



ICT-P-001

# Protocol for

# Hosting Activities

## TOURISM SECTOR

CREATION DATE:  
DECEMBER-2020

VERSION: 002

PREPARED BY:  
COSTA RICAN TOURISM BOARD  
COSTA RICAN CHAMBER OF HOTELS  
HOTELIERS PRIVATE SECTOR



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# FOREWORD

As part of the declaration of a national state of emergency throughout the territory of the Republic of Costa Rica, made official by Executive Decree 42227-MP-S, as a result of COVID-19, and, given the characteristics of the pandemic and the various forms of infection of the virus, **preventive health measures have been defined by the Ministry of Health**, as the governing body in the context of this response phase and in the event of contagion in a workplace.

## OBJECTIVE AND FIELD OF APPLICATION

The objective of this document is to establish the requirements that allow the reactivation of the tourism sector under the COVID-19 alert. **This protocol provides the hotel subsector with guidelines so that they may gradually provide clients with their services**, at least at 50% of their capacity, while avoiding chains of contagion.

## HYGIENE AND DISINFECTION

### OVERVIEW



The establishment must ensure access to potable water, antibacterial soap, gel alcohol, disposable towels, or any other authorized hand drying implements, in common areas, as well as their replenishment and cleaning.

The establishment must intensify cleaning and hygiene measures in all public areas. Management must assign a person responsible for monitoring high contact surfaces such as railings, doors, telephones, elevator buttons, countertops, among others, as well as, make sure that the rest of the areas are also taken care of.

Each establishment must maintain documentation to support the periodicity of inspections, cleaning and disinfection in areas.

The establishment must guarantee the use of approved commercial cleaning and disinfection products.

Cleaning carts must be cleaned and disinfected.

Protocols for sneezing and coughing, hand washing, alternative forms of greeting, not touching the face and populations at risk, must be displayed in a visible area and in the most common languages used by tourists. (see annexes).



# COMMON OR HIGH CONTACT AREAS

Gel alcohol, disposable towels or any other authorized hand drying implements, must be readily available for hygiene and disinfection in all common, or high contact areas.



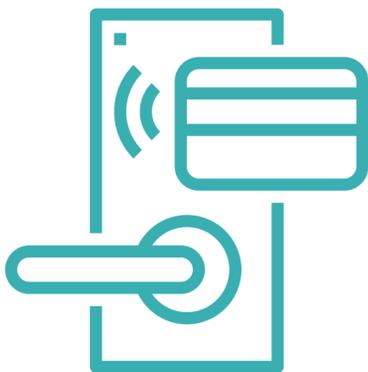
Make sure that all staff members must have any PPE, or implements, they may need.

Avoid sharing pens. If you must share a pen, disinfect before and after use.

The establishment must encourage electronic payment, preferably contactless.

Countertops must be cleaned and disinfected constantly, taking into account the transit of people.

In areas where services may be provided to larger groups of people, ensure the established 1.8 meters of social distancing by demarcating the area.



Clean and disinfect key cards and keys before handing them to clients. Upon departure, they must be again cleaned and disinfected by the reception staff.

Baggage transport services provided by staff members must be carried out in a safe manner. For this, personnel must have the authorized protective equipment.

With regard to valet services, the handling of customer vehicles by the staff members must be avoided.

In general, it is recommended that staff members avoid manipulating the belongings of guests, visitors, providers, and others.



# GUEST ROOMS



The establishment must **ensure the cleanliness and hygiene of guest rooms.**

It is recommended that the establishment clearly communicate all cleaning and hygiene standards implemented on site.

Employees must use EPP (gloves, masks, uniform, among others) during the cleaning and disinfection process of guest rooms. Special emphasis must be placed on cleaning high contact surfaces such as remote controls, telephone dial pads and handsets, door, closet and drawer handles, A/C control panels, light switches, lamp switches, coffee makers, among others. In the bathroom, high contact surfaces include the toilet, sink, shower, doors, and others.

