



St Lucia Hospitality & Tourism Association

# RESTARTING DMC SERVICES FOR TOURISM

Protocols, guides, Rationales. DMC COVID19 Response  
plan

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## Restarting DMCS services for Tourism

### Overview

In preparation for reopening the wider sectors of Saint Lucia's tourism, Destination Management Companies (DMCs) will need to apply all related and established protocols alongside that of their individual peculiarities. The aim of the fraternity as an SLHTA member collective, is to facilitate maximum DMC trading functions without compromise to health and safety, while complementing mandate of State authority. This missive articulates the measure member companies have all agreed to implement in that regard.

## About the Destination Management Company

### We Are A DMC! What We Do

The activities and business of Destination Management encompasses the participation in and or ownership of a cross section of tourism and travel services by land sea and air.

A Destination Management Company (DMC) is a third-party firm that is contracted by overseas Tour Operator Companies, Travel Trade Agents or a Meeting Incentive Conference and Events (MICE) Buyers to provide professional services in a tourism destination. The value of a Destination Management Company primarily rests in the company's extensive knowledge of the destination, expertise and resources as well as its professional relationships with local suppliers. A DMC contributes a significant dollar value to their local tourism sector and to the national gross domestic product GDP.

A DMC is an integral arm to overseas corporates by providing every component of an on-destination event, be it organizing of a one-person tour, or a production of mega 300-people incentive travel rewards, or event program for the Incentive Planners' attendees.

By extension, a DMC helps the Tourism Destination's marketing agencies in their efforts to market the Destination overseas by attending Travel Tradeshows, Roadshows, Travel Exhibitions, MICE Conventions, Tour Operator Symposiums and Training. With its expertise and knowledge of the destination, a DMC can influence the improvement of the quality of visitor experience to a destination in and outside of the tourism season

The positive effect of a DMC on a Tourism Destination is to enhance market competitiveness and development of the destination. A DMC markets and sells every aspect of the destination and assumes an important role in creating more complex products in the destination offerings, and adds value to the distribution chain, especially in products and services.

## Responsibility of the Destination Management Company (DMC) as an Employer

Employees / team members represent the quintessential resource of the destination experience. Providing an enabling environment is paramount to the cause of safe and healthy destination experience. DMCs, therefore, will commence COVID19 era operations by implementing the following for the health and safety protection of team members.

### **DMCs as employers shall supply for hygienic practices the following:**

- Tissue and waste disposal receptacles for use by employees.
- Continuous supply of soap and water and alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided in suitable property locations to encourage hand hygiene.
- Personal protective equipment including but not limited to gloves and face mask, will be provided during office hours.
- DMCs as employers shall provide accurate and consistent information to employees, to include but not limited to: Sensitization on COVID-19 Updates on local and international situations. (non-sensitive/classified information)

### **Operations in Office**

- Workers should not use other workers' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, where possible.
- Maintain regular housekeeping practices, including routine cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces, equipment, and other elements of the work environment.
- Use approved cleaning chemicals.
- All workers shall be provided and be expected to wear face mask whilst at work.
- Officers within the workplace shall maintain a 6 feet physical distance between each other.
- There shall be no overcrowding within the working space (10 persons within a designated space or a minimum of 30 square feet per individual)
- Employees who are receiving cash shall be provided with alcohol-based hand sanitizer to maintain hand hygiene
- In-person meetings whether non-company parties or in house should be limited and done virtually where possible.
- Employee must conduct routine decontamination of equipment and tools.

### **Covid19 Health & Hygiene Plan**

The ongoing pandemic portent immense threat to the trade. It is therefore necessary to agree on uniformed practices and protocols germane to threat mitigation.

#### **Employee Health:**

The employees of Destination Management Company engage with our guests from airport arrival to departure. Their roles include: airport representatives, hotel representatives, MICE planners, taxi drivers etc. With this in mind, Destination Management Company will ensure that their employees are well prior to the start of every work day.

#### Stay At Home Policy:

Employees who do not feel well and may exhibit any related symptoms to that of the Coronavirus are advised to stay home. COVID-19 affects different people in different ways. Most infected people will develop mild to moderate illness and recover without hospitalization.

