



## **Maldives will re-open for international tourists on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020**

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His Excellency President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih announced in an address to the nation today that Maldives will re-open its borders for international tourists on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020. Resorts, Liveboards and hotels located at uninhabited islands will be open from 15<sup>th</sup> of July 2020. Guest Houses and hotels located at inhabited islands will be open from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2020.

Maldives relies heavily on the tourism industry as it accounts for the largest foreign exchange earnings, making it the biggest economic contributor in the country. However, it has come to a standstill due to the stringent public health measures taken to curb COVID-19. The tourism industry has been gearing up to restart; it is set to resume in compliance to protective measures, taking into account the safety of tourists and staff working in the industry.

The guidelines for re-opening the tourism sector, “Public Health Interventions to Prevent COVID-19 Transmission in the Tourism Sector”, was also released today by the Ministry of Tourism giving comprehensive information for all sectors across the tourism industry on their standard operating procedures, as well as important information to tourists.

According to the guidelines, tourists are not required to pay an additional fee, produce a certificate or test result indicative of negative status for COVID-19 prior to entry into Maldives. For tourists without symptoms, there is no requirement for quarantine either. The guideline will be periodically reviewed based on further developments.

### **Before your travel to Maldives**

- Travellers who have a history of contact with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 within the past 14 days and persons who have fever or respiratory symptoms such as cough, sore throat, shortness of breath within the past 14 days are advised not to travel to Maldives.
- Regular official updates on travel to the Maldives re provided on the websites of the Ministry of Tourism (<https://www.tourism.gov.mv/>) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (<https://www.foreign.gov.mv/>) of the Maldives
- A confirmed booking in a tourist establishment registered with the Ministry of Tourism, prior to travelling is mandatory.
- Tourist resorts, liveboard vessels and hotels located on uninhabited islands are open for bookings starting from July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- Guest houses and hotels located on inhabited islands will open for bookings starting from 1<sup>st</sup> August, 2020.
- However, guest houses and hotels located on inhabited islands will be allowed to accommodate transiting passengers waiting for domestic transfers under special permits. Transit arrangements can be made through the primary facility where the stay is booked.
- Tourists are advised to directly check offers and operational status with the preferred tourist establishments on their websites and mobile applications.
- Tourists who are visiting Maldives during phase 1 of opening shall book their entire stay in one registered establishment. Stays at multiple resorts and hotels are not permitted during this period. However, exemptions will be made for transit arrangements.



### **During your flight**

- All passengers should submit a health declaration card upon arrival, completed onboard the aircraft.
- As per border health and aviation procedure, if a passenger has fever, cough or shortness of breath on board the flight it should be informed to the Health Protection Agency.

### **Arrival at the airport**

- Tourists travelling to Maldives will be provided a free 30-day tourist visa on arrival.
- A health declaration card will be required as part of the on-arrival procedure.
- All arriving passengers should wear masks
- Physical distancing should be ensured.
- Hand sanitization at entry to the arrival terminal.
- All arriving passengers must undergo thermal screening at entry.
- Tourists will not be subject to any quarantine measures upon arrival to the Maldives.
- Tourists will not be required to submit any medical test results for entry to the Maldives. However, travellers presenting with symptoms of Covid-19 upon arrival will be subject to a PCR test at the traveller's cost. The tourist will be sent to a designated facility for isolation. Isolation will be done at a designated transit facility or at the tourists' destination resort (depending on the resort policy). If the result of the PCR test is positive, the tourist may continue isolation at the resort or will be transferred to a designated state-run isolation facility. If the result of the PCR test is negative, the tourist will be released from isolation. In the case of negative PCR test in a tourist who is isolated temporarily at a transit facility, he/she will be released from isolation and may travel to the destination resort. Although released from isolation, a symptomatic tourist will have to follow restrictions on attending public places such as restaurants until the symptoms resolve.
- Contact tracing should be done for the symptomatic patient to identify passengers who were close contacts during the flight and during the journey. Contacts who are tourists can be quarantined in their destination resorts until the PCR test result of the patient is known. Contacts will be released from quarantine if the patients' PCR test is negative.
- On arrival, if any tourist gives history of contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 within 14 days prior to arrival (as per passenger health declaration card), the tourist must be examined by the doctor at the airport clinic. If the person is asymptomatic, he/she will require to be quarantined. If the person is symptomatic, a sample should be taken for PCR for COVID-19 and the patient should be sent to a designated facility for isolation.
- Installing the contact tracing app "TraceEkee" is encouraged for all tourists.
- Additionally, local health authorities may conduct random testing at no cost to travellers.
- Mandatory restrictions on travel within Maldives for tourists during the COVID-19 pandemic: Tourists should observe the existing Health Protection Agency (HPA) rules and regulations on restrictions on inter island travel. The Ministry of Tourism should continuously update and inform the tourist establishments regarding the travel restrictions imposed by HPA.
- Requirement for tourists to inform the resort if he/she tests positive for COVID-19 upon return from Maldives: All tourists should inform the resort if they test positive for COVID-19 within 14 days of departure from the resort.

### **At departure from your place of stay**

- Tourists will have to undergo an exit screening prior to departure from the place of stay.
- The exit screening questionnaire should document any history of fever or respiratory symptoms such as cough or shortness of breath within the prior 14 days. It should be ensured that the guest is not under quarantine or isolation. Temperature should be checked to exclude fever.
- Routine testing for COVID-19 is not required prior to departure, however during exit screening if any tourist is found to have fever or symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 within the prior 14 days, they should undergo PCR testing for COVID-19.



- Testing services are available in the Maldives for tourists who require Covid-19 test results to return to their countries of origin or another destination.

Maldives is an island nation made up of 1,190 coral islands strewn across the equator. It is a world-class holiday destination well-known for its unique one-island-one-resort concept. Only tourists and staff are accommodated on these resorts, far away from the hustle and bustle of other islands. Along with the pristine natural beauty surrounding the resorts, privacy and seclusion are the epitome of what makes it one of the most sought after tourist destinations in the world. We look forward to welcoming you to the sunny side of life once again.

**Attachments:**

- Statement by the Ministry of Tourism: <https://bit.ly/2ZneXIB>
- Guidelines for re-opening the tourism sector: <https://bit.ly/3gXUslI>
- Maldives Travel Information: <https://bit.ly/2DCSxo9>
- HPA link for Covid-19 latest updates: <https://bit.ly/2OjMNSb>
- Guidelines video: <https://bit.ly/3gSSTVV>
- See you soon video: <https://bit.ly/327y84O>

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