paper, envelopes and all equipment sanitized. Sanitise the pen after the guest register is signed. E-bills to be sent instead of paper bills.
- Obtain a disclaimer from guest in the event a Covid-19 related issue impacts a guest arising from a stay at your accommodation.
- Guests can sanitise their phones/credit card with the surface disinfectant/sanitizer dispenser kept in the reception. Kindly use surface disinfectant/sanitizer to clean their phone or credit cards.
- No sweets/fruits to be provided on the reception desk.
- Suggest that guests take a shower as soon as they get to their room before touching anything in the room like furnishings.
- Inform Guests that newspapers are not being delivered due to safety reasons, but e-papers will be made available through WhatsApp etc.

## Guest Rooms

- Signages with information on sanitization norms should be placed (preferable vinyl printing pasted on the back door/wall with easy visibility).
- Guest's instructions given at the reception should include instructions on how the rooms are sanitized at regular intervals.
- Remove any furnishings such as extra display cushions and bed runners which cannot be washed/sanitized after each Checkout.
- Room linen to be changed once in two days or ONLY on request; no turn down services to facilitate minimal contact.
- Kettle, Tea/coffee sachets, Fruits, extra cushions, extra toiletries and other amenities will be provided only on request. This will also help in generating less waste.
- Housekeeping to be done when guest is not in the room.

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## Check-out

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- Advise Guests to inform reception about their check-out plans in advance so that bills can be made ready and wait times minimized.
- During checkout have physical distancing floor markers demarcated at the reception.
- Wherever possible use e-check out by emailing the bill & accepting online payments. Promote cashless transactions. In case physical handling of credit cards is required, wipe the card with an alcohol-based sanitizer before and after use. Make sure that payment terminals are also sanitized before and after use, especially key pads.
- Instead of using written review/feedback forms, guest can be asked to review via TripAdvisor link/Google/ hotel website.
- After check-out, ensure that the room is vigorously cleaned. CDC provides some helpful recommendations for cleaning rooms. (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>)
- Guest luggage should be sanitized again after checkout and before departure.

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## Common Areas and Facilities

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- Current studies indicate a causal link between the spread of the Covid-19 virus and air-conditioning. We therefore recommend the guidelines issued by ISHRAE (approved by the DG, CPWD), which may be downloaded from the ISHRAE website: <https://ishrae.in/>
- Keep sanitizers at regular intervals on the floor. (This can be taken as a standard of placing one between 20 rooms approx. at a distance of 120 ft. assuming guests have their own hand sanitizers)
- Sanitise public telephones and vending machine.
- Ensure physical distancing in all common areas. (Guests Should Wear Masks at all times in Common Areas which are indoors and if outside a minimum distance of 10 ft. to be maintained without mask)
- Instruct guests to give bulk of the laundry together for wash in a laundry bag. It is recommended to use tongs to pick up the Laundry bag. Regular hand washing is recommended by housekeeper.

### Public Toilets

- Do not use air-hand dryers. They spray water droplets all over the place and may lead to further contamination of the area and other users.
- Ensure that the WC lid is closed before flushing. An open WC results in micro droplets, which may be potentially contaminated with infected faecal matter, being dispersed all over the washroom.

### Elevators

- Ensure that safety instructions, including the number of Guests allowed at one time, is placed outside and inside the elevator and is easily visible; apologize for the delay and inconvenience caused to the Guests due to the new safety norms (maximum number of people allowed in the lift to be calculated by the Accommodation authorities keeping in mind physical distancing norms advised by the government).
- Ensure elevator floor buttons and handrails are regularly sanitized by the Housekeeping Associates with surface disinfectant.
- Regularly sanitize the floor and walls of the elevators with surface disinfectant cleaner.
- Install hand sanitizer dispensers outside the elevators.
- Use elbows/folded finger to press elevator buttons (sanitize your hands after disembarking)
- Consider a lift attendant for larger, busy lifts.

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## Pool, Gym & Spa

- It is recommended to keep these closed until the government gives the all-clear.
- Suggest alternate options / drop to open parks or walks which may be safer, keeping in mind any governmental regulations.
- Include Yoga sessions or health channels in the morning for Guests to follow in the privacy of their rooms.

## Business Centres

- Keep enough space between work desks.
- Limit the number of Guests in the area based on maximum allowed.
- Disinfect each desk, equipment and work area after the Guest has moved out with surface disinfectant.

