



CHTA Guidance to Employers and National Hotel & Tourism Associations on Key Health Safety and Recovery Matters

May 18, 2021

In response to various inquiries which CHTA has received from members and NHTAs on several matters related to health safety, CHTA has adopted the following Guidance Notes. These are intended to support local efforts, recognizing that employer and destination policies will vary due to one's own circumstances. We'd like to hear more about the health safety policies and initiatives of employers and destinations for sharing of best practices to the overall benefit of the region's tourism industry. If you wish to share your successful initiatives, please reach out to any CHTA staff member or contact us at: information@caribbeanhotelandtourism.com.

1. Vaccine Requirement for Travel/Entry

Vaccines should not be a requirement for travel to and within the Caribbean. CHTA maintains the position presently held by the World Travel and Tourism Council which states that vaccines should not be a pre-requisite for international travel.

This position recognizes that tourism's recovery cannot wait until the world reaches a herd immunity level of vaccination and that substantial risk mitigation from Covid-19 is being realized through a combination of testing, health safety protocols inclusive of mandatory face coverings, and the growing number of the public receiving vaccines.

It further recognizes that for various reasons not all members of the public will become vaccinated, but all members of the travelling public should adhere to testing requirements and health safety protocols. As proof of vaccination (i.e. approved certificates) protocols for Covid-19 are standardized and digitized within the industry, this can present destinations with an added measure for facilitating travel entry within a framework which also allows for entry by non-vaccinated individuals who meet other local entry requirements.

2. Vaccine Priority for Travel and Tourism Related Employees

Recognizing the importance of protecting all workers who support and facilitate travelers and the critical role which tourism-related employees have in restoring economic health, in January, 2021 CHTA recommended to CARICOM and Heads of Government throughout the region, Ministers and Directors of Tourism and Health Ministers, and to its Federation of National Hotel and Tourism Associations that:

Priority be given for tourism-related employees inclusive of those working in the travel and tourism industry and at ports of entry, as essential workers to receive vaccines, following those allocated to senior citizens, healthcare workers, health-compromised citizens, and other essential workers.



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Since that time a growing number of Caribbean jurisdictions have designated that tourism-related workers be given priority status. CHTA urges all National Hotel and Tourism Associations and jurisdictions to advance this.

3. Vaccines as a Requirement for Employment

CHTA recognizes that the subject of vaccines as a requirement for employment is one which needs ongoing dialogue, education and understanding and that a mandatory requirement for employment in the industry is difficult to put in place given variances in jurisdictional law, union and employer-employee agreements, medical and ethical issues, and the inconsistencies in the availability of vaccines from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Recommending a blanket regional policy on mandatory vaccines for employment in the travel and tourism industry is not practical.

CHTA recommends that employers encourage all employees who are able to receive a Covid-19 vaccine do so as World Health Organization and locally approved vaccines become available to protect the health of their fellow employees and guests.

Recognizing the need to provide assurances to employees, vendors and guests that everything is being done by employers to help ensure their health safety, employers should continue to enact strong health safety measures as advanced in the [Guidelines, Protocols and Checklists for the Tourism Industry](#) and support training which has been made available to the industry by the Caribbean Covid-19 Tourism Task Force (established in March, 2020 by the Caribbean Public Health Agency, CHTA, CTO, the OECS, and the GTRCMC).

4. Regional Harmonization Re Entry, Testing, Protocols, Quarantines

CHTA, along with its partners the Caribbean Public Health Agency and the Caribbean Tourism Organization, recommend the harmonization of health safety protocols across the region where possible. In general, many of the more than 30 Caribbean jurisdictions have subscribed to similar protocols for entry testing, departure testing, and adherence to in-destination health safety standards. As each jurisdiction is separately governed, there are some differences, particularly around the time period to receive a test prior to arrival, and while most jurisdictions require a PCR test, several permit entry with proof of a negative antigen test as well.

Several jurisdictions also have in place a quarantine requirement upon entry or limited quarantine requirement within the resort or a zone upon arrival, but that is not applicable across the board. CHTA recommends that travelers consult the entry requirements when looking at where they may want to travel in the Caribbean. Most destinations make it easy to comply.

CHTA has compiled and keeps current a quick resource page to assist with determining entry requirements. This is also available thru a [travelers App](#) which can be found on the CARPHA website.



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For a quick guide on destination's entry and health safety protocols go to the CHTA COVID-19 Resource Center under [Entry Requirements, Health Updates & Travel Advisories](#) (the entry requirement grid is available under Caribbean Entry Requirements).

5. Vaccine Education and Encouragement

Employers and National Hotel and Tourism Association should 'encourage' employees to receive vaccines, providing support information and education to employees. CARPHA, as part of its collaborative efforts with the Caribbean Covid-19 Tourism Task Force, has developed support materials and information for dissemination to the industry and its employees for use in encouraging immunization.

For information, tools and resources on vaccines for NHTAs, employers and employees visit [CARPHA's Vaccine Information Resources](#)

Employers are also encouraged to support employee vaccinations by providing time off for receiving vaccines. Some employers may provide financial support to secure vaccines for employees where possible, working in collaboration with their local government and health authorities.

For additional insights see:

[How Employers Are Educating Employees About Getting Vaccinated](#) – This is an excellent compilation of the latest research by SHRM (Society for Human Resource Management), issued April, 2021, regarding policies and approaches by employers to educate employees about vaccines.

6. Implementation of Regional Tourism Safety Initiatives

Global industry research continues to highlight that prospective travelers place a high value to health safety programs as the top consideration when choosing their vacation destination and accommodation provider. It is vital for hospitality businesses to continue to train their teams and seek resources that will help provide reassurances to visitors, employees and residents.

The Caribbean Traveller's Health Assurance Stamp for Healthier Safer Tourism from CARPHA endorsed by CHTA, CTO and WTTC provides a measurable and verifiable recognition regionally and globally. In four detailed steps found on the [CHTA Health Safety Resources](#), you can achieve this stamp recognition which also qualifies your business for the WTTC Safe Travels Stamp and the CHTA Health Safety Commitment, a set of marketing tools to build customer trust.

By implementing the training and monitoring systems required for this recognition, your business and team members will be equipped with the tools, knowledge and resources to manage any health safety situation.