- 1) **Most common symptoms:** fever, dry cough and tiredness
- 2) **Less common symptoms:** aches and pains, sore throat, diarrhea, conjunctivitis, headache, loss of taste or smell, a rash on skin, or discoloration of fingers or toes.
- 3) **Serious symptoms:** difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, chest pain or pressure, loss of speech or movement.
- 4) Employees are advised to seek medical attention if they exhibit serious symptoms. Always call before visiting your doctor or health facility.

#### Temperature Checks & Screening:

Every morning, employees will be temperature screened. This is a mandatory process.

- 1) **Screening:** DMC Representatives assigned to hotels will be temperature screened prior to leaving for the assigned hotel / accommodation. The employee must report their temperature to the Managing Director. Any employee who has a temperature above 37 °C (99 °F) should remain at home, and another DMC representative will be assigned to visit the hotel. **DMC representatives visiting hotels should check their temperature approximately ten minutes prior to the arrival at any property.**
- 2) DMC representatives may be asked to do a temperature check at the hotel and if so, must adhere to the protocols of the property.
- 3) **Confidential Information:** All temperature readings will be kept in strict confidence and remain on employees file.
- 4) **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** All employees are required to wear their face guards and masks when visiting the hotels and interacting with people.

#### At Risk Employees:

Consideration must be given to at risk employees in exercising their duties. Employees have an obligation to advise their Manager of any health risks which they are susceptible to. Management will ensure there is a doctor's note on the employee's file. Any employee who may become ill with a respiratory illness must remain at home, and should only return to work, once the doctor has cleared them to do so. In such a case, a doctor's note should also be presented to management and kept on the employee's file.

#### Travelling Employees:

Employees, who traveled, whether for business or pleasure, will be quarantined upon returning to island for 14-days as mandated by the Government of Saint Lucia.

#### Be Open, Be Honest Policy:

The Destination Management Company will encourage employees to be open and honest, should a family member be ill with the COVID 19. This will allow us to work with our local Department of Health & Wellness to address any concerns regarding exposure. Employees who are highly exposed will be required to remain at home for 14-days in quarantine, monitoring their symptoms. Low risk employees should check their temperature prior to their arrival at work to ensure they are still asymptomatic before arriving at the work place. Any information shared by the employee about their families will remain confidential. Additionally, the employee's temperature will be checked upon arrival at the workplace.

#### Office/Work Station Sanitation:

The Destination Management Company will ensure all work spaces are clean and hygienic. Public areas will be cleaned regularly throughout the day with disinfectant.

#### Employee Training:

All employees will be trained, and constantly be reminded about general hygiene and safety regarding COVID 19 and other communicable diseases in the work place. This will be done through general meetings, memos, and educational posters in key area. All employees will be trained in the following areas:

- 1) Limiting Exposure
- 2) Communication with Management
- 3) Employee regulatory rights and responsibilities
- 4) Impact on Work Environment

The staff of the Destination Management Company is required to attend any training facilitated by the Department of Health & Wellness or any Government affiliated entity such as National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO).

#### Airport Arrival & Departure:

In partnership with the Saint Lucia Air & Sea Ports Authority, Taxi Operators and others partners, Destination Management Company will ensure all areas frequented by travelers are well sanitized. Some Destination Management Companies may elect to provide guests with care kits as part of their enhanced welcome experience. **(Await further procedures from SLASPA e.g. temperature testing upon arrival, etc and Taxi Operators and include any major measures they will be instituting.) Based on policies as stipulated by our partners, the following is outlined:**

#### Meet & Greet Services

Destination Management Company Airport Representatives will follow the procedure outlined below to welcome guests once they have exited the Immigration and Customs doors.

- 1) All staff must be uniformed and is required to wear face shields and masks.
- 2) Guest checks in with the Destination Management Company at the designated booth or kiosk.

