



MEJDI TOURS

Health and Safety Handbook

The guidelines below are the MEJDI Tours protocol for touring during the COVID-19 global health crisis and will be continuously updated to fit local governmental regulations. We've developed the handbook based on information published by the below leading health organizations and local government standards.



Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada

Context

The first case of COVID-19 in Israel was diagnosed on February 21st 2020 and in Palestine on March 5th 2020. Both governments immediately responded and it seems the situation has since been changing rapidly with the amount of cases going up and down dependent on the local community behaviour.

Preparation

A Risk Assessment has been conducted to identify possible hazards to our operations and to be able to avoid situations where the health of our groups may be affected.

MEJDI will follow the "[purple standard](#)" set by the Israeli government and make sure our vendors do as well. We will hold tours/meetings with our suppliers to examine their abilities to obey the instructions and needs set.

MEJDI has appointed a Health and Safety manager that will be monitoring the situation, our groups on the ground and acting as the emergency contact when needed. The manager will plan to visit the groups to make sure the tour is running smoothly and following the protocol. The manager is in charge of creating and updating the emergency contact forms fit for every itinerary. This will include emergency rooms, hospitals, and COVID-19 based contacts. The manager will check and approve all First-Aid Training & Medical Kits available on the tour bus.

Traveler Services will send out an updated packing list to the travelers prior to departure. This list will include sanitation elements that MEJDI will be able to supply if for some reason the traveler failed to pack them. In addition, a short survey will be sent to each traveler to be filled out prior to departure asking - whether they have been in touch with anyone infected, do they have a temperature, a cough, etc.

Training sessions with MEJDI Tours staff, tour leaders (guides), and drivers will be prepared and will be delivered once we start the pre-departure stage. These sessions will include the following segments and preparation steps:

1. Pre Tour

- Incident management training
- **Traveler Services** will prepare and share health waivers to be signed by travelers prior to departure from home country and provide safe travel guidelines

- **Guides** will:
 - Identify itinerary “pressure points” and plan ahead (i.e. When is best to get to a specific spot in order to avoid a crowd)
 - Review traveler medical notes to identify risk factors
 - Review health and safety emergency protocol with the manager
- **Tour Operators** will:
 - Make reservations and payment arrangements prior to tour - no tickets will be bought on the spot, no cash payments, etc
 - Prepare a kit list of sanitation to have on the bus: hand sanitizer, disinfectant, etc. in addition to the existing First-Aid and Medical kit.
- **Bus Drivers** will disinfect their vehicles for the group, and pay extra attention to high touch areas like rails, handles, etc.

2. On Tour

- **Guide/Leader** will:
 - Have an opening session discussing the tour health requirements and responsibility towards the group
 - Have all health waivers in hand and if a traveler refuses to follow requirements and procedures MEJDI holds the right to remove them from the tour
 - Check group member temperature before starting the day and before speakers/meetings
 - Keep the hygiene on tour (specific topics and regulations mentioned below) - Maintain daily check-ins twice a day to see how everyone is feeling
 - Follow protocol when a traveler is presenting symptoms - use list of hospitals / emergency rooms and Covid-19 test facilities
 - Keep staff itinerary up-to-date with any schedule changes, specifically if the group meets any unplanned speakers
- **Tour Coordinator** will keep regular communication with the Guide/Leader to make sure all regulations are being followed

3. Post Tour

- **Traveler Services** will:
 - Reach out to the group 1 and 2 weeks prior to departure to check on health
 - Update travelers if anyone has been infected and encourage them to get tested

*Guides and drivers showing symptoms or feeling uncomfortable joining a tourist group, will be encouraged to stay home and replaced.

Contingency plan

Monitoring and Auditing

After the initial review of all of our suppliers we will continue collecting feedback from our Guides/Leaders and doing regular checks by visiting hotels, restaurants, and activities suppliers. Suppliers that are unable to meet the necessary standards will be swapped immediately with those who can.

Our local team will send update messages on a daily basis to the US Traveler Services so they can contact traveler emergency contacts if needed.

Reporting & Review

After collecting information, a monthly internal report will be prepared with key notes of the current situation in the country and status of all suppliers. Also any feedback received on the field from travellers, leaders, and drivers will be documented. The outcome / learnings can be shared with our partners upon request.

Contracting

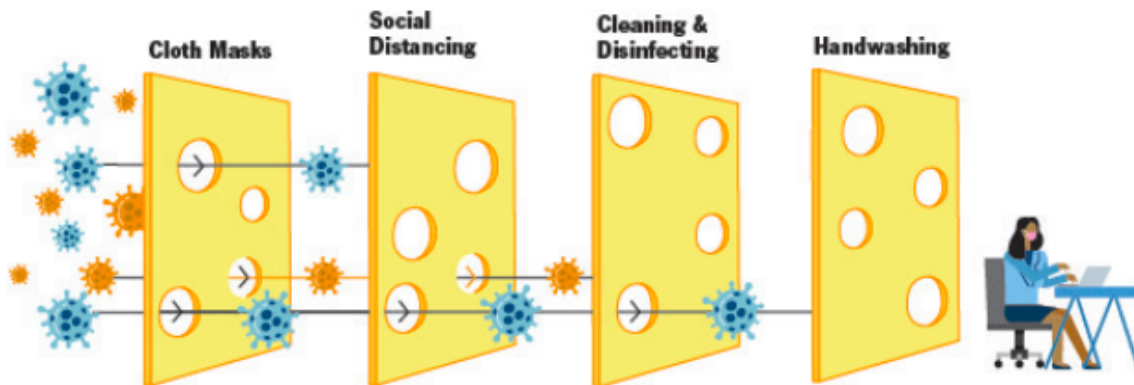
All contracts and agreements with all our suppliers will include COVID-19 related policies and procedures. For MEJDI tours, it is imperative to ensure preventive actions by every supplier.

