

Health & Safety Certification for Tourism and Hospitality

Implementation Manual and Toolkit:

Tour Guides



Myanmar

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Introduction

Health and Safety Certification: Myanmar

1. The documents

The documents that support the implementation of the Myanmar Health and Safety certification system are as follows:

The Health and Safety Protocols	Implementation Manual & Toolkit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic protocols for all sectors to comply with • Sector specific protocols added to the basic standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 1: an explanation on the protocols and how to implement them • Section 2: a toolkit with templates and Standard Operating Procedures, checklists, etc., that a business could adapt to use within their own operations to meet the certification requirements.

2. The Myanmar Health and Safety Protocols

The **Myanmar Health and Safety protocols** have been developed based on the protocols of the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTTC). This enables Myanmar to become a safe travel destination through endorsement of the WTTTC. This endorsement is in the form of the 'Safe Travels' certification which provides reassurance to tourists visiting Myanmar that we have world class health and safety protocols in place to protect them, as well as to protect our staff.



The protocols have been compiled in two bands:

1. **Basic protocols:** applicable to all sectors of the industry
2. **Specific protocols:** relevant to the particular sector e.g. transport protocols vs restaurant protocols.

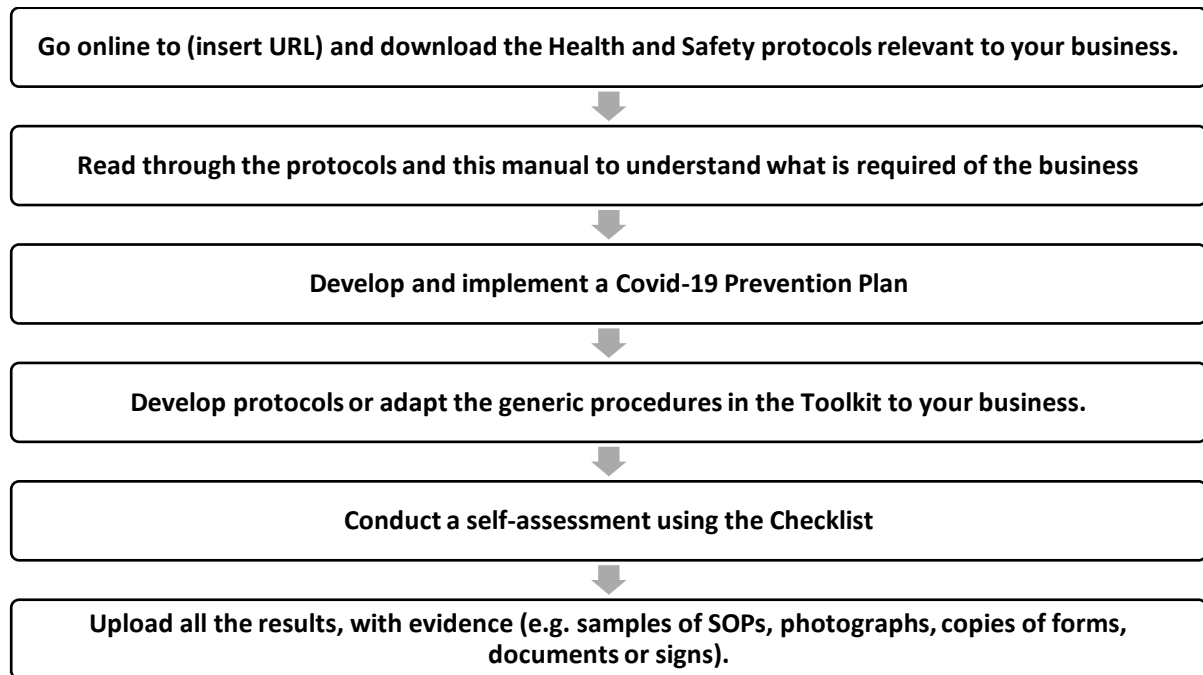
The protocols are written with the words '**must**' and '**should**'. Where 'must' is indicated, this is a requirement that must be met; where 'should' is used, it is a recommended practice that should be implemented if it is possible in the business. The more protocols that can be implemented by a business, the better and safer they will be, so tourism business are encouraged to adopt as many of the recommendations as they can.

