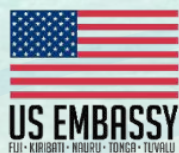




# Kiribati Tourism & Hospitality Protocols for the New Normal





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# Message



**Honourable Tekeewa Tarati**

Minister for Information, Communication,  
Transport &  
Tourism Development (MICTTD)  
Government of Kiribati

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought significant challenges to the global travel industry. Since its outbreak of Corona virus SARS - CoVs-2, the Government of Kiribati enforced closures on all its international borders on 20 March 2022, thereby restricting all international flights and subsequently bringing international tourism to a standstill.

The impact of such a safety measure to the Kiribati tourism industry has been substantial by way of revenue and job loss for our tourism operators. At the same time, Kiribati has enjoyed a Covid-Free status since the outbreak.

Government recognises that with vaccinations, international travel will soon resume, and it therefore supports the guidelines of this document to help prepare us for the new normal in international tourism and hospitality.

I salute the working group that have put this protocol together and we appreciate the strong emphasis on safety, security, wellness, and comfort; all of which will help make Kiribati a safe and desired destination post-COVID-19.

We have a responsibility for the welfare of our people and our visitors in these extraordinary and trying times. I therefore strongly encourage tourism operators and partners to strictly adhere to these health and safety protocols once enforced for It is only through continued partnership and support for one another that we can safely revive tourism post Covid-19.



# Message



**Ms Eretii Timeon**  
Director Public Health  
Ministry of Health & Medical Services

Covid-19 triggers our ability to rearrange and coordinate well our systems and services, and most importantly our linkages to work as a team to prevent the entry of such deadly outbreak. We look at this as an opportunity to reset ourselves and strengthen our connections to ensure health security is not compromised.

I would like to thank everyone who have contributed to ensure such standard operational procedure is well set in context with Kiribati's existing systems and resources. Public health is at the frontline and this SOP is there to ensure prevention is strengthened and well captured in our new procedures during this new normal.

May God provide guidance and strength to implement well what is outlined and to keep us all safe in his good will.

Ara bau te mauri, te raoi ao te tabomoa.

Kam rabwa



# Message



**Mr. Kautoa Tonganibeia**

President

Kiribati Chamber of Commerce & Industries

COVID-19 pandemic is more than just a global health emergency. It has forced the world to impose adverse impacts and significant changes affecting the daily lives of the people and how the business world operates. Developing countries like Kiribati are the most disadvantaged by COVID-19 because we are most reliant on imported goods and services. The border closures and quarantine restrictions to curb the spread of the disease had brought great challenges, public outcry, and hardships to the business communities in Kiribati. Many businesses shutdown, stopped their production lines, and laid off their employees leaving many unable to support their families.

But Reset Kiribati brings new ideas and an unmissable opportunity of positive change for the business community in Kiribati during this pandemic. The general population realize how important the local businesses, in providing goods and services to sustain both subsistence and cash economies that support the daily lives of all citizens. It is now the time to strengthen more connections between the people and the business communities.

These unprecedented circumstances created by COVID-19 has also helped KCCI and its members to accelerate business changes for the “new normal” to support the new routine of individual businesses to stay afloat, improved resilience, and to be most prosperous post COVID-19.

I personally commend the continuous support of the Government to the business communities in Kiribati, and a timely injection of AUD\$3.5 million relief package earlier this year through DBK for members of KCCI to have easy access to soft loans. In a post-coronavirus era, this financing will help expedite the necessary maintenance and transformation processes of all business sectors, especially the travel agencies and tourism sector in Kiribati. I do acknowledge the successful partnership between TAK and KCCI in the development of this document, with the guidance of the Government. Most importantly, I do recognize the diligent effort of TAK team in producing this protocol and the funding support of the USAID in achieving this important milestone as we “the business community” navigate and paddle our way through this pandemic to the end.

Ana kakabaia Atuara ae moan te maaka iaon abara ae Kiribati n aki toki! Te mauri Te Raoi ao Te Tabomoa.

Kam rabwa



# Acknowledgements

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These protocols benefited from the valuable contributions of the Government of Kiribati through the Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration (MFIA), World Health Organisation (WHO) Kiribati, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) Kiribati, Kiribati Red Cross Society, and Kiribati tourism operators.

Coordinators of this project, the Kiribati Chamber of Commerce and Industries (KCCI) and the Tourism Authority of Kiribati (TAK) are grateful to the following organisations that formed the Tourism Reset Taskforce (TRT) and finalised these protocols:

- Public Health Division
- MHMS
- UNICEF
- Dreamers Hotel
- Mary's Motel

We call on all tourism business operators across Kiribati to subscribe to these protocols as a measure of confidence to the world that Kiribati will be ready to safely welcome travellers back once its borders are open and international resume.



