

BEST PRACTICES WEBINAR – Q&A

What date can we open our business?

If in the accommodation sector, your business is eligible to be open now. As an essential service, you were never required to close and have the full right to be open. However, it is integral that you adhere to new safety recommendations if operational. We advise you to use our best practices document to inform your updated policies and procedures.

Why are we both an essential service that is open and operating, according to CDC guidelines and also 'not open' until Phase 3?

Unfortunately, unclear messaging surrounding this has led to much confusion. Many hotels are reopening this week as they were anticipating that we would be entering phase 3 beginning of June. At this stage, there is an advisory for non-essential travel and BC residents are being advised to only travel within short distances from where they live and work. Again, as an essential service you are allowed to be operational through this state of emergency and welcome guests.

The item that is of critical importance is that you are confident in your ability protect yourselves, guests and staff by implementing new operating procedures that are being recommended based on our best practices. Take this time to put safety plans in place through ~~proper~~ staff training, cleaning the hotel, implementing physical distancing measures etc. to ensure that you are ready for business when it comes your way, whether it be part of the essential service network or beyond that.

When do you expect to see formal guidelines and protocols from the government surrounding smaller business meetings, training seminars, and/or social events?

Currently, within the best practice guidelines we did include meetings protocols; this was done purposefully to fit the current message of meetings and group gatherings under 50 people, as recommended by the health minister. Many properties have business on the books from this sector, and ensuring this business materialises in 2020 is critical to business survival.

We have accommodation providers across British Columbia that are prepared to execute these best practices protocols in order for these meetings to be successful. As we look to the next phase, we will be working on providing framework for larger meetings and gatherings. Many of the protocols we have included thus far are scalable, but they are geared to smaller business meetings. Larger social events, such as weddings, have yet to be sanctioned by the government though we anticipate communication, hopefully, within the near in the future.

What would be the best practices for a guest room shower curtain? Remove after departure?

Currently within the protocols, it does not determine that you have to remove the shower curtain. You are however entitled to supersede the foundation best practises currently approved and supported by the Ministry and Work Safe BC.

Do you have certain areas where each guest can gather?

This is not mandated, but if your physical plant allows this, it is encouraged. Reconfiguring your lobby and public spaces to support physical distancing is appropriate. As people travel in groups, you will want to try to keep those groups together and ensure high-frequency cleaning is done through these touchpoints.

If a guest wants to have their room cleaned, does housekeeping enter room to clean?

No, there should be no turndown, or stayover service at this time. If a guest does request housekeeping, employees should gather all requested items to be left outside of the guest's door for the guest to change themselves. Guests should then use a plastic bag, that you provide, to place used linen and put it outside their room for collection. This would be the same for garbage pick-up. It is recommended that housekeeping wait a minimum of 3 hours following guest departure. This may mean you need to look at scheduling, and communication for check-in and departure times depending on current policies.

If a guest coughs in the lobby and/or restaurant, do we address it? What would be the best course of action?

Coughing protocol is well advised to include in your safety guidelines and training for your team. If anyone is coughing in a public space and not into their elbow – as has been suggested by health and safety guidelines – you are perfectly fine to ask them to remove themselves and go outside. While there are a variety of reasons for why someone may be coughing beyond being sick, we do need to take this behaviour seriously. As these interactions with guests require a certain level of sensitivity, Go2HR is also developing a seminar that will offer further guidance on customer service and guest communication. Please continue to check [this link](#) for more details within the coming weeks.

Is it reasonable to store instead of wash unused linen? What is the storage time for fabric?

Time on fabric is part of what we still need to understand with this virus. At this stage, we would suggest washing everything even if it is not used and will continue to re-evaluate this and update our best practices guidelines based on new information as it evolves.

We live in the East side of the province. Less than 2% of our guests travel in province in our area. How are you addressing the influx of Alberta travelers to our area? Are we able to provide accommodation to them without facing problems with the directives on BC only travel?

As the border between Alberta and British Columbia has never been closed, it is within your full right as an operator to book out-of-province reservations. We know that many accommodation providers currently do have guests staying from Alberta, though we do suggest that following provincial guidelines would be wise. In terms of refusing guests, we have seen this decided on a community-level, where if the community is not ready to welcome them back, it is in their right to do so.

One of the most important things that we must do as an industry, is connect with our community, mayor and council to determine what our capacity is to welcome travelers back and build confidence in our ability to do so. This begins with you. You have to be confident as an operator that you can operate with well-executed best practices. Then your community

needs to join together and collectively be prepared to welcome back guests. Following that, we feel the provincial government will be much more confident in our industry and make steps to open our province up to welcome tourists.

Is it reasonable to take temperature reading from hotel guests or restaurant customers and deny access to those with fever? At this stage, we have not included temperature checks within our best practices – as health authorities do not recommend doing so.

What protocols/ best practices are in place for removing all top of bedding after each guest? At this stage, we recommend removing and washing all linen and bedding.

When our occupancies grow, it will be very difficult to maintain the 3 hour limit for room attendants to access the room. Any suggestions as we move forward?

Operationally, this is a very important question. We suggest having your staff work in teams and also communicating to guests so that they understand that their health and safety is part of the wait. Predictions around travel suggest that people will be staying with their accommodation providers for longer periods of time, and we hope this helps quell these issues for hotel providers. Pre arrival communication is of paramount importance, so the guest understands what to expect, so build the consumer confidence, so support your new housekeeping protocols and to ensure we, as an industry continue to provide exemplary travel experiences.

We are a bed and breakfast. We plan on herding guests to their rooms with no access to common areas and breakfast in bed. With all other protocols followed and guests coming into our home, what further steps should be taken and is air circulation a concern?

Prior to making any operational changes, we suggest going through our best practices guidelines in detail and ask yourself “how can we facilitate this?”. At the end of the day, it has to be workable for both your guest and operation. Some considerations in this instance could be opening all windows and waiting for a 3-hour period in order to ensure that air exchange can occur, guiding your guests to their room and to frequently clean all high touchpoint areas. Banning guests from public areas, and/or the breakfast room is not necessary if you follow the Best Practices and Protocols for Food and Beverage Best Practices.

Should we remove all plates & glasses from suites, even if there is a dishwasher in the suite?

Glassware does not need be entirely removed from each suite. However, it is important to ensure that all dishes and cookware are removed from cupboards and washed, ideally via a dishwasher where possible, after guest checkout. If a dishwasher is not available, cleaning agents are listed in the Best Practices and on the BCCDC website.

We have guests staying for a long term, more than a month. Right now, we are doing the room cleaning for them every 2 weeks when they go back home on weekends or when they go to work. Should we not do this?

As long as you wait the suggested three hours then cleaning the room is perfectly fine.

Guest breakfast: any ideas on how to move back to hot breakfast? We are currently bagging breakfasts with peelable fruit and wrapped granola bars, yogurt etc.

In partnership with the BCRFA and Restaurants Canada, we have embedded recommendations under the section 5.3 of our best practices document, accessible [here](#). You can offer hot breakfast, but it is important that you understand these best practices.

Do we have any guidelines on how to handle guests refusing to social distance?

Similar to any unacceptable behaviour demonstrated by a guest, it is fully within your right to voice your concern and educate the guest regarding their behaviour. It is important that you equip your team with the verbiage that fits your brand and your health and safety protocols in order to do this tastefully and supports your tonality.