3. The Myanmar Health and Safety Implementation Manual and Toolkit

This **Implementation Manual and Toolkit** has been developed to assist operators of tourism and hospitality businesses in Myanmar to implement the Health and Safety protocols.

The information contained in this manual is designed to provide an understanding of each protocol and how to implement it. The Implementation Manual is supported by a Toolkit that provides a range of useful, practical tools such as Standard Operating Procedures for business owners to adapt to their needs and implement in their businesses.

4. Steps to follow



Glossary and Abbreviations

Protocols	The specific requirements that need to be met to achieve the Health and Safety Certification from the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism
MoHT	Ministry of Hotels and Tourism
MoHS	Ministry of Health and Sports
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure

Protocol 1: Tour Guide Knowledge and Behaviour

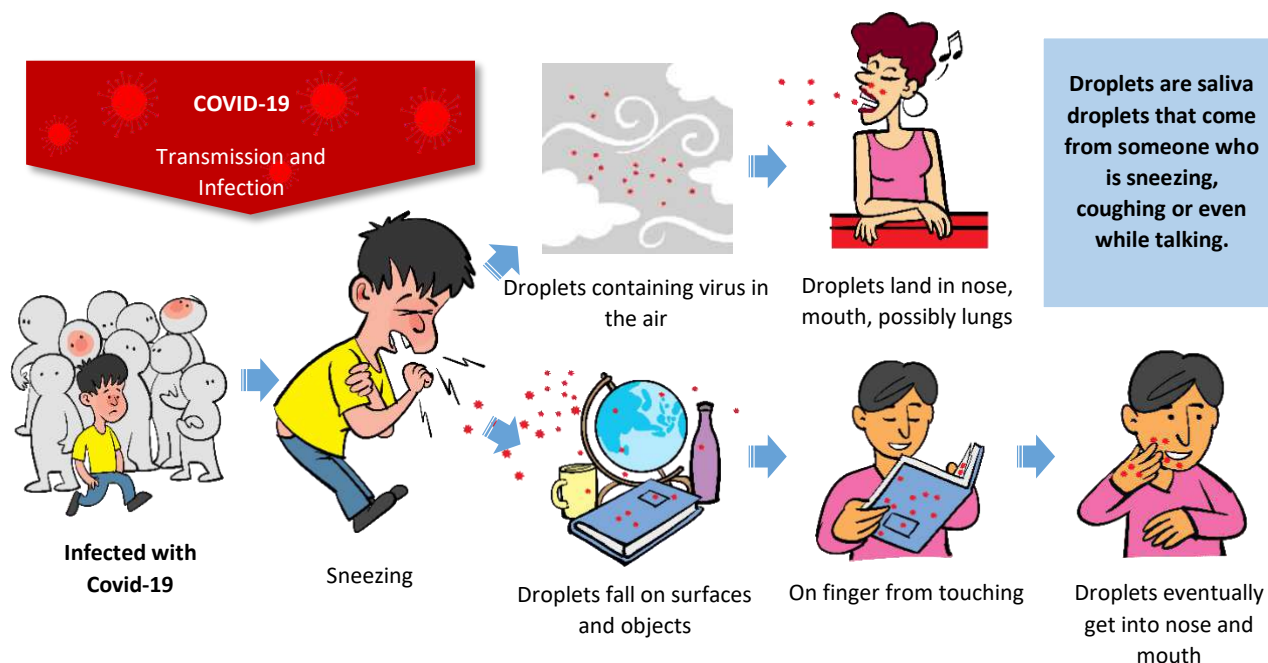
1.a Training tour guides about Covid-19

Tour guides must be familiar with Covid-19 transmission, symptoms, prevention/infection control, and new/revised protocols according to latest advice from public health authorities and/or WHO.

Transmission of Covid-19

COVID-19 spreads through person-to-person contact and through direct contact with droplets generated when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It is important to know that many people may have COVID-19 and not feel sick at all. They could spread the disease to other people without even knowing it, so it is important to understand how it is spread, and how to prevent it from spreading.