## Meetings

- In case Guests require a meeting area, keep enough space between tables & chairs as per government mandate.
- Limit the number of Guests in the area based on maximum allowed
- Disinfect each desk, equipment and work area after the Guest has moved out with surface disinfectant

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## Laundry

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- Linen should not be shaken as this might contaminate the surrounding area.
- If linen and towels require laundering, they should be collected in a laundry bag.
- Linen should be emptied directly from the laundry bag into the washing machine without handling and laundered on a normal hot cycle then air or tumble dried.
- Do not use compressed air and/or water under pressure for cleaning, or any other methods that can cause splashing. Vacuum cleaners should be used only after proper disinfection of other surfaces has taken place.
- Linen may become contaminated with the virus, so it is important to add disinfectant when washing laundry or at least maintaining a 65-degree heat when washing linen.
- Linen can also be washed as per WHO Guidelines from <https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/environmental/background/laundry.html>
- Laundry, room service instructions should be available in the room for the new SOPs being implemented individually by each Accommodation, depending on their mode of operation.



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## Room Cleaning and Housekeeping

- Disposable gloves can be worn while cleaning the room, toilets and other common areas, and when handling cleaning and disinfecting solutions continuously. Dispose of gloves if they become damaged or soiled or when cleaning is completed; never wash or reuse the gloves. Use a new pair of gloves for every guest room, alternatively; housekeeper can wash hands after room entry, clean the room, wash hands and then exit the room.
- Wearing a simple surgical face mask is recommended if close contact (within 1.5 metres) with the guest is unavoidable when the cleaning is conducted.
- Eye protection such as goggles, and a surgical mask may be required if splashing cannot be avoided.
- Avoid touching the face with gloves or unwashed hands.
- Train Housekeeping staff to use the disinfectants safely and correctly.
- Special cleaning procedures for upholstery, carpets and storage areas are not necessary unless obviously soiled.

## Routine Cleaning

- The use of disposable equipment, especially disposable cloths, is strongly recommended, with a fresh cloth used for each room. If other cloths are used, they should be laundered in hot water wash before re-use.
- Clean surfaces as usual with a neutral detergent and water.
- In addition, the following surfaces in the room which are commonly touched should be disinfected
  - door handles and light switches
  - tables and counters
  - armrests of chairs (if not fabric)
  - TV buttons and remote controls, telephones, air conditioner (A/C) buttons and remote controls.
  - Kettle handles, fridge door handles, bathroom including door handle.
  - door lock, toilet seat and buttons, taps, wash-basins, counters, shower and/or bath
- Best Hygiene and Disinfection practices to be followed specially at Entry Points for all persons and materials.

## Body fluids

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- Cleaning staff should wear an impervious disposable gown or apron, gloves and eye protection when there are body fluids to clean up, including any steam cleaning.
  - Any body fluids should first be removed from visibly contaminated surfaces by using an absorbent material, which should then be disposed of as described in a sturdy and leak-proof plastic bag.
  - Hard, non-porous surfaces must then be cleaned and disinfected. Large areas contaminated with body fluids (e.g. covering most of a table) should be cleaned up with an absorbent material, then cleaned with detergent and water followed by the disinfectant cleaner.
  - Since disinfectants are not registered for use on some porous surfaces, contaminated material such as carpets and upholstery should be carefully steam cleaned or laundered in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

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## Restaurants

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- Arrival instructions should explain to Guests that they should come down to the restaurants only when a table is available to avoid crowding. Recommend pre-booking of table.
- Have a notice board outside the restaurant which is updated with number of free tables.
- Reduce number of tables to maintain Physical Distancing norms.
- Stop community dining and encourage in-room dining.
- Space out the tables at least 3m. apart to maintain Physical Distancing norms.
- Outdoor seating is recommended
- Avoid physical menu cards in the dining area. Instead a digital menu card can be sent to the guest on their device via WhatsApp/QR Code on the tables.
- Limited laminated menus can be offered to guest. These must be disinfected after each use.
- Encourage Guests from different groups to sit separately unless travelling together.
- Avoid buffets for crowding initially and include either TDH or 'a la carte'.
- It is preferable to procure locally and serve freshly prepared items
- Staff must be trained for minimal contact/communication during service (This document should be communicated to all the staff from bottom to top and the concept of physical distancing has to be made clear to them).
- Ensure Associates are wearing masks and have washed/sanitised their hands before food delivery and clearance.

## Food Trays, Dishes and Cutlery

- Wash reusable dishes and cutlery in a dishwasher with detergent and hot water as usual.
- Use Drying Trays and Allow to Air Dry.
- Do not use Dish Towels and other methods which may increase Contamination
- Latex gloves recommended to prevent scalding of employee hands
- Use disposable napkins which are pre-packed or individually packed serviette.
- Keep sanitizers for Guests to use at each table and/or at the Restaurant entrance.
- Keep sanitizers handy which Guests can use to clean their phone or credit cards.

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## Standard protocols for mobile camps, treks and expeditions

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Following are the mandatories that will be followed by the Tour Operator/Camping Sites for all wilderness programs that are expedition based, i.e., where the group sets up a new campsite at different locations on the route every night.

