



Bahamas Tourism Reopening FAQ

As of 6.23.20

Reopening the Borders

What is The Tourism Readiness and Recovery Plan? Where can I view it?

- In preparation for the reopening of our borders and the resumption of commercial travel, a Tourism Readiness and Recovery Committee was established among public and private sector partners to develop a collaborative plan for reopening.
- The committee collected and considered feedback from in excess of 100 public and private sector stakeholders from every type of business and tourism touchpoint - from airlines and cruise ports, to hotels, taxi drivers, tour operators, and retailers, to name a few.
- As a result, The Bahamas "Tourism Readiness and Recovery Plan" is an approved, comprehensive guide of health and safety protocols to be followed consistently across the country.
- For more information, or to view the plan in full, please visit:
www.bahamas.com/travelupdates.

When and how will The Bahamas reopen?

- The Bahamas' tourism sector will gradually come back online, following a strategic, phased approach that ensures critical health and safety protocols are being adhered to, and that the Health sector remains well equipped and ready to respond, as necessary.
- Phase 1, beginning on June 15, will allow for international boaters, yachters and private aviation to return to the destination.
 - These smaller special interest groups will allow a more controlled segment to test the country's new measures.
 - Also, during this phase:
 - Hotels will reopen for staff to return to work and put in place all the measures required to ensure they are ready to welcome guests at the onset of Phase 2.
 - Commercial airlines will be allowed to bring in Bahamian citizens, legal residents, homeowners qualifying for economic permanent residency, or the immediate family members or significant others of any of these groups.
 - It is anticipated that during this period of time, there will be a reduced flight schedule as airlines begin adding The Bahamas to their schedules once again.



- Phase 2, beginning July 1, allows for the resumption of international travel, including:
 - Commercial airlines, both international and domestic
 - Domestic and International airlines are beginning to announce plans for their return to The Bahamas. It is recommended that travellers check with airlines directly for details of recommencement of service.
 - Hotels and vacation rentals, inclusive of Airbnb and HomeAway
 - Transportation ranging from taxis to jitneys and buses

The timing of the other phases and sectors will be announced shortly.

How is The Bahamas monitoring the COVID-19 situation to ensure that it is safe to reopen on schedule as is planned?

Reopening of borders will continue to be monitored and guided by the Bahamas government and health officials. Dates are subject to change based on COVID-19 trends, if there is a deterioration in improvement or if government and health organizations deem these phases unsafe for residents or visitors.

Are there concerns over a surge in cases in the U.S. leading to a spike in The Bahamas once borders are reopened to international travellers?

Our main concern is the health and safety of our residents and visitors. We will continue to monitor the situation and adapt our policies in order to create the safest environment possible. Until there is a vaccine or treatment for the virus, we must continue to ensure that our plans are flexible and we are adapting to new information in accordance with recommendations from the Bahamas Ministry of Health, the government and our tourism partners so we are mitigating risk while also working to restore our tourism sector and economy safely. In an abundance of caution and due to the recent increase of COVID-19 cases in the U.S., The Bahamas will require all incoming visitors to present a COVID-19 RT-PCR Negative (Swab) Test upon arrival, with results less than ten (10) days old.

Entry Requirements: Testing and Health Declarations

Is a COVID-19 RT-PCR Negative (Swab) Test required to enter the Country?

- Yes, both domestic and international travelers are required to present a COVID-19 RT-PCR Negative (Swab) Test upon arrival. Results must be no more than ten (10) days old. Those exempt from testing are:
 - Children under the age of two
 - Private pilots who do not deplane



- Bahamian Citizens, Residents and Homeowners Returning from CARICOM countries. However, they remain subject to other public health measures.

Where can I get a COVID-19 RT-PCR (swab) test?

Contact your health care professional to receive a COVID-19 RT-PCR Test. Tests are also available at select [CVS](#) and [Walgreens](#) stores across the U.S. For additional information, please visit your [state](#) or [local](#) health department's website.

Do I need to complete a Health Declaration Card?