When any person coughs or sneezes, tiny droplets can fly quite far and land on surfaces, on clothes and on other people. When someone with COVID-19 coughs or sneezes, these droplets contain live virus which can infect other people.

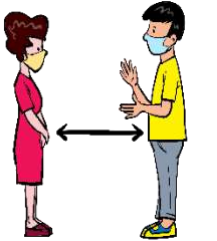


The virus can also easily get onto hands if people cough or sneeze into their hands or blow their noses. If these people then touch other people or surfaces, they leave some virus behind on the item that they touched (for example a menu, an elevator button, a door handle). Anyone who touches that surface may pick it up onto their hands, and if they touch their faces, it can easily get into their bodies through their mouth, nose or eyes.

If the virus lands on a surface it can stay alive for a limited period of time. The coronavirus can live for hours to days on surfaces like countertops and doorknobs. How long it survives depends on the material the surface is made from.

How to Prevent Transmission

Once we know how COVID-19 spreads, we can apply rules to stop it from spreading. The following rules help us to prevent the spread of COVID-19:



Avoid close contact: no handshakes, hugs or kisses. Keep 1 to 2 meters distance between people.



Avoid gatherings and crowds, meetings, travelling to work in crowded vehicles.



Avoid touching your face: eyes, nose, or mouth.



Wash hands often, using soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, blowing nose, coughing or sneezing and before eating.



Protect others by wearing a mask even if you are not sick; staying home when sick, covering your cough and sneezing with a tissue or elbow.

What kills the virus:

- Soap (and water)
- Alcohol sanitizers (>60% alcohol)
- Bleach (sodium hypochlorite)
- Heat
- Sunlight

Symptoms of Covid-19 infection

The symptoms of Covid-19 infection are:

<p>Most common symptoms: Fever of >38°C dry cough tiredness</p>	<p>Less common symptoms: aches and pains sore throat diarrhoea</p>	<p>conjunctivitis (eye infection) headache loss of taste or smell a rash on skin, or discolouration of fingers or toes</p>
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1.b Public health guidelines

Guides must be familiar with the most up-to-date public health guidelines and will adhere to these for the duration of the tour.

Common protocols are issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports (MoHS), and the Tour Guiding Protocols from Ministry of Hotels and Tourism (MoHT) are based on these protocols and well as the protocols issued by the World Health Organisation.

The public health guidelines from MoHS and MoHT include:

1. Wearing masks at all times – for both guides and tourists.
2. Maintaining a physical distance of 6 feet
3. Having sanitizer available for self and tourists
4. Cleaning and sanitizing of items that are used and touched often
5. Not sharing items such as masks, microphones, eating utensils.

1.c Tour guide illness

Tour guides must not guide tourists if the tour guide feels ill with any of the Covid-19 symptoms.

If a guide experiences any of the Covid-19 symptoms (see Protocol 1a), they must not guide tourists in case they infect the tourists and other people that the guide may work with such as drivers. If guiding for a tour operator, inform them immediately when feeling the symptoms so that they can find an alternate guide, and can also warn any people that the guide has had close contact with prior to experiencing the symptoms.

Protocol 2: Tour Preparation

2.a Risks for covid-19 transmission

Tour guides must identify risks that may lead to Covid-19 transmission and must develop and follow plans for alternative actions to mitigate risks. Risks include issues such as visits to attractions, possible crowding, group size, restrictions on the provision of certain tourist services, etc.

'Risks' are times when the possibility of contracting the virus are higher than other times. Such times include being in attractions, having a large group of tourists, guiding a group of people who are coming from different places and do not know each other.

Develop plans to minimise these risks, based on an understanding of preventing the transmission of Covid-19, for example:

- Split a large group into several smaller groups
- Distance people in attractions by getting the group to spread out
- Get a portable microphone so that the guide can stand further away from the group when providing information, and the group can also spread out while still being able to hear the guide.
- Visit attractions in non-peak times to avoid being there at maximum capacity
- Space tourists out in vehicles
- Ensure tourists follow protocols
- Revise activities such as watching an artisan create a craft – do such activities outdoors, and do not allow the tourists to practice with the artisan
- Suspend any close contact activities like demonstrations, dancing, contact sports or adventures.

