

Based on the health guidelines issued
by the Ministry of Health
on 6th January 2021

S WARM & WELCOMING SRI LANKA

SRI LANKA TOURISM SAFETY PROTOCOLS



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MINISTRY OF TOURISM
STATE MINISTRY OF AVIATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF EXPORT ZONES



HELLO AGAIN!

As we open our doors to the world again; let's make sure our paradise island is as safe and secure as it can be against the ongoing pandemic. After a thorough analysis of the situation and following multiple consultations with all relevant stakeholders and health professionals, a set of guidelines and protocols have been listed out to assist those in the tourism sector to ensure a smooth transition to begin operations in the midst of this new normal.

Those in the tourism sector have been requested to adhere to these guidelines, as they are vital measures that have been taken to assure the protection of our tourists and ourselves. Safety measures have been implemented across the country so that travellers may enjoy a hassle-free stay; however it is the responsibility of the tourism establishments to adhere to the COVID safety protocols, so that the reopening of the island may be a sustainable effort for the tourism sector as a whole.

KEY POINTS TO NOTE



No minimum number of days is required for a stay.



All facilities of the hotel would be made available to the guests.



No restrictive quarantine required.



Tourists can visit approved tourist sites under the safety of a bio-bubble.



Tourists must stay at a certified 'Safe & Secure' Level 1 hotel for up to 13 nights/14 days of their stay.



Pay for PCR Tests (40 USD per PCR test depending on the number of days of the stay) when applying for visa online and for insurance (12 USD) with one month cover of 50,000 USD.



Currently no exceptions would be made for vaccinations taken; all safety protocols should be adhered to regardless.

1

INTERNATIONAL ARRIVALS

Technical preparation details for the opening of the airports.



Tourists may arrive through Charter Flights, Scheduled Flights or Private Jets, at both **Katunayake** and **Mattala** Airports. Please note that Bandaranaike International Airport (BIA) is certified as a safe airport by ACI airport health accreditation programme.



Special arrangements for the crew would be agreed upon in advance by the Civil Aviation and Airport Aviation Authority, according to the current health guidelines in place.



Arrival of tourists would be decided by the **testing capacity** of the private laboratories as determined by the Ministry of Health and Minister of Tourism jointly.



Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA) will inform the details of arrivals to the Ministry of Health via the following emails and the **local area Medical Officer** prior to the arrival of the respective flights.



Dual Citizens, spouses of foreign nationals and paid commercial passengers with foreign passports are allowed, following an adherence to the guidelines and protocols in place.

DGHS:

dghs@health.gov.lk

ddgphs1@health.gov.lk

Chief Epidemiologist:

chepid@slt.net.lk



All flights bringing in tourists are required to consult the Civil Aviation Authority on the health protocols that need to be adhered to.

DPRD:

drishankadprd@gmail.com



This guideline document is **not applicable** to Business Visas.



