

GUIDE TO CRUISING IN THE MALDIVES

During the “New Normal”



www.boating.mv



INTRODUCTION

The Maldives is a nation of islands in the Indian Ocean, that spans across the equator. The country is comprised of 1,192 islands that stretch along a length of 871 kilometers. Our natural geographical setting is based on dispersed coral islands. Due to the unprecedented global pandemic, COVID-19, the government decided to close the border on March 15, 2020, to strengthen measures and to control the spread of the deadly virus.

Being closed for over 100 Days, On July 15, 2020, the President of the Maldives HE. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih announced the reopening of Maldivian borders to international tourists. While the world slowly overcomes the impacts of the situation, the government is fully confident in the safety measures and preparations to ensure the protection of all visitors and people working in the tourism sector itself.

A Special Health Emergency Coordination Task Force was formed along with the stakeholders to handle and closely monitor the situation.

All Tourist Vessels and other tourist establishments have been regulated to ensure that they are in line with the COVID-19 tourism guidelines; the COVID-19 Safe Tourism Guidelines were issued by the Ministry of Tourism along with a certification programme to uphold proper safety and hygiene standards.

Liveaboards began operations just a year after Tourism was introduced to Maldives and remain as one of the finest concepts of boating holidays across the world. A liveaboard holiday means that travellers can stay on her or his preferred choice of liveaboard, ranging from budget to utmost luxury. They can cruise, visiting uninhabited islands, dozens of dive sites or surf breaks, the best fishing, diving and snorkeling spots, plus many more, exploring the best that the Maldives has to offer in a 7- to 14-day trip.

These vessels, permitted by the Ministry of Tourism to restart operations, have an operational plan applying all safety measures and precautions ensuring the wellbeing and comfort of each onboard traveller making their stay in the Maldives a unique one, as always.

The National Boating Association of Maldives (NBAM) works closely with the industry and authorities to ensure that the boating sector is well informed and assisted throughout every aspect of operation. NBAM requests the industry to take all measures shared by the Health Protection Agency and the Ministry of Tourism, ensuring that all necessary requirements are met prior to arrival, during guests' stay and departure from the Maldives.



BEFORE YOUR ARRIVAL

MAKING YOUR LIVEABOARD / BOAT BOOKING :

A confirmed booking in a tourist vessel registered and permitted to restart operations by the Ministry of Tourism is mandatory.

Travellers may reconfirm with the National Boating Association of Maldives (NBAM) by email : info@boating.mv or directly with the preferred tourist vessel.

A list of permitted tourist vessels by Ministry of Tourism has been constantly shared and updated on all digital platforms by NBAM.

The guideline published by the the Ministry of Tourism and Health Protection Agency details what tourists can expect as they plan their trip to the Maldives.

The guidelines are available on the official website of the NBAM www.boating.mv and Ministry of Tourism website www.tourism.gov.mv as well as Visit Maldives website www.visitmaldives.com, and it will be revised every two weeks depending on the changing dynamics of the COVID-19 situation in the country.



BEFORE YOUR ARRIVAL

PRIOR TO ENTRY:

A pre-arrival Visa is not required to gain entry into the country. Tourists are provided a 30-day free Visa on arrival.

The tourists' Passports must have at least 1-month validity from the date of expected departure from the Maldives.

The online Health Declaration Form should be filled and submitted within 24 hours prior to departure to the Maldives. This form is accessible on <https://www.ivisa.com/maldives-health-declaration-form>.

For the safety of all, HPA Maldives has made it mandatory, with effect from September 10, 2020, for all tourists and short term visitors to present a Negative PCR certificate on arrival in the Maldives.

The said PCR test must be conducted within a maximum of 72 hours prior to departure to Maldives.

Persons who have a history of contact with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 within the past 14 days and/or persons who have fever or respiratory symptoms such as cough, sore throat, shortness of breath within the past 14 days should not travel to the Maldives.



DURING YOUR FLIGHT & ARRIVAL AT ANY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IN THE MALDIVES

All passengers will undergo thermal screening at the arrival terminal. All passengers should wear masks.

Hands should be sanitized. Hand sanitization and hygiene facilities are available throughout the airport.

Physical distancing should be ensured. All physical distancing guidelines are clearly marked with visible distance information and floor markings in passenger terminals.

If the passenger has a fever, cough or shortness of breath on board the flight, it should be informed to the local Health Protection Agency.

All tourists are encouraged to install the Contact Tracing app "TraceEkee." available on the App Store and on Google Play.