- 3) Destination Management Company Rep welcomes the guest with an elbow bump, smile and “Welcome to Saint Lucia”. Whichever greeting is most appropriate to the guest.
- 4) Guest submits their Tour Operator voucher for the purpose of the Destination Management Company Rep to take a photo. The voucher must be placed on the glass to allow the representative to take a photo.
- 5) Destination Management Company will hand sanitizers.
- 6) Guest is transferred to the hotel/resort.

#### Handling Monetary Transactions:

In the event that monetary transactions are required, The Destination Management Company will encourage guests to use touch less payment options when available. However, it will be impossible not to handle cash or credit/debit cards; therefore, the Destination Management Company Representative should do the following:

- 1) DO NOT touch your face after conducting a monetary transaction.
- 2) Use disposable gloves/hand sanitizer when handling cash/debit/credit cards.
- 3) Ask guests to place cash/credit/debit cards on the counter, rather directly in your hand.
- 4) Place money directly on the counter when providing change to the guest.
- 5) After handling the guest, encourage them to use sanitizer and use the washrooms to wash their hands.
- 6) Wipe down, and sanitize countertop between each guest at transaction.
- 7) After handling all guests, ensure the work station is thoroughly sanitized – payment terminals, counter tops, tables, chairs etc.
- 8) After cleaning the workstation, ensure hands are thoroughly washed with soap water.

#### Luggage Handling:

All guests will place their luggage at the assigned luggage area. The appropriate signage will be erected.

#### Transportation- Airport transfer services and excursions:

- 1) In collaboration with the National Taxi Association and Certified Tourism Transport, the Destination Management Company will abide by national tourism transportation standards for the safety of guests, employees, suppliers and the general public. Guests will be required to adhere to these standards as follows:
- 2) All guests must use hand sanitizer prior to entering the vehicle.
- 3) Guests are not permitted to sit next to the driver. Only in rear seats.
- 4) **Based on the vehicle type, a stipulated number of guests will be transported at any one time. This may increase the number of vehicles required to rent for the duration of the event. Following is a guide for assigned numbers to vehicle type.**

Vehicle Type	# of Guests
Luxury Vehicle	3

Standard Car	2
15-seater Mini Coach	6
30-seater Coach	15
40-seater Coach	20

- 5) Guests will be required to wear masks when boarding a vehicle and in the company of others outside of their group.
- 6) Guests may only travel with each other, if part of the same family or group.

#### Contact Tracing - Airport and Excursions Transportation

For the purposes of contact tracing, all guests' contact details must be provided to Destination Management Company. This information will only be shared with our local Department of Health & Wellness, Saint Lucia Fire Service and Respiratory Centers located in Gros Islet, La Clery, Dennery and Vieux Fort as required. For hotel Excursion pick-up and drop-offs, the Destination Management Company will inform all place of stay hosting mutual clients of their appointment to pickup and drop-off, logging in information of name, expected time of meet and return. **This log must be secured by the company and made readily available to State authorities upon demand.** In addition, the following protocols are to apply on all land-based touring transportation:

- Drivers and tour guides must wear face masks at all times.
- Official COVID19 compliant certificate must be visibly displayed at all times
- Avoid all handshakes; a gentle curtsy will suffice.
- Hand sanitizers should be offered to guests prior to entering the taxi or tour bus
- Electronic payment processing medium is highly encouraged instead of cash transaction.
- All guests should wear facemask throughout the journey.
- Drivers and tour guides must wash hands or sanitize after any possible contact.
- Drivers and tour guides must elect to open and close vehicle doors at all times.
- Vehicles must be cleaned and sanitized before each and every engagement.

