ASEAN Guidelines on Hygiene and Safety for Professionals and Communities in the Tourism Industry

# **Facilities inside Hotels and Resorts**



## ASEAN Guidelines on Hygiene and Safety for Professionals and Communities in the Tourism Industry

## **Facilities inside hotels and resorts**

These Guidelines have been developed for facilities inside hotels and resorts, including gyms, yoga rooms, and swimming pools.

Where applicable, it is recommended that these guidelines be considered side-by-side with the ASEAN Guidelines for Spa facilities and the ASEAN Guidelines for Accommodation.

### Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the importance of the safety, health, and welfare of people working in the tourism sector. ASEAN is pursuing the development of common regional ASEAN Guidelines on Hygiene and Safety for Tourism Professionals and Communities as a key strategy for building back better. Defining common standards will aid in rebuilding the trust of the tourism workforce, travelers, and local people alike.

It is recognized that many relevant guidelines already exist among the ASEAN Member States and around the world. These Guidelines, therefore, consolidate, adapt, and harmonize the various existing international and national standards, best practices, and guidelines as well as ASEAN Member States' national health and safety protocols, to reflect common regional parameters. These non-mandatory guidelines are recommendations that are subject to the respective ASEAN Member States' national laws and regulations.

Due to the nature of the tourism and hospitality industry, there is a high degree of interaction among tourism professionals, communities, and tourists. The human resources of the industry and the tourists jointly play a key role in co-creating tourism experiences. A comprehensive strategy of protective measures that minimize the risk of transmission of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases is needed to ensure a sustainable and resilient tourism industry.



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These Guidelines are intended to provide practical guidance to empower tourism entrepreneurs to take effective action to protect tourism professionals, communities, and other relevant interested parties from COVID-19 and other communicable diseases, and to safeguard work-related health, safety, and well-being. The ASEAN Guidelines on Hygiene and Safety will support tourism enterprises in becoming more competitive and more sustainable, which will contribute to their competence to revive their businesses post-COVID-19 pandemic and their ability to address future challenges related to health, safety, and welfare.

It has been established that masks, vaccines, and social distancing (and interacting outside rather than inside when possible) are of essential importance to controlling the pandemic. As epidemiologists and other health researchers continue to learn more about COVID-19, these ASEAN Guidelines on Hygiene and Safety for Tourism Professionals and Communities in the tourism industry are a living document, evolving in response to new and improved knowledge of preventing and minimizing risk of spreading the virus. Ultimately, stewardship of these Guidelines belongs to the ASEAN Member States and their tourism industries.

ASEAN Guidelines have been developed for eight sectors:

- Accommodation (front office and housekeeping)
- Restaurants (food & beverage services and food production)
- Facilities inside hotels and resorts (gym, yoga, swimming pool)
- Spa and wellness facilities
- Travel and tour operation
- Ecotourism and community-based tourism
- Theme parks
- Convention centers



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#### **Clarifications on standard practices**

These Guidelines recommend following the national protocols in place at all times.

The risk of work-related exposure to COVID-19 depends on the probability of coming into close (less than 1 meter) or frequent contact with people who may be infected with COVID-19 and through contact with contaminated surfaces and objects.

These common ASEAN Guidelines adhere to international standards. According to international standards<sup>1</sup>, you protect yourself and others from COVID-19 by:

- 1.1. Physical distancing safe distance is considered at least 1 meter.
- 1.2. Physical spacing safe spacing is considered at least 1 meter apart for workstations and common spaces, such as entrances/exits, lifts, pantries/canteens, stairs, and other places where congregation or queuing of employees or visitors/clients might occur.
- 1.3. Wearing an appropriate mask well-fitting face masks fit completely over the nose, mouth, and chin so that a person coughs and/or sneezes into their face masks; reusable masks should be washed daily, disposable masks should be replaced daily. These guidelines recommend that an appropriate mask be worn at all times.
  - 1.3.1. Appropriate face masks are intended to protect both the wearer and other people.
  - 1.3.2. Care must be taken when putting on and taking off appropriate face masks to ensure that the staff or the appropriate face mask does not become contaminated.
  - 1.3.3. Appropriate face masks should be replaced regularly.
  - 1.3.4. Do not wear face masks if their use creates a new risk (i.e., interferes with vision, or contributes to heat-related illness) that exceeds their COVID-19 related benefits of slowing the spread of the virus.