All travelers visiting the Bahamas between June 15 – June 30th are required to complete an Electronic Health Declaration Form at travel.gov.bs prior to departure and for any inter-island travel within The Bahamas. An automated response will be provided upon completion, and it is essential that travellers present proof of confirmation upon arrival in their destination.

Why is The Bahamas requiring an Electronic Health Declaration Form?

The Electronic Health Declaration Form is an important step for contact tracing purposes and to help mitigate risk for spread among visitors and residents alike.

What if I do not complete the Electronic Health Declaration Form?

Failure to complete an Electronic Health Declaration form or provide a negative COVID-19 RT-PCR Negative (Swab) Test will result in denied entry to The Bahamas.

Is a print version of my Electronic Health Declaration Form required for travel?

Travellers can show proof of Electronic Health Declaration via print copy or on their mobile device.

Do I need to quarantine upon arrival in The Bahamas?

- No, in both phases 1 and 2, quarantine is not required upon entry.
 - if persons are exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms upon arrival, health professionals may need to conduct additional testing and/or recommend additional measures such as quarantine.



What do international boaters, yachters and those travelling on private aviation need to prepare for when visiting The Bahamas June 15-30?

- A COVID-19 RT-PCR Negative (Swab) Test is required and must be presented upon arrival. Results must be no more than ten (10) days old. Select individuals will be exempt from testing:
 - Children under the age of two
 - Private pilots who do not deplane
 - Bahamians (citizens, residents and homeowners) who are returning to The Bahamas from English speaking CARICOM countries
- All travellers – both domestic and international – are required to complete an Electronic Health Declaration Form at travel.gov.bs prior to departure and for any inter-island travel within The Bahamas. An automated response will be provided upon completion, and it is essential that travellers present proof of confirmation upon arrival in their destination. This is an important step for contact tracing purposes.
- No quarantine will be required upon arrival (if all steps are met).
- Failure to comply with the test requirements and health form submission will result in denied entry.
- Boaters must also:
 - Inform marina at least 48 hours prior to vessel's arrival
 - Wear masks while on marina's premises
 - NEVER shake used or unused clothing, sheets, or cloth items
 - Boats always required to remain 50 feet apart
 - No "rafting" (tying boats together)
 - No "beaching" (running boats ashore in shallow water to disembark)

What about Bahamian Citizens, Residents and Homeowners?

- Per the direction of the Bahamas Ministry of Health, Bahamians (Citizens, Residents and Homeowners) returning from English speaking CARICOM countries are not required to present a COVID-19 RT-PCR Negative (Swab) Test upon arrival. However, they remain subject to other public health measures.
- Required to complete an Electronic Health Declaration Form at travel.gov.bs prior to departure and for any inter-island travel within The Bahamas. An automated response will be provided upon completion, and it is essential that travellers present proof of confirmation upon arrival in their destination. This is an important step for contact tracing purposes.
- For those not returning from English speaking CARICOM countries, a COVID-19 RT-PCR Negative (Swab) Test is required in Phase 1 (June 15-30) and must be presented upon arrival.



What preparations and precautions should travellers take/expect when planning to visit The Bahamas after July 1?

- A COVID-19 RT-PCR Negative (Swab) Test is required and must be presented upon arrival. Results must be no more than ten (10) days old. Select individuals will be exempt from testing:
 - Children under the age of two
 - Private pilots who do not deplane
 - Bahamians (citizens, residents and homeowners) who are returning to The Bahamas from English speaking CARICOM countries
- All travellers will be required to complete an electronic Health Visa.
 - **Additional information on the Health Visa application and approval process is forthcoming.**
- Travellers will not be required to quarantine.
- Travellers planning to visit The Bahamas should also be prepared to:
 - Monitor business websites (airlines, hotels, attractions, etc.) for changes in protocols.
 - Follow The Bahamas' "Healthy Traveller Campaign" ongoing practice of:
 - Physical distancing measures (3ft -6ft)
 - Regularly washing hands
 - Wearing PPE such as face masks when appropriate
 - Avoid travelling when they feel ill.

