



10 Things you can do to keep your guests safe

The South African hospitality industry is, for the most part, breathing a collective sigh of relief after the country's 'family meeting' last week.

While Nelson Mandela Bay Metro was declared a COVID-19 hotspot, other areas of concern (including Sarah Baartman District in the Eastern Cape and the Garden Route in the Western Cape) were given a reprieve – at least until Health Minister Zweli Mkhize visits the regions to assess the situation on the ground.

President Ramaphosa was very clear that SA's economic recovery has to get underway (which is good news for all in the travel, tourism and hospitality sectors) but we need to 'recommit ourselves to the fight' in order to prevent a resurgence of the virus.

South Africans are desperate to get out and enjoy life this festive season, but it's imperative that we keep our customers, our staff and our industry safe.

Jeremy Clayton, Fedhasa Cape Chair, says: "We continue to support the implementation of common-sense principles. After months of following COVID-19 protocols, the hospitality industry is well-versed at ensuring guest safety. Across the industry, we have seen hotels implementing a balanced approach to service and COVID-19 standards; extensively preventing crowds and ensuring social distancing is in place. Let's keep up the good work."

Here are 10 things you can do today to ensure a #safesummer for all:

1. Ensure social distancing is non-negotiable

It is crucial that you and your guests adhere to physical distancing rules. Make it easy for them by using floor markings, placing furniture at an adequate distance, and urging waiters to keep a 1-metre distance at all times.

2. Limit close contact

Related to the point above, we need to limit close social contact as much as possible – and avoid 'super spreader events' at all costs. Think about the maximum number of people in

your restaurant, bar or hotel lounge. Smaller groups are safer, so encourage reservations to avoid unexpected crowds.

3. Keep a record

Monitor your guests' temperatures when they enter your establishment and keep a register of visitors. This is a legal requirement, and a reliable register will help the government to trace infections if necessary.

4. Mask up correctly

Wearing a mask really is your first line of defence! Tell your clients they need to wear a cloth mask in communal areas (except when eating or drinking). Your staff should set an example by wearing their masks (over nose and mouth) at all times.

5. Scrap self-service

Buffets and self-service are a thing of the past. Food and drink should be pre-dished and not passed between people (communal handling of jugs and tongs is a no-no!).

6. Follow cleaning protocols – and sanitise, sanitise!

By now, you know you need to sanitise your hands regularly and have plenty of sanitiser at the ready for your guests! Cleaning and sanitising is another non-negotiable, and public health officials suggest increasing the frequency of cleanings, using effective disinfectant products and cleaning 'high-touch' items like desks, credit card machines, light switches and remote controls as often as possible.

Take your housekeeping team through some simple safety steps, for example, closing the toilet lid when flushing and removing soiled linen with care (without folding or shaking).

Most COVID protocols will be implemented in the background – but ensure you don't cut corners just because your efforts are not visible to guests. We cannot let our guard down, be it in front of house, in the kitchen, in the laundry or delivery bays!

7. Get outside!

Ventilation is key when it comes to limiting the spread of the virus. Ventilate all rooms by opening doors and windows and by using ceiling fans to keep fresh air circulating.

Are you lucky enough to have outdoor space? Now is the time to maximise your outdoor areas by seating patrons on patios, verandas or out in the garden.

8. Reduce touchpoints

Reducing points of physical contact between guests and staff have never been more important. Technology can help (think mobile apps like SnapScan), but you can also keep it simple, for example, by using blackboards instead of printed menus.

9. Become the industry standard

All establishments and activity providers are strongly encouraged to enrol in the Travel Safe/Eat Safe Certification Programme and make use of the official COVID-19 screening and protocols app to record compliance. For more information, please click [here](#). Individuals are able to lodge a complaint through the **Travel Safe/Eat Safe** website, so do use the [portal](#) if you are aware of any issues that could bring the industry's name into disrepute.

You can also access **FEDHASA's hospitality protocols** [here](#), and familiarise yourself with the Tourism Business Council of South Africa's recommended and comprehensive guidelines [here](#).

10. Get in touch for advice or support

Remember, you are not alone. Please call our 24-hour coronavirus (COVID-19) hotline number on **0800 029 999** or WhatsApp **0600 133 456** if you have any questions!

Western Cape COVID Hotline: 080 928 4102 or click [here](#) for more details.

The majority of consumers expect their health and safety to be your first priority – and will also play their part in keeping your staff safe and well. Of course, a small minority may refuse to play ball, causing added stress. And while compliance can be challenging, the consequences of non-compliance will be even more devastating.

Here are five things that could happen if you don't comply:

- You could lose your liquor licence
- You could be reported by unhappy clients (or named and shamed on social media)
- You could get sued for non-compliance
- Your business could close
- Stricter regulations could be put in place, devastating the entire tourism industry

Let's work together this festive season and ensure a safe summer for all!

Hospitality Greetings

Rema Wiese

Executive Officer