2.b Sanitizing vehicles

Where appropriate, tour guides must liaise with tour operators and coach companies and private vehicle companies and drivers to ensure vehicles have been thoroughly sanitized.

Work closely with the businesses that provide the transport for the tour group e.g. tour operators, coach companies, private vehicle owners to ensure that the vehicles are thoroughly cleaned and sanitized before and during your tour. Special attention must be paid to cleaning high touch areas in the vehicle such as door handles, arm rests, rails, window sills, window controls.

2.c Avoiding crowding

The tour guide should coordinate with suppliers such as hotels, restaurants and attractions in order to avoid crowding when groups arrive, for example:

- Sending the list of client documentation in advance so that the documents are not processed while tourists are standing waiting
- Handing out room keys inside the vehicle
- Staggered entrance to the hotel/museum/monument
- Distancing protocols when queuing to enter the facility
- Visiting attractions during off-peak times or extended opening hours such as visiting a museum in the evening
- Directing that tourist disembark from busses row by row in an orderly fashion
- Providing extra time for boarding and disembarking of busses and coaches.

2.d Site specific covid-19 requirements

Tour guides must ensure they are fully aware of tourism sites' specific Covid-19 requirements and comply with them.

While general Health and Safety protocols must be followed at all times, some tourism sites may have specific requirements such as the removal of shoes at pagodas, or not entering people's homes during Community-Based Tourism visits. Guides must find out what these specific protocols are and convey these to tour members so that they can follow them at the tourism site.

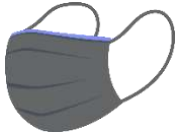

Protocol 3: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Guiding Equipment *

3.a Tour Guides PPE

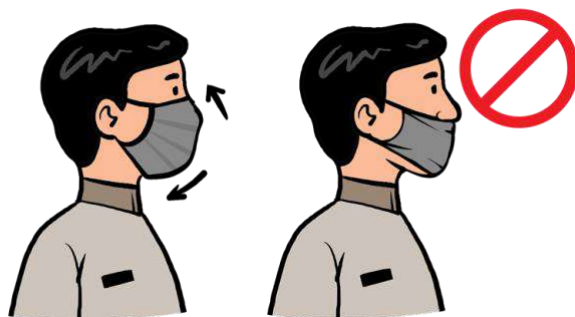
Tour guides must wear a face mask or a mask and a face shield while guiding.

Personal Protective Equipment

Personal Protective Equipment, PPE, is equipment worn to protect the wearer from becoming infected. Examples of PPE include gloves, goggles, face shields, face masks, aprons, coats, overalls, hair and shoe covers and respiratory protection (masks or face shields). Tour guides must always wear face masks and this can be supplemented with a face shield.

	
<p style="text-align: center;">Masks</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Face Shields</p>
<p>These can be disposable or reusable. Disposable masks are very convenient, but create waste, and constant supplies must be bought. Fabric masks will be more expensive initially but can be washed and used as long as needed. Fabric masks can be made of a material that matches the colours or uniform of the guide so can look professional.</p>	<p>These can be worn in addition to masks, not instead of masks. The shields must be cleaned with disinfectant.</p>

Masks must be worn correctly and must cover the nose and chin, and fit closely to be effective:



Before putting on the face mask and whilst wearing the face mask



1. Wash hands or apply hand sanitizer before touching the mask.



2. Make sure the mask is clean and dry.



3. Inspect the mask for damage.








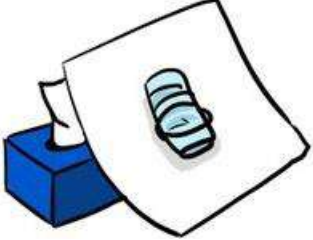

4. Put on the mask and ensure it fits correctly, leaving no gaps on the sides.



5. The mask should cover your mouth, nose and chin.

- Do not lower the face mask when speaking, coughing, or sneezing.