Leave it to **the guest to decide if they want the room cleaned on** a daily basis during the stay.

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## INFORMATION MEASURES FOR EMPLOYEES REGARDING GUIDELINES ISSUED BY THE MINISTRY FOR THE WORKPLACE

Provide the time and the means for proper hand hygiene when entering the workplace and during the work day.

Frequently disinfect, throughout the work day, objects of use, as well as elements in the workplace.

Do not share work equipment or other employees' devices. In the event that there is alternation in the use of certain equipment or devices, the hotel must establish cleaning and disinfection guidelines to be implemented between each use, to reduce the risk of contagion.

Wear clean work clothes every day.

Provide and guarantee the use of PPE by staff members, according to the guidelines of the Ministry of Health.

If the establishment has an onsite doctor's office, the person in charge must be attentive to any updates made to guidelines regarding procedures in the event of a case or possible contact, in accordance with the provisions issued by the Ministry of Health.

The company doctor must notify the immediate manager if an employee presents symptoms of risk.

In the event of a confirmed case or suspicious contact, the HR department will follow the instructions provided by the Ministry of Health; if not, this will be carried out by a direct supervisor.

Implement informative and educational actions with company staff, providers and customers, aimed at incorporating healthy practices.

# EMPLOYEES

Assign a person responsible for communication related to individual and collective protection.

Compile information found on the Ministry of Health website and choose the best strategy to disseminate it. This may be electronically or graphically, maintaining strategic information points such as the dining room, bathrooms, information boards or any other high traffic area.

# PROVIDERS

Providers must comply with all cleaning and disinfection measures implemented by the establishment.

The establishment must, insofar as possible, must communicate with providers through channels that limit or avoid personal contact or interaction, such as a scheduled appointment, email or video call. If in-person attention is required, it must be done in compliance with all established guidelines.

The use of PPE is recommended when tending to providers.

The establishment must log visits from providers, indicating the date and time of visit along with the agent's personal information, so that, if required by the Ministry of Health, in the event of an epidemiological study, the information may be promptly provided.

The provider shall remain on the premises only for the amount of time needed to complete the transaction.

Providers must comply with all health guidelines implemented by the establishment.

Staff at the property are required to clean and disinfect the reception area for goods and merchandise frequently.

# CUSTOMERS

It is recommended that clients be notified of any service conditions and prevention measures in effect at the time along with the confirmation of their reservation.

It is recommended that each establishment share, via their website, all protocols implemented to guarantee the health of both guests and those who care for them. As part of the welcome protocol, inform guests of all health procedures and regulations in effect at the time and, in order to guarantee prompt and timely treatment, based on guidelines established by the Ministry of Health, ask guests to immediately notify the establishment if they experience any COVID-19 related symptoms during their stay.

# OFFICIAL DOCUMENTATION



All documents issued must be in the official language, and at least one other foreign language (English), for the understanding and compliance of all. Display informational posters specifying the steps for proper hand disinfection, the correct way to cough or sneeze, and other forms of greeting, according to the guidelines provided by the Ministry of Health.

Place in public areas, public bathrooms, employee dining areas, employee restrooms and any other place that the establishment deems appropriate.

Ensure that all staff members comply with their assigned responsibilities, including notifying their immediate superior if they have any cold or flu like symptoms, prior to coming on shift, to take the appropriate steps, in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the Ministry of Health.

## CLEANING AND DISINFECTION PROCEDURES



### PROCEDURE FOR WASHING YOUR HANDS.

- Wet your hands and forearms with water.
- Place antibacterial soap on the palms of your hands.
- Clean and disinfect the palms of your hands.
- Rub the backs of your hands.
- Clean and disinfect between your fingers.
- Clean and disinfect the backs of your fingers.
- Clean and disinfect your thumbs and fingertips.
- Wash your hands thoroughly after sneezing, blowing your nose, coughing or touching potentially contaminated surfaces (money, documents, countertops, etc.).
- Frequency of hand washing includes before touching your face, preparing and eating food, after using the restroom, after touching handrails and door handles, before and after a break, after interacting with a client, and after touching objects that have been manipulated by clients, to name a few.



