

Protocol for Adventure Tourism, Ecotourism and Outdoor Activities in Response to the Covid -19 Emergency

This document has been prepared by a committee of both experts in outdoor activities and Ecotourism tour operators from the Lake District in Chile, gathering information from national and international organizations individualized down below. This initiative arises as a response to the necessity of having a risk management manual in order to prevent Coronavirus Sars-Cov- 2 contagion, while producing a document that may be of use to the authority efforts in establishing official protocols in this matter. This protocol is based on currently available information and could be updated based on new information.

Range and Context

Considering the advance of the Coronavirus Sars – Cov – 2 pandemic and the absence of specific vaccines and treatments that may counteract the risk of contagion, the eco and adventure tourism sector has produced this document to be presented to National Health and Tourism authorities. This protocol considers only recreational activities in the outdoor within the context of touristic activities and does not include append areas such as passenger transport, food in gastronomic establishments or use of public facilities such as ports, airports, ships and such. The protocol is to be modified and updated in accordance with legal measures that may arise from the central government pertaining touristic safety related to the Sars-Cov -2 emergency, regardless of it being at the disposal of said authorities as source for the development of other regulations. The companies that prepared this protocol agree to its use as internal manual for its staff and the delivering of it to their clients. This protocol takes for granted the adequate preparation of both company and teams in regards to first aids with certified guides in WAFA or WFR courses, emergency and work hazard prevention protocols according to the current national legislation and it is meant to be supplementary to the risk management plan of each company to respond to emergencies during their touristic operations on site.

General Considerations about Symptoms

Worldwide recognized symptoms to be considered suspicious by the WHO are fever, dry cough and difficulty of breathing. Other symptoms that may occur are: tiredness, headache and soar throat. Therefore, precautionary measures include personal distancing and frequent thorough hand washing with water and soap or disinfectant solutions. *Refer to Image 1 with information about correct hand washing.

Definitions

This protocol is to be applied taking into consideration the role of the **agency or tour operator, from now on, the company**, the role of the **adventure tour guide** and the participant in the activity, from now on, **the client**, in addition to the safe use of **the technical equipment**. This manual will consider the activities at a general level. Each company is to supplement this manual with specific chapters related to its own activities such as kayaking, rafting, rock climbing, trekking, hiking, wildlife observation, touristic cycling, mountain climbing, etc. For the response protocol in case of a suspected Sars-Cov-2 case, the procedure to take place will be the one indicated by National Health authority in segment 7

https://www.minsal.cl/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/2020.03.06_PROTOCOLO-SEGUIMIENTO-VIAJEROS_COVID-19.pdf

Role of the Adventure Tour Operator and its Obligations:

The company is to subscribe a firm and coordinated compromise to minimize contagion risk for its own staff as well as clients. Such efforts are to be under coordination and within a plan that will supplement the safety protocol already in place. It is advised to update the emergency and hazard committee, which is to include members of the staff in contact with the clients.

Risk Committee is to:

Establish and update mechanisms for decision-making.

Establish communication and intervention mechanisms according to official protocols in case of suspicious cases of contagion by Sars-Cov-2, activating the Emergency Committee and following official indications mentioned in the Definitions chapter which **must be aligned with the current regulations of the National Health authority**. The company is to reveal its protocols to clients and adapt all pre trip information to the new reality of risk prevention in its forms, informing preventive mechanisms and legal suspension causes for activities whenever necessary.

The company is to provide the client with the out most information prior to their trip or tour via virtual communication or remote tools, so it comes early thus reducing the time for information on site, reducing the latter just to the protocols pertaining the activity to be conducted.

On Monitoring Company Staff

The company is to have a staff monitoring journal where it is recommended to take tests to detect Sars-Cov-2 periodically to all personnel in contact with clients, specially guides and drivers.

On the use of own- or third-party vehicles for transport

The company is to check and enforce the correct use of means of transport according to existing regulations of National Health authority in relation to the number of clients per vehicle and disinfecting protocols before and after its use. Rotation of seat during transportation will not be allowed except for members of the same family groups or couples.

