



**ADVENTURE TRAVEL**  
TRADE ASSOCIATION

# **WILDLIFE SAFARIS AMID COVID-19: RECOMMENDATIONS**

# **ADVENTURE TRAVEL COVID-19 HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES**

**JUNE 2020**

# INTRODUCTION



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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](https://adventuretravel.biz)

More information about Cleveland Clinic can be found at [clevelandclinic.org](https://clevelandclinic.org)

# 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 **Wildlife Safaris 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.

# WE'RE ON A TEAM

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.

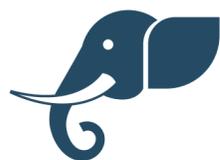
# NOTE & DISCLAIMER

**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](mailto: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 implementing 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.

# WILDLIFE EXPERIENCES

As with any activity, wildlife experiences have advantages and disadvantages for implementing strategies to minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Advantages include the small group nature of safaris, that they take place outdoors, and that spacing and protection measures are easy to implement. Disadvantages include the wide-ranging nature of how safaris are conducted (vehicle-based, on foot, boat-based, etc), the inclusion of lodging for multi-day safaris, and the common use of vehicles for transportation. These factors must be assessed and measures must be put in place to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19.



## 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.
- Consider offering the possibility of private trips for people who prefer not to sit in a vehicle with other guests, or ensure that distancing measures are implemented with a group of members from different household units.
- If undertaking a walking safari or wildlife experience, distancing measures for group members should be considered. For further information see [Trekking amid COVID-19: Guidelines](#)
- Use face coverings when in situations of higher risk of virus transmission, such as when using transportation, in enclosed spaces, or when guests are in close proximity to one another.
  - As of current knowledge, face shields do not provide the same level of protection as face coverings; face shields should be used as an additional layer of protection to face coverings or used when face coverings are not recommended (e.g high exertion aerobic activities).



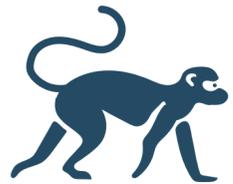
## II. Pre- Arrival, Instruction and Briefing

- Have screening procedures in place. Before joining the activity or experience 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.
- For longer trips, consider additional pre-trip recommendations and screening, such as suggesting steps to limit exposure to COVID-19, using screening questionnaires, or testing.
- Perform daily screening and monitoring measures, such as asking about symptoms or checking temperatures.
- Screening and monitoring measures should be extensive for staff members.
- Set clear standards and boundaries for COVID-19 health and safety measures and guest participation. Make available relevant information about the activity, 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, kitchen, or dining facility, before starting an activity and as often as needed throughout the activity.
- 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 with the necessary additional COVID-19 measures. Consider holding briefings and gatherings outside whenever possible.
- When closer contact is required consider the use of face coverings.



### 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.
- The choice of vehicle should also be considered. Most safari operators use open air 4x4 vehicles, which are preferred, that allow for reasonable spacing between guests.
- If members of more than one household unit are sharing a boat to undertake a water based wildlife safari, the choice of boat and number of guests allowed on the boat should be considered to allow for adequate spacing. For further information see Small Vessels amid COVID-19: Guidelines



### IV. Commencement of activity or experience:

- Consider procedures for when wildlife is encountered that allow for safe distancing between guests whilst still enjoying the experience.
- It is important to also ensure guests remain distanced from any wildlife (Whilst there have been very few cases of human to animal transmission of the virus, there is very little science or evidence to prove that humans cannot transmit the virus; such transmission could have a devastating consequence in species such as the Great Apes).
- Consider the use of face coverings throughout the experience.
- Maintain your company standards of distancing and sanitation when encountering other groups - remember they might not know nor be following the same health and safety standards that you require of your group.
- 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. Dining:

- Distancing: consider alternatives to provide spacing, such as ample guest seating and spaced tables, offering private or outdoors eating locations, and scheduled meal times.
- Prevent surface contact where needed, for example:
  - Identify high-use areas and touchpoints, such as; workstations, tables, menus, doors, utensils, or condiments.
  - Clean high-use areas and touchpoints often with a rigorous enhanced sanitation regimen.
  - Prevent contact in high-use areas when possible.
  - Food and beverages should be served by staff members trained and observant of precautions.
- Consider serving individually served meals rather than buffet or self-service.
- 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.
- Ensure food safety and restaurant cleaning is in line with local official guidance.
- For further information on food handling see Culinary Experiences amid COVID-19 Guidelines.
- For further information on food preparation in the field see Camping amid COVID-19 Guidelines.



## VI. Lodging:

- FIT or household groups should be favoured to promote distancing. Avoid members of separately booked groups sharing bedrooms.
- Attention should be paid to increased levels of sanitization and disinfection. Distancing and screening measures should all be implemented in line with hotel, local and official guidelines.
- For further information on lodging see Small Lodges amid COVID-19: Guidelines.



## VII. 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 and touchpoints often with a rigorous enhanced sanitation regimen.
  - Prevent contact in high-use areas when possible.
- Each person should have their individual gear – binoculars, walking poles, lifejacket, etc.
  - 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.
  - Have guests size and choose equipment with minimum handling, care for and carry their own equipment.
- 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.
- Consider implementing safe-handling procedures for personnel who use cleaning products to clean equipment to prevent harm from chemicals or cross-contamination.
- Consider sanitizing any equipment or item that could be a vector for COVID-19 transmission.



## VIII. 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](https://clevelandclinic.org).**





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## SUPPORTING CONTRIBUTORS

