



## Hatch River Expeditions COVID - 19 Client Safety Statement

### Client Safety Statement

At Hatch River Expeditions (HRE) we have always taken standards for hygiene and cleanliness very seriously. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are taking additional steps to protect our guests and employees. Our health and safety measures are designed to address a broad spectrum of viruses, including COVID-19, and include everything from handwashing hygiene and cleaning product specifications to the cleaning of vehicles, boats and the tools of our trade. The following Client Safety Statement is an overview for our guests of the steps we are taking to address the pandemic.

The information surrounding COVID-19 is changing rapidly. It is our intention for this plan to guide us in our operation of trips while preventing the spread and outbreak of COVID-19 *to the extent possible given the specific nature of rafting trips in the Grand Canyon*. We are closely monitoring government policy changes, guidelines, and mandates. Our primary guidance comes from the [US National Park Service Office of Public Health](#), [The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), [Coconino County Health Department](#), and the [Arizona Department of Health Services](#). We will continue to make changes to our protocols and procedures as necessary or appropriate.

While we have developed a comprehensive plan to screen for and mitigate COVID-19 both prior to a trip and while on the river, ***we must acknowledge that we cannot eliminate the risk of contracting the virus while on a rafting trip with Hatch River Expeditions. While we will strongly encourage distancing to the extent possible while on our trips, it is important to be aware that physical distancing while on the raft, during on-river orientations, transportation to and from the river, while administering direct first aid, and other trip related activities is not possible.*** In addition, many COVID-19 cases are asymptomatic, and guests may unknowingly be exposed to the virus while traveling therefore potentially exposing other guests.

Unfortunately, there is no solution to these challenges. We feel compelled to ask our guests to be active partners with us in this COVID mitigation plan. This includes monitoring your health closely in the weeks and days prior to your trip and also while traveling with us. Our best tools for the health of our guests and guides must be clear communication during pre-trip screening and on-river screening, as well as following guidelines for hand-washing, sanitation, and other protocols outlined in this document. Consideration and respect for health and safety for all is paramount.

We believe that these steps satisfy the basic contract that we have entered into with our customers, in which we pledge to do everything reasonable and prudent to care for our guests. The decision to participate is an individual choice. We believe we have an action plan in place to appropriately address this evolving situation. The federal agencies that regulate our operations, and access to

Grand Canyon National Park, have approved our actions and plan to operate. Accordingly, we plan to operate our trips and feel the choice to participate is yours. If you choose not to participate based on your personal beliefs or circumstances, our standard cancelation policy delineates the options available to you.

## **Specific steps we are taking and areas of focus include:**

### **Screening Guests**

We will conduct pre-screening three times prior to your trip. The primary method to be used will be self-screening. You will be sent a questionnaire 14 days prior to the trip launch, 4 days prior to trip launch, and screened in-person on the morning of trip launch. We reserve the right to refuse service to any individuals who do not comply with or do not respond to pre-screening.

Guests who are a higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 should be advised not to go on a backcountry trip. High risk individuals include, but are not limited to people with the following conditions:

- Over 65 years of age
- Chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
- Severely obese
- Diabetes, chronic kidney disease, or undergoing dialysis
- Liver disease
- Other immunocompromised individuals (HIV, undergoing cancer treatment, or other underlying medical conditions)

If you have any questions as to your personal risk, you should consult your physician.

### **Before Arrival:**

- Guests will receive an email 14 days prior to the launch of their trip asking them to self-screen for symptoms of COVID-19 as determined by the CDC and provided on the Traveler's Health Declaration.
- Guests will receive an additional email 4 days prior to the launch of their trip asking them to re-screen for symptoms of COVID-19 as determined by the CDC and provided in the Traveler's Health Declaration.

