

Village Ways Covid-19 Operating Plan

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR ALL STAFF AND GUESTS

All Village Ways team and guests to take personal responsibility for:

- ❖ practicing social distancing,
- ❖ using face masks when appropriate,
- ❖ and practicing good hygiene including washing hands, avoiding touching the face, and sneezing or coughing into the inside of the elbow.

SCREENING OF STAFF:

- ❖ Four days prior: Staff and guides will be screened using the Daily Screening process.
- ❖ Prior to activity at start of work: staff and guides will be screened using the Daily Screening process.

Daily Screening:

Staff/Guides should be screened every day before work using the following questions: Since your last day of work have you had any of the following symptoms:

1. Fever (100.4°F/38°C or higher) or chills?
2. Cough, not due to another health condition?
3. Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, not due to another health condition?
4. Sore throat not due to another health condition or by a specific activity (such as physical exercise)?
5. Loss of taste or smell?

If an employee answers yes to any of the screening questions, the emergency protocol for COVID-19 will be initiated. The screener will immediately:

1. Remove the employee from the work area and isolate the employee at least 6 feet away from others.
2. Implement the use of masks and gloves by staff and co-workers until a status can be determined with a medical test.

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3. Have the employee examined and tested by a medical professional.

If an employee tests positive, the following precautions should be taken:

1. Ask the employee to isolate at home and seek medical attention.
2. Assure adequate medical care and treatment for the employee while at work and until released to professional medical care.
3. Conduct in-house contact tracing using reservations / employee database and work schedules. Coordinate with local officials to conduct contact tracing, especially among other staff.
4. In consultation with the public health and medical professionals, consider testing for and quarantine of those employees who have been in close contact with the positive employee.
5. Employees confirmed for Covid19 positive, should follow medical guidance on staying home until non-infectious. If possible, arrange alternative duties that can be done in an isolated environment.
6. The decision to allow an employee to return to work will be based on: At least 3 days (72) hours since fever has gone (without the use of fever-reducing medications) AND improvement in respiratory symptoms AND at least 10 days have passed since symptoms appeared.

Covid-19 Travel Advisory: (to be sent to guests)

Notification to all Guests - prior to booking Guests at higher risk are advised about the trip, to check that all risks are understood. High risk individuals include, but are not limited to people in the following age groups or 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
- ❖ Expectant mothers
- ❖ Other immune compromised individuals (HIV, undergoing cancer treatment, or other underlying medical conditions)

Before Arrival Questionnaire for Guests: 4 days before arrival, every Guest will be required to fill out a questionnaire with the following questions:

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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?
- If a Guest answers “yes” to questions 1-3, they will not be allowed on the tour.
- If a Guest does not fill out the questionnaire, they will not be allowed on the trip.

The questionnaire will be signed and dated by each Guest or, in the case of minors, their legal guardian.

Travel and Arrival at Destination Airport/Railway Station

You should travel with masks, disposable gloves and hand sanitiser

You will be greeted by a team member who will abide by current social distancing protocols and be wearing a mask and gloves. He/she will be able to provide you with hand sanitiser, further masks and gloves should you require them.

Transfers by car

All taxi transfers will be carefully selected with an emphasis on your safety.

The vehicle will be sanitised before each journey with antiviral sanitiser and warm water. The driver will adopt personal sanitising procedures. A safety screen will be installed between driver and passengers.

En-route hotels and other 3rd party accommodation

We will only work with any such accommodation that fully adopts and publishes Covid 19 protocols derived from Indian Government and Regional State

recommendations. Each will have been inspected by **Village Ways**. The protocols adopted by each such accommodation can be provided to guests on request at the time of booking.

At the Village Ways Guesthouses

At each guest house there will be supplies of sanitiser, gloves and masks. There will be a thermal gun thermometer for regular temperature checking.

Your group will be the only group staying at each guesthouse. We will not accept bookings for more than 4 people. 24hrs will elapse between the departure of one group of guests and the arrival of the next.

If any guest develops symptoms while staying at the guesthouse, a room will immediately be made available in the guest house for isolation.

Village hosts looking after you during your stay will all have been trained in Covid-19 protocols. All will wear masks, gloves, sanitised and changed frequently.

Bedrooms, showers and toilets will be thoroughly cleaned between guests with antiviral sanitiser.

All the kitchen utensils, crockery and cutlery will be thoroughly washed with hot water using antibacterial detergent.

Meals will be prepared with sanitised utensils and our Kitchen staff including cook will be wearing face protecting shields/masks and gloves while working in the kitchen.

We will provide professionally laundered sleeping bag style bed linen for each guest on arrival, which will be carried in a sealed bag from guesthouse to guest-house by the porters. Fresh linen can be provided when required along the way.

For the protection of the village population, guests will be expected to wear masks when in a communal room and to sanitise their hands frequently. All will be expected to keep to social distancing protocols.

On-Trip Checks:

Our First Aid box will have an IR thermometer which can take temperature without contact, a pulse oximeter, screening questions.

Walking with Guides | Visiting communities

While out in the open air, along paths, through forests and over the hills your guides will not wear masks or gloves.

On hikes and village visits keep distance more than "2.0 m (6 feet)" when possible, duration of time frames when we are closer than "2.0 m (6 feet)" must be kept as short as possible. Short duration contact has low risk, especially outdoors. If you need to touch others, avoid touching your face afterwards until you have time to sanitize.

Our guides will be carrying masks, gloves and sanitisers and use these when appropriate or requested by you.

