



# Timeshare **Safe Welcome**

*Industry Guidance for Promoting  
the Health and Safety of the  
Timeshare Industry*





# Timeshare

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*Industry Guidance for Promoting the Health and Safety of the Timeshare Industry*

COVID-19 represents an unprecedented challenge to the timeshare industry affecting resort developers, timeshare owner associations (HOAs), and resort management companies. Collectively, we must inspire confidence in our owners and guests by showing that we are appropriately focused on their health and safety.

|   |    |
|---|----|
| <b>Create</b> Transmission Barriers .....                             | 4  |
| <b>Enhance</b> Sanitation .....                                       | 9  |
| <b>Promote</b> Health Screening .....                                 | 10 |
| Food & Beverage Service <b>Guidance</b> .....                         | 12 |
| Owner and Guest Expectations:<br><b>A Shared Responsibility</b> ..... | 13 |



The **American Resort Development Association** and the **ARDA-Resort Owners Coalition** have produced a set of recommended guidelines<sup>1</sup> to help define the role of the timeshare industry in promoting the health and safety of our owners, guests and employees. These recommendations compliment but do not replace those of state and local authorities.

No industry can overcome this challenge alone. Owners and guests must also follow health guidelines to do their part to help protect their families and those around them. We are all in this together. We also recognize that any travel presents an inherent risk of exposure. COVID-19 is a highly contagious disease, and the risk for exposure exists in all public spaces. Owners and guests voluntarily assume this risk by choosing to travel.

This guidance not only directly responds to the COVID-19 threat faced today, but also prepares the industry to handle future health-related threats that may arise. These recommendations will likely evolve and be updated as the nation moves through different stages of reopening, as the science and data become more robust, and as the efficacy of certain practices become clearer.



<sup>1</sup> Developed based on previous guidelines produced by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and White House guidelines: "Opening Up America Again", and in consultation with the U.S. Travel Association guidelines: "Travel in the New Normal"

# Create Transmission Barriers

*Timeshare businesses should adapt operations, modify employee practices, redesign public spaces, and reimagine resort experiences to protect employees, owners and guests*

**ARDA members** should adapt or establish a strategy designed to reduce risks of COVID-19 transmission, including operational changes, new employee practices, and the modification of high-traffic public spaces. Strategies should align with CDC guidance and build confidence in owners, guests, and industry employees that their health and safety is the top priority.

## Signage and Communication

Open lines of communication are essential. Resort operators should communicate pre-arrival instructions to set expectations and ensure a smooth transition into the hospitality experience. Owners and guests should be encouraged to communicate any special needs or questions prior to arrival.

Posting new signage is an important technique to ensure the implementation of new practices, including physical distancing between owners and guests, employees, and vendors.

**The following situations exemplify how signage can amplify safety for owners, guests, and resort staff:**



Discourage congregating in crowded areas by marking all common areas, including elevators, with social distancing reminders and instructions.



Limit the number of employees, owners and guests in concentrated areas.



Ensure both owner and guest facing and employee facing signage are put in place.



Make public access stairways identifiable, clean, well-lit, and maintained as per fire code. Site leadership should consider if the signage is sufficient to direct guests to stairwells.

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## Physical Barriers and Amenity Access



Resort owners should consider installing physical barriers, such as transparent screens, at potential points of transaction to provide proper separation between owners, guests and employees.



Resort amenities, such as pool & spa areas, should be controlled to ensure proper social distancing guidance and to meet any local authority guidance and ordinances.



When social distancing cannot be maintained, resort management should consider implementing best practices such as amenity reservation systems, staff oversight, maximum occupancies, controlled access wristbands, and other means to ensure social distancing can always be maintained.

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## Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

PPE, including face masks and gloves, should be provided to employees and contractors when required by local regulations. Resort leaders should always refer to OSHA, CDC, WHO, and local ordinances and orders regarding PPE usage. If local requirements are less stringent than an employee's personal preference, he or she should be permitted to wear a mask and/or gloves to fulfill the duties of their individual position.

Where there are local requirements to wear masks or based on the resort manager's discretion, owners and guests must be notified through pre-arrival communication and encouraged to supply their own PPE if not being supplied by the resort. Signage should be posted to reinforce the use of PPE where practical.

Additionally, outside vendors, such as food and beverage delivery personnel, should also be required to adhere to required PPE protocols when on resort property.