### Camping tent allocation

To minimize contact with equipment that may otherwise be handled by the expedition staff, the Tour Operator/Camping Site will take the following steps:

- Sanitized tents, sleeping mattresses, sheets and trekking pillows should be allocated to each participant at the beginning of the expedition. They will be marked with their name and placed in a thick re-useable plastic bag.
- The re-usable plastic bags will be off-loaded from the ponies/transport vehicle at the end of each day and laid out on the ground for the Guests to open themselves.
- In any trip, Guests should be encouraged to set up their own tents and interiors. Assistance should always be at hand; this is to minimize external contact with their equipment as far as possible.
- Guests should be encouraged to bring their own sleeping bags.
- Guests should be assigned to tent groups (if using tents), so they share the accommodation with the same people for entire course.

### Dining and serving protocols

#### The Kitchen & Staff

The Kitchen staff should continue to maintain the high levels of hygiene expected of them. They should not use hand sanitizers while preparing and serving meals. Hand washing with soap and water as per protocol is the ideal method of cleaning hands.

#### For All

- Clean water and liquid soap should be placed outside the dining and kitchen tents for the use of everyone including staff and Guests.
- 'Pinky paani', water diluted with potassium permanganate crystals, should also be placed alongside as a final rinse.
- Water should be made available in buckets with water pumped in through a foot pump.
- Food should be served in the dining tent and be completely laid out before calling Guests.

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- Depending on the weather, chairs and small tables should be laid outside the dining tent to ensure physical distancing.
  - To ensure minimal contact with the staff during mealtimes, hot chapattis and rest of the food should be placed in casseroles on the table itself.
  - Each Guest should be allotted their own cloth bag of crockery and cutlery – plate, glass, fork, spoon and dish washing soap dispenser/scrubber.
  - Guest should be expected to wash their personal items themselves –hot water should be provided for the purpose.
  - Hot boiling water should be provided for final rinse after which the Guests should take their personal items back with them to their tent, to be brought out for the next meal.

### **Toilet and Hygiene**

A 'Covid-safe' kit should be provided to every Guest before the start of the expedition. This should include:

- Fresh masks, one for every day of the expedition, for those who require it.
- Small personal bottles of hand sanitizer.
- Toilet seat sanitizer spray.
- Toilet paper.
- Toilet vs. participant ratio to be fixed as per the new normal.
- As always, water and soap will be placed outside every toilet tent. In addition, a bucket of 'pinky-paani' will also be present.
- Operators to only choose those locations where physical distancing can be possible.

This would mean:

- No meals in the dining room with unknown guests on the premises.
- If the dining room has prior guests present, room service will be accommodated for.
- Seating areas, hammocks, benches etc. maintain a minimum distance of 2m.
- Bonfires (if present) will be lit separately for each group at a safe distance to ensure minimal contact with unknown guests on the premises.
- The virus that causes COVID-19 has not been detected in drinking water yet. Conventional water treatment methods should remove or inactivate the virus that causes COVID-19. We will ensure that all accommodations have RO or filtered water. No bottled water will be available.
- The use of swimming pools on the premises will not be encouraged. However, if there is a natural pool fresh-water stream, river or lake nearby which we know to be safe and

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clean, we will encourage our Guests to go ahead and take a dip ([Ref: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)). According to the CDC, there is no evidence to show that anyone has contracted COVID-19 through drinking water, recreational water, or wastewater. The risk of COVID-19 transmission through water is expected to be low.

## Guest Obligations

- All Guests are required to sign off on their health and medical disclosure forms before they can be confirmed for the course. Post-Covid, some additional steps will be undertaken:
  - Guests will need to disclose their travel history for three months prior to booking on the trip.
  - Guests will also ensure that they do not travel 21 days before course start date. An undertaking to this effect will need be included in the disclosure form.
  - The mandatory liability form will include a Covid-19 clause that states that if a participant contracts the virus despite all our efforts, they will not hold the service provider responsible for the same.
  - The participant will have to agree to be isolated or removed from the trip if at any time they are found to be infected or came in contact with a +ve carrier, hitherto undisclosed.
- A gear list would have been provided to all Guests well in advance. Guests are obliged to adhere to the same.
- All Guests will submit to regular temperature checks. Those running a temperature of more than 100.4°F/38°C will be immediately directed to get in touch with local health authorities. The service provider should assist them with this. All expenses in relation to this will need to be borne by the Guests.
- All Guests will be required to get adventure travel insurance and need to ensure that Covid-19 is covered in the insurance.
- All Guests will be expected to wash and rinse their personal crockery and cutlery as described under the “Dining and Serving Protocols” above.
- All Guests will be instructed on proper hand-washing, sanitation, and hygiene procedures. Instructors will be vigilant in the enforcement of this and ensure this is maintained throughout the entire course.