### PROCEDURES FOR HAND RINSING AND DRYING.

- Rinse hands and forearms with water.
- Dry hands and forearms using a paper towel, or any other approved hand drying implements, and dispose of properly.
- Disinfect with gel alcohol.



### PROCEDURES FOR DISINFECTION WITH EFFECTIVE ANTI-VIRUS PRODUCTS.

- Always treat body fluids as infectious.
- If working with reusable equipment, clean and disinfect after use.
- Make sure to clean and disinfect all incoming items.

# CLEANING PLANS AND SCHEDULES

The establishment must ensure the thorough cleaning of its facilities, intensifying cleaning and hygiene measures, treating surfaces with approved commercial products and complying with the stipulations set forth by the Ministry of Health.

A person will be assigned to monitor high-contact surfaces such as railings, doors, telephones, elevator buttons, countertops, and others, in public areas, as well as make sure that all other areas are well taken care of.

Each establishment must define cleaning and disinfection schedules for the different areas based on their operation and the transit of people.

The outreach plan for cleaning, maintenance and general personnel shall be carried out through on-site trainings, information boards, electronic media, logs, and others.

Each employee is responsible for cleanliness and hygiene his or her workplaces. For those Departments that require some form of accreditation, the establishment is responsible for ensuring that staff members comply with the provisions set forth by the Ministry of Health.

Each establishment is responsible for implementing the appropriate procedures to monitor the assigned tasks.

The establishment must assign the task of waste management to a staff member, provide training so that employees are aware of the procedures and risks implicit in said task, and ensure the proper use of all required PPE.

It is recommended that records of these procedures are kept in the form of logs or control forms.

# CLEANING AND DISINFECTING PRODUCTS

Cleaning and disinfection products shall be those duly authorized and recommended by the Ministry of Health to combat the virus that causes COVID-19 disease.

Disposable items must be disposed of in a container with a foot pedal, the bag must be closed. These items may include gloves, tissues, face masks and any other single-use items.

To reuse a personal hygiene item, it must be washed with hot water and soap.

For greater safety, it is recommended to leave them in a sanitizing and disinfectant dissolution, recommended by the Ministry of Health.



# IDENTIFICATION OF CRITICAL POINTS FOR DISINFECTION

**THE FOLLOWING SURFACES MUST BE CLEANED RIGOROUSLY:** light switches, handles, handrails, locks, sanitary facilities, remote controls, sinks, faucets, telephones, cups, desk tops, drawer handles, alarm clocks, horizontal surfaces, coffee makers, hair dryers, light and AC controls, among others.

Each item may have specific cleaning requirements and, therefore, it is recommended that you consult the product user manual or consult with manufacturer's website for assistance.

## THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES ARE SUGGESTED FOR ELECTRONIC DEVICES:

- a. Turn off the computer.
- b. Disconnect power cables, devices, and external cables.
- c. Use only a soft, lint-free cloth.
- d. Keep liquids away from the item, unless otherwise indicated for specific products.
- e. Do not let moisture enter through any opening.
- f. Do not use sprays, bleaches or abrasive substances.
- g. Do not directly spray any type cleaner onto the device.
- h. Do not use products containing acetone, as it may damage your equipment.
- i. Finally, wash your hands frequently with soap and water, following the proper protocols.

Intensify the frequency of cleaning and hygiene in these spaces, with emphasis on support surfaces.

An alcohol-based solution of at least 70% should be used, as well as commercial products recommended by the authorities.

The use of gel alcohol dispensers in public areas is suggested.

## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (EPP)

PPE (face masks or mouth covers, face shields, eye protection, gloves) and other contaminated products require special handling and proper disposal. Refer to sections 6.6.1 and 6.6.2.

Note: When acquiring PPE, It is recommended that you validate its quality based on the national and international standards: <https://www.inteco.org/juntos-en-la-prevencion>.

The establishment must ensure the provision of the required PPE according to the protocols established by the Ministry of Health.

According to Executive Decree No. 42603-S of September 07, 2020, the company must provide the mandatory mask for all users who require access to its services within its facilities, the foregoing being personal protective equipment.

In addition, transportation services of people, in its different modalities, also require the use of a face mask.

The use of a face shield shall be optional and in addition to the required use of a face mask as personal protective equipment.

# WASTE MANAGEMENT

The establishment must carry out waste management in accordance with the guidelines established in the National Strategy for the Separation, Recovery and Valuation of Waste (ENSRVR) 2016-2021, of the Ministry of Health.

The company must have a unique container preferably lidded, with a foot pedal, for the disposal of waste products from cleaning and disinfection, as well as disposable personal protective equipment.

The plastic bag must be closed, before being placed in the non-recoverable waste container, when it has reached 80% of its capacity.

The person collecting waste must follow up with the proper hand washing protocol.

Trash cans must be washed and disinfected daily with water, soap and a chemical product that ensures their hygienic conditions.



# LOGISTICS IN THE WORKPLACE

## SERVICE OR OPERATIONAL CONTINUITY PLAN

The establishment, if deemed necessary, must have a Business Continuity Plan containing, at least, the following recommended sections:

- a. Threat Identification.**
- b. Impact Analysis on the establishment.**
- c. Crisis Management.**
- d. Emergency response.**
- e. Communication in crisis.**
- f. Recovery Process.**

The establishment must design work schedules according to operational needs in such a manner as to achieve physical distancing at the time of entry, during work shifts and at the time of departure of staff.

The establishment shall use staggered shifts to ensure that entry, break and departure times are orderly, and it is possible to identify, if applicable, alerts regarding the health of employees.

The establishment shall define work schedules in accordance with current provisions set forth of the Ministry of Labor.

Works schedules shall include time for employees to wash their hands at least once every 60 minutes, for at least 40 seconds, or as deemed necessary.

# SOCIAL DISTANCING IN THE WORKPLACE



**IN COMMON AREAS FOR EMPLOYEES SUCH AS:** dining room, changing area, lockers, among others, a sign must be displayed with the hours of use for each shift and/or activity in such a way that the regulation of physical distancing can always be complied with and crowding is avoided.

All employee meetings must comply with the physical distancing approved by the Ministry of Health of 1.8 meters.

If a meeting exceeds 60 minutes, a pause must be made, so that staff members can wash their hands for at least 40 seconds.

The place where the meeting is held must be disinfected and sanitized before and after the meeting.

The establishment must ensure that employees are safe at all times. To do this, it must encourage the use of the necessary protective equipment while at work through internal policies, memorandums, information boards, electronic means, among others.

The establishment shall ensure the indicated use of PPE and, in turn, will sanction any non-compliance, in accordance with all applicable regulations.

The establishment shall remind employees of their obligation to comply with all protocols established by the Ministry of Health during the trip.

The establishment shall review any vehicular or general movement restrictions, as established by the Ministry of Health and the competent authorities, with employees prior to travel.

The establishment will keep a log at the entrance of the premises to record the admittance of providers and visitors.

The establishment will display posters on guidelines provided by the Ministry of Health regarding hand washing, physical distancing, sneezing and coughing, greetings, and others, in a visible area for visitors and providers.

The establishment, through internal training, shall promote and monitor that social distancing is complied with.

To ensure compliance with recommended social distancing, the establishment will coordinate break times and areas for the employees of each shift.

To avoid crowding at all times, the establishment shall define how many individuals who can walk through corridors, stairwells, and other similar places, at the same time.