Obligations of the Tour Guide during Outdoor Activities

- 1- Adventure tour guide is to protect his/her own body with mandatory health masks (we recommend reusable ones) and gloves or face protectors (these last two will be optional) as long as he/she is less than 2 mt. /6,5 ft from the client, inside the vehicle, when picking up the client or in enclosed spaces. In the event that the guide chooses to wear gloves, he/she is to put them on in the proper way right in front of the client. Hand washing with soap or disinfectant solution is favored. *Refer to image 2 for the correct use of masks.
- 2.- The guide is to deliver to the client the information, restrictions and care to be aware of during the tour when the activity starts. Risk management briefing is to take place before getting on the transport vehicle, in an open space and has to include: the double check of the client's personal protection equipment (mask or facial protector), the proper way to sneeze, cough or yawn, encouragement the practice of not touching the face with the hands and taking the temperature of each client, the guide and the driver, action that is to be done properly in plain sight of the clients. The guide will be in charge of taking everyone's temperature and any participant whose temperature is 37, 5 C / 99,5 F or above will not be taking part in the activity. This rule includes company staff.
- 3- During the development of the activity, safe handling of the equipment is to be ensured. The company will provide personal use equipment for the activity whenever possible. Equipment considered personal can only be manipulated by the client in charge and has to be properly labeled. In the case of the equipment of communitarian use, it has to be disinfected after each use. Each client will have at their disposal an equipment cleaning kit with disinfecting solutions of hydro alcoholic base and, in the case of optical equipment, special disinfecting solutions. After each use of communitarian equipment, the client must disinfect it before another client can use it. The guide will be in charge of monitoring the correct use of equipment and the enforcement of this protocol on site.
- 4- The guide is to check the first aid kit includes sealed masks for replacement for each client in case they lose or rip their own, in addition to disinfectant solutions that allow the constant washing of hands during the activity. Soap and water and gel with minimum 70% alcohol are favored. Correct use of the first aid kit and its hygiene products are of responsibility of each guide in charge.
5. In the event of accidents, the guide will take necessary measures to guarantee precautionary regulations regarding contact and hygiene when looking after the injured person, according to updated protocols for First Aid in Remote Locations or any other course of the sort.
- 6- The guide is to be aware to keep the group away from other visitors and of not to use the same resting places o camping sites.
- 7- The guide is to make sure that the interaction with residents of local communities or other people foreign to the tour is limited to the minimum, and if it should occur, the

same protocol used for the clients is to be applied (mask, personal distance, hand sanitizing).

8- In the case that the guide presents any symptoms, as minor as they could be, prior to the activity, he/she is to inform the company and cancel his / her participation in it. This agreement is to be included in a formal document signed by the involved parts.

9- The guide in charge of the activity is to prevent all type of physical contact with the clients and among the clients unless they belong to the same family group.

Obligations of the Client

- 1- To accept and to follow all protocols indicated by the guide and the company.
- 2- To respect the recommended minimum distance of 2 mt /6 feet with other clients, with the guide and other people during the activity, unless the people in question are members of the same family group.
- 3- To bring his/her own bottle of water, his/her own mask and his/her own sanitizer, gel or other method of disinfection, regardless of the fact that the company in charge of the activity is to have extra stash if needed.
- 4- To sign a form on prior contact with people with symptoms or diagnosed with Sars-Cov- 2.
- 5- The client is to accept, in case of presenting any of the symptoms described in this document as signs of possible risk (See General Considerations about Symptoms) , not to participate in the programmed activity in order to look after his/her own, the staff and the other client's health. Participants in close contact with the person with potential symptoms are to avoid participation in the activity as well.
- 6- The client is to wash hands with disinfecting solutions detailed in this document at least every 2 hours.
- 7- The client can demand to know and be given access to the company's contagion prevention plan at any given time.