Cleaning and disinfecting vehicles are compulsory at the end of every work day

- When cleaning tourism transportation vehicles, persons should wear face mask and disposable gloves.
- Doors should remain open when cleaning the vehicle
- All surfaces that are frequently touched should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected using 0.5% sodium hypochlorite solution or commercially approved disinfectant.
- Clean interior of vehicle with neutral detergent
- Rinse the interior of the vehicle with disinfectant.
- Allow the vehicle to air dry



### **Standard Hygiene Requirements**

- Wash your hands after using the toilet, before and after eating, and if you cough/sneeze into your hands (follow the 20 second rule). If soap and running water are not immediately available, use alcohol-based sanitizers.
- Cough/sneeze into your sleeve, preferably into your elbow. If you use a tissue, discard it properly and clean/sanitize your hands immediately.
- Open the windows regularly to ensure adequate ventilation and air exchange.
- Avoid touching your face, particularly eyes, nose, and mouth with your hands to prevent infection.
- If you find yourself coughing/sneezing on a regular basis, avoid close physical contact with your coworkers and take extra precautionary measures (such as requesting sick leave).

### **Hotel Briefings for DMC representatives**

- 1) All Destination Management Company Representatives will adhere to the protocols of the respective hotels.
- 2) For the purpose of social distancing, all hotel briefing times will be staggered to limit the interaction with guests.
- 3) In scheduling hotel briefings, advise the family or group, encourage only one representative per family/group is required to attend the briefing.
- 4) Ensure all DMC representatives keep a log with contact information of clients and their contact numbers should any hotel rep become incapacitated.
- 5) Any challenges must be discussed with hotel managers and management of the Destination Management Company.

### **Tours - Hotel pickup and drop off – Excursions**

The Destination Management Company are encouraged to select and sell only tours that are socially distant friendly. In collaboration with the tours and attraction companies, the destination management company will only conduct business with companies who adhere to health and safety protocols. Before commencing a tour, guides are required to include a debrief of COVID19 protocols. Each touring vehicle will avail or display a printed copy of the prescribed tourism transportation protocols.

### **Programs**

Destination Management Company will only host incentive programs not exceeding State mandated numbers. The events hosted as part of a program may include private dinners, lunches, tours, meetings. Our operations will not accommodate conferences at this time. All of these programs are private and exclusive to the Incentive Planner or Overseas Tour Operator. All group events coordinated will be done in a manner with all protocols as it relates to social distancing, food and beverage, medical and emergency, sanitization etc. Destination Management Companies will work with all its suppliers to ensure these standards are highly maintained.

## **Taxi Driver Training**

The Destination Management Company as part of its company policy will only use COVID19 certified drivers. Tourism taxi use must be a holder of a Tourism Operational and COVID19 Certificate. Additionally, all DMC staff drivers must receive relevant COVID 19 certifications.

## **Communication**

All guests who are on island are the responsibility of the Destination Management Company (DMC). Therefore, the Destination Management Company will be working in collaboration with Hotel Managers and State to ensure the safety of all our guests. The Destination Management Company will have a staff member to ensure all protocols are maintained and there is a clear line of communication to the Department of Health & Wellness.

## **Handling a Sick Guest:**

The Destination Management Company is a member of the Saint Lucia Hospitality & Tourism Association (SLHTA) and therefore, adopts their protocol in handling a sick guest or Destination Management Company Staff member.

In the event a guest becomes ill, he/she must contact hotel management. The hotel will follow the protocol as outlined below and will contact the Destination Management Company, the contracted destination management company, for the guest tour operator. In handling arrangements for the guest, the Destination Management Company will handle in collaboration with the hotel.

## **Hotel Protocol**

If there is a suspected case of the Coronavirus, the following is the protocol as recommended by the Ministry of Health:

- 1) All guests or staff who are visibly showing or are reporting flu like symptoms / respiratory illnesses (suspected cases) should be reported to the Head of Department / General Manager, immediately.
- 2) In the case of a guest, the individual should be quarantined in their room. The hotel will be required to contact the Chief Medical Officer at the Ministry of Health who will organize and determine what steps to take next. The hotel is also required to contact the Destination Management Company. The Ministry of Health will take full responsibility for the patient to organize transfer and care to the designated quarantine facility.
- 3) In the case of a Destination Management Company Team Member, the individual should be isolated in a room so designated which should allow for easy access. Destination Management Company is required to contact the Chief Medical Officer at the Ministry of Health who will organize and determine what steps to take next. The Ministry of Health will take full responsibility for the patient to organize transfer and care to the designated quarantine facility.
- 4) If a doctor is called to the resort, the doctor will be required to wear a protective gear and should be the only contact person in the room with the guest or team member until the medical team from the Department of Health & Wellness arrives.