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## Considerations for Sales, Marketing, & Tours Centers

Administrative, sales, marketing, and tours centers throughout the resort should be reimaged to reduce potential transmission. Because the operational procedures and physical layout of each administrative resort center is unique, adaptation to these guidelines will largely remain at the discretion of site leaders. However, considerations should include the following adjustments:

- Share any marketing information using electronic methods to minimize the exchange of paper.
- Where possible, remove excess furniture to naturally signal the capacity of a space and eliminate the possibility of congregation.
- Ensure sales associates can work in accordance with social distancing guidance
- If too many guests are congregated, associates should help direct them to a more suitable location.
- Owners and guests should be encouraged to adhere to appointment times, reducing the possibility of any lobby crowding.
- Walk-in appointments should be discouraged.
- Occupancy in presentation or meeting rooms should be minimized to allow for social distancing protocol.
- The maximum number of tours during a slotted time period will depend on tour reception, and sales center configuration and space.
- Children and other additional family members should be allowed on tours if desired, especially if childrens' centers are closed.

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## Resort Experience: Contactless Solutions

In addition to reducing physical contact, further touchless solutions should be implemented, where practical, in order to limit the potential for virus transmission through communal objects or surfaces. Timeshare resort operators should consider pursuing new technological and innovative practices to promote a safe, enjoyable, and positive hospitality experience.

**Such measures may include new contactless technologies for the following scenarios:**



Guest identification and check-in



Payment for goods and services



Automated and digital systems for ordering and pick-up for food and services



Reserving or requesting resort amenities



Digital routing and interaction should be encouraged at all touchpoints where possible

Reimagining resort offerings in this way will continue to provide your guests with an engaging hospitality experience but keeping their health and safety a priority. For example, resort management should consider developing and offering 'take back to room' activities as an alternative to group activities.



# Enhance Sanitation

*Resort operators should adopt and implement enhanced sanitation procedures specifically designed to combat the transmission of COVID-19*

Protecting against COVID-19 requires heightened sanitation practices. Specific practices may vary from one location to another. Each resort will continue to tailor procedures to its own operating environment and the expectations of its owners and guests while aligning with leading public health authority guidelines and leading health and safety practices. Some may also adopt practices verified by third party certification services.

**To promote the health and safety of owners, guests, and employees, every property should deploy enhanced sanitation procedures that include:**

- Implementing more frequent hand washing practices for all employees and, in the absence of hand washing, make available the use of an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol).
- Sanitizing objects and surfaces more frequently, using products and disinfectants that meet requirements against COVID-19. Special attention should be paid to high-touch surfaces and shared equipment and facilities.
- Providing sanitization stations that offer disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer in public areas throughout facilities.
- Modifying business hours when necessary to carry out thorough sanitation and disinfection procedures to clean public surfaces, including resort amenities such as pools, spas, fitness rooms, game rooms, and other public activity areas
- Providing new training for employees on implementing these measures with oversight on execution.
- Researching technological innovations and testing new procedures, as appropriate, to enhance sanitation.
- Assigning designated “COVID safety managers and staff” and ensure their on-property availability 24/7.

# Promote Health Screening

*Resorts should promote health screening measures for employees, isolate workers with possible COVID-19 symptoms, and provide health resources to owners and guests*

Resort operations should include screening procedures that require all employees to monitor their health, report any identified COVID-10 symptoms, and self-isolate if showing symptoms or awaiting test results. Timeshare employers and operators should review their policies to more easily enable these procedures and include the following practices:

- Encourage employees to stay home when sick or when possibly exposed to the coronavirus
- Update sick leave policies, allowing employees to stay home to care for sick family members, or to fulfill self-isolation requirements

Resort owners and guests also have a role to play in preventing the spread of COVID-19. To help them fulfill this responsibility, Resorts should offer appropriate resources to owners and guests to better enable them to monitor and screen their own health prior to travel, including:

- Pre-arrival communication and on-site signage that specifies any COVID-19 symptoms
- Guidance to local public health resources in case testing or treatment is needed
- Pre-arrival communication to owners and guests, describing good health practices to protect themselves and others, including the suggestion to refrain from travel should any COVID-19 symptoms arise
- Communication practices that remind and encourage travelers to stay home if they are sick and to postpone travel until they are well.
- Health screening of owners and guests, if appropriate and permitted by state, local, and federal regulations.

# Promote Health Screening

*Resorts should promote health screening measures for employees, isolate workers with possible COVID-19 symptoms, and provide health resources to owners and guests*

**Resort operators should establish the following procedures aligned with CDC guidance should an employee, owner, or guest test positive for COVID-19:**



Resort operators should follow an appropriate checklist of actions in response, including directing individuals and their families to local medical facilities for testing and treatment



Resort operators should follow guidance from leading public health authorities to define necessary actions in these instances.

