



Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Tourism Industry in Pakistan in the COVID Era

NTCB's Tourism Recovery Action Committee

NTCB'S TOURISM RECOVERY ACTION COMMITTEE has prepared following SOPs in the light of International Best Practices and in consultation with the concerned Stakeholders:

Background:

- Several countries have demonstrated that COVID-19 transmission from one person to another can be slowed or stopped if effective measures are adopted as Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). The document is addressed to collective tourism sector such as hotels, tour operators, travel agents, transport companies and similar establishments. In addition, the document will help any authority involved in public health to respond to a public health event in hotels and tourism accommodation establishments.
- The SOPs proposed here should be adapted as per the local context by the tourism sector's Workplace Health & Safety Committees which should be established by the provincial/regional Tourism Departments. These committees should have representation of provincial tourism departments, district administrations, local governments, health departments and stakeholders from private sector tourism and hospitality trade associations.

SOPs FOR HOTELS & ACCOMMODATION FACILITIES:

GUEST TRANSPORT:

- Ensure the driver is wearing protective gear such as mask, gloves etc.
- The car should be disinfected with every arrival.
- Keep sanitizers for use by driver and guests in the dashboard of vehicle.
- Check if the driver section can be segregated with a temporary plastic or a transparent sheet.
- Driver should be instructed to limit conversations to minimal.
- Guest instructions to be placed at the back seat; the information booklet must cover all the steps being taken by the hotel for safety and sanitization along with the operational norms for restaurants, room service,
- housekeeping & laundry procedures



ENTRANCE:

- Temperature checks at entrance of hotel should be mandatory.
- Guests running a temperature of more than 98.6° F should be politely asked to return or directed to the nearest hospital/medical facility
- Keep sanitizers for guests to use at the main entrance of the hotel.
- Disinfect and clean guest luggage after informing the guests
- Provide a mask if guest is not wearing one

RECEPTION:

- If the guest is arriving from restricted countries or regions, ensure that you have detailed information from the guest upfront before arrival or at time of making the reservation.
- For all pre-booked guests all check-in formalities should be completed online to reduce contact and time at the front desk.
- Give safety, hygiene and other instructions to the guests as per the new SOPs.
- Ensure markings on the floor at reception to maintain Social Distancing.
- Ensure staff members are wearing masks & gloves at all time.
- Keep sanitizers for guests to use at the entrance gate and reception counter.
- Keep paper, envelopes and all equipment sanitized.
- Keep swabs which Guests can use with sanitizer to clean their phone or credit cards

ELEVATORS (where applicable):

- Ensure that safety instructions, including the number of guests allowed at one time, is placed inside the elevator and is easily visible; apologize for the delay and inconvenience caused to the guests due to the new safety norms.
- Elevator floor must have markings with directions, so that guests do not face each other and maintain the appropriate Social Distancing.
- Ensure elevator floor buttons are regularly sanitized by the Housekeeping Associates.
- Keep floor & other area of the elevators that can be touched sanitized.
- Install hand sanitizer dispensers in the elevators.

GUEST ROOMS:

- Due to Social Distancing norms, allocate alternate rooms or leave one room vacant in between, based on occupancy levels.
- Guests instructions given at the reception should include instructions on how the rooms are sanitized at regular intervals.



- Signage with information on sanitization norms should be placed on the bedside table.
- Ensure Housekeeping staff on the floor are wearing safety gear.
- Keep sanitizers at regular intervals on the floor and small dispensers in the rooms.
- Laundry, room service instructions should be available in the room for the new SOPs being implemented.
- Room linen to be changed once in two days or ONLY on request; no turn down.
- Services to facilitate minimal contact.

RESTAURANTS:

- Reduce number of tables to maintain Social Distancing norms.
- Seating for the tables to be reduced to half of capacity.
- Arrival instructions should explain to guests that they should come down to the restaurants only when a table is available to avoid crowding.
- Staff must be trained for minimal contact/communication during service.
- Ensure staff are wearing masks, gloves and hair nets.
- Use disposable napkins which are pre-packed or individually packed serviettes.
- Keep sanitizers for guests and staff use on the reception counter.
- Keep swabs which guests can use with sanitizer to clean their cell phones or credit cards etc.