How to safely remove face mask

 <p>Clean your hands before removing the face mask</p>	 <p>Remove the mask by the straps behind the ears or head. Take them off carefully and fold them inside out (so that the outer surface is inside) before washing them. This is so that the wearer does not touch the outside, contaminated surface.</p>	 <p>Pull the mask away from the face and fold inside out if the wearer is not infected.</p> <p>Fold it outside in if the wearer is infected (to contain any saliva on the inside).</p> 
 <p>Wash the mask in soap or detergent, preferably with hot water, at least once a day; iron when dry.</p>	 <p>Disposable masks: fold in half; roll up with the ties, wrap in tissue and throw into a bin with a closable lid.</p>	 <p>Wash hands after removing the mask</p>

3.b Masks for Tourists

Masks (preferably re-washable not disposable) must be made available to tourists, either for free or for sale.

Tour guides should have masks available for tourists if tourists need them (e.g. theirs is lost or damaged). These can either be sold or given to tourists and could be disposable or made of material so that they are reusable.

3.c Shared Equipment

Tour guides must not share work equipment or devices with other tour guides if possible. If certain equipment or devices are shared (e.g. radios, walky-talkies, microphones, telephones, umbrellas, etc.), the tour guide must establish cleaning and disinfection guidelines and, failing this, use PPE to reduce the risk of contagion.

Here are some recommendations for sharing equipment:

1. Wipe down all items with sanitising solution when sharing with other tour guides
2. Do not spray sanitizer directly onto electronic equipment, rather wipe it with a sanitizing wipe.
3. Keep equipment out of use for a day or so if possible so that any virus on it will die.

Protocol 4: Handwashing and Sanitizing

4.a Hand sanitizing protocols







Hand sanitizing protocols must be followed by tour guides and tourists. These must be followed at all relevant points such as:

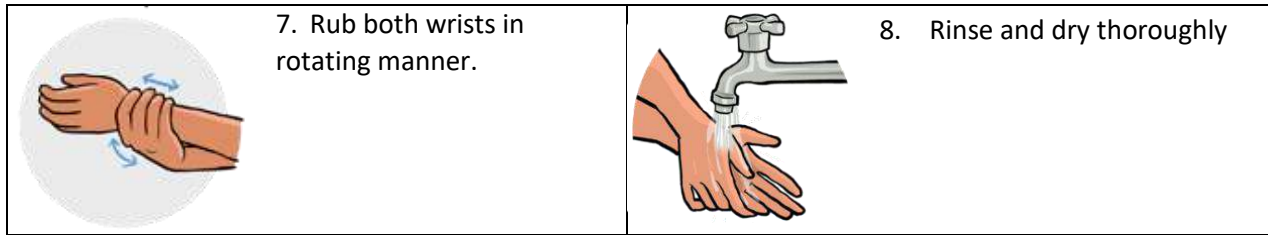
- Boarding vehicles
- Entering attractions
- Entering restaurants for meals and again after meals
- Before and after activities
- Shopping

4.b Tour Guide Hygiene Practices

Tour guides must apply rigorous hygiene practices, including thoroughly washing or sanitizing hands with a 70% alcohol sanitizer before and during tours. When possible, wash hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds when at attractions, rest stops, restaurants or hotels. Washing hands with soap and water kills the virus, but also cleans any dirt off the hands, which sanitizer does not. Use both methods as much as possible.

When washing hands, do so for 20 seconds, using the following technique:

 <p>1. Rub hands together, palm to palm</p>	 <p>2. Right palm over the back of the left hand, with interlaced fingers and vice versa</p>
 <p>3. Palm to palm with fingers interlaced</p>	 <p>4. Back of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked</p>
 <p>5. Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa</p>	 <p>6. Rotational rubbing, backwards and forward with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa.</p>



4.c Hand sanitizer

Tour guides must carry hand sanitizer with them on tour for own personal use and for tourists who may need it. Guides should be able to offer guests hand sanitizer in any risky situations or offer sanitizer to drivers or suppliers such as artisans if needed to keep both them and the tourists safe.