What is the arrival process for international travelers entering The Bahamas by air or sea starting July 1?

- A COVID-19 RT-PCR Negative (Swab) Test is required and must be presented upon arrival to The Bahamas. Results must be no more than ten (10) days old. Select individuals will be exempt from testing:
 - Children under the age of two
 - Private pilots who do not deplane
 - Bahamians (citizens, residents and homeowners) who are returning to The Bahamas from English speaking CARICOM countries
- All travellers will be required to complete an electronic Health Visa.
 - **Additional information on the Health Visa application and approval process is forthcoming.**
- All travellers must wear a face mask:
 - When entering and transiting air and sea terminals
 - During security and customs screenings



- At baggage claim
- When checking in and boarding
- All incoming passengers will be subject to temperature screenings.
 - Travellers who show symptoms of COVID-19 may be transferred to an on-site quarantine area, away from other passengers for further testing and evaluation.
- Follow physical distancing directions.
- More time will be provided for boarding and exiting.
- More distance will be established between active gates at terminals.
- Travellers should hold and scan their own boarding passes or mobile devices.

What about Cruises? What new protocols will be in place for ships calling on The Bahamas?

- Cruise protocols are subject to change and will be updated once cruise lines are set to resume travel to The Bahamas.
- At this time, protocols may include:
 - All vessels required to submit Declaration of Health to the Port Health Control Officer or other designated Government officer in advance of arrival in The Bahamas.
 - If any passenger or crew member is presenting COVID-19 symptoms, no disembarkation can take place. No gangway will be attached to the ship, until the ship is given the all clear by Port Health Control Officer or other designated Government officer.
 - When guests do disembark, it is contemplated that the ships will install temperature screening equipment in immediate proximity to the disembarkation gangway. A health officer from the Government of The Bahamas will monitor and observe the temperature screening process.
 - Once off their cruise ship, all passengers will be required to comply with protocols in place for tour operators and attractions, taxis, restaurants, retail, etc., which in many cases require the wearing of face masks and respecting physical distancing measures.

On-Island Tourism Protocols

What is the “Clean & Pristine” Certification?

- A Certification Agency has been established - representing a collaboration between the Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Health, and other regulatory agencies - to enforce a “Clean & Pristine” Certification Program.



- **All** tourism related, customer-facing entities in The Bahamas must verify they have in place and are adhering to the Government approved health and safety guidelines to receive Clean & Pristine certification. Adequate signage outlining policies will be clearly displayed at all locations helping to guide staff and visitors.

What does this mean for Taxis and Independent Cars?

- Passengers to wear masks at all times throughout journey
- Passengers should not ride in front seat
- Vehicles reduce the maximum number of people by 50%
 - Sedans = 2 persons, or a family travelling together
 - SUVs = 4 persons

What does this mean for Hotels, Resorts and Vacation Rentals?

- Extensive health and safety protocols enforced; details will be clearly stated by specific institutions
- Enhanced cleaning for guest rooms
- Hand sanitizer and disinfectant readily available
- Employee health monitoring
- Limiting guests in elevators

What does this mean for Restaurants, Food & Beverage Services?

- Buffets discontinued until further notice
- All meals must be served at individual tables where social distance is adhered to, or prepackaged
- Disposable menus offered or displayed on monitors or chalkboards
- Seating to accommodate for physical distancing of guests; limiting number of guests

What does this mean for Excursions, Tours, Local Attractions and Shopping?

- Maximum number of guests and duration of guest visit limited.
- Guests use personal gear (such as snorkelling gear) as appropriate.
- Guests will not be allowed to touch products unless purchasing.
- Cashless sales encouraged
- Beach chairs to allow 6ft. physical distancing between family units
- Cleaning timetable / checklist maintained



What does this mean for Vessel and Ferry Operations?

- Maximum passengers on-board reduced by 50%
- Passenger seating assigned to ensure proper distancing
- Vessel sanitizing:
 - Before any passenger embarks
 - Between all passenger exchanges
 - On high touch surfaces consistently during passage
 - At end of each day