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## ACTIVITIES

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## General points

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The protocols outlined below are designed to minimize the risk of Covid-19 infection for guests and activity leads. However, some important points to note:

1. Never compromise on regular safety protocols. If the Covid-19 protocols outlined here prevent the full execution of a normal safety protocol, then don't conduct the activity.
2. Current guidelines mandate that masks must be worn when outdoors. However, there is concern that masks may restrict breathing. In this scenario, it is recommended that the rules be followed, but keep a close watch on participants for light-headedness, dizziness, numbness or tingling and shortness of breath. If any of these symptoms manifest, stop and take a break. If a pulse oximeter is available to hand, check O2 levels and take first aid action if necessary.
3. Close physical contact, especially between activity leads and guests, may be unavoidable for some activities. In such cases, either (i) group a set of guests (<10) and the associated activity lead into a "bubble" and treat that bubble as a single entity or (ii) consider not doing the activity
4. Follow all mandatory Covid-19 protocols stipulated by the concerned authority and take personal responsibility for
  - a. practicing social distancing,
  - b. using face masks appropriately
  - c. practicing good hygiene including washing hands, avoiding touching the face, and sneezing or coughing into the inside of the elbow
5. Err on the side of being over-cautious and remain well within the capabilities of all participants to avoid unnecessary strain on emergency and health services
6. The World Health Organization does not believe that wearing gloves outside is effective in preventing coronavirus infections: "Regularly washing your bare hands offers more protection against catching COVID-19 than wearing rubber gloves," the health organization has clearly stated. ([Ref: https://www.facebook.com/WHO/posts/2988790457832984](https://www.facebook.com/WHO/posts/2988790457832984))
7. Use these guidelines to develop your customized version of these guidelines.

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## Pre-activity protocols

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1. Screen activity leads daily before start of work using the following questions:
  - a. Fever (100.4°F/38°C or higher) or chills?
  - b. Cough, not due to another health condition?



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- c. Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, not due to another health condition?
  - d. Sore throat not due to another health condition or by a specific activity (such as physical exercise)?
  - e. Loss of taste or smell?

If an employee answers yes to any of the screening questions, immediately,

- i. Isolate the employee at least 2m away from others
  - ii. Implement the use of masks and gloves by employees and co-workers at the site until a status can be determined with a medical test.
  - iii. Have the employee examined and tested by a medical professional.
2. Before booking, guests must be made aware of the **Guest Pre-booking notice** (Template 3: Guest pre-booking notice)
  3. In the case of pre-booked guests, send them the **Guest Questionnaire** (Template 4: Guest Questionnaire) along-with the booking confirmation and ask them to return the completed form at least 3 days before arrival.

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## Equipment and it's use

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1. Follow manufacturer's guidance on equipment cleaning and quarantine
2. As far as possible, guests should use self-owned equipment. Minimise sharing or borrowing equipment
3. If equipment is being provided by the operator on a long-term basis (such as tents or trekking pillows for multi-day programs):
  - Allot the equipment at the beginning of the expedition. Identify each set with the guest name and place in a thick re-useable plastic bag
  - The re-usable plastic bags will be off-loaded from the ponies/transport vehicle at the end of every day and laid out on the ground for the participants to open themselves.
  - Participants are encouraged to set up their own tents and interiors. Assistance will always be at hand, but we would encourage participants to minimize third party contact with their equipment as far as possible
  - Participants must be strongly urged to bring their own sleeping bags
  - Keep equipment assigned to a bubble together
4. If equipment is being provided by the operator for short term use (such as harnesses or helmets)
  - After each use, wipe down hard equipment (such as cycles, kayaks, carabiners, pulleys, belay devices, harness buckles, helmet shells etc.) with surface disinfectant, 10% bleach solution or alcohol-based sanitizers (min 70% iso propyl alcohol)
  - After each use, spray isopropyl alcohol (min 70%) on soft equipment (such as harnesses, helmet insides, drybags, ropes) to disinfect them and let dry naturally (few minutes). **Do NOT use bleach or detergent to clean soft equipment since this will degrade the nylon**
  - For further brand-specific information, please visit <https://www.challengedesign.com/blog/gear-manufacturers-statement-regarding-cleaningsanitizing/>
5. As far as possible, use demonstrations to help guests with wearing PPE. Provide hands-on assistance only when essential. If physical contact between the activity lead and guest is unavoidable for helping them wear PPE properly, then
  - Wear a mask
  - Ensure minimal contact

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- Sanitize all points of contact with alcohol-based sanitizer (min 70% isopropyl alcohol) after each guest.