<sup>1</sup>World Health Organization



- 1.4. Keeping rooms well ventilated make sure indoor spaces have enough air circulation. Ventilation should be maximized either with open windows or efficient air-conditioning. In the case of air-conditioning, regularly check the temperature and the moist filter (as per the instructions of the ASEAN Member State).
  - 1.5. Cleaning your hands thoroughly effective hand hygiene is achieved by washing hands with clean water and soap for at least 20 seconds; or by applying a palmful of hand sanitizer and rubbing hands together until they are dry.
  - 1.6. Coughing and sneezing Staff or guests may cough or sneeze into their mask. If the mask has become wet, they should replace the soiled mask with a clean one. Staff or guests may also choose to cough or sneeze into a tissue, as long as they cover their nose and mouth with the tissue. Dispose of the soiled mask or tissue appropriately (throw disposables in a waste bin and wrap reusables with anything of sustainable material.). Immediately clean hands either by washing thoroughly with soap and clean water or applying hand sanitizer.



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## A. General hygiene and safety practices

1. Personal hygiene and safety for employees

#### Require all staff to:

- 1.1. Wear an appropriate and well-fitting face mask at all times, e.g. in common areas, in the guestroom or wherever and whenever in contact with guests and/or co-workers.
- 1.2. Maintain a high standard of personal hygiene, including taking a bath or shower and brushing their teeth daily, regularly trimming their nails short and filing them down to avoid sharp edges, regularly washing their hands, and wearing a freshly laundered uniform during the services. This is especially important for the trainer/coach.
- 1.3. Wash hands with soap and water before preparing or eating food and drinks for general food safety.
- 1.4. Keep personal items out of the guest areas in a dedicated employee space.
- 1.5. Change into their uniform at the workplace to ensure it is clean and ready for the services. The uniform should be clean and tidy every day.
- 1.6. Wear appropriate gloves and footwear when it is appropriate for a specific task e.g., when handling cleaning solutions. Wearing gloves does not replace cleaning hands; wash gloved hands equally as often and thoroughly.

#### Furthermore:

- 1.7. If staff blow their nose into a tissue, they must throw the tissue in the waste bin and immediately wash their hands thoroughly with soap and clean water or hand sanitizer after that.
- 1.8. If a staff member has been exposed to the virus, they should not come to work. They should quarantine in accordance with the local health regulations.
- 1.9. If a staff member shows signs or symptoms of COVID-19 or tests positive for the virus, they should not come to work. If the situation occurs while at work, the staff member must not continue to work (also



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refer to section A.6. Infection Response). They should quarantine in accordance with the local health regulations.

- 1.10. Pre-Screen: Subject to national regulations, employers shall screen the body temperature and assess symptoms of staff prior to entering the facility. Note that COVID-19 is not always detected through increased temperature. Employers can consider COVID-19 (rapid) tests for suspected cases or as a routine procedure.
- 1.11. Staff should be reminded to maintain social distance before and after their service.

#### 2. Sanitation facilities for employees

- 2.1. Place handwashing stations or hand sanitizers in multiple locations that are easily accessible, convenient, and highly visible throughout the workplace for workers and guests.
  - 2.1.1.1. Use touch-free stations, where possible.
  - 2.1.1.2. Make sure restrooms are well stocked with soap and drying materials.
- 2.2. Additional face masks should be made readily available for all staff and guests.
- 2.3. If the task requires, face shields should be made available to staff.