Equipment and Food

- 1- Equipment is to be understood as any element provided to the client for his/her own use during the tour as well as the communitarian equipment, which is also under the same protocol.
- 2- The equipment is to be sanitized according to the protocols of the Ministry of Health (Minsal) regarding disinfection. The company is to keep a disinfection journal and the equipment is to be kept properly at its facility minimizing its manipulation by unauthorized third parties.
- 3- Any personal equipment is to be of use solely of each client and properly identified (helmet, harness, ice axe, binoculars, bicycles, paddles, etc.). For the communitarian use (i.e. telescopes) each client will have a cleaning and disinfecting kit that they will use to clean such equipment after use before handing it down to another client.
- 4- The disinfection process of the equipment is to be informed to all clients disclosing the procedure protocol.
- 5- Food will be sealed and individually distributed. Each client is to transport their own food thus preventing manipulation by a third party. Food will be individual and clients are not to share either food or utensils. Waste generated by each client during the activity is to be handled only and exclusively by them until reaching a place they can be disposed of. To such effect, personal containers will be provided for collecting garbage.
- 6- In the case of local vendors for food, it will be responsibility of the company to check and make sure the proper protocols for handling and manipulation of food according to the regulations of health authorities. Regarding food in gastronomic establishments protocols from health authorities are to be enforced, being company responsibility to check that such establishments fulfill sanitary and hygiene conditions.
- 7- Regarding the use of common areas in state protected wild areas, protocols produced by CONAF (National Forest and Protected Areas Services) are to be followed and in the case of using natural areas where there are no hygienic services or facilities of the sort, the **Leave No Trace Techniques** are to be used which will have to be explained by the guide in charge of the activity during the safety briefing.

Bibliography and papers/documents consulted:

Chilean Health Authority (only Spanish)

https://www.minsal.cl/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/2020.03.06_PROTOCOLO-SEGUIMIENTO-VIAJEROS_COVID-19.pdf

Spanish Institute for Tourism Quality. Protocols for adventure travel and guides

Adventure Travel Trade Association – https://www.adventuretravelnews.com/10-recovery-health-and-safety-recommendations-for-adventure-travel-from-atta?utm_source=ATTA+%26+AdventureTravelNews&utm_campaign=069fc95e60-ATN_05_22_2019_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1e08e536bd-069fc95e60-412637453

World Health Organization

<https://www.who.int/who-documents-detail/updated-country-preparedness-and-response-status-for-covid-19-as-of-14-may-2020>

Chilean Federation of Mountain Guides

Leave No Trace Principles <https://Int.org/why/7-principles/>

IMAGE 1 HAND WASHING

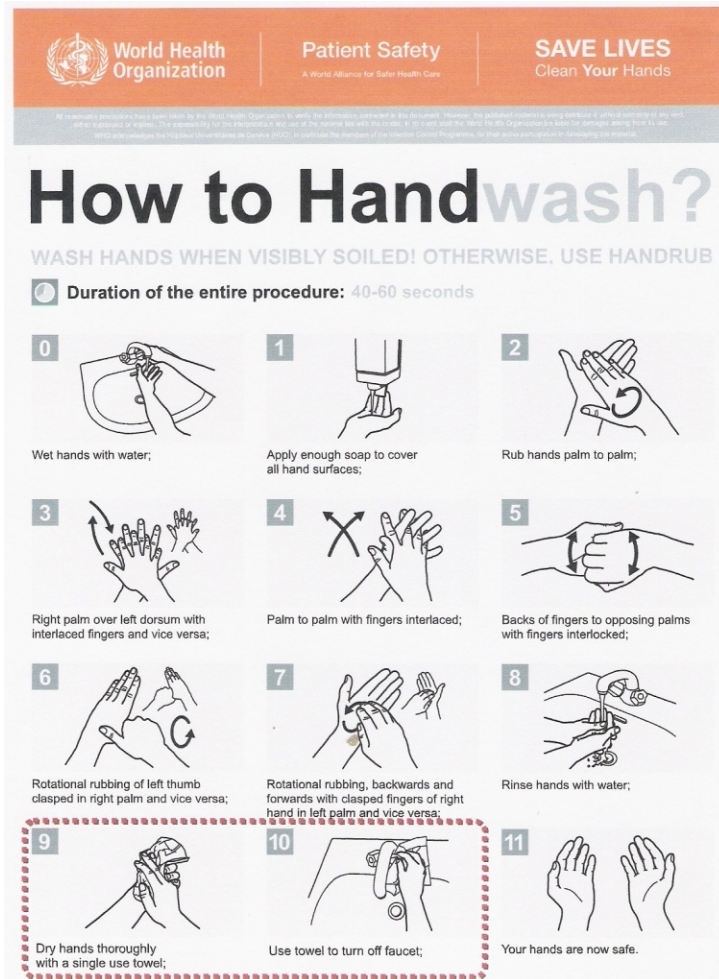


IMAGE 2 : HOW TO WEAR A MASK