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## Processes

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### Briefings

- Encourage social distancing of at least six feet
- Minimize any physical contact - no hand shaking, hugs, etc.
- Activity lead washes hands upon entering the expedition hotel
- If briefing outdoors, wipe hands frequently with alcohol-based sanitizer
- All surfaces must be sanitized with wipes or disinfectant spray prior to guest arrival
- Minimize points of contact for walk-in guests. Sanitize any points of contact immediately after the guest interaction
- Set-up the room so people are more than 2m away from the speaker.
- Set-up screening station outside the conference room.
- Sanitizer will be available in the conference room.
- Guests and orientation staff must wear masks during orientation.

### Conduct of the activity

1. Before conducting any activity, follow the below on-site checking protocol to check all guests. This should be done for all walk-in guests, and daily for all guests on multi-day tours.
  - a. Walk through the questions listed in the Guest Questionnaire. If the guest answers Yes to any of questions 1 – 3, immediately,
    - i. Stop the activity for that guest/bubble
    - ii. Isolate the guest and his/her bubble at least 2m away from others
    - iii. Implement the use of masks and gloves by employees and co-workers at the site until a status can be determined with a medical test.
    - iv. Have the guest examined and tested by a medical professional.
  - b. Temperature check using a no-touch infrared thermometer. Temperature must be below 100.4°F/38°C
  - c. For physically demanding activities conducted above 5000 feet altitude, Oxygen saturation should be checked using a pulse oximeter. Minimum reading should be 90% saturation (90% SpO2)
2. Maintain a minimum distance of 2m between guests. If this is not possible, then consider the guest group as a “bubble”. Do not mix bubbles.
3. Reduce guest numbers if necessary, to maintain social distancing

4. Allocate higher activity lead: guest ratio. Remember that guests may be spread over a larger distance and may also need closer monitoring for symptoms of oxygen deprivation
5. As a first responder, proceed according to the generally applicable first aid guidelines and use a mask (mouth-nose protection). When close to somebody, limit conversation to help reduce potential spread of infection. (ref: <https://www.theuiaa.org/uiiaa/covid-19-recommendations-for-mountain-sports-endorsed-by-the-uiaa/>)

## Payments

- Encourage contactless payments such as google pay or UPI
- If using a credit card, sanitize the credit card and hands before and after use with an alcohol-based sanitizer (min 70% isopropyl alcohol). Provide the sanitizer to guests also
- For cash payments, ask guests to count it and drop it into a safe receptacle without touching. Leave it for 24 hours before use. Recommend that guests sanitize their hands after accepting change.

## Post activity (multi-day programs)

- Upon arrival guides must wash hands using a hand wash setup outside the store.
- Minimize any physical contact between people - no hand shaking, hugs, etc.
- Encourage social distancing of at least six feet except when needed for carrying heavy items.
- Encourage single person tasks. Discourage sharing of workspace, tools, or other equipment.
- Avoid spending time in the office or touching office surfaces as much as possible. Sanitize if necessary.
- Pressure wash or sanitize (with bleach or isopropyl alcohol) all hard equipment including:
  - Boxes, kitchen equipment, tables, chairs, toilet
  - Drybags - passenger, boots, chairs, tents, backpacks
- Lifejackets should be washed in soap, rinsed and dried
- Launder all fabric items including sleeping bags, table cloths etc.
- Follow manufacturer's instructions for equipment such as tents and sleeping bags. Refer to <https://www.challengedesign.com/blog/gear-manufacturers-statement-regarding-cleaningsanitizing/> for information, or individual manufacturer statements
- Head cook is limited to one helper who will be briefed on procedures and PPE.

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## Activity specific guidelines

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It is recommended that all adventure activities follow the guidelines and protocols outlined above. In addition:

- For the below activities, please refer <https://www.theuiaa.org/uiiaa/covid-19-recommendations-for-mountain-sports-endorsed-by-the-uiaa/> for activity specific guidelines
  - Sport Climbing
  - Outdoor Bouldering
  - Via Ferrata
  - Multi-pitch climbing / alpine climbing / alpine touring
  - Mountain Biking
  - Alpine Skiing
- For Wildlife Safaris, please follow the below, in addition to the common guidelines

### **For the Park**

- Reduce touch points
- Promote use of E-Tickets/ QR Code system for entering the park
- Reduce wait time at the entry gate of the park
- Reduce crowding at the entry gate by allowing time slots for vehicles to enter
- Allow only the same group/family in one vehicle
- Canter and sharing safari vehicles should be discouraged and only deployed when physical distancing norms can be enforced effectively. Smaller vehicles used by bubble groups may be encouraged instead.
- Inform all gypsy owners to sanitise vehicle after each safari

### **For the Guide**

- Wear a mask
- Do Namaste (no shaking hands or body contact with others)
- To be seated in the front seat to not have body contact with guests.
- To be briefed on social distancing and sanitisation

### **For the private vehicle provider (such as Gypsy)**

- Sanitise vehicle seats and handlebars before and after each safari.
- Do Namaste (no shaking hands or body contact with others)
- Inform guests that they should use the toilets at the resort before leaving for the park.