# Acronyms

<b>GoK</b>	-	<b>Government of Kiribati</b>
<b>KCCI</b>	-	<b>Kiribati Chamber of Commerce and Industries</b>
<b>MHMS</b>	-	<b>Ministry of Health &amp; Medical Services</b>
<b>PPE</b>	-	<b>Personal Protective Equipment</b>
<b>TAK</b>	-	<b>Tourism Authority of Kiribati</b>
<b>UNWTO</b>	-	<b>United Nations World Tourism Organisation</b>
<b>WHO</b>	-	<b>World Health Organisation</b>
<b>YOY</b>	-	<b>Year on year</b>





# Definitions

## Face mask

A face mask is a protective covering for the nose and mouth. These include fabric/cloth masks, surgical masks, N95 respirator, filtering facepiece respirator, P100 respirator/gas mask, self-contained breathing apparatus, full face respirator, full length face shield and KN95 respirator.

## PPE

Short form for Personal protective equipment. These are equipment worn to minimize exposure or threat of COVID-19 transmission. These include face mask, eye protection, respirators, and gloves.

## Social Distancing Guideline

Keeping a safe physical distance between people, especially those who are not from the same household. To practice social distancing, be at least 1 meter away from other people when in a motor vehicle or boat and at least 1.5 meters in other indoor or outdoor places including hotels, airports, restaurants, and bars.



# Introduction

## Background

The global tourism sector in 2019 employed 1 in every 10 employed persons globally and continued to be an important contributor to economies worldwide. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), tourism continued to outpace the global economy having recorded 1.5 billion international tourist arrivals in 2019 representing a 4% increase from the previous year. Although the UNWTO had projected growth of about 3% to 4% in international tourist arrivals worldwide in 2020 based on the 2019 growth trends, economic prospects and the UNWTO confidence index, these projections are now in doubt due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Kiribati enjoyed 8% year on year (YOY) growth between 2017 and 2019 and had projected the same percentage growth ratio in international visitor arrivals for 2020, forecasting a total of 3,929 and 2,847 holiday and business visitors' arrivals respectively.

The outbreak of Corona virus SARS – CoVs-2 and its subsequent declaration as global pandemic brought tourism to a standstill by early 2020 and Kiribati declared total restriction on international flights from 20 March 2020. The Government of Kiribati (GoK) has confirmed that these restrictions will remain until further notice.

The lifting flight restrictions into Kiribati and vaccination dates for COVID-19 is yet to be confirmed.

The Tourism Authority of Kiribati (TAK) understands that Kiribati's international border may not fully open until vaccines for COVID-19 are available for and the threat for transmission is minimised. TAK also understands that as its international border reopens, Kiribati can expect the inflow of a different type of traveler – one that will expect a globally acceptable level of health and hygiene through every aspect of their visitor experience. Tourism experts refer to this as the new normal in travel and tourism.

It is for this reason that TAK and the Kiribati Chamber of Commerce and Industries (KCCI) have sought the guidance of the relevant health authorities to develop the Kiribati Tourism & Hospitality Protocols for the New Normal. All tourism and hospitality establishments, facilities and enterprises shall observe the general protocols for safety of their staff, clients, and the public in the environment that they interact with. These will apply at the workplace and any facility used for tourism business.



# Introduction

## Objectives of the Protocols

The underlying objectives of the Kiribati Tourism & Hospitality Protocols for the New Normal are:

1. To adopt new technologies in tourism and hospitality operations that support government efforts to protect Kiribati against the threat of COVID-19 transmission;
2. To gain visitor, tour operator and investor confidence in the destination;
3. To assist tourism and hospitality operators conform to the requirements of the new normal;
4. To encourage public and private sector collaboration to effectively implement and enhance compliance with the prescribed health, safety, and hygiene best practices for the tourism industry, and
5. To protect the lives and livelihood of Kiribati people

## Scenarios

The Kiribati Tourism & Hospitality Protocols for the New Normal will be applicable under the following circumstances:

*Semi border opening*      GoK agrees to open its international border with a compulsory 14 days quarantine at a designated quarantine hotel.

*Full border opening*      GoK agrees to open its international border with no quarantine requirement but a high priority on COVID-19 transmission prevention measures.

## Kiribati Public Health Infectious Diseases Regulations 2020

The following protocols are guided by the Kiribati Public Health Infectious Disease 2020. This is an approved national document and hence non-compliance by tourism operators to the set protocols will be subject to penalties as stipulated under the 2020 regulation.