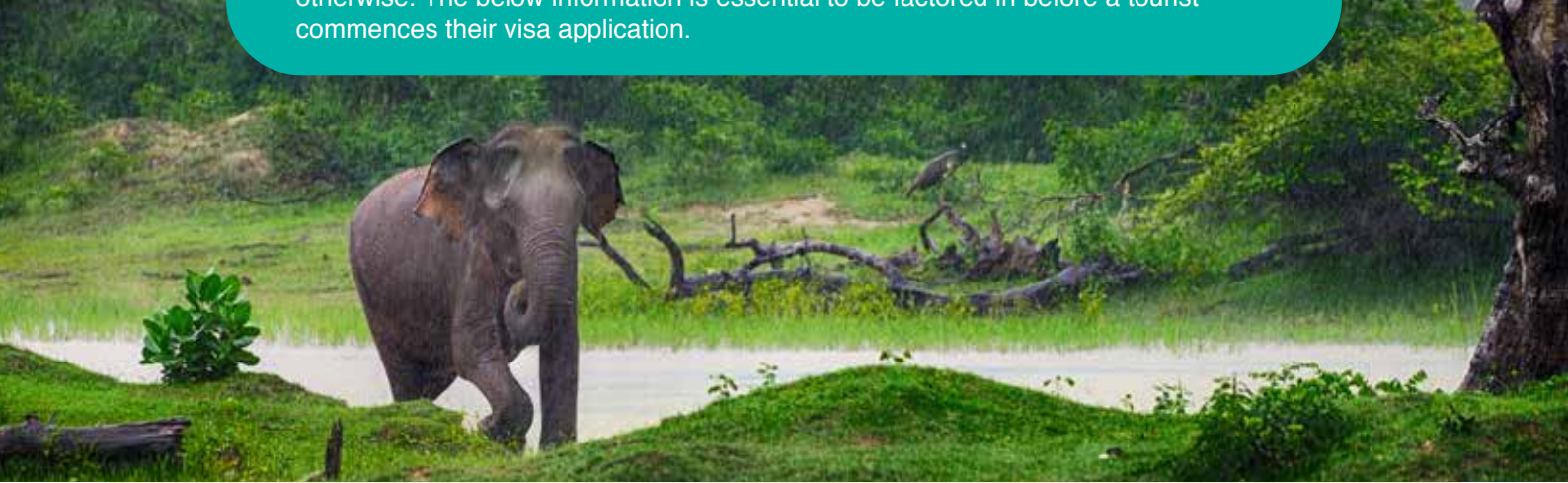
Please call the Sri Lanka Tourism 24-hour hotline on **1912** for any additional support



2

VISA APPLICATION

Currently, all countries have been permitted for entry; unless specifically mentioned otherwise. The below information is essential to be factored in before a tourist commences their visa application.



All visas must be applied online through the Immigration ETA portal (www.eta.gov.lk). Prior to applying for visa, travellers are required to pre-purchase PCR tests and a mandatory COVID-19 Insurance Cover using tourism channels (pay to your Level 1 hotel or safe and secure certified travel agent) and upon payment travellers will be issued a unique tourism reference number which needs to be used in the ETA portal when processing the visa (visit srilanka.travel/helloagain for more information)



Purchase the **mandatory COVID-19 Insurance Cover** from People's Insurance PLC at USD 12 for a policy of USD 50,000 for a period of one month.



Confirmation of a booking at a certified 'Safe & Secure' hotel, for a period of up to 13 nights/ 14 days should be shown when applying for visa; there would be no mandatory minimum stay requirement.



Upon issuing a visa, the details of the international traveller would be sent to the area Medical Officer of Health; and be updated accordingly until their arrival at the respective hotel



Pre-purchase PCR tests depending on the number of days of stay as deemed by the Ministry of Health. The cost per PCR test will be USD 40. (eg: On arrival PCR testing is mandatory. If a traveller stays for 4 nights/5 days or less pay for 1 PCR test, If the stay is more than 5 days yet less than 13 nights/14 days, pay for **2 PCR tests**, If the stay is 14 days or more, pay for 3 PCR tests. Children under 12 years of age are exempted from PCR testing.





3

PRE-FLIGHT PREPARATION

The below checklist is of utmost priority to every passenger before they board their flight; all relevant parties should ensure the requirements have clearly been communicated and met before departure.



Travellers should undergo a PCR test from an **accredited laboratory** and obtain a negative result, approximately 96 hours before their flight.



The COVID-19 Insurance Cover purchased during visa process for a value of at least \$50,000 for 1 month.



A Health Declaration Form (HDF) should also be submitted prior to boarding, on-board the flight or upon arrival.

4

HOTEL ACCOMMODATION : PERTAINING TO GUEST

Showing proof of hotel bookings is a vital requirement in the visa application process; below are factors to be considered when a traveller is choosing their accommodation. Travellers must book their stay at a Level 1 'Safe & Secure' hotel; for their protection. 'Safe & Secure' is a certificate issued to hotels in compliance with the COVID-19 Health Protocols and the Tourism Operational Guidelines.