DURING YOUR FLIGHT AND ARRIVAL AT ANY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

IF THE TOURIST IS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

The tourist will continue isolation. The duration of the isolation period will be 14 days after symptom onset AND at least 3 days without symptoms.

Upon completion of the isolation period, the tourist will be released.

IF THE TOURIST IS NEGATIVE FOR COVID-19

If the tourist is in temporary quarantine at a transit facility, he/she will be released from quarantine.

Although released from quarantine, a symptomatic tourist must wear a mask, observe physical distancing and avoid public gatherings for 48 hours after resolution of symptoms.

A symptomatic tourist should be reviewed periodically by a health profession at the resort until the resolution of symptoms.

Expenses for quarantine / isolation has to be borne by the traveller directly or through an insurance covering COVID-19.

The NBAM will assist in all areas and provide assistance and information to member vessels / companies.



DURING YOUR FLIGHT AND ARRIVAL AT ANY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

MANAGING CONTACTS OF A SYMPTOMATIC TOURIST

Contact tracing will be initiated by the border health staff of the Health Protection Agency. If a close contact is identified, the person will be informed to self-quarantine until the result of the PCR test for the suspected case is available.

Contact tracing should be done for any tourist who is a suspected case of COVID-19 to identify passengers who were close contacts during the flight and during the journey.

If the contact is identified at the airport, he/she will be allowed to travel to their destination resort and self-quarantine in the resort room. A tourist who is identified as a close contact should not embark on to a safari until the result of the PCR test for the suspected case is available.

If the PCR test of the suspected case is positive, the contact must undergo a PCR test.

If the contacts' PCR test is positive, the contact will be managed as a confirmed case of COVID-19.

If the contacts' PCR test is negative, the contact must undergo quarantine for a period of 14 days from the date of last exposure to the suspected case. During this period, if the contact is symptomatic, a PCR test must be done. If the contact remains asymptomatic, a PCR test will be done upon completion of the quarantine period and he/she will be released if the result is negative.

If the PCR test of the suspected case is negative, the contact will be released from quarantine and no restrictive measures will be taken on him/her.



DURING YOUR FLIGHT AND ARRIVAL AT ANY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

MANAGING TOURISTS WHO HAVE A HISTORY OF CONTACT WITH A CONFIRMED CASE OF COVID-19

A tourist with a history of contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 within 14 days prior to arrival, must be examined by the doctor at the designated health screening clinic/area and a sample should be taken for PCR for COVID-19 testing.

If the tourist is symptomatic, he/she will be managed as a suspected case of COVID-19.

If the tourist is asymptomatic, he/she can be transferred to the destination resort OR transferred to a designated isolation facility.

If the result of the PCR test is positive, the tourist will be isolated at the destination resort OR transferred to a designated isolation facility. The duration of the isolation period will be 14 days from the date of the test if he/she remains asymptomatic.

If the result of the PCR test is negative, the tourist will be quarantined for 14 days from the date of last exposure. This can be done at the tourists' resort room.

If he/she remains asymptomatic during quarantine, a PCR test will be done upon completion of quarantine and he/she will be released if the result is negative.

If he/she develops symptoms during quarantine, a PCR test will be done and he/she will be treated as a confirmed case of COVID-19 if the result is positive.

If the result is negative, the duration of quarantine will be extended to a further 14 days from the date of onset of symptoms, followed by another PCR test at the end of this quarantine period.