Hotel Guest - Further Details:

**The hotel will follow the protocol as outlined below or as is mandated by State protocols for hotels:**

When a guest shows signs of being unwell, the following questions should be posed to the guest:

Are you feeling unwell? If the answer is yes, proceed to ask them the nature of the illness.

Following their response, the following questions should be asked:

- Do you have a cold?
- Do you know what kind of cold?
- Do you have a fever?
- How long have you been feeling unwell?
- Where did you travel from?
- Have you been in contact with someone who had a confirmed case of COVID – 19?
- On which airline did you travel?
- Who is your Tour Operator/DMC Representative?

Guests' response should immediately be reported to management. The hotel management and the Destination Management Company will collaborate on making the final decision as to whether or not the Ministry of Health & Wellness should be contacted.

Based on the decision, and should quarantine be warranted, the guest MUST be advised that due to the Protocol in place by the Local Health Authorities, due to the COVID-19 Virus any suspicious cold symptoms must be reported to them. Also, anyone showing such symptoms MUST remain in their room until seen by someone from the Local Health Authorities and approval is given to leave the room. Apologize for any inconvenience that this might cause and ensure the guest that arrangements will be made to ensure that the necessary steps will be taken to assist in making their stay a comfortable one.

After the guest's situation has been determined, the Destination Management Company Representative must immediately thereafter contact the guest's Overseas Tour Operator Company to give an update of the situation.

Handing A Sick Guest at A DMC Briefing:

- 1) In the event a guest is ill at a DMC briefing, the Destination Management Company representative will report it to hotel management who will then follow the stipulated protocol.
- 2) The DMC representative will await and update and will report to the management of the Destination Management Company and the tour operator/incentive buyer.

Quarantine & Isolation Procedure

If there is a suspected case of the Coronavirus, the following is the protocol as recommended by the Department of Health and Wellness:

- 1) All guests or Destination Management Company Team Member who are visibly showing or are reporting flu like symptoms / respiratory illnesses (suspected case) should be reported to the Head of Department /General Manager, immediately.
- 2) In the case of a guest, the individual should be quarantined in their room. The hotel is required to contact the Chief Medical Officer at the Department of Health & Wellness who will organize and determine what steps to take next. The hotel is also required to contact the Destination Management Company. The

Ministry of Health & Wellness will take full responsibility for the patient to organize transfer and care to the designated quarantine facility.

- 3) In the case of a Destination Management Company Team Member, the individual will be quarantined in a room designated for this purpose and should allow for easy access. The Destination Management Company will be required to contact the Chief Medical Officer at the Ministry of Health and Wellness who will organize and determine what steps to take next. The Ministry of Health and Wellness will take full responsibility for the patient to organize transfer and care to the designated quarantine facility.
- 4) If a doctor is called to the resort, the doctor will be required to wear protective uniform and should be the only contact person in the room with the guest or team member until the medical team from the Ministry of Health and Wellness arrive.

The Destination Management Company will call any one of the following numbers and alert the St. Lucia Hospitality and Tourism Authority (SSLHTA) via WhatsApp or call the CEO at Tel 721-4444 to give an update on the guest's situation.

#### Supplier Held Standards:

In coordinating any program, select suppliers must adhere to the protocols as outlined by Destination Management Company & Travel and that of our partners, to include hotels/resorts, venues, restaurants, Taxis, Decorators, Florists etc. Some of these protocols will include:

