



7th September 2020

By Email: sharon.belmar@govt.lc

Dr Sharon Belmar-George
Chief Medical Officer
2nd Floor
Sir Stanislaus James Building
Waterfront
Castries
St Lucia

Dear Dr. Belmar-George

We wish to thank you for your continuous support to The Saint Lucia Hospitality and Tourism Association during these difficult times. We write to you on behalf of our membership, to enlist your support to relax some of the protocols that have been implemented to mitigate the risks of COVID-19.

We recently attended a meeting chaired by the Prime Minister of Saint Lucia, The Honourable Allen Chastanet, and supported by the Minister of Tourism, Information and Broadcasting, The Honourable Dominic Fedee, Chief Executive Officer of the Saint Lucia Tourism Authority, Mrs. Beverley Doty-Nicholson and yourself, Chief Medical Officer. The purpose of the meeting, as outlined by Prime Minister Chastanet, was to find out how his Government can provide some form of economic relief to the SLHTA membership.

The key commentaries from our members during the discussion on Thursday 27th August 2020, was the financial burden that many of them are facing with the reopening of their respective businesses. We expressed that the outlook for the year ahead is looking rather austere. The harsh reality is that many of us will not see a profit in the coming months and our objective is to minimize our debt burden. It is with this knowledge, that we must examine our recurrent expenses to preserve and reduce our financial burden, with the objective being to stay in business and keep our employees in a job.

We wish to highlight some of the key recommendations that came from our membership pre and post the meeting. We wish to highlight that our recommendations are not intended to compromise any aspect of the protocols nor to create any negative health exposure to the people of Saint Lucia.

Below are our recommendations for your consideration:

1. We are requesting a review of the requirement for staff to shower after finishing work to be removed as a mandatory requirement.
2. We would like the requirement for our accommodation members to have to launder uniforms for their staff as a mandatory requirement to be removed.
3. We would like a decision made to allow for a singular nurse in instances where a hotel has multiple operations on the existing compound or within proximity of each other. It is a financial burden to have multiple nurses on a site with proximity to each other. We believe this recommendation will work and provide uninterrupted health care monitoring. It should also be noted, that the requirement for nurses and medical stations is a burden for our small properties, and we would welcome a meeting where we address specifically the smaller properties and how we can come up with a compromise for such properties without affecting the overall requirement for rigorous health and safety protocols. The SLHTA is also interested in your thoughts as they relate to nurses oversight and medical stations in Phase 2 or 3 of the opening.

To support our request for the relaxation of points 1 & 2, we wish to commit to the continuous engagement with our teams, on the importance of maintaining their physical distance during and after work, and reiterating the importance of going straight home from work. We will also ensure we go through with our teams on the basics of removing and washing their clothing using a best practice methodology.

The protocols for staff arriving and leaving property could include:

- mandatory changing into uniform on property and out of uniform upon leaving
- carrying home of the used uniform in a tied bag
- thorough hand washing or using of hand sanitizer prior to leaving property.
- used uniform to not be mixed with other clothing and put to soak immediately in the team member home, or kept sealed up until washed.
- team members to follow their usual hygiene procedures, recommendation is to shower immediately upon return home.
- team members to maintain strict hand washing, physical distancing and mask wearing protocols at all times

The relaxation of the above protocols will allow us to have a financial ease in running our operations, without any compromise to the overall objective of maintaining a safe environment for our transient guests and employees. We will be able to channel some of the savings from the relaxed protocols above in order to maintain/provide our teams with the required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

We look forward to a favourable response to our request and we remain available to have a collective discussion with a core group from our Board of Directors and our accommodation members.

Yours sincerely,



KAROLIN TROUBETZKOY
President
St Lucia Hospitality and Tourism Association

Cc: Prime Minister Honorable Allen Chastanet
Permanent Secretary Donalyn Vittet
Minister of Tourism – Dominic Fedee