



Soulful Concepts'
COVID-19 Health and
Safety Plan

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4
PURPOSE	4
WHAT IS COVID-19?	5
IMPACT ON SOULFUL CONCEPTS OPERATIONS	5
IDENTIFIED RISKS	6
OUR APPROACH	7
MINIMUM STANDARDS	8
HYGIENE	8
- Hand Hygiene	
- Respiratory Hygiene	
PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)	8
- Medical/Surgical Masks	
- Fabric Masks	
SANITATION	8
- Accommodation	8
- Camping	9
- Transport	9
- Restaurants	
- Activities	9
- Trekking	9
- Cycling	9
- Camping	9
LOW TOUCH	9
PHYSICAL DISTANCING	10
- Accommodation	
- Camping	10
- Transport	10
- Trekking	
- In Public	
- Restaurants	







HEALTH SCREENING & TRACKING	10
- Pre-Departure (Brand Material)	
- Pre-Departure (Travellers)	
- Pre-Departure (Leaders/Crew)	10
- COVID-19 Testing	
ON TRIP	10
- Removal Of Travellers, Leaders, Crew	
DATA COLLECTION & HEALTH TRACKING	11
- COVID Tracking Apps	11
INCIDENT MANAGEMENT	11
- Management Of Incidents Involving Travellers	11
- Management Of Incidents Involving Leaders/Crew	11
- Management Of Incidents Involving Suppliers	11
- Support During A COVID-19 Incident	11
- COVID-19 Crisis Management Training	11
- First-Aid Training And Medical Kits	11
APPENDIX 1 - EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN	12
APPENDIX 2 - COVID RISK MANAGEMENT AND INCIDENT MANAGEMENT MATRIX _	13









INTRODUCTION

Soulful Concepts is committed to rebuilding the tourism industry and reopening operations in a safe, responsible and sustainable way.

This COVID Safe Policy has been produced with a wide variety of stakeholders in mind, including our charity and corporate partners, travellers, staff, local operators, leaders, crew and suppliers. The ongoing pandemic is a complex and fluid situation, which is why we are sharing this document with the wider community, so we can support a globally consistent approach to recovery, working together to find and create solutions for the current crisis the tourism industry faces.

PURPOSE

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting economic downturn is one of the biggest challenges the tourism industry has ever faced. The pandemic caused an unprecedented level of disruption with borders closed, countries in lock down, industry declining, and healthcare overwhelmed.

As we move into the next phase of the pandemic, parts of the world are easing restrictions and moving towards a gradual reopening of tourism. Vaccines are currently being rolled out in some countries including Australia. There is still a risk, to varying degrees, of catching the virus via community transmission in most countries. The purpose of this document is to outline key health and safety risks in operating within this environment and to propose mitigation strategies.

It assumes a phased approach to reopening travel in all markets. In the early stages, any return to travel is likely to come with strict safety requirements. In addition, regions with high community transmission are likely to require more safety measures than others.

This document concentrates on changes that are likely to be permanent and global. These changes will be added to our existing Hygiene Plus Measurable Standards for Stakeholders (Appendix 2). Any additional safety measures that may be needed only in certain regions will be identified prior to beginning operations via a risk assessment (Appendix 1).







WHAT IS COVID-19

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that cause respiratory infections. These can range from the common cold to more serious diseases.





SYMPTOMS

Symptoms of COVID-19 can range from mild illness to pneumonia. Some people will recover easily, and others may get very sick very quickly.

People with coronavirus may experience symptoms such as:



Other symptoms can include runny nose, headache, muscle or joint pains, nausea, diarrhoea, vomiting, loss of sense of smell, altered sense of taste, loss of appetite and fatigue.

IMPACT ON SOULFUL CONCEPTS OPERATIONS'

On March 11 2020, the World Health Organisation declared COVID-19 a pandemic.

In response, Soulful Concepts suspended operations and supported our travellers to return home. No Soulful Concepts travellers have tested positive for COVID-19.

The decision was made to run no international tours and domestic departures were postponed until mid to late 2021. March 20, 2020 the Australian government closed its borders to all non-citizens and non-residents.