#### 3. Safety and hygiene planning and communication

- 3.1. Post signs and reminders at the entrance and in strategic places providing instructions on social distancing, hand hygiene, and the need to wear appropriate well fitting face masks. This must be in line with national rules and regulations, e.g., some ASEAN Member States mandate the wearing of masks when in public.
  - 3.1.1. Signs should be accessible for people with disabilities, easy to understand, and may include signs in relevant languages, as needed.
- 3.2. Encourage social distancing of at least 1 meter between guest and employees in all areas of the facility, such as workout areas, classrooms, pools and saunas, courts, walking/running tracks, locker rooms, parking lots, and in entrance/exit areas.



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- 3.3. Visual cues such as floor decals, colored tape, and other signs reminding staff and guests to maintain a distance of at least 1 meter should be installed in confined or narrow areas, such as aisles and stairways, to encourage single-file movement.
- 3.4. Close or limit access to common areas where employees are likely to gather and interact, such as break rooms, outside the entrance, and in entrance/exit areas.
- 3.5. Limit the number of people in the facility at one time to ensure physical spacing. Employees should be included in the count. Consult with the national guidance if available.
  - 3.5.1. Consider implementing limited or contactless online reservation and check-in/check-out systems that will limit the number of people in the facility at one time (employees should be included in the count).
  - 3.5.2. Consider offering or continuing to offer virtual classes and opportunities.
  - 3.5.3. Stagger work shifts and break times where feasible, to reduce the number of employees in common areas such as screening areas, break rooms, and locker rooms.
  - 3.5.4. Review current practices for all classes and fitness/training instruction while limiting and reducing the number of guests in class settings.
- 3.6. Consider closing water stations, except for no-touch bottle refill stations. Encourage guests and employees to bring their own water bottle.
- 3.7. Determine if you can make any additional changes to minimize the risk of spreading the virus that causes COVID-19, such as reducing class sizes, discontinuing in-person group fitness classes, moving to larger areas, or holding classes outdoors.
  - 3.7.1. Consider closing waiting areas and discourage guests from entering the facility prior to their reservation time, if possible.
  - 3.7.2. Consider assigning social distancing coaches to ensure that guests are properly spaced during their workout.
- 3.8. The maximum allowable capacity limit should be posted at elevator entrances to ensure appropriate social distancing.





#### 4. Emergency preparedness

- 4.1. With reference to national guidelines, if any, put in place COVID-19 Pandemic Response Plan, the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and Emergency Protocol on the safety and hygiene measures.
- 4.2. Establish direct links with local and national public health authorities and other relevant authorities. Contact numbers for the appropriate authorities, medical centers and emergency services must be readily available.
- 4.3. Report immediately to and take necessary guidelines and actions from the local health authorities and other relevant authorities for any accidents or illnesses of staff while at the workplace, and guests during and after visitation.
- 4.4. Follow preventive, control, and treatment measures for healthy behaviors to reduce spread of COVID-19 and communicable diseases among all involved in the tourism industry.
- 4.5. Consider the available data and risk factors versus the number of COVID-19 cases in the host communities, if any.
- 4.6. Consider readiness to make necessary amendments to operations and facilities in case of an emergency or escalated outbreak of health and safety incidents.
- 4.7. Consider:
  - 4.7.1. The setting of the activity (indoors or outdoors)
  - 4.7.2. The length of the selected activity
  - 4.7.3. The number and crowding of people at key points and activity areas
- 4.8. Consider all hygiene and health safety measures for all personnel in the tourism industry as well as the amenities and equipment used in each activity of the visit.
- 4.9. Protect all staff and guests with various approaches including barriers, protective coverings, and distancing.
- 4.10. Enhance and communicate medical guidelines & protocols (e.g., safety seals, certifications, or badges) for stakeholders in the supply chain.
- 4.11. Share records and build up capacity and provide skills training and team cooperation for future programs.