LEVEL 1

All bookings to be made with a **Level 1 certified** 'Safe & Secure' hotel for the initial period of up to 13 nights/14 days.



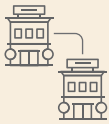
All certified 'Safe & Secure' Level 1 hotels would have a unique **QR code** displayed so that the tourist may provide feedback on the health protocols observed.



Tourists are allowed to stay any number of days with **no minimum requirement**, provided they continue their stay at a certified 'Safe & Secure' (pre-booked) hotel for up to 13 nights/14 days.



Hotels will ensure **effective access control measures** are in place, in and around the hotel.



During the initial 13 nights/14 days period, the guest can choose to continue staying at the current hotel or any other Level 1 certified 'Safe & Secure' hotel (travelling under a **bio-security bubble**); providing their on-arrival PCR tested negative.



Use of common areas such as the spa and pool could be permitted, subject to strict adherence to the general health guidelines, including social distancing.



Tourists are **not permitted** to move outside the hotel for a period of up to 13 nights/14 days; except for approved tourist sites by the COVID Taskforce; in consultation with the Ministry of Health under a bio-security bubble (provided the on-arrival PCR test is a negative result).



Hotel guests should not be allowed to entertain locals; nor have functions that encourage the same; especially during the 13 night/ 14 day period at a Level 1 certified 'Safe & Secure' hotel.



Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA) will ensure that continuous **assessments and audits** are carried out to uphold the standards of Certified 'Safe & Secure' (Level 1) Hotels.



After the initial 13 night/ 14 day stay at a certified 'Safe & Secure' Level 1 hotel, the tourist is then permitted to leave their accommodation and interact with the community; provided the PCR test results are negative; including moving to any accommodation of their choice.

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HOTEL ACCOMMODATION : PERTAINING TO HOTEL



Hotels, Travel Agents and Tour Operators are to share accommodation booking, transportation and site visit details with the Area Medical Officer of Health and DG Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, immediately as bookings are made and prior to any travel.



Only hotels certified as 'Safe & Secure' Level 1 are permitted to take bookings for the initial 13 nights/14 days of an international traveller.



Tourists are **not permitted** to leave the hotel for the initial 13 nights/14 days of their stay, except to the approved tourist sites under a bio-security bubble.

LEVEL 1

Guests may change their hotel at any point during the initial 13 nights/14 days, provided it is a Level 1 certified 'Safe & Secure' hotel; travelling under a bio-security bubble.



A pre-confirmed hotel booking; at one or more Level 1 certified 'Safe & Secure' hotels; is mandatory for the first 13 nights/14 days, of the guest's stay.

75%

Hotels to function at a **maximum room occupation capacity** of 75%; the rest to be left on stand-by should a need arise for the isolation of non-symptomatic COVID-19 positive guests and their direct contacts.



Bookings from multiple flights are permitted. Hotels should take all possible measures to minimize mixing of groups arriving from different flights.



Hotels should have a **room allocation plan** in place to cater accordingly.



Reservation details should be informed to the area's Medical Officer of Health and DG Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, following each booking and prior to the guest's arrival.



Effective access controls must be in place; with the support of the relevant Authorities; in and around the hotel, to ensure there is no interaction with the local community for the initial period of 13 nights/14 days.



Public transportation should not be encouraged to guests, even after the initial 13 nights/14 days period is over.



The Health Guidelines currently in place should be adhered to at all times.



Frequent **surveillance of symptoms** must be maintained; the Hotel must make arrangements for a designated Medical Officer to monitor the health of guests and staff.



Contact details of the designated Medical Officer should be promptly informed to the area Medical Officer of Health and to the Ministry of Health.