IDENTIFIED RISKS

Transmission of COVID-19 to travellers, staff, leaders, crew, suppliers or communities

A return to operations will carry some risk of transmission of COVID-19 and with it the risk of serious disease or death. This risk will be lower where the virus is well contained (e.g. Australia, New Zealand) but until community transmission is eradicated and/or a vaccine is well established, some risk remains.

Transmission of COVID-19 to vulnerable communities

There are additional risks associated with the transmission of disease into local or vulnerable communities where healthcare and services are limited. Re-entru into vulnerable communities will be guided by expert advice in line with government regulations and undertaken in consultation with communities.

Legal Risk

There is a risk of financial and/or reputational loss resulting from the failure to understand. comply with or act upon any relevant laws and regulations relating to COVID-19.

All relevant internal policies and best practices will need to be reviewed and processes put in place to ensure compliance with local requirements.

Healthcare and emergency services

Health standards have always been varied around the world. It is worth noting that COVID-19 has put increased pressure on healthcare with some regions strugaling to provide healthcare, testing, ICU beds, ventilators or personal protective gear.

Travel insurance

Travellers may struggle to source travel insurance that covers them for COVID-19 related incidents and/or for disrupted trips if an outbreak occurs on a trip.

New outbreaks

It is possible that there will be new outbreaks that could cause the need for similar evacuation and/or incident management. We need to be prepared for the possibility of disruption due to further outbreaks.

Supply Chain

While we have a strong supplier network, there is a risk that some suppliers may sustain heavy losses due to the economic downturn caused by the pandemic and may subsequently close, causing tour cancellation and the need to source new suppliers for new product ranges. Health and safety standards dropping in times of economic crisis is a welldocumented risk.

Many suppliers may cut corners in order to save costs. We will need to be vigilant in contracting and auditing new suppliers to ensure the same quality, safety and standard. Wherever possible, we should offer to provide support to suppliers via training and education

Leaders and Crew

Leaders and crew may move into new industries as a result of the decline in tourism. This could result in the need for local operators to train new leaders (including crisis management/first aid) at a time when faceto-face training may be cost prohibitive and/ or difficult logistically.







OUR APPROACH

POLICY

Our Health and Safety framework has been expanded as a result of our learnings from the coronavirus pandemic and will continue to grow and evolve to meet the requirements to operate safely in this environment.

PREPARATION

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment will need to be completed for each of our tours. This will evaluate anu risks under local conditions and mitigation strategies put into place to alleviate the risks.

Communication with Travellers

During Booking

- Inform travellers of COVID-19 Health and Safety Plan and emergency response procedures
- Send travellers COVID-19 Health & Safetu Acknowledgement and instruct on when to return signed form (90 days prior to departure)
- Inform travellers that they will be contacted prior to departure to ensure no decline in health
- Inform travellers that masks may be made mandatory if social distancing isn't possible and are strongly advise them to bring their own
- Inform travellers that if they do not follow safety regulations from guides or ground operators they will be removed from the tour

The day prior to departure

- Contact each traveller and check health has not declined since booking stage
- Remind traveller of COVID policies and regulations

21 days post departure

Contact each traveller to check health has not declined

Monitoring and auditing

Frequent auditing and monitoring should take place to ensure compliance against health and safety standards. This is important particularly in the early phases of reopening travel as volume may be low. Infrequently operated trips run higher risks of incidents as leaders and suppliers are less familiar with the product and informal auditing via evaluations, passenger feedback, passenger complaints and leader trip reports will happen less often.

Reporting & review

On-trip incidents and safety issues should be recorded, and a monthly report should be produced to study trends against the safety standards in the business, and any associated issues. Actions to rectify the issues should be documented. Trip products and suppliers should be reviewed regularly to ensure suppliers are notified of any safety issues relating to their service, and that they remain aware of the most up-to-date policy and procedures.

Contracting

All contracting and training of new suppliers will be done with reference to the Emergency Response Plan and COVID Risk Management & Incident Management Matrix. All sub-policies will be reviewed with a particular focus on the accommodation, vehicle, boats and ferries, activities, first aid and leader policies. All sub-policies will be amended to include the minimum standards in this document.