# Introduction

## OF COVID-19



**Clean your hands often**

**1.**

**2.**

**Cover your mouth & nose while coughing/sneezing with a tissue/handkerchief/flexed elbow & dispose off used tissues properly**



**Avoid touching your eyes, nose & mouth**

**3.**

**4.**

**Limit social gatherings & time spent in crowded places**



**Avoid close contact with someone who is sick**

**5.**

**6.**

**Clean & disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces**



## Kiribati Tourism & Hospitality Covid-19 Protocols for the New Normal



### Room Cleaning and Sanitation Protocol

- Standard room cleaning schedule
- Room cleaning SOP



### Check out and Departure Protocol

- Check out protocol including sanitizing of touch points
- Payment Protocol
- Guest Farewell procedure
- Return airport transport protocol



### Employee Safety Protocols

- Covid safety PPE Protocol
- Employee to Customer Social Distancing Protocol



### Restaurant & Bars Hygiene and Safety Protocols

- Restaurant & Bar Social Distancing requirement
- Food orders and delivery protocol
- Supply of complimentary PPE including hand sanitizers
- Payment Protocol



### Check In Procedure

- Check-in protocol including sanitizing of room key, touch points and exchange of personal information including ID cards



### Boat Transfer

- Boat Transfer Protocol



### Hotel Public Area Hygiene Protocol

- Public hand sanitizer station requirements
- Public area cleaning and hygiene requirements
- Supply of complimentary guest PPE



### Hotel Arrival Protocol

- Meet & Greet Protocol
- Baggage handling protocol
- Payment protocol



### Arrival - post airport clearance

- Passenger Baggage Handling by Driver
- Vehicle hygiene and social distancing requirement



### En-route

- Supply of complimentary PPE including masks and hand sanitizer in vehicle

1

2

2.1

3

4

5

6

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9



# Transport

**Tourism transport services will include all licensed land and sea tourist transfer providers. These include, but are not limited to airport taxi, van and bus services and inter island ferry and charter boat services.**



## 1 Arrival and post customs clearance – Airport Protocol

### 1.1. Passenger

- 1.1.1 Must always wear a face mask.
- 1.1.2 Ensure that the social distancing guideline is observed at boarding, during the journey and upon disembarking at the destination.
- 1.1.3 Where possible, encourage passenger to load and offload all personal items and belongings unless proper sanitising measures are in place.
- 1.1.4 Be courteous towards fellow passengers and to the driver.
- 1.1.5 Identify bags to the hotel porter/ staff upon arrival at the destination.

### 1.2. Driver

- 1.2.1 Undergo mandatory PPE training prior to operating any foreign passenger transfer.
- 1.2.2 Thoroughly sanitise all seats, door handle and touch points of the vehicle prior to departing for the airport.
- 1.2.3 Adequately stock vehicle with passenger PPE's including facemasks and hand sanitiser. Vehicle must also have sealed disposable bin/bag for used PPE's.
- 1.2.4 Refrain from any physical contact with the passenger upon their arrival.
- 1.2.5 If applicable, ensure that medically approved rubber gloves are on before handling/ (loading and offloading) passenger's luggage.
- 1.2.6 Carefully remove gloves and dispose of it in the vehicle's disposable bin/bag.
- 1.2.7 Sanitise hands thoroughly before driving the vehicle.
- 1.2.8 Monitor and ensure that the minimum 1m social distance requirement is always maintained by passengers during the journey.



## 1 Arrival and post customs clearance – Airport Protocol

- 1.2.9 Report directly to the health authorities via the Health FREE HOTLINE number is 888 if passenger is displaying any signs of fever and excessive coughing.
- 1.2.10 Put on a pair of the approved rubber gloves prior to disembarking the vehicle.
- 1.2.11 Open door and advise passengers to disembark individually in an orderly manner and direct them to designated check in area whilst maintaining social distancing rules.

### 1.3. Vehicle Owner / Operator

- 1.3.1 Vehicle operator must ensure that the social distancing markings inside the vehicle is clearly visible to the passengers.
- 1.3.2 Sedans and other small vehicles that cannot comply with social distancing requirements must limit passenger numbers to 2 passengers only per trip.
- 1.3.3 Vehicle operator/owner must ensure that a barrier is installed around the driver's seat.
- 1.3.4 Supply of PPE's including facemasks and gloves must always be available in the vehicle.
- 1.3.5 Provide sufficient COVID-19 safety information signage in the vehicle.