The hotel doctor should report daily to the **Ministry of Health**, COVID Taskforce and DG Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority in regards to the health of the hotel staff and guests

DGHS:

dghs@health.gov.lk

ddgphs1@health.gov.lk

Chief Epidemiologist:

chepid@slt.net.lk

DPRD:

drishankadprd@gmail.com



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PCR TESTING

The Ministry of Health requires a specified number of PCR tests to be carried out by the tourist, from the time of their departure and throughout their stay here. Hotels should strictly adhere to and ensure that these tests occur before the guest is allowed to leave the premises.



Travellers should undergo a PCR test from an **accredited laboratory** and obtain a negative result, approximately 96 hours before their flight.



All PCR tests for each guest should be arranged by the hotel with a **private sector laboratory approved by the MOH**; ideally, all PCR test of a given traveller should be carried out by a single laboratory.



The on-arrival PCR test; pre-purchased by the guest upon application of their visa; should be carried out prior to check-in; and arranged for by the hotel with a private sector laboratory approved by the Ministry of Health. Movements of the guests should be restricted to the minimum until the on arrival PCR test result is negative.



The second PCR test should be conducted 5-7 days after the guest's arrival at the hotel; should the stay exceed 14 days, an additional (third) PCR test would be carried out between the 10th and 14th day of arrival.



Children under 12 years of age, visiting Sri Lanka under the tourism route will be exempted from PCR testing. However, if the child indicated symptomatic or identified as a first contact of a known patient, they will be required to undergo a PCR test.



All PCR Reports to be **e-mailed** by the Private Sector Hospital to the **Epidemiology Unit**

chepid@sltnnet.lk

COVID Taskforce:

covid19sl20@gmail.com

DG Ministry of Health:

dghs@health.gov.lk

DG Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority:

dg@srilanka.travel
helloagain@srilanka.travel

and to the respective hotels, highlighting the positive test reports.



The Passport No. would be considered as the **reference number** for the tourist's identification to ensure traceability of reports and payments.



7

TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS: PERTAINING TO THE GUEST



Travel Agents and Hotels to adhere to the prevailing **Health Guidelines** of the Ministry of Health and Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority.



The Hotel or Travel Agent is required to have a thorough **transport plan** in advance.



The Hotel / Agent should arrange **independent transport** for each group of tourists.



Domestic Flights are permitted; subject to a strict adhering of health protocols



Refrain from allowing any **interaction** or mixing of different groups during travel.



Transportation details should be informed to the area Medical Officer of Health, COVID Taskforce and DG Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, following each booking and prior to the guest's arrival.

8

TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS: PERTAINING TO THE DRIVER