Trainina

Training must be provided for all Soulful staff, leaders and crew who are involved in any part of the product design and delivery journey on all new health and safety guidelines prior to reopening operations.

All leaders contracted to provide a service or run a trip for Soulful Concepts will be required to complete the online Infection Control Training course developed by the Australian Government and show proof of completion. Training of suppliers and/or 3rd party operators must be provided when applicable.









Communication

All new information related to tour operations will need to be readily available for Soulful staff, leaders and crew.

A dropbox will be created for each tour with links to:

- COVID safe policies and procedures
- Risk assessments
- Medical facilities evaluation which include location of hospitals and/or screening clinics for COVID-19.
- Travellers medical manifest
- Crisis management guidelines
- Incident reports
- Emergency response plans

MINIMUM STANDARDS

HYGIENE

Hand Hygiene:

- Ensure all travellers and guides are informed of the importance of hand hygiene both before and during tour
- Ensure hand washing stations are located at each site and hand sanitiser is readily available
- A hand washing policy with how often and for how long to be attached to travel documentation
- Ensure travellers have signed COVID-19 Health & Safety Acknowledgement

Respiratory Hygiene:

- Ensure all travellers and guides are informed of the importance of respiratory hygiene both before and during tour
- Ensure travellers have signed COVID-19 Health & Safety Acknowledgement





PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Medical/Surgical Masks:

- Will be provided in First-Aid kits
- Compulsory wearing of medical/surgical mask for anyone who:
- Develops symptoms of COVID-19
- Is caring for people with suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19
- Recommended wearing of medical/surgical masks in areas where social distancing is not possible to anyone who:
- Is over the age of 60
- Has underlying health conditions

Fabric Masks:

- Can be used to help prevent the spread of the virus in areas where social distancing is not possible/difficult to maintain
- Should cover nose, mouth, chin and be washable and reusable

SANITATION

Accommodation

- Ensure all properties comply with WHO (World Health Organisation) standard COVID-19 safety rules and regulations
- All rooms and common surface areas such as door handles, tables and chairs etc are cleaned and sanitised thoroughly between use
- Soap and hand sanitiser easily and readily available in all bedrooms and private/ shared bathrooms







Camping

- Tents to be cleaned and sanitised hetween use
- Soap and hand sanitiser to be readily available in all common areas and shared bathrooms/showers
- Any shared cooking utensils to be thoroughly cleaned and sanitised before and after use
- Travellers to wash and sanitise hands before eating meals
- Guides to wash and sanitise hands before preparing meals for travellers

Transport

- Hand sanitiser, tissues and disposable masks to be readily available on all forms of transport
- Common areas such as seats, seat belts, door handles etc to be cleaned thoroughly between short trips and at the end of the day using hot soapy water and disinfectant

Restaurants

- Ensure restaurants comply with WHO (World Health Organisation) standard COVID-19 safety rules and regulations
- Avoid buffet where possible
- Equipment to be cleaned and sanitised between use

ACTIVITIES

Trekking

- Individual equipment for each traveller i.e. water bottles, backpacks, hats, sleeping bags to be provided by travellers
- Mask will be recommended in crowded areas to minimise risk
- Travellers will be asked to maintain social distancing regulations
- Sanitisation regulations must be followed if any handling of other travellers equipment
- Travellers and guides to follow all instruction and policies from on the ground suppliers

Cycling

- Individual equipment for each traveller ie bike, helmet, gloves
- Travellers to fix their own bike if possible a mechanic is on hand for difficult fixes and will follow sanitisation regulations before handling the bike
- Cycling configuration will be set up to maintain social distancing regulations and to minimise risk



Camping

- Individual equipment for each traveller i.e. tent, sleeping bag are to only be handled by the individual traveller once received from the auide
- Shared bathrooms will be stocked with soap and hand sanitiser and regularly cleaned to minimise risk
- Tents will be cleaned and sanitised between uses
- Masks will be recommended in crowded campgrounds if social distancing is hard to maintain