Q&A

We will keep an online platform with Q&A available for all group leaders and travelers to access at all times. This will be updated regularly by Traveler Services.

An online collaborative system will be set up for the guides/leaders to raise questions and share their knowledge. This will be updated regularly by the Health and Safety Manager.

Hygiene



1990, James Reason, PhD, the “Swiss Cheese Model”¹

Hand Hygiene

The Guide/Leader will remind all travelers to wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Hand washing should be done: after using the restroom, before and after eating, before reentering the bus, after treating a cut or wound, after handling garbage, and any time there is a possibility to do it.

Guide/Leader will give a daily reminder to avoid touching the face, nose, and mouth. Avoid handshakes.

In those cases where washing with water and soap is not available, leaders will encourage the use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer. The leaders and driver will be carrying sanitizers with at least 60 percent alcohol.

Guides/Leaders will be trained to remind people about high hand contact surfaces especially at sightseeing spots. Hand sanitizer will also be readily available in such places.

We will contract suppliers who have hand hygiene protocols in place.

¹ Taken from “[Covid-19 Workplace FAQs](#)”, Cleveland Clinic

Respiratory Hygiene

All guides/Leaders, drivers, staff and travelers should follow these steps when coughing or sneezing:

1. Cover mouth and nose with a tissue
2. Put your used tissue in the garbage bin
3. If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow. NOT your hands.
4. Wash hands with soap and running water and dry thoroughly with disposable paper towels.

Tour Elements

Accommodation

Contracted accommodations will follow the “Purple Standard”. All check-ins will be done as efficiently as possible; guides and MEJDI staff will call ahead to ensure rooms are ready and keys have been allocated according to the group rooming list. The guide will pick up the keys and distribute them outside so there will be minimal time spent in the hotel lobby.

The guide will brief the travelers on how to follow the local protocols regarding the common areas.

If a traveler is found Covid-19 positive while on the tour, MEJDI Tours and the specific accommodation venue will follow local governmental requirements. These will be updated to date.

Private Transportation

In the case of private transfers, suppliers are requested to follow Ministry of health regulations in order to operate. Currently no more than two passengers are allowed in taxis/small vehicles, the back window needs to be open, and masks worn at all times. Vehicles must be cleaned and disinfected between passengers using recommended disinfectants.

For buses, mini buses, and vans enough distance between passengers and drivers should be ensured, filtered Air Conditioner or windows open if not available. Disinfecting and cleaning of buses will be done every day and also during in between touring in public spaces.

Each person should have an assigned seat to reduce possible spread.

Meals

Group meals will be arranged prior to arrival using vendors that have shown commitment to

following the necessary standards. Before entering a restaurant or home, the guide will check traveler symptoms and ensure the hosts of their safety. Guests will be asked to wash their hands prior to the meal. All meals will be served to the table, there will be no buffet style or family-style meals.

When having meals “on own”, the guide will instruct the group on social distancing and encourage them to keep their personal hygiene.

Speakers and Meetings

Meetings and speakers to be arranged in open spaces or larger rooms where physical distancing can be guaranteed. When inside, masks will be provided. Also with access to hand washing and filtered AC or open windows. Room, tables, and chairs will be disinfected before travelers use them.

Speakers will be symptom checked before meeting the group. Enough distance between speaker and group should be ensured before starting the talk. Handshakes will not be allowed during these meetings.

Sites

When planning to enter a crowded site, the guide will remind the travelers of the risks and ways to keep their own safety. If one of the travelers is not comfortable to enter, the guide will set a designated meeting point and time.

Before entering a National Park, the guide will check traveler symptoms and ensure they are able to enter.

Incident Management

MEJDI Tours is monitoring the Health Ministry and Governmental processes/requirements for tourists regarding Covid-19 and will update our protocol once those are available. The guide will share the situation with the Health and Security Manager and the latter will obey current/local law and procedure. To date, it is not yet clear how the Health Ministry is planning to deal with infected tourists.

Annex 1 - COVID-19 Risk Assessment

Destination:	<i>Israel and Palestine</i>	Assessed by:	<i>Keiner Jiménez-Alvarado</i>	Date:	<i>June 24th, 2020</i>
		Revised by:	<i>Kim Passy-Yoseph</i>	Date:	<i>June 25th, 2020</i>
HAZARD	RISK IMPOSED	RISK RATING	CONTROL MEASURE		COMMENTS
<i>COVID-19 infection</i>	<i>Travelers, Staff or stakeholders infected with serious illness or death</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health check before & during trip - Hand Washing protocol - Use an alcohol-based hand rub with at least 60% alcohol. - Wearing Masks during trip - Physical Distancing Protocol - Follow "Purple" protocol for Hotels, buses and companies - Good respiratory etiquette, Covering coughs and sneezes 		<i>The Risk Rating is Medium considering the control measures in place to reduce the risk of infection, the low date rate and the high quality of medical facilities in Israel</i>
	RISK RATING	SEVERITY			
		Slight	Moderate	Extreme	
LIKELIHOOD	Highly Unlikely	Trivial	Low	Medium	
	Unlikely	Low	Medium	High	
	Likely	Medium	High	Intolerable	

Annex 2 - Local / International Health and Safety Website links

- <https://info.oref.org.il/12410-he/Pakar.aspx?tab=12412&parentCategory=12479>
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>
- <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en>
- <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/>
- <https://wtcc.org/>
- <https://govextra.gov.il/ministry-of-health/corona/corona-virus-en/guidelines/>
- https://www.gov.il/en/Departments/ministry_of_tourism