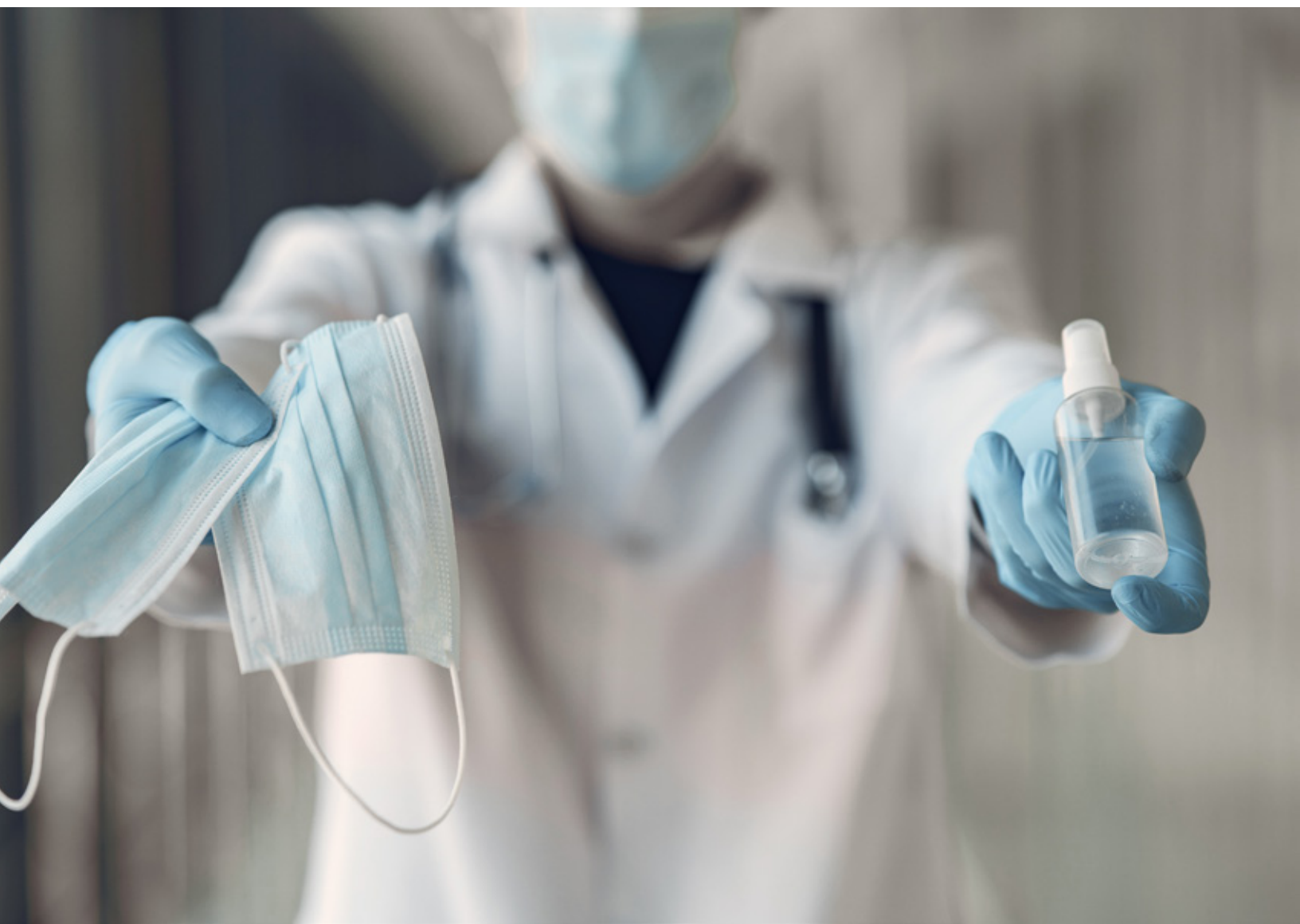


DURING YOUR STAY ON A BOAT

PUBLIC HEALTH INTERVENTIONS FOR TOURIST VESSELS :

A COVID Safe plan in accordance with this guideline must be in place. The COVID safe plan must include the following:

- Have an SOP on how to respond to a suspected case of COVID-19 on board the vessel.
- It is recommended to have a pre-designated room/cabin/quarters for isolation of a symptomatic patient. If such an arrangement is not possible, a symptomatic guest or staff should be kept in his/her room, maintain 1-meter distance from other guests who reside in the room, mMask-wearing should be mandatory for the patient and other guests sharing the room. Measure for personal hygiene such as frequent hand washing sanitization must be taken.
- Arrangements made for laundry.
- Arrangements made for waste disposal.
- Availability of materials for cleaning and disinfection.
- Availability of basic PPE to attend to a suspected case (face masks, face shield, gloves, disposable aprons or washable gowns)
- Availability of basic first aid materials including an infra-red (non-contact) thermometer.
- Hand washing facility/ availability of hand sanitizer.
- Signages and posters displayed to promote good hygiene and COVID-19 awareness.
- All staff and tourists must be oriented regarding the COVID safe plan of the BOAT.



DURING YOUR STAY ON A BOAT

All tourist vessels will have access to first aid medical services and will be in reach of health professionals and facilities during the cruise. A well-managed stock of PPE and a COVID-19 safety manager is compulsory to be onboard as per the new normal guidelines.

Boats should not take tourists from resorts. Tourists who come to boats / safaris should spend the entire duration on the boat.

Tourists and crew are not allowed to travel to other inhabited islands or to the capital Malé city, including (hulhumale' and vilimale'). it is prohibited to visit any local island for any purpose.

Tourists with transit requirements may stay in designated hotels in Hulhumale', Malé which have been given special permits by the Ministry of Tourism and the Health Protection Agency. The boat representative will help in making special arrangements for this if required.