LOW TOUCH

Limited Surface Touching:

- Ensuring all documentation/waiver forms are electronically signed where possible
- Contactless payments such as credit cards are used instead of cash
- Shared devices to be sanitised between use







PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Accommodation

- All accommodation is based on twin-share where travellers are sharing a room
- Single supplements are available to those who do not wish to share
- We are working with properties to increase the availability of single use rooms where possible
- Travellers to adhere to social distancing regulations of 1.5 meters while in accommodation where possible

Camping

- Use single tents where possible to minimise risk and maintain social distancing regulations
- Tents to be set up using appropriate social distancing regulation where possible

Transport

- Travellers will be seated in accordance with social distancing protocols where possible
- Mandatory masks to be worn if physical distancing is not possible
- Use of larger vehicles where possible
- Travellers to be seated in their allocated seats at all times

Trekking

- Travellers to maintain 1.5 metre social distancing regulations while on the walk
- Guides will be regulating and advising social distancing protocols before and during the trek
- Travellers to carry their disposable masks in their day pack while trekking
- Guides to have hand sanitiser and spare disposable masks for travellers during the trek

In Public

- Maintain social distancing in public areas
- Design itineraries to avoid large crowds and peak times where possible

Restaurants

- Where possible ensure travellers are seated in accordance with social distancing protocols
- Request the use of private dining facilities if available
- Request travellers to be seated away from other guests

HEALTH SCREENING & TRACKING

Pre-Departure (Brand Material)

- "Get Ready For Your Adventure" email with essential information regarding COVID-19 will be sent out prior to departure

Pre-Departure (Travellers)

- All travellers to sign COVID-19 Health & Safety Acknowledgement and get their doctors sign off on a medical evaluation prior to departure
- Travellers to be debriefed and provided with a copy of the COVID-19 Health and Safety Plan

Pre-Departure (Leaders/Crew)

- All guides to sign COVID-19 Health & Safety Acknowledgement
- All guides to be properly trained and instructed on the COVID-19 Health and Safety Plan before any trip

COVID-19 Testing

- Travellers will not be required to present a negative COVID-19 test unless it is required by local law or regulations
- If symptoms of COVID-19 present themselves a test will be mandatory and at the discretion of Soulful Concepts, travellers may not be allowed to travel

ON TRIP

Removal Of Travellers, Leaders, Crew

- If at any time travellers or guides present symptoms of COVID-19 they will be removed from our tour to prevent risks to others





DATA COLLECTION & **HEALTH TRACKING**

COVID Tracking Apps

- Soulful Concepts strongly recommends all travellers and guides to download the COVIDsafe tracking app
- Travellers are advised they will need to complete state based border entry declarations

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

Management of Incidents Involving **Travellers**

- Refer to Risk Management & Incident Management Matrix

Management of Incidents Involving Leaders/Crew

- Guides will be treated the same as travellers

Management of Incidents Involving Suppliers

- Suppliers will be required to advise us of any suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19

Support During a COVID-19 Incident

- Soulful Concepts will ensure that anyone with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 will receive appropriate medical care as soon as possible. We will ensure that family will be contacted and travel arrangements to return home are efficiently organised

COVID-19 Crisis Management Training

- All guides will receive appropriate COVID-19 crisis training before every departure

First-Aid Training And Medical Kits

- All guides will have up to date First-Aid training and carry with them a First-Aid kit at all times during the tour.

Travellers will be informed where the first aid kits are kept in case of an incident









APPENDIX 1: COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

In the case of a suspected COVID-19 case, this plan should be followed immediately.

The symptoms of COVID-19, described by the WHO are as follows:

- Ranging from mild cold-like symptoms to pneumonia
- Fever
- Shortness of breath
- Coughing, sore throat, fatigue, or loss of smell

If a traveller or guide presents any of these symptoms, enact the COVID-19 Emergency Response Plan.

Remember that these symptoms do not necessarily mean a positive COVID case, and the person could be suffering from a cold or other respiratory illness.