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- Inform guests that they will not be allowed to get down inside the park.
  - Inform guests that they have to eat their breakfast in the vehicle and will not be allowed to alight.
  - Inform guests they have to wear a mask and face shield or as directed by the forest department.
  - Guests below 10 years and above 65 years are not allowed to get entry into the park. Pre communication must be sent to the guest regarding this at the time of reservation as per NTCA directive.

### **Boat Cruise safari**

- Maintain a safe distance while escorting guests
  - The Jetty should be equipped with hand sanitizers and disposable masks.
  - Sanitised life jackets should be offered to guests, maintaining a safe distance.
  - Request guests to follow physical distancing norms
  - Keep the seat next to the boatman empty to promote safe distancing policy.
  - Boat should be sanitised after each ride.
- For **Scuba Diving**, please refer to  
[https://www.padi.com/sites/default/files/documents/2020-05/8%20Steps\\_0.pdf](https://www.padi.com/sites/default/files/documents/2020-05/8%20Steps_0.pdf)

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## **APPENDIX**

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## Appendix A: Product Recommendations

Coronaviruses are killed by a number of chemical disinfectants readily available from consumer and commercial sources, and likely to be used already by hotels. Examples of appropriate disinfectant solutions are listed in the table below.

Disinfectants	Recommended use	Precautions
Sodium hypochlorite (bleach)  1000 parts per million of available chlorine, usually achieved by a 1 in 50 dilution of 5% liquid bleach	Disinfection of material potentially contaminated with blood and body fluids (Recommended contact time with surfaces is 10 minutes).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should be used in well-ventilated areas</li> <li>• Protective clothing required while handling and using undiluted bleach</li> <li>• Do not mix with strong acids to avoid release of chlorine gas</li> <li>• Corrosive to metals</li> </ul>
Granular chlorine to be diluted as per manufacturer's instructions	May be used in place of liquid bleach if this is unavailable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should be used in well-ventilated areas</li> <li>• Protective clothing required while handling and using undiluted bleach</li> <li>• Do not mix with strong acids to avoid release of chlorine gas</li> <li>• Corrosive to metals</li> </ul>
Alcohol e.g. Isopropyl 70%, ethyl alcohol 70-80%	Smooth metal surfaces, tabletops and other surfaces on which bleach cannot be used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flammable, toxic, to be used in well-ventilated area, avoid inhalation</li> <li>• Keep away from heat sources, electrical equipment, flames, hot surfaces</li> <li>• Allow to dry completely</li> </ul>

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## Appendix B: Masks & Gloves

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Respiratory viruses that includes Corona viruses target mainly the upper and lower respiratory tracts. Hence protecting the airway from the particulate matter generated by droplets / aerosols prevents human infection. Contamination of mucous membranes of the mouth and nose by infective droplets or through a contaminated hand also allows the virus to enter the host. Hence the droplet precautions/ airborne precautions using masks are crucial while dealing with a suspect or confirmed case of COVID-19/performing aerosol generating procedures.

Masks are of different types. The type of mask to be used is related to particular risk profile of the category of personnel and his/her work. There are two types of masks which are recommended for various categories of personnel working in hotels or community settings, depending upon the work environment:

### Triple layer medical mask

A triple layer medical mask is a fluid-resistant disposable mask that provides protection to the wearer from droplets of infectious material emitted during coughing/sneezing/talking.

### N-95 respirator mask

An N-95 respirator mask is a respiratory protective device with high filtration efficiency to airborne particles. To provide the requisite air seal to the wearer, such masks are designed to achieve a very close facial fit.

Such mask should have high fluid resistance, good breathability (preferably with an expiratory valve), clearly identifiable internal and external faces, duckbill/cup-shaped structured design that does not collapse against the mouth

If correctly worn, the filtration capacity of these masks exceeds those of triple layer medical masks. Since these provide a much tighter air seal than triple layer medical masks, they are designed to protect the wearer from inhaling airborne particles.

Masks are effective only when used in combination with frequent hand-cleaning with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.

### Usage guidelines of masks

- Unfold the pleats of the mask; make sure that they are facing down
- Place the mask over your nose, mouth and chin. Ensure there are no gaps on either side of the mask. Adjust to fit using nose clip if provided.