- 4.12. Implement health and safety protocols & promote digital communication (e.g., send an instant message to alert the guest through their phone if anything would happen inside the property or in the city where they guest visits).
- 4.13. Participate in certification programs as an indicator of high quality and National Tourism Organization (NTO) approved standards of safety and hygiene.
- 4.14. Provide mental health support for employees and guests:
  - 4.14.1. Ensure that staff members feel their workplace is a place that prioritizes their health and safety.
  - 4.14.2. Ensure that staff members fully understand and are comfortable with changes to the workplace and protocols, if any, and what is expected from them.
  - 4.14.3. Train staff to be sensitive to guests with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.

#### 5. Infection Response

If a guest or staff member is sick or exhibiting symptoms consistent with COVID-19<sup>2</sup>, the workplace should follow these steps to reduce the likelihood of transmission:

- 5.1. Always follow the regulations and guidelines provided by local and national authorities.
- 5.2. If possible, close off all areas used by the sick person.
- 5.3. If possible, open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation and wait up to 24 hours before you clean or disinfect (if 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible).
- 5.4. Clean and disinfect all areas used by the sick person.
- 5.5. Develop a process for handling any staff, guests, or 3rd party contractors who exhibit elevated temperatures, or any WHO identified symptoms consistent with COVID-19.
- 5.6. Suspected cases of COVID-19 must be taken to an isolation area within the property via a pre-designated isolation route. Isolation areas must be identified in advance for both staff and guests.





- 5.7. Transportation must be arranged to a local medical facility where COVID-19 testing, and treatment can be performed.
- 5.8. An evacuation procedure must be in place for all remaining staff, guests, and 3rd party contractors that takes into account appropriate social distancing measures during departure and at the congregation side outside of the property.
- 5.9. A cleaning and disinfection procedure must be in place for any areas on the property exposed to a suspected COVID-19 case including, but not limited to, the pre-designated isolation area and isolation route, any guest rooms, common areas, amenities, or back of house locations.
- 5.10. This procedure must also include criteria for when staff and guests may reenter the property, as well as how they will be notified of the successful operation and the steps taken to get there.

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organization – symptoms of COVID-19





- 6. Cleaning protocols
- 6.1. Clean reusable tools using water and soap or detergent.
- 6.2. Rinse the tools thoroughly with clean water.
- 6.3. Immerse the tools in disinfectant for at least 8 minutes to further sterilize them.
- 6.4. Rinse the tools with clean water and dry with a clean cloth.
- 6.5. Store sanitized tools in a clean, closed container.
- 6.6. Disinfection tools, like ozone generator, UV light, should be used as per the manufacturer instructions.





## B. Significant areas to focus on

#### 1. Reception area

Everyone will go through the reception area.

- 1.1. Wipe down surfaces regularly (including door handles)
- 1.2. Invite guests to clean their hands with hand sanitizer at the entrance.
- 1.3. Use transparent partitions in the reception area.
- 1.4. Use devices that do not require the employee to handle customer's credit and debit cards and institute a cashless policy. If this is not possible, ensure that cash and/or cards are handled with care by employees either by changing gloves between each transaction or using hand sanitizer between customers.
- 1.5. Move electronic payment terminals and card readers farther away from the attendant to increase the distance between the customers and the reception attendant.
- 1.6. Make disinfecting supplies available to the staff and guests to wipe down commonly used areas.
- 1.7. Clean or sanitize card payment terminals and pens between guests.
- 1.8. In offices, and administrative areas, shared tools and equipment by employees should be sanitized after each shift or transfer to a new employee.





#### 2. Restrooms

Keep staff and guest restrooms tidy and clean.

- 2.1. Ensure sufficient soap is readily available in the restroom. Consider upgrading to touchless soap dispensers.
- 2.2. Bottles of hand sanitizer should be readily available outside the bathroom, to sanitize hands after passing by all possible touch points.
- 2.3. Provide disposable towels and no touch toilet seat sanitizer dispenser for each cubicle, if possible. Post a notice for the staff and guests recommending cleaning the toilet seat before use.

#### 3. Shower rooms

Clean and dry the shower room thoroughly after each guest. Remove used towels and any visible dirt on the surfaces. Check and clean the bath soap and shampoo containers and dry them properly.