However, if the person has been in a place where possible COVID-19 contamination may exist (a large city, airport, hotel, taxi etc.), then the chances of a suspected COVID-19 case are more likely.

- 1. Isolate the person and provide them with PPE (personal protective equipment) to prevent further spread e.g. a face mask, hand sanitiser, tissues, rubbish bag
- 2. Also provide PPE to anyone assisting the person
- **3.** If the person has serious symptoms and is having trouble breathing call 000.
- 4. If the person does not have serious symptoms, then they need to be tested and remain in isolation at the accommodation until the test result has been returned
- 5. Allocate staff member (where possible) to monitor the person
- 6. The rest of the group can continue trip itinerary

- 7. The head guide will call the local operators head office giving them as much detail as possible. The office should then get in touch with Soulful Concepts who will then get in touch with the family of the person via the emergency number and the charity.
- 8. The head guide will organise for the person to be tested and/or taken to a place of isolation/care.

If the COVID test comes back as a negative, then this is all that needs doing. The guides will continue cleaning accommodation, van, and tour kit to normal standard and proceed with the tour.

If the person tests COVID-19 positive, these additional steps need to be followed:

- **9.** Notify anyone else on tour of the positive
- 10. Local operators head office will advise the Health Department
- 11. All travellers and guides to isolate and
- 12. Local operator to notify the manager of
- 13. Head guide to take note of anyone or any area the person has been near or spend
- 14. Isolate any areas the person may have
- 16. Notifu management of any area or
- 17. Head guide to organise a deep cleaning of the van and all the tour kit
- **18.** The guides will have to self-isolate for 14 days







APPENDIX 2: COVID RISK MANAGEMENT AND INCIDENT MANAGEMENT MATRIX

TRAVELLER MANAGEMENT

SOULFUL CONCEPTS RISK MANAGEMENT - TRAVELLERS ON TOUR					
RISK LEVEL	LOW	LOW-MEDIUM		MEDIUM-HIGH	HIGH
Incident	Traveller with few COVID-19 Symptoms	Traveller with severe COVID-19 symptoms	Traveller that has been exposed to confirmed case of COVID-19 but shows no symptoms	Traveller that has been exposed to confirmed case of COVID-19 and shows symptoms	Traveller with confirmed case of COVID-19
Immediate Action - Tour Guide	Isolate the traveller and ask to confirm recent travel history. Document this in	Isolate the traveller and ask to confirm recent travel history. Assist in seeking	Isolate the traveller and ask to confirm recent travel history. Assist in taking	Isolate the traveller and ask to confirm recent travel history. Provide medical	Isolate the traveller and ask to confirm recent travel history. Assist in getting
	the incident report for head office Assist in seeking medical care and	emergency care at nearest Hospital Report Incident to Local Operator	extra prevention of potential spread - Provide masks to all Travellers	mask from first aid kit Assist in getting emergency	emergency assistance from nearest hospital call 000
	access to Doctor/ Hospital	Head office and Management	Monitor symptoms Report incident	assistance from nearest hospital call 000	Provide masks from first aid kit
	Report Incident to Local Operator Head office and	Create an incident report	to Local Operator Head office and Management	Report incident to Local Operator	Report incident to Management
	Management Create an incident report		Create an incident report	Head office and Management Create an incident report and keep a communications	Ask other travellers to self-isolate and await further instructions from Guides.
				log	Create an incident report and keep a communications log
Immediate Action - Local	Report incident to Soulful Concepts Travel Manager	Report incident to Soulful Concepts Travel Manager	Report incident to Soulful Concepts Travel Manager	Activate Emergency Response Plan	Activate Emergency Response Plan
Operator Head office	Follow local authority protocols	Assist guide to find suitable medical/emergency care	Follow local authority protocols	Report incident to Soulful Concepts Travel Manager	Report incident to Soulful Concepts Travel Manager
		Follow local authority protocols	Assist guide to find suitable medical/emergency care	Follow local authority protocols	Follow local authority protocols and report incident to Health Department
				Assist guide to find suitable medical/ emergency care	Assist guide to find suitable medical/emergency care