4.d Knowledge of facilities at tourism sites

Tour guides must know where public toilets/hand-washing facilities/hand sanitizer points are available at tourism sites and be able to inform tourists accordingly. Many attraction and visitor sites will have set up hand sanitizing or washing stations in addition to restroom facilities. Guides must become familiar with these at each of their sites and direct tourists to use them.

Protocol 5: Health Screening

5.a Health checks and records

Health checks, including body temperature checking with a thermal scanner, must be conducted and a register must be maintained for all tourists in the group being guided.

Health Screening of tourists should be conducted at the start of any tour, and on longer tours, daily, or even more frequently such as at midday and also at the end of the day.

Health screening includes a **temperature and symptom check, and completion of a register or logbook:**

Procedure for taking temperatures:

- Wear a mask
- Approach the person from the side, tell them to look forward as you test from the side of their forehead. This keeps the tester out of the person's breathing zone.
- Use a handheld infrared thermometer to check temperatures.
- A test above 38°C must be verified by a second test.
- If the tourist is from a tour that is arranged by a tour operator, any tourists with a temperature of $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$ must be referred to the Operations manager of the tour company as soon as possible.
- If the tour is an independent tour, the guides must not allow the tourist to join the tour and should suggest that the tourist goes for testing and self-isolates.

Fill in a Covid-19 Health Screening Register or logbook: fill in name, contact details, PPE and/or symptoms sheet as well as recording temperature

This sample register can be adapted and used by tour guides:

Date	Time	Name	Contact	Mask	Sanitizer	Temp	Symptoms
30/2/21	12.00	John Smith	123 456 789	√	√	36.2°	None

Keep visitor information for two weeks in case anyone in the group tests positive for Covid-19 after the tour.

Protocol 6: Physical Distancing and Minimizing Physical Contact

6.a Physical distance

Tour guides must maintain physical distance between themselves and tourists at all times. Ensure that while guiding, walking and interpreting, the correct distances are maintained. Keep a distance also when assisting tourists, answering questions or helping with queries or problems. Remind guests politely to maintain a safe distance for their sake as well as yours if they forget or get too close.

6.b Facilitating physical distancing

Tour guides must facilitate physical distance of 6 feet between tourists in queue control, seating areas, attractions and other such areas. Remind and ensure that tourists follow any distancing markers at attractions, hospitality venues and in vehicles.

6.c Maximum capacity

A maximum number of people to whom the service can be offered safely should be calculated. Some tourist activities require close observation e.g. when watching an artisan such as a jewellery maker, or participating in an activity such as cooking. Calculate how many people can safely watch and see clearly from a distance and break tourists into smaller groups for such activities.

For larger groups, keep families, households or companions who are travelling together apart from each other.

Ensure that vehicles are not too full; they should be at about 70% capacity, with empty seats between people who are not from the same family, household or travelling party.

Try to keep these groups separate during guided activities and meal times.

For activities and engagement such as Community-Based Tourism, split large groups into groups of five tourists.

6.d Physical contact with clients

Guides must avoid shaking hands or any other physical contact with clients. Develop an alternative way of greeting tourists, such as touching elbows. Most tourists are by now familiar with such practices and will not take offence. If they offer their hands, a guide should be polite and remind the tourists about protocols. Be friendly and even joke about it if appropriate.

6.e Appropriate social distancing in groups

On tours where the group includes different households, tour guides must encourage and help clients to adopt appropriate social distancing between each other.

Identify which people are travelling together e.g. families, people from the same households, or friends travelling together. Note these groups and try to keep them separate from each other during guided activities, meal times, and in vehicles.

6.f Outdoor activities

Tour guides must deliver interpretation and activities outdoors as much as possible. The virus disperses easily in the open air, so this is a much safer environment for tourist and others such as artisans. Instead of artisans delivering demonstrations in their homes or workshops, if possible, set up a space to do this outside instead.

6.g Safe engagements with Artisans and Performers

Facilitate safe activities and experiences with artisans and performers

Where relevant, the tour guide must facilitate Covid-19 safety recommendations for Local artisans and performers including:

- Visits must take place outside of the artisan's home
- Prepare an appropriate area with shade, and shelter
- All equipment used during activities must be cleaned beforehand and after each group or person
- There must be no physical contact between artisans and visitors during demonstrations and hands-on experiences
- During performances the performers and tourists must be separated by 6 feet. Different groups must also be separated by 6 feet
- Good photo spots should be arranged in advance so tourists and community members can take photos safely

Protocol 7: Communication with Tourists *

7.a Communicating Health and Safety Protocols

Health and safety protocols should be shared with tourists ahead of time if possible.