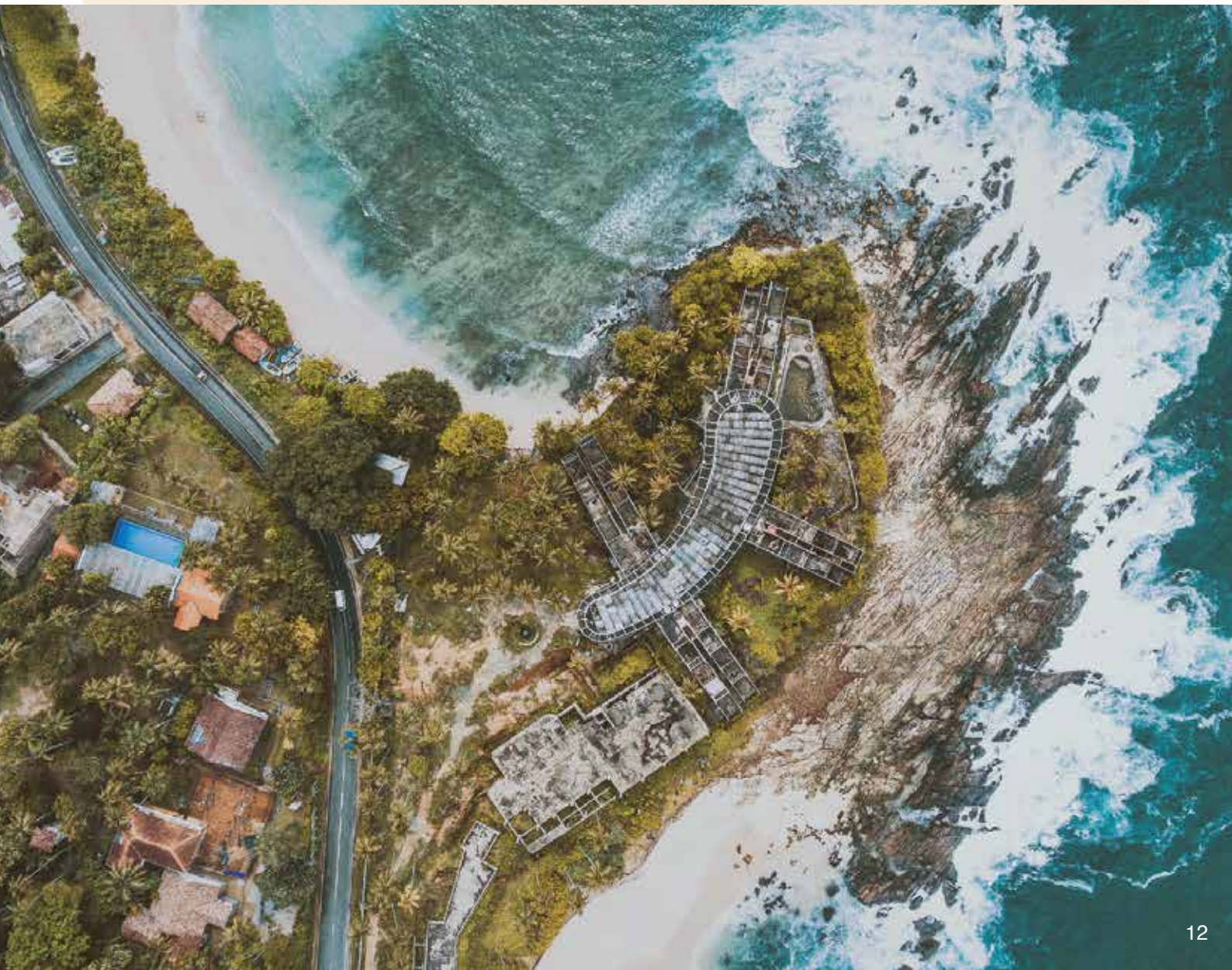
Maintain a thorough **transport log** with passenger details.



Inform the National Operations Center for Control of COVID-19 of all **details** prior to arrival, for the purpose of contact tracing; including the area MOH and DG Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority.



Unless the personnel were in full PPE attire, all service providers involved in transportation should be quarantined for a period of 14 days; with a PCR conducted; having informed the COVID Task force and DG Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority of the necessary details, including location of the quarantine facility.







9

TOUR GUIDES, DRIVERS & OTHER PERSONNEL



Hotels / Travel Agents to ensure that adequate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), masks and sanitizer to be **provided** to all personnel accompanying the tourists.



Accommodation to be provided during the tour in adherence to Health & Safety Guidelines.



Hotels, Travel Agents and Tour Operators are bound to adhere to the **health guidelines** currently enforced by the Ministry of Health and SLTDA.



A quarantine facility for 14 days to be arranged by the travel agent after the tour, unless the personnel were in full PPE.



Medical Insurance including the COVID-19 Insurance is to be given to all personnel during the tour and the subsequent 14 days in quarantine.

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MANAGING COVID-19 PCR POSITIVE GUESTS

Hotels should ideally be fully prepped to deal with any outcome of the situation; even if every precaution and safety measure is in place. Should a guest or guests test positive on their PCR, ensure protocols are followed to contain the situation in the best possible manner.