#### 4. Workout rooms

- 4.1. Make sure your workout rooms are properly sanitized and be sure your employees follow the proper procedure for cleaning and disinfecting surfaces after each class.
- 4.2. Modify or adjust cardio equipment, free weight areas, weight training equipment, and fitness classrooms to maintain social distancing of at least 1 meter between guests and employees. If rearranging is not an option, place "do not use" signage and turn-off/unplug select equipment to allow for proper social distancing.
- 4.3. Subject to the national guidelines, encourage the guests to use separate indoor sports shoes in the workout rooms.



#### 5. Saunas

Operate at higher temperatures (70-100°C or 158-212°F) and have porous wood furniture that could make it difficult for any virus to survive for long. Normal cleaning with a moderately degreasing cleaning agent (mild soap) should be suitable. According to the standard size of the saunas, it should allow only 2 guests at a time. In this regard, the guest might need to book in advance if they wish to use the saunas.

#### 6. Spa products

Operate at a far lower temperature than saunas and are not warm enough to interfere with the lifecycle of the coronavirus, so they could be a potential source of contamination. Hygiene arrangements after each use would need to be thorough and bather use would need to be controlled to the size of the unit. Not many steam rooms in the modern format would be operable with social distancing and enhanced cleaning. Turkish/Russian style steam baths can be very large and consequently have many customers simultaneously without infringing on social distancing recommendations. Also, the lower operating temperatures should enable almost continuous cleaning. The risk assessment would involve weighing the ability to clean versus the number of potential guests.

#### 7. Waste bin

All workout tools and equipment should be cleaned, and disinfected correctly after each use, shared yoga mats should be well disinfected after each use or encourage the guests to bring their own.

#### 8. Locker

Each locker should be cleaned and disinfected after each use to ensure it is safe for the incoming users.



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#### 9. Waste Bin

Any sanitation plan would be remiss without regard for the disposal of waste. Waste bins should be emptied throughout the day, but you may need to adjust your current procedure to account for the increased use of disposables.

- 9.1. Waste should be double bagged.
- 9.2. Encourage staff not to carry too much at once.
- 10. Air Quality

Make sure the gym is well ventilated:

- 10.1. Work with facilities management to adjust the ventilation so that the maximum amount of fresh air is delivered to occupied spaces while maintaining the humidity at 40-60%. If possible, increase filter efficiency of ventilation, and air conditioning units to the highest functional level.
- 10.2. Consider installing an air purification system as an added safety measure, particularly to minimize the spread of germs. Portable high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filtration units may be considered to remove contaminants in the air of poorly ventilated areas.
- 10.3. If free standing fans are used, position them in a way that does not direct air from one guest to another.
- 11. Swimming Pool

There is no evidence that COVID-19 can be spread to humans using pools and hot tubs.

- 11.1. A well-run, clean swimming pool with appropriately treated water using chlorine at internationally accepted levels should provide adequate disinfection to neutralize the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which causes COVID-19.
- 11.2. Operators should ensure chlorine levels in the pool are kept between 1–3mg/I with the pH between 6.8–7.4.
- 11.3. Given that the virus is new, experts cannot say with absolute certainty that pools will be safe. However, most authorities believe that a pool which is adequately disinfected should not spread the





disease. A bigger risk will be the face-to-face interaction between individual users of the pool; therefore, a strict policy on the number of guests entering the pool area at the same time is critical.





## C. Safety and hygiene protocol for service delivery

#### 1. Before the services

- 1.1. The staff on duty should check all the significant areas as described above and make sure they are well cleaned and organized by following the cleaning procedure approved by the workplace.
- 1.2. All the staff on duty must follow the general sanitation and hygiene practices as indicated in the above section carefully before the services.
- 1.3. Staff should avoid staying in a group.
- 1.4. The Manager/Supervisor of the workplace should check the staff before their duties to ensure they are clean and tidy and make sure they review the checklist for safety and hygiene of the workplace.
- 1.5. When the guests arrive, greet them with a no-touch welcome ritual or greeting instead of a handshake.