Once all the previous steps are in place, it is important to communicate with your tourists on the protocols you have put in place to protect them during their time with you.

This is best done via email or text message before the tour begins so that tourists know what to expect of them on the tour.

7.b Forms of Communication

There must be communication (digital, written or verbal) with tourists or tourists to observe Covid-19 protocols at the beginning of the tour and during the tour as needed by the itinerary. These should cover general protocols as well as specific protocols such as interactions with artisans, time spent in attractions and other facilities.

Tourists must be briefed on Covid-19 protocols that need to be followed. Large tour operators may prepare some of this information in advance and send it to the tourists via email or text message.

Tourists will also or only be verbally briefed before or during the tour. The information or briefing should include:

1. What will happen when they arrive at an attraction or destination such as dividing them into smaller groups where necessary, disembarking row by row, sanitising, etc.
2. Covid-19 safety measures taken by suppliers, attractions or communities
3. Any do's and don'ts for the tourists
4. General protocols: masks, sanitizing, distancing
5. Not sharing food and drink containers

Speak loudly and clearly while respecting physical distancing protocols and ensure tourists and suppliers follow the protocols as well. Alternatively use appropriate communication equipment such as a microphone.

7.c Tour Guide Preparation

Tour guides should be prepared to answer questions, resolve challenges, address situations where tourists are not complying and share protocols before and during the tour to reassure travellers.

Tour guides are responsible for the safety of the tourists they guide. This includes Covid-19 safety. Guides must be vigilant and notice if protocols are not being followed (e.g. masks not worn correctly or at all, distances not being kept, etc). Politely but firmly remind tourists to follow protocols for the good of everybody on the tour, including the tour staff.

Refer tourists to signs and notices in the venue, the vehicle, the attraction or the hospitality provider if necessary.

Protocol 8: Emergency Protocols

8.a Covid-19 Contacts and Facilities

Tour guides must know the nearest Covid-19 treatment facility in the destinations where they are guiding, and contact numbers for the appropriate authorities must be available and accessible..

The MoHT website for Health and Safety Protocols hosts a list of Covid-19 treatment facilities and authorities around the country. Tour guides can access this list and copy the relevant information from the list for the destinations in which they guide. The list can be downloaded and printed, or the guide can take photos to save on their phone, or access the website when in need.

It may be easier and safer to have the list either in hard copy or in digital copy in case there is any problem accessing the site, for example in areas where there is not good signal coverage.

8.b Procedure to Manage Covid-19 Cases

There must be a clear procedure on how to manage a suspected Covid-19 case of a guest or tour member.

Most tour guides work for Tour Operators. These companies will have established procedures on how to manage a suspected Covid-19 case of a tour member. Complications arise when a tourist is part of a family or other group and needs to isolate and should be left behind the main group. The Tour Operator will have procedures on how to deal with this and other such challenges.

Guides must be briefed by their employers/tour companies and be very familiar with what to do in such cases. They should carry a copy of the procedure with them in case they need to refer to it.

8.c Medical Insurance Details

Tour guides must be informed of the medical insurance details of tourists in case of emergency.

This protocol applies to tours of longer duration than, for example day tours, half day tours or site tours. Tourists who are on multi-day tours should provide details of their medical insurance to the tour operator or tour guide to keep on file in case of emergency. Contact details for the medical insurance must be provided as well as number for next of kin or who to contact in case of emergency.

The tour operator should provide this to the guide or keep it at head office to use as needed. Generally, in case of an emergency with a tourist, the guide will contact the Operations Manager who will access this information and use it as needed. However, in the event that the guide or the manager is out of contact, it is suggested that the guide also carries a copy of this information on the tour.

Independent guides should collect and carry this information on their tourists with them safely in an easily accessible form such as a file.