<b>Traveler's Health Declaration Questions</b>
<i>Within the last 14 days, have you:</i>
1. Had a fever (100.4 degrees Fahrenheit/38 degrees Celsius or higher) or chills?
2. Developed a new cough that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
3. Developed shortness of breath that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
4. Developed a new sore throat that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
5. Developed muscle aches that you cannot attribute to another health condition, or that may have been caused by a specific activity (such as physical exercise)?
6. Experienced a new loss of taste or smell?
7. Been exposed to someone who has symptoms of COVID-19 or has tested positive for COVID-19?

- All guests must conduct self screening beginning 14 days prior to their trip's start date. Hatch will provide the self screening questions on the Traveler's Health Declaration in reminder emails at 14 days and 4 days prior to the trip's start date.
- If a guest answers "yes" to any of questions 1-7 on the Traveler's Health Declaration, they must report their answers to Hatch River Expeditions staff immediately. At that time, we will refer to current CDC guidance for quarantine and isolation and determine the best course of action. If symptoms present or an exposure occurs when the Hatch River Expeditions office is closed and if the office will not re-open prior to the start of a guest's trip, that guest should not travel or join their trip, but instead should send an email to [info@hatchriverexpeditions.com](mailto:info@hatchriverexpeditions.com) indicating that they will not be on the trip and the reason why. We strongly recommend that each guest purchases a travel insurance policy with a "cancel for any reason" option that will allow them to recoup any financial loss due to COVID-19 exposure or other factors.

### **Upon Arrival:**

- At guest orientation prior to the trip's launch (or prior to hiking down the Bright Angel Trail on lower canyon trips), guests will be required to complete, sign, and date the Traveler's Health Declaration.
- If a guest answers "yes" to any of questions 1-7 on the Traveler's Health Declaration, they must report their answers to Hatch River Expeditions staff immediately. At that time, we will refer to current CDC guidance for quarantine and isolation and determine the best course of action. If symptoms present or an exposure occurs when the Hatch River Expeditions office is closed and if the office will not re-open prior to the start of a guest's trip, that guest should not travel or join their trip, but instead should send an email to [info@hatchriverexpeditions.com](mailto:info@hatchriverexpeditions.com) indicating that they will not be on the trip and the reason why. We strongly recommend that each guest purchases a travel insurance policy with a

“cancel for any reason” option that will allow them to recoup any financial loss due to COVID-19 exposure or other factors.

- Guests will be required to bring a thermometer for self screening prior to launch and on the river. If you report a temperature of 100.4 or higher, we will not allow you or your immediate traveling party, to travel with us and will offer a full refund or an “Account Credit” to be used at a later date.
- Guests will need to have and show personal PPE equipment, including: face mask or face cover, hand sanitizer, thermometer, as well as any other personal protective equipment deemed necessary.

### **Screening while on the River**

Daily review of symptom questions will be conducted by our staff to ensure self-screening has been completed. If you experience any of the symptoms above they must be reported immediately to the trip leader. If a person is experiencing symptoms, temperature and oxygen saturation (measured by a finger pulse oximeter) will be taken and isolation measures *to the extent possible* will be implemented.

### **Screening HRE Employees**

Hatch River Expeditions guides and employees will also undergo the same screening process, and are also subject to other requirements as detailed in our full internal COVID-19 mitigation plan.

## **What if someone experiences COVID-19 symptoms during a trip?**

### **Patient care and management for guests or staff with positive symptoms**

- The symptomatic person will immediately be physically distanced from others *to the extent possible* and required to wear a mask for the remainder of the trip. One liaison on the trip will be identified to provide care to the symptomatic individual such as serving food, and assisting with camp set-up if necessary. The symptomatic individual will be quarantined away from the group in camp *to the extent possible* and required to sleep in a separate isolation tent with a dedicated sleep kit.
- HRE staff will follow COVID-19 protocols and provide appropriate medical treatment according to their training.
- The symptomatic individual will be closely monitored and symptoms documented. Worsening symptoms should be reported to the trip leader immediately.

### **Grand Canyon National Park Involvement:**

HRE will attempt to notify the NPS Search and Rescue (SAR) to alert them of the situation and assess the need and availability for evacuation. Given the remote location and the variable success of satellite phone communication, we may need to proceed to another location to do so. If a patient is over age 65 or has high risk factors such as previous lung or heart conditions, is diabetic, or has other conditions that compromise their immune system OR, experiences worsening symptoms the NPS will be notified of these conditions.