## 2 Post trip protocol

- 2.1. Vehicle seats, door handles, windows and touch points must be thoroughly sanitised before and after every trip.**
- 2.2. Vehicle doors to be left open for 1-3 hour after each trip.**
- 2.3 Driver to carefully dispose of the disposal bag/bin.**





## 3 Boat transfer

- 3.1. All passengers must adhere to social distancing guideline throughout the journey.**
- 3.2. Passenger boarding and disembarking must be done one passenger at a time to avoid clusters at the entrance and exit.**
- 3.3. Operator must ensure that seats and all touchpoints are sanitized thoroughly at the end of each trip.**



# Accommodation

**Accommodation shall include all licensed accommodation providers such as hotels, resorts, motels, apartments, bungalows, homestays, and rooms utilized by paying guests / visitors on a short-term basis.**



# Accommodation

## 4 Accommodation arrival protocol

- 4.1. Courteously welcome the guest, explain that the mandatory guest temperature check with the WHO approved device will be done before guest can proceed to the designated check-in area/desk. [If temperature reads 37.5 or more, isolate and report passenger immediately to MHMS].**
- 4.2. Hotel must clearly mark the ground/floor with the recommended social distancing marks per the set social distancing guideline at the check in area/desk.**
- 4.3. A hand sanitiser station with spare facemask must be made available by the check in area/desk.**
- 4.4. Allow for contact-less, digital check-in where possible.**
- 4.5. Enforce the wearing of face masks in public/common areas.**
- 4.6. Provide guests with a printed or electronic copy of the safety protocols which the hotel is employing. Information should contain at a minimum the following:**
  - Steps taken to safeguard employees and guests
  - Expectations of guests while on property
  - Contact details for questions or concerns while on property
  - Reporting procedures for suspected Covid-19 cases or exposure.
- 4.7. Hotel information including dining options, activities, room servicing schedule and sanitised room key must be available in room upon guest arrival.**

## 5 Hotel public area hygiene protocol

- 5.1. Disinfect common area furniture continually throughout the day with tables, armrests, benches to be disinfected once every 60–90 minutes.**
- 5.2. Remove shared brochures and magazines from the hotel public area. It is recommended that brochures and general information are put up on a notice board.**



## 6 Room cleaning and sanitation protocol

- 6.1. Staff servicing room(s) must be in the fully approved WHO PPE gear before entering guest room(s).**
- 6.2. Disinfect all room contact surfaces and touch points thoroughly.**
- 6.3. Remove extra pillows, blankets, linens etc. in the room to limit exposure. Provide extra items upon request. Deliver requested items in an individual single use sanitary bag/wrapping.**
- 6.4. Service bed only on guests' request. Guest is requested to manage resetting of own bed to minimise contact.**
- 6.5. Dirty linen and towels must be bagged and taken directly to the laundry where it must be washed separately from other linen and towels.**
- 6.6. Provide travel size hand sanitiser to guests as part of in-room amenity.**
- 6.7. Guest room air conditioning and ventilation systems shall be enhanced and cleaned after every check-out.**
- 6.8. All furniture, all surfaces, all movable items, wall surfaces close to traffic/seating/lying areas, all floors and bathrooms must be thoroughly cleaned with an effective disinfectant once guest checks out.**
- 6.9. Accommodation establishments are encouraged to rotate room use leaving a used room for at least one (1) idle day before subsequent check-in.**
- 6.10. All rubbish from the room must be bagged and delivered to the designated waste bin.**

## 7 Check out protocol

- 7.1. It is recommended that all bills to be settled electronically.**
- 7.2. Invoice must be e-mailed directly to guest. No hard copies of invoice are to be handed directly to guest upon check-out.**



## Restaurant & bars

**Restaurant & bars shall include all designated dining and beverage areas within an accommodation establishment or in licensed private standalone operations.**



## 8 Restaurant

- 8.1. Employees must disinfect the restaurant menu, table, and chairs thoroughly at opening and after each use.**
- 8.2. Guest must disinfect their hands thoroughly upon entry at the restaurant (at least 20 seconds if using an alcohol-based hand rub, and at least 40 seconds with soap and water).**
- 8.3. Social distancing guideline must always be maintained between employees and customers. Where necessary, clearly marked social distancing markers must be available in restaurants.**
- 8.4. Social distancing guideline signs/ poster must be visible in the restaurant for the employee and customer's information.**
- 8.5. Employees must always properly wear a face mask when serving a customer.**
- 8.6. Employees must regularly sanitize hands during their shift especially after servicing guests using an alcohol-based hand rub. Disposable rubber gloves should not be used as an alternative to regular hand washing.**
- 8.7. Cashless payment system is recommended. However, when exchanging cash, employee must sanitize hands and cash immediately after handling.**
- 8.8. Restaurant washrooms must be equipped with proper hand sanitising gear. Water and soap must be provided if hand sanitizers are not available.**