Non-symptomatic



Initial isolation should be carried out at a cordoned off section in the same hotel; under strict supervision of the designated Medical Officer of the hotel and the area MOH, until the patient has been transferred to a designated intermediate care center.



The SLTDA would ensure that appropriate **intermediate care centers** for asymptomatic COVID-19 patients have been identified, with the consultation and approval of the Ministry of Health.



In a situation where isolation would not be feasible (e.g., a large group that's tested positive), an **alternative designated isolation hotel** would be identified in advance by the DG of SLTDA.



The staff of the hotel and other contacts should be managed accordingly, adhering to the guidelines already in force, under the guidance of the area Medical Officer of Health.

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MANAGING COVID-19 PCR POSITIVE GUESTS

Symptomatic



If **symptomatic**, the guest and those exposed should be admitted to a pre-arranged MOH-approved private hospital, on the verdict of the area or hotel's designated Medical Officer.



COVID-19 Insurance cover to **reimburse hospitals charges**; including the ambulance transfer; to the value of \$50,000 for the period of a month.



The area Medical Officer of Health should be duly informed and updated.

12

TREATMENT OF OTHER CONDITIONS (During the Initial 14-Day Stay)

Emergency measures have also been factored in, should a guest need to be treated for another medical condition apart from COVID-19. Please ensure that the guidelines and protocols in place are not disrupted, in the process of obtaining the medical attention.



The hotel's **designated Medical Officer** would have the authority to make a decision after assessing the situation.



The area Medical Officer should be duly informed and updated, following the decision taken by the hotel's designated Medical Officer.



Patients still in their initial **13 night/14 day period** should only be treated in hospitals specifically identified by the SLTDA and approved by the MOH.



Cost of the treatment/s should be covered via the patient's own personal medical insurance.

13

MANAGEMENT OF STAFF

Understanding that the staff being in close proximity to guests who may or may not be COVID positive, is a potential risk to not just them but also their communities; hence strict measures should be taken to ensure their safety and protection.



All members of the staff with **direct contact to guests**, should not be allowed to leave the hotel premises for the period of the guest's accommodation (13 nights/14 days), and an additional 14 days after the guest's stay has ended.



All staff should be subjected to a **proper risk assessment** under the guidance of the area Medical Officer of Health; and appropriate interventions should be instituted if a guest is to test positive for COVID-19.



The quarantine process should be arranged under the hotel Medical Officer's supervision, together with the local health authorities. Details to be provided to the Ministry of Health, COVID Taskforce and DG, Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority.



In the event a COVID-19 positive guest or employee is reported to the hotel; the Travel Agents and Tour Operators are also required to be in adherence to the **Health Guidelines** currently enforced by the Ministry of Health and Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority.



Staff should be screened for COVID-19 at regular intervals as per the existing Occupational Health Guidelines published by the Ministry of Health.



14

VISITING TOURIST SITES

Following the negative, on-arrival PCR, guests are permitted to visit approved tourist sites under a bio-safety bubble.



Arrangements have been made to visit **permitted sites** on a daily basis; in a bio-safety bubble; with specific timeslots allocated for tourists.



Any **special arrangements** including stops for meals, lavatory breaks or any other stops, must be indicated in the itinerary and should be done in consultation with the local health authorities of the specific areas in which the stops are planned.



Permission for the tourist sites has been granted by the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority in consultation with the Ministry of Health, COVID Taskforce and the relevant local health authorities.



All personnel accompanying the tourists; including tour guides, safari jeep drivers, bus drivers, other drivers, assistants and translators; unless attending in full PPE, should undergo a 14-day quarantine under the supervision of the local health authority, with the inclusion of PCR testing.



Itinerary should be shared in advance with the local health authority of the tourist site and the agencies managing the site, through the SLTDA.



The timeslots allocated for tourists would be published clearly on the Sri Lanka Tourism website, to minimise the risk of interaction with the locals.



SRI LANKA



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to access tourism information

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