#### Screening:

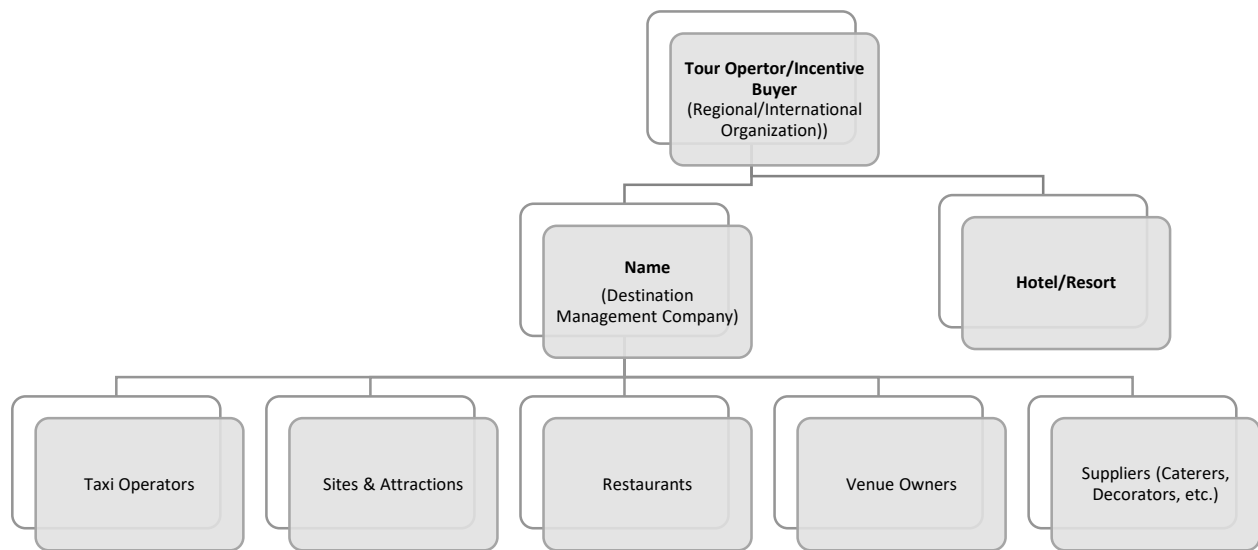
- **Temperature Check:** Prior to entering any of our offices, suppliers' temperatures will be checked. If a supplier exhibits a high temperature above 37 °C (99 °F) will not be allowed to enter our offices.
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** All suppliers are required to wear their face masks to come to work and wear when interacting with people throughout the work day.

#### Scheduling:

All suppliers will be scheduled for set up or delivery in an effort to limit the number of people in any location.

#### Vehicles:

All vehicles transferring staff and guests must be sanitized before, during and after the transfer.



## Management of Operations

## Contact Details

### Organizational Contact Details

Company	Contact Numbers
Destination Management Company	(758)
Department of Health & Wellness	(758) 468-5300 (758) 452-2859
Owen King EU Hospital	(758) 727-4068
Respiratory Clinic—Gros-Islet Poly Clinic	(758) 518-4127
Respiratory Clinic—Vieux Fort	(758) 518-5881
Respiratory Clinic—Dennery	(758) 518-5695
Respiratory Clinic—Soufriere	(758) 518-1905
Respiratory Clinic—La Clery	(758) 723-0712
Respiratory Clinic—Victoria Hospital	(758) 518-4101

<b>Saint Lucia Fire Service</b>	(758) 451-7667
<b>Saint Lucia Hospitality &amp; Tourism Association (SLHTA)</b>	(758) 453-1811

Staff/Officials Contact Details

<b>Name &amp; Position</b>	<b>Company</b>	<b>Contact Numbers</b>	<b>E-mail Addresses</b>
<b>Dr. Sharon Belmar-George</b> <b>Chief Medical Officer</b>	Department of Health & Wellness	(758) 468-5309 (758) 285-1260	<a href="mailto:sharon.belmar@govt.lc">sharon.belmar@govt.lc</a>
<b>Joseph Joseph</b> <b>Chief Fire Officer</b>	Saint Lucia Fire Service	(758) 451-7667 (758) 725-7339	<a href="mailto:samjo10@hotmail.com">samjo10@hotmail.com</a>
<b>Noorani Azeez</b> <b>Executive Director</b>	Saint Lucia Hospitality & Tourism Association	(758) 453-1811 (758) 721-4444	<a href="mailto:slhtaceo@gmail.com">slhtaceo@gmail.com</a>