The establishment must identify the most important areas of service and high concurrence such as reception, counseling, tour office, among others, to install protective barriers such as acrylic screens or require that employees use face shields and/or the use of PPE.

If the establishment offers transportation for staff members, the vehicle must be disinfected and sanitized before and after each trip.

All staff members are required to use PPE during the journey.

The establishment will provide training for employees regarding official information from the Ministry of Health.

Employees must inform the establishment of any changes in their health, through the means established by the employer, to agree on the next step.

# EMPLOYEE SANITARY HABITS IN THE WORKPLACE

The establishment must place posters from the Ministry of Health, or similar, in areas where employees can see them. Example: employee entry and exit points, , dining area, break areas, offices, and others.

The establishment shall provide refresher trainings, at least once every two weeks, to promote hand washing, personal hygiene in general and sanitary protocols provided by the Ministry of Health and / or other government entities.

The establishment shall promote by means of talks, conversations, electronic messages, internal posters, among others, frequent washing of uniforms.

## ACTIONS FOR CONFIRMED CASES AMONG EMPLOYEES

The duty of protection of the company providing the hosting services is to ensure the safety and health of its employees, guests and other visitors (internal and external customers). This is in all aspects related to the work and services it offers and demands and must seek procedures to ensure the physical and sanitary safety of all those under its scope of management, that is to say, under its ability to control.

Given the above, it is worth clarifying the different cases that may occur in the establishment so that the identification is timely, and its handling is quick and adequate:

Any employee or client with COVID-19 like symptoms, and who has been in contact with people who were diagnosed as suspected, probable or confirmed cases, must undergo a medical assessment through the company's medical service, if the service exists within the establishment, or go to the corresponding medical center.

**In the case of suspicious cases, the company must follow the following recommendations:**

Provide the person with PPE and coordinate his or her transfer in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the Ministry of Health.

In the event of exposure of other employees or clients, await instructions from the Ministry of Health.

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**If the employee is diagnosed as a “suspicious case” of Coronavirus (COVID-19) by a doctor, he or she must:**

Comply with the indications the CCSS or the Ministry of Health.

In the case of external clients, appropriate measure must be coordinated according to the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health or CCSS.

If an employee qualifies as a “probable” or “confirmed” case, the instructions provided by the health facility or the protocol defined by the Ministry of Health for each case should be followed and immediately communicated to those responsible for the establishment.

The establishment must ensure the confidentiality of information and protect the identity of individuals.

The reinstatement of the affected employee will be carried out by means of a medical discharge issued by the CCSS doctor. Likewise, if applicable, the Department of Occupational Health will monitor as appropriate.

Refer to the Guide for the Prevention, Mitigation and Business Continuity due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

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# COMMUNICATION

The establishment must define a reliable and official verbal or written communication channel to share information related to COVID-19 that is truthful and coming from the Ministry of Health. (Information boards, posters, official signage in visible places, digital channels, among others).

Staff members, providers and customers will be provided with the necessary information regarding the prevention and containment measures established for the COVID-19 emergency.

Protocols for sneezing and coughing, hand washing, other forms of greeting, not touching the face and high-risk populations, in the most common languages used by tourists, must be posted in visible spaces. (See annexes).

The administration shall provide information about the services, provisions regarding access, use of facilities and schedules, if necessary, as well as protocols related to COVID-19.

The General Manager shall be the person responsible for maintaining and updating the information in an official manner, or failing that, he shall designate the person he deems relevant for the position and shall inform everyone (employees and providers), who will be in charge of communication from the Ministry Health.

The means of publication of the protocol, once approved by the Minister of Tourism, shall be the official website of the Costa Rican Tourism Board, CANATUR and the Costa Rican Chamber of Hotels.



## APPROVAL, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

### APPROVAL

The Minister who must approve this sectoral protocol is Mr. Gustavo Segura Sancho, Minister of Tourism.