TRAVELLER MANAGEMENT

SOULFUL CONCEPTS RISK MANAGEMENT - TRAVELLERS ON TOUR					
RISK LEVEL	LOW	LOW-MEDIUM		MEDIUM-HIGH	HIGH
Immediate Action - Soulful Travel Manager	Review the incident report from Local Operator and contact Traveller to see if they need any assistance. Follow local authority protocols Report to Charity	Review the incident report from Local Operator and contact Traveller to see if they need any assistance. Follow local authority protocols Report to Charity	Review the incident report from Local Operator and contact Traveller to see if they need any assistance. Follow local authority protocols Report to Charity	Activate Crisis Management team Review the incident report from Local Operator and create a communications log for our records. Follow local authority protocols Report to Charity	Activate Crisis Management team Review the incident report from Local Operator and create a communications log for our records. Follow local authority protocols Report to Charity Contact Traveller Emergency Contact
Extra Action	Local Health Authority to give advice on if traveller will need to be tested for COVID-19, Isolate or be quarantined	Local Health Authority to give advice on if traveller will need to be tested for COVID-19, Isolate or be quarantined	Local Health Authority to give advice on if traveller will need to be tested for COVID-19, Isolate or be quarantined	Local Health Authority to give advice on if traveller will need to be tested for COVID-19, Isolate or be quarantined	Local Health Authority to give advice on if travellers will need to Isolate or be quarantined. All other Travellers will be informed of their risk exposure and next steps
POSITIVE TEST RESULT	Local health authorities are informed of the result. Fellow travellers are informed of possible exposure and are isolated and assisted in getting tested. Quarantine protocols are activated				









OPERATIONS MATRIX

SOULFUL CON	CEPTS RISK MANAGI	EMENT - TRAVELLER	S ON TOUR	
RISK LEVEL	LOW	LOW-MEDIUM	MEDIUM-HIGH	HIGH
Does the destination have any tourism related COVID-19 restrictions?	Destination currently does not have any travel restrictions (National and International)	Destination has some restrictions that DO NOT affect the trip	Destination has some restrictions that DO affect the trip	Destination currently has a travel ban
What is the current COVID-19 case situation?	Destination has not had any new cases consecutively for 14 days and the situation is under control	Destination has very few active cases and steady decline in numbers. Restrictions easing	Destination has some active cases but with new cases and a potential for more restrictions	Daily cases are increasing and potential for a full lockdown
Destination COVID-19 Health policy	Destination has great test, trace and track policy. Destination has excellent health system available to travellers	Destination has great test, trace and track policy but may be limited	Destination has limited test and limited to no trace and track policy	Destination has no test, trace and track policy
Group risk and vulnerability	Traveller is under 50 with no underlying health conditions	Traveller is under 70 with no underlying health condition	Traveller is under 50 with minor underlying health conditions	Traveller is over 70 OR has high-risk underlying medical condition
Transport	Traveller is travelling alone in rented or private car	Traveller is travelling in transport that can operate at 50% capacity Social distancing is maintained	Traveller is travelling in transport that may be hard to maintain social distancing sanitisation process is easily accessed	Traveller is travelling on large public transport with no option to social distance and sanitisation processe are hard to access
		Health Checks are provided before departure PPE are available and worn	Health checks are not regularly done PPE are available and worn	No Health Checks
Accommodation	Sanitised tents Self-catered accommodation Traveller has no contact with staff	Small hotel/ accommodation with minimal guests and minimal contact with staff	Medium to large hotels with many other guests Hotel has been sanitised according to relevant policies Hotel location changed constantly	Large hotels with many other guests o dormitories/ hostels with shared facilities
Food	Food is self-catered by traveller who has followed all appropriate food- handling protocols	Food is prepared by guide who has followed all appropriate food- handling protocols	Meals are eaten in small dining rooms	Meals are eaten in large hotel dining rooms
Activities	Activity takes place in large outdoor area where social distancing is maintained	Activity takes place in large outdoor area in small groups	Activity takes place in small outdoor area in groups where social distancing is somewhat possible	Activity takes place indoors in close proximity to other travellers