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- Avoid touching the mask while using it.
  - Do not leave the mask hanging from the neck.
  - Change the mask every six hours or as soon as they become wet.
  - Never reuse disposable mask and disposed the used ones into closed bins after disinfecting them.
  - Do not touch the potentially contaminated outer surface of the mask while removing it.
  - After removing the mask, clean your hands with soap and water or use alcohol-ha

### Why should we not use Nitrile or Latex Gloves

- The use of Nitrile or Latex gloves, while good for optics, isn't the best thing for outdoor trips in the wilderness, and we would not be requiring our staff to wear them all the time for the following three reasons:
- A small puncture or tear in the gloves is not uncommon in the wilderness and Nitrile or Latex gloves give a false sense of security.
- The World Health Organization does not believe that wearing gloves outside is effective in preventing coronavirus infections: "Regularly washing your bare hands offers more protection against catching COVID-19 than wearing rubber gloves," the health organization has clearly stated.
- Gloves – Nitrile or Latex are meant for single use only. They need to be discarded after every 4 hours, and these gloves take hundreds of years to bio-

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## Appendix C: Templates

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These are suggested formats for communications with guests

### Template 1: Pre-arrival Information to be sent to guest

Dear Patron,

Thank you for booking your next holiday with us. We are looking forward to your visit, and wish to update you on our concern for your safety, while you are with us.

We are taking precautions for hygiene and cleanliness at all touch points of your visit, and beyond. To help us ensure your stay is seamless and enjoyable, we request you to please prepare yourself with the following for the new-normal way of holidaying:

1. Please carry your personal masks and a bottle of alcohol-based hand sanitizer. We can also provide you these, if you wish, at additional cost.
2. Please carry your refillable water bottles
3. Please share your travel history of you have visited any Covid-19 hotspots
4. Please do not travel if you have a cough and/or fever. If you have one on arrival, we will have to send you to the closest medical facility as per government directives
5. Please adhere to the measures in place and follow guidelines to keep your stay sanitized
6. Practise social distancing norms and Covid-19 precautions during your stay with us
7. Your activities are being planned carefully, please follow instructions to help us make these enjoyable
8. We request you to take personal responsibility for yourself, your family and friends to ensure you are armed with the latest updates for Covid 19, and help us ensure a safe and enjoyable environment for you.

### Template 2: Pre-Dining Information for guest

Dear Patron,

Please note that the following safeguards have been put in place for your safety and that of our employees. We request your patience and kind cooperation, and regret any inconvenience that may be caused. Please do feel free to let us know of any suggestions you may have for improving the process – we are continually trying to improve our procedures for your safety and comfort.

- Please do not enter the restaurant unless directed to do so by a member of the restaurant staff
- We will take your temperature checks before you enter the dining facility and may deny entry to the restaurant if we feel there is cause for concern
- Tables have been re-arranged so as to maintain 2m distance from each other
- Maximum of four people are allowed per table.
- All chefs are required to wash and sanitize their hands frequently (at least every hour).
- Chefs are required to wear surgical masks with goggles at all times and wear gloves when handling food items.
- All buffet or semi-buffet food are served in smaller portions and are replaced or replenished approx. by every 30 minutes to avoid contamination.
- All tableware including salt & pepper shakers, toothpick holders, sugar container, tent card holders, menus and bill folders are cleaned and sanitized on a daily basis.
- All crockery and utensils used at the buffet counters, including tongs, spoons and under liner are changed and sanitized every 30 minutes.
- Disinfecting wet wipes are given out to replace normal wet wipes at all restaurants and function areas.
- Dining tables and chairs are sanitized with designated disinfectant before serving new guests, so guests can find a pleasant and safe dining experience at all restaurants.
- Request you to reserve a table before coming down for your meal

### Template 3: Guest pre-booking notice

Guests at higher risk are advised that they do not go on the trip. High risk individuals include, but are not limited to people with the following conditions:

- Over 65 years of age and under 10 years of age
- Chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
- Obesity
- Diabetes, chronic kidney disease, or undergoing dialysis
- Liver disease
- Expecting mothers
- Other immune compromised individuals (HIV, undergoing cancer treatment, or other underlying medical conditions)

### Template 4: Guest Questionnaire

Thank you for booking your tour with us. To ensure your safety and that of other guests and our employees, we require you to complete the below questionnaire, sign it and send a scanned copy back to us at least 3 days before your scheduled arrival.

1. Have you recently experienced any of the following symptoms?
  - Fever (100.4°F/38°C or higher) or chills?
  - Cough, not due to another health condition?
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, not due to another health condition?
  - Sore throat, not due to another health condition?
  - Muscle aches, not due to another health condition, or been caused by a specific activity (such as physical exercise)
  - Loss of taste or smell?
2. Have you been in contact with an individual who has been ill with flu-like symptoms in the last 14 days?
3. Have you been diagnosed with Covid-19 in the last 30 days? If “yes”, please enter the date you were notified that you were no longer contagious with Covid-19.
4. Have you been tested for Covid-19? If yes, when was the test and what were the results?
5. Have you been tested for Covid-19 antibodies? If yes, what were the results?