Grand Canyon National Park SAR will decide whether to evacuate someone from a river trip or not. *While we will initiate the conversation and inform them of the situation, Grand Canyon SAR will make the final decision regarding evacuations.*

## **Personal Precautions**

All guests and guides will take precautions to the extent possible as detailed below.

### **Physical Distancing**

Although we have acknowledged that we cannot maintain physical distancing of 6' during transportation to and from the trip, while on the raft, during on-river orientations, while administering direct first aid, and other trip related activities we strongly encourage guests to physically distance themselves from those with whom they did not travel *to the extent they are able*. This includes pre-trip, while in camp, at attraction sites and while hiking.

### **Hand Washing**

While we have always emphasized the importance of handwashing on the river, we will continue to do so with increased frequency and additional instructions. At least one hand wash system will be set up immediately upon arrival at camp, lunch, and attraction sites, and will be left up until departure. Hand sanitizer will also be available, although guests will be encouraged to use the sanitizer they brought. Handwashing should be done after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose.

In addition, multiple hand wash stations will be set up in camp: at the toilet(s), near the kitchen, and other locations as necessary and possible. Guests will be asked to wash hands prior to using the toilet and again after using the toilet.

### **Face Coverings and Personal Equipment**

**All guests and employees are required to bring their own face coverings/masks.** This will be confirmed at trip check-in/ orientation. Additional masks and/ or face coverings will be available in the event of loss or damage to the guest's own.

Guests and employees are expected to sneeze or cough away from others and into their elbow creases.

**Each guest will be required to bring their own thermometer on the trip,** and required to take their temperature daily and report any fever over 100.4 to the trip leader immediately. The guest's temperature will be retaken if they report a fever for confirmation with an HRE thermometer, and oxygen levels will be taken as well.

**Each guest will need to bring hand sanitizer for their own personal use during the trip.** While HRE will have hand sanitizer available, it is strongly encouraged that guests use their own dedicated bottle.

## **Other Precautions we are Taking**

### **Sanitation and Food Service**

- Our boats and other high-touch equipment such as toilet facilities, water coolers, etc. will be sprayed with a sanitizer or bleach solution daily, and more frequently if deemed necessary. Guests will be asked to spray surfaces they have touched or used thoroughly after use.
- In addition, only HRE guides who are certified Food Managers will prepare food at mealtimes.

### **Assigned Equipment**

- Each guest will have an assigned lifejacket, personal sleeping kit, a night time dry bag and day time dry bag for the entire trip, to be clearly marked by the guest at orientation. All of these items will have been cleaned and sanitized immediately prior to the guest arrival.
- Tents, cots, and chairs will be assigned for the duration of the trip. These items will also have been cleaned and sanitized prior to departure.

### **General**

- Group guests *to the best of our abilities* into those living in common households or families, or who have traveled inside the same vehicle onto the same area or section of rafts, shuttle vehicles, planes and helicopters.
- Spacing of guests according to current guidelines and *to the extent possible*: while in food lines, eating meals, hiking, camping, and at orientations and interpretive stops.

- Limit passenger numbers in vehicles *to the extent possible* to accommodate spreading out of guests. Groups traveling together should be seated together.

## **Conclusion**

These precautions are in no way exhaustive. They are meant to give our guests an overview of some of the steps we are taking to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Hatch River Expeditions has researched extensively and developed a detailed mitigation plan that is distributed to every employee in all aspects of our operations. Employees will be trained in new and preventative procedures before our operations resume.

As we stated above, the details surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic are dynamic and we are monitoring the situation closely. As new information comes to light, we will adjust and update our mitigation plan accordingly. We value the health and safety of guests and employees. Choosing to raft with us will mean that we are partners taking care of each other and working together to make sure that our trips are as fun, successful, and healthy as possible.