If someone experiences Covid-19 symptoms during a trip

The staff will immediately notify the office, review symptoms and develop an evacuation plan if needed. Base manager will notify the closest local health officials and the head office. Until evacuation occurs or if evacuation is not warranted or feasible, the symptomatic person will be isolated from others as much as possible for the remainder of the trip. Protocols will be followed and appropriate medical treatment will be provided. A customer liaison will be assigned if possible and a guide (assign PPE) will be assigned as a health care provider; temperature, oxygen saturation, and vital signs will be monitored and documented. Enhanced PPE will be provided for crew designated to provide care to the person with symptoms including N95 masks, disposable face masks and gloves

The infected / ill / symptomatic person will:

- ❖ Be required to wear a mask for the remainder of the trip
- ❖ Be kept at least "2.0 m (6 feet)" from others for the remainder of the trip, if feasible.
- ❖ Sleep in isolation for the remainder of the trip with equipment dedicated to that person.
- ❖ Use a single make set of utensils for the remainder of the trip.
- ❖ Use a separate toilet designated for those with symptoms.
- ❖ Be advised to cough into elbow creases.
- ❖ Be kept well hydrated.

WHY Social distancing?

can protect us by minimizing the time we are exposed in an environment that is already low risk.

Infection = exposure to virus x time The amount of virus a person is exposed to is an important factor - if one receives a high dose (like someone directly sneezing on you) it may only take a moment of exposure. In our circumstance we are looking at exposure through speaking or breathing in the outdoors - this is a relatively low level of exposure.

When social distancing is not possible (and even when it is) masks are discretionary. All guides consider wearing masks to set an example, protect themselves and guests in case you are the one that is asymptomatic.

Enforcement of Guidelines:

Our protocols will be regularly re-visited based on guidance from qualified agencies and changing protocols and the level of vigilance required to keep our teams and guests safe.

These are, and to be included like other safety guidelines – we educate, we provide reminders and we enforce if it is a safety or health issue (i.e. if a guest is not washing their hands before eating, etc).

To assure all that guests remain committed to protocols, we will require all guests to sign “**Commitment to Hygiene and Safety Protocol**” in advance of the trip.

“Commitment to Hygiene and Safety Protocol”

I commit to disclose my travel and quarantine history to **Village Ways**, and decide to not travel should I have symptoms of infection related to Covid-19 or other disease that may spread due to my participation, thereby endangering other people. I also commit to follow guidelines and protocols set up by **Village Ways**, and oversee implementation by its guides, trip leaders on my journey. If I do not, I understand that I may be asked to do so or leave the trip/expedition/journey, to maintain our hygiene and safety protocol.

TRAVEL ADVISORY ENDS HERE

On Arrival: (for our staff)

A symptom check and screening will be done by **Village Ways** guides on tour, including:

1. The symptom questionnaire listed above in “Before Arrival”
2. Sanitise luggage before putting in vehicle/guesthouse/camp
3. Temperature check using a no-touch infrared thermometer.
4. Oxygen saturation check using a pulse oximeter. Orientation staff and hike guides will administer the screening:
 - ❖ Prior to getting on the trip vehicle
 - ❖ The morning of the hike prior to beginning the hike.

New Protocols For Mobile Trips:

Snacks:

- ❖ Individually pre-packed in small bags prior to the trip.
- ❖ Tea/Coffee times: individuals wash hands, spray dispensing handle with sanitiser, or self-dispense. Consider individual packets of sugar.
- ❖ Sanitiser bottles available to sanitize water bottles and lids.

Lunch:

- ❖ Guests will pack identical lunches into day packs.
- ❖ Set-up on trail lunch as per usual. Guides build table and servings for guests.

Hand Washing

Hand washing is essential to prevent spread of infection, we will remind, and enforce this protocol.

On-Trip Checks:

Our First Aid box will have an IR thermometer which can take temperature without contact, a pulse oximeter, screening questions.

Social Distancing:

We appreciate that social distancing is not possible in all activities/locations or at all times during these activities. Therefore, we need to minimize time and strength of exposure to others – as individuals may be asymptomatic.

- ❖ At guesthouse/camp keeping distance of "2.0 m (6 feet)" as often as possible between social bubbles will reduce risk of spread.
- ❖ On hikes and village visits keep distance of "2.0 m (6 feet)" when possible, duration of time frames when we are closer than "2.0 m (6 feet)" must be kept as short as possible. Short duration contact has low risk, especially outdoors. If you need to touch others, avoid touching your face afterwards until you have time to sanitize.
- ❖ Guide responsibility for above factors will be important.

PRECAUTIONS TO MINIMISE TRANSMISSION RISK

Hand washing will occur:

- ❖ Upon arrival in homestay/camp
- ❖ Handling guest luggage.
- ❖ After blowing one's nose, touching face, coughing or sneezing.
- ❖ Before and after using the toilet.
- ❖ Before eating or preparing food.
- ❖ Before putting dishes away and/or packing up the kitchen.
- ❖ After removing gloves or before donning new gloves.
- ❖ After contact with a person who is ill.
- ❖ Encourage social distancing of at least six feet.
- ❖ Minimise any physical contact - no hand shaking, hugs, etc.

Drives - Driver and Crew:

- ❖ Drivers and guides are required to wear masks during transit.
- ❖ Driver must wear disposable gloves while refuelling
- ❖ Wash hands or use hand sanitiser after refuelling.



❖ If other stops are made and guides get out they should wash or sanitise hands.