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.

MEETINGS:

- In case guests require a meeting area, keep enough space between tables & chairs.
- 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.

POOL and GYM etc. (where applicable):

- Keep these areas closed till advised to open, as per government norms.
- Suggest alternate options / drop to open parks or walks which may be safer.
- Include Yoga sessions or health channels on in-house TV network for guests to follow.



CHECK-OUT:

- Create a separate check-out area if you think it's getting over-crowded and wherever possible use e-check out by emailing the bill & accepting online payments.
- Advise the guests to inform their check-out plans in advance so that bills can be made ready.
- Put floor markers as in case of check-in.
- Provide sanitizers and other swabs on the counter in case the guest requires.

EMPLOYEES TRANSPORT:

- Temperature check point for staff before boarding the bus/van, where transport is provided.
- Ensure that staff transport is organized in case public transport is not operating in your cities or is not safe.
- You may wish to have few staff members stay in the hotel, keeping in mind the Occupancy levels.

EMPLOYEES DINING:

- Shifts must be staggered to avoid cafeteria crowding.
- Cafeteria hours should be extended to allow smaller groups over a longer period of time - the usage should be restricted to 33% of its capacity at any given time.

KITCHEN:

- Operational kitchens must be sanitized at regular intervals.
- Limit the number of staff to the minimum required; staff can be organized into teams to reduce interactions between teams.
- All staff should wear disposable masks, gloves, hair nets and all other safety gear.
- Workstations should be placed in such a way that the staff is not facing each other and can maintain appropriate Social Distance.
- You may tweak the menus to include more options of cooked food rather than raw food.
- Ensure proper cleaning of vegetables, meats and all other materials that are required in the kitchens; use approved sanitizing agents to disinfect.

SERVICE ELEVATORS (where applicable):

- Ensure that safety instructions, including the number of employees allowed at one time, is placed inside the elevator and is easily visible.



- Ensure elevator floor buttons are regularly sanitized.
- Keep floor & other area of the elevators that can be touched sanitized.
- Elevator floor must have markings with directions, so that employees do not face other and maintain Social Distancing.
- Keep one elevator dedicated to quarantine and evacuate any possible suspected cases for both guests and staff.
- Install hand sanitizer dispensers in the elevators.

EMPLOYEES HEALTH CARE & TRAINING:

- Ensure regular health check-ups for employees; can have a well-equipped clinic operational within the hotel premises with a health partner.
- Have proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the Safety Team in case of any requirements, train the Safety Team to handle and wear disposable PPE equipment in case they have to evacuate a potential suspected case.
- Check all employee temperatures twice a day.
- HR Department should conduct sensitization classes for staff on upgraded hygiene standards; they can also have visiting faculty to update staff on standards
- All employees must be well-informed about all COVID related operating SOPs.

OTHER GUIDELINES:

- All indoor areas such as entrance lobbies, corridors and staircases, escalators, elevators, security guard booths, office rooms, meeting rooms, cafeteria should be mopped with a disinfectant with 1% sodium hypochlorite or phenolic disinfectants
- For metallic surfaces like door handles, security locks, keys etc. 70% alcohol can be used to wipe down surfaces where the use of bleach is not suitable.

USE OF HOTEL/ACCOMMODATION FACILITIES DURING THE TRIP:

- Tour companies shall only use approved hotels and accommodation facilities for providing boarding and lodging facility to their guests. (List of approved hotels and accommodation facilities strictly following the SOPs will be provided by the provincial/regional tourism departments).
- During travel, the stop over stay or stay for meals will also be arranged at the preapproved restaurants/hotels.
- Guest must be instructed about the safety and hygiene procedures during the stay at hotels.
- Disinfect and clean guest luggage before every departure

Pakistan Hotels Association