#### 2. During the services

- 2.1. Encourage the guests to wash their hands before using the equipment. Place handwashing stations or hand sanitizers in multiple locations throughout the workplace for workers and guests.
- 2.2. If the guest uses the pool, saunas, steam, or hot bath, ask them to take a shower first to make sure the guest washes off any oil, lotion, perfume, or chemical which may affect the quality of the treated water in the pool.
- 2.3. Ensure there are enough coaches in the workout area to monitor that guests are properly spaced during their workout.
- 2.4. Monitor all the significant areas to manage the number of allowed guests, including the workout room, saunas, steam room, pool, locker room, and other relevant spaces.





- 2.5. According to the size of the workout class, make sure there is enough space for social distance between guests and the coaches. Consider limiting and reducing the number of guests in class settings.
- 2.6. Continuously monitor the ventilation of the workout room to ensure enough air circulation and freshness or open the doors/windows if applicable.

#### 3. Guest Check-out

- 3.1. When the guest checks out from each equipment, clean it thoroughly and make it ready for the next user.
- 3.2. After each class finishes, clean and sanitize the room and all the equipment used during the class for the next class.
- 3.3. Check the waste bin(s) and empty them regularly.
- 3.4. Clean and disinfect the lockers used, remove the used towels and keep them properly for laundering, and prepare the new towels for the next guests.
- 3.5. Maintain regular housekeeping practices, including routine cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces, equipment, and other elements of the work environment.





## **D. Sustainability Guidelines**

- 1. Stay Sustainable
- 1.1. Wear reusable medical grade face masks. Support training opportunities for women artisans to produce intricately designed, sanitized and quality checked medical grade cloth masks, linking with overseas markets.
- 1.2. Give preference to biodegradable disposable disinfecting towels and wipes.
- 1.3. Give preference to locally sourced, organic, and biodegradable cleaning products and amenities.
- 1.4. Use compostable straws such as bamboo or paper straws.
- 1.5. Ensure proper washing of glasses, cups, plates, cutlery, or if not otherwise possible provide biodegradable options.
- 1.6. Work with alternatives for printed materials (e.g., menus, guest books or any other in-room materials), for instance through QR codes, or (digital) notice boards.
- 1.7. Achieve health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality health care services and access to safe, effective quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines.
- 1.8. Provide on-the-job training for workplace cooperation, occupational safety, and health.
- 1.9. Invest the time to train employees on the importance of sustaining the environment, so they can participate and promote the sustainable practices at the workplace and their home.
- 1.10. Reduce the use of hazardous chemicals such as alcohol-based sanitizers, detergents, and disinfectants, which could cause illness and death.
- 1.11. Strengthen the capacity for early risk reduction and management of national and global health risks.
- 1.12. Initiate innovative tourism products for visit experiences in the tourist destinations.
- 1.13. Encourage business start-ups in the tourism value chain for creation of micro and small enterprises and decent jobs for women and men, young people, and persons with disabilities.
- 1.14. Promote and support market access for ethnic culture and products.





- 1.15. Promote access to communication and innovative technology.
- 1.16. Substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling, and reuse.
- 1.17. Raise awareness of climate change and its consequences on the livelihood of local families.
- 1.18. Save energy and water where appropriate. For example, by converting to water-efficient faucets and toilets, and energy-efficient lighting.
- 1.19. Raise awareness of environmental practices at the workplace and their homes such as waste disposal, saving water and energy and where appropriate, convert to energy-efficient faucets, toilet flushes, and lighting.





The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established on 8 August 1967. The Member States of the Association are Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. The ASEAN Secretariat is based in Jakarta, Indonesia.

For inquiries, contact:

#### **The ASEAN Secretariat**

Public Outreach and Civil Society Division 70A Jalan Sisingamangaraja Jakarta 12110 Indonesia Phone : (62 21) 724-3372, 726-2991 Fax : (62 21) 739-8234, 724-3504 E-mail : public@asean.org

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