Important:

- If you answer “yes” to questions 1-3, we will be unable to accommodate you on the tour
- If we do not receive your completed response to the above at least 3 days before you arrive, we will be unable to accommodate you on the tour and your booking will be cancelled. Our standard cancellation terms will apply
- All members of your group/family, including minors must submit an individual completed copy of this questionnaire.
- Each completed questionnaire must be signed and dated by the concerned person. In the case of minors, their legal guardian must sign the completed questionnaire
- If you are diagnosed with Covid-19 on or after your arrival, you may be charged for PPE and sanitization processes

### Template 5: Steps for Service Provider in Case Guest has Temperature

The service provider maybe a Transporter/Guide/Hotel/Homestay etc. This template suggests steps they can take to ensure the Guest is comfortable and not hassled in case he turns up with Fever/Covid-19 symptoms at the time of check-in/pick up.

This is just a suggestive template, which can be customised according to the local prevailing laws and state guidelines, *which an organisation may choose to adopt.*

#### **Scenario 1: Guest has the following symptoms at the time of Airport/Railways Station pick up.**

- Fever (100.4°F/38°C or higher) or chills?
- Cough, not due to another health condition?
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, not due to another health condition?
- Sore throat, not due to another health condition?
- Muscle aches, not due to another health condition, or been caused by a specific activity (such as physical exercise)
- Loss of taste or smell?

Ask the Guest:

1. If he/she has been in contact with an individual who has been ill with flu-like symptoms in the last 14 days?
2. If he/she has been in diagnosed with Covid-19 in the last 30 days? If “yes”, please enter the date you were notified that you were no longer contagious with Covid-19.

3. If he/she has been tested for Covid-19? If yes, when was the test and what were the results?
4. If he/she has been tested for Covid-19 antibodies? If yes, what were the results?

Important:

If you answer “yes” to questions 1-2, we will be unable to accommodate you on the tour and can assist you with the following:

- The driver can advise the guest through mobile communication about the options available to him
  1. Either the guest can call up the testing centre for getting a Covid-19 Test done.
  2. The Guest to be offered a PPE Suite to wear without which the Guest cannot board the vehicle.
  3. The Driver should wear a PPE Suite and drive the Guest to the Testing Centre with windows open.
  4. Post the Testing, the driver can recommend a hotel/isolation centre where the guest can check-in till the test results come out, and drop the Guest there.
  5. The driver will need to disinfect the whole vehicle and dispose the PPE suite as per Government Guidelines.
  6. The Cost for the PPE suit and disinfection of the vehicle maybe charged to the Guest. It is recommended that the service provider intimate the guest about these charges in the pre-booking communication

**Scenario 2 : Guest has the following symptoms at the time of pick up from another hotel.**

- Fever (100.4°F/38°C or higher) or chills?
- Cough, not due to another health condition?
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, not due to another health condition?
- Sore throat, not due to another health condition?
- Muscle aches, not due to another health condition, or been caused by a specific activity (such as physical exercise)
- Loss of taste or smell?

Ask the Guest:

1. If he/she has been in contact with an individual who has been ill with flu-like symptoms in the last 14 days?
2. If he/she has been in diagnosed with Covid-19 in the last 30 days? If “yes”, please enter



the date you were notified that you were no longer contagious with Covid-19.

3. If he/she has been tested for Covid-19? If yes, when was the test and what were the results?
4. If he/she has been tested for Covid-19 antibodies? If yes, what were the results?

Important:

If you answer “yes” to questions 1-2, we will be unable to accommodate you on the tour and can assist you with the following:

The driver can advise the guest through mobile communication about the following:

1. That the driver will not be able to take the guest to the next hotel due to high temperature (if Covid-19 is not ruled out yet).
2. The Guest should continue to stay at the current hotel and should get a Covid-19 Test done.
3. Driver should inform the Hotel/Tour Operator about the situation.
4. Advisable to get insurance done for any exigency so all parties do not end up incurring a loss.
5. All Guest expenses for the hotel stay/testing to be borne by the guest.
6. The Travel Agent can insure itself for loss of revenue for the day.
7. Currently no insurance is available to Hotels (hotels can decide their own policies for the same.)

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The information in this document has been collated from various publicly available sources. A partial listing is provided below

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## Acknowledgements

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- *Wildlife Protocols: Mr. Rajnish K Singh (DCF Wildlife Madhya Pradesh) & Mr. Anirudh Chaoji Environmentalist.*
- *Accommodation Protocols: Mr.Sanjeev Sethi (ITC Hotels)*
- *Ms.Dilshad Master – Outward Bound India-Himalayas*
- *Ms.Anjuna Dhir - RTSOI*
- *Mr.Ravindran K / Mr.Homayon Khoram – Pranavam Resorts*
- *Ms.Mini PC / Mr.Balakrishnan KG – Namaha Homestay*