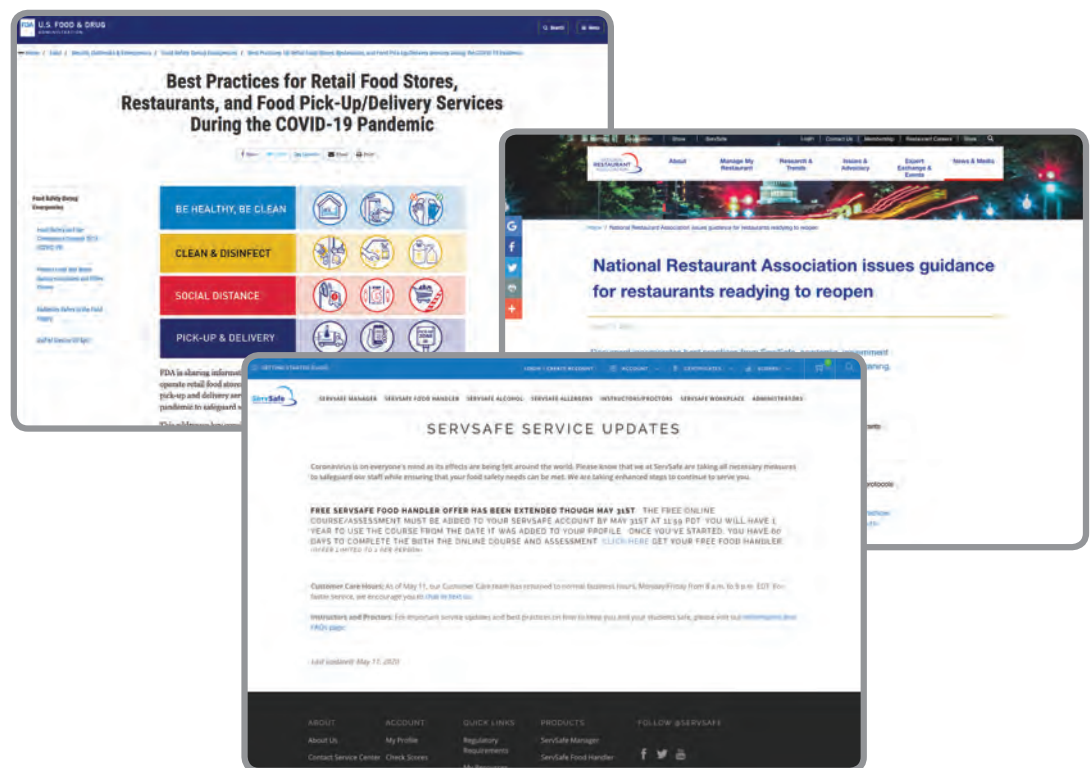


If an employee, owner, or a guest reports that they have tested positive for COVID-19, or a medical provider directs them to quarantine as presumptively positive based on symptoms, resort operators should conduct contact tracing using leading practices and tools where practical. Resort owners should consider privacy laws and regulations during the tracing and tracking process.

# Food & Beverage Service Guidance

*Resort operators should follow best practices in food and beverage service to promote health of employees and customers*

While COVID-19 is not a food borne illness, food and beverage service is an essential and ubiquitous part of the hospitality our industry provides to travelers. When serving food and beverages, resorts should follow **FDA's Best Practices for Retail Food Stores, Restaurants, and Food Pick-Up/Delivery Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic** and the **National Restaurant Association's COVID-19 Re-Opening Guidance**. They should also review the National Restaurant Association's long standing **ServSafe** guidelines or comparable state program. Resorts should also research and follow state and municipal guidance regarding COVID-19 reopening where food and beverage is addressed.



# Owner and Guest Expectations: **A Shared Responsibility**

Responding effectively to COVID-19 is a collective responsibility of resort operators, timeshare developers, owners and guests. This guidance reflects the essential role that owners and their guests must play to help promote the health and safety of the entire timeshare family.

Owners must work collectively to ensure that their resort facilities continue to be seen as a safe and healthy vacation environment. Owners also share a responsibility for their guests and should consider the following leading practices:

- Pay attention to any communications from resort management prior to your or your guest's arrival.
- Comply with resort specific rules regarding COVID precautions and ensure all necessary parties also comply when on premise.
- Be respectful of fellow owners and guests and report any issues to resort management.
- Ensure all visitors take action to stop the spread of the virus by utilizing recommended respiratory hygiene practices, sanitizing shared facilities and equipment after use, and washing hands often.
- Monitor your health and do not travel when sick. Extend the same practices to your guests, as they represent you on property.

*In the spirit of collective action, we urge all owners to do their part and follow government and industry guidance to help protect themselves and members of the timeshare community. No industry can overcome this challenge alone, and we're all in this together. While safety cannot be guaranteed, this industry can begin to reopen, and responsibly thrive again.*





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**Legal Disclaimer**

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