## 9 Bars

- 9.1. **Employees must disinfect the bar counter, table, and chairs thoroughly prior to opening and after each guest use.**
- 9.2. **Guest must disinfect their hands thoroughly upon entry into the bar (at least 20 seconds if using an alcohol-based hand rub, and at least 40 seconds with soap and water).**
- 9.3. **Social distancing guidelines must always be adhered to. Where necessary, clearly marked social distancing markers must clearly be visible to customers to follow.**
- 9.4. **Social distancing guideline signs/ poster must be visible in the bar for the employee and customer's information.**
- 9.5. **Employees must always wear a face mask on when serving a customer.**
- 9.6. **Employees must regularly sanitize their hands during their shift using an alcohol-based hand rub. Disposable rubber gloves may be worn when serving customers.**
- 9.7. **Cashless payment system is recommended. However, when exchanging cash, employee must sanitize hands and cash immediately after handling.**
- 9.8. **Employers to consider installing barrier at the bar and payment areas to minimise physical contact with guest.**



## Employee safety

**Employee safety shall cover the general safety protocol for all individuals employed in any tourism business operation**





## 10 Arrival to and departure from work protocol

- 10.1. All employees must be PPE trained and certified.
- 10.2. Each staff must be temperature checked by the designated manager upon arrival at work using the WHO approved device when they report to work.
- 10.3. Where applicable, staff must change into their work uniform at the provided change room at work.
- 10.4. Employees must sanitize hands before and after putting on their uniform
- 10.5. Before reporting to their workstation, employees must wash their hands (at least 20 seconds if using an alcohol-based hand rub, and at least 40 seconds with soap and water).
- 10.6. When removing uniform at the end of shift, employees must ensure the outer surface of their uniform does not touch their face.
- 10.7. Employees must take a full shower before returning home at the end of their shift.

## 11 Working hours protocol

- 11.1. Employees must always wear a mask.
- 11.2. Employees must always wear the certified rubber gloves when serving customers.
- 11.3. Employees must adhere to the social distancing guideline with other staff and guests.
- 11.4. Employees must always cover a cough or sneeze with a bent elbow or tissue and throw away the tissue in a designated bin.



## 12 Employer's commitment

- 12.1. Employers must undertake COVID-19 awareness training for all employees.**
- 12.2. Employers must provide the necessary PPE and the proper training on how to use them.**
- 12.3. Employers will promote frequent & thorough handwashing, by providing workers, customers, & worksite visitors a place to wash hands. Provide antiseptic hand sanitizer or alcohol-based hand towelettes containing 60% alcohol when soap & water are unavailable.**
- 12.4. Require workers who are sick to not report to work.**
- 12.5. Hotel employers will rotate staffs every 14 days of guest arrival.**
- 12.6. Prohibit workers from using other workers' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools & equipment when possible.**
- 12.7. Employers must keep a record of all employee and customer screenings daily and be ready to submit to the MHMS when required.**



# Waste Disposal Guideline

The following waste disposal guideline encourages best sustainable practices for safely managing COVID-19 health care waste.

COVID-19 health care waste refers to used PPEs such as tissues, disposable masks, gloves, and other disposal items used as personal protection gear against COVID-19 by an employee or guest.

## Removal of PPE's

To minimise potential transmission through the COVID-19 health care waste, tourism operators must ensure that PPE's are properly removed to reduce the risk of self-contamination. Operators must train staffs to carefully remove gloves, gowns, aprons, and other PPE's to avoid contaminating the wearer and the surrounding area.

## Disposal Bins/Bag

Proper PPE waste disposal covered bins must be provided. Each bin must be lined with a plastic bag and must be used for disposing personal care items such as tissues, disposable masks, gloves, and other items contaminated with respiratory secretions or other body fluids.

## Waste Collection

When the bin is  $\frac{3}{4}$  full, "tie-off" the plastic bag to prevent spillage of the contents and dispose of the bag into the designated waste bin. All COVID-19 health care waste must be delivered to the designated COVID waste facility.

## Personal Care

"As an interim measure safely burying health care waste may be done until more sustainable measures can be put in place. Manual chemical disinfection of waste is not recommended, as it is not regarded as a reliable and efficient method".<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> WHO Water, sanitation, hygiene, and waste management for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19 Interim guidance 29 July 2020



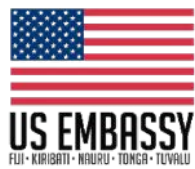




Photo credit: Daz Wang