Absence of symptoms does not guarantee that guests, passengers or crew may not be harbouring a possible infection.

Due to the limited space in a boat, the relatively enclosed environment, and people living in close proximity, an outbreak in a safari/vessel is likely to easily spread among the passengers and crew. Hence restriction of movement between safaris and resorts/islands is advised to prevent the possible transmission of COVID-19 between the Resorts/islands and boat/safari



CONTACT TRACING AND MANAGEMENT OF CONTACTS WHEN THERE IS SUSPECTED CASE OF COVID-19 ON BOARD A SAFARI

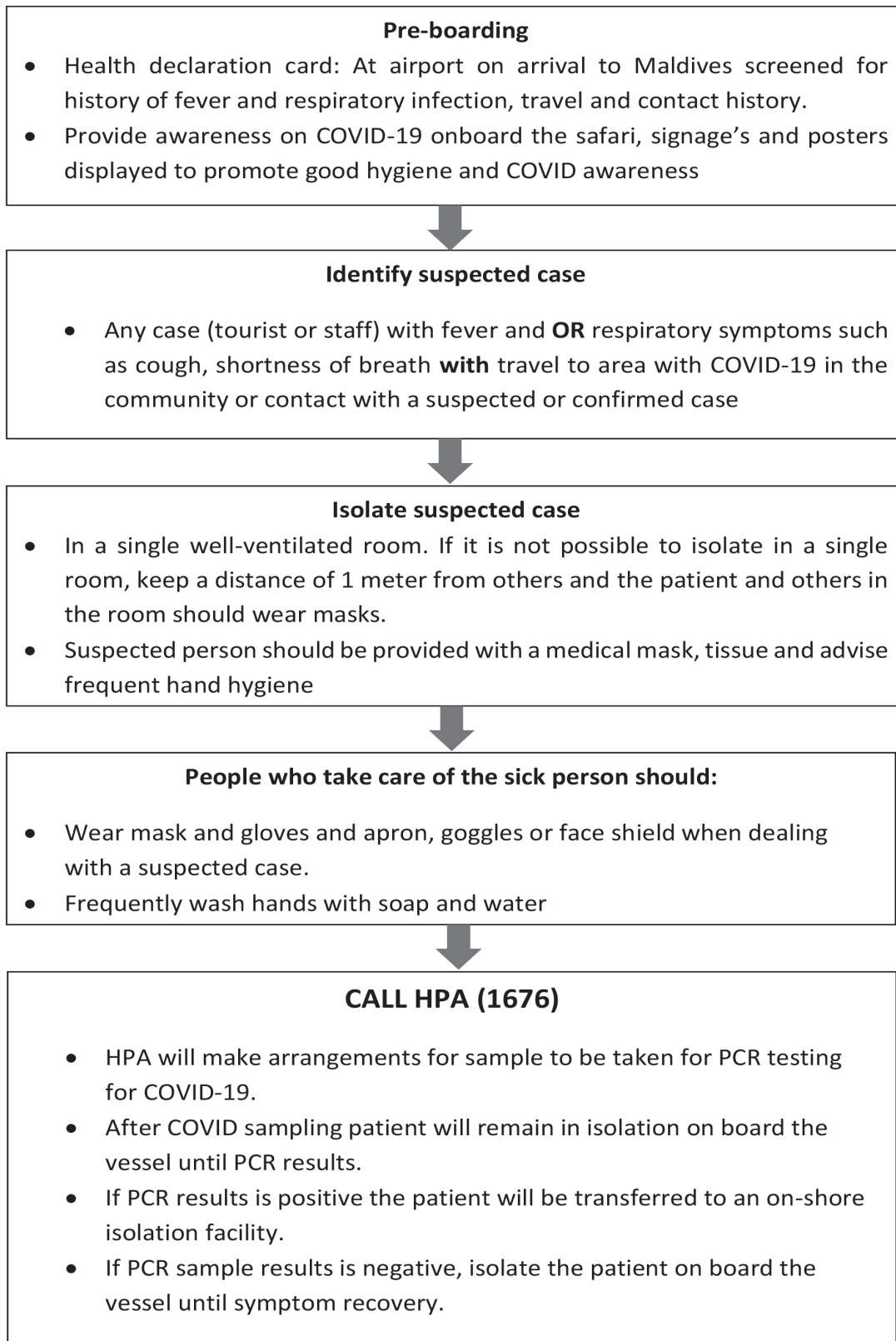
The close contacts who have been exposed to the index case from 48 hours before the onset of symptoms should be identified. Contact tracing should be started immediately as soon as a suspected case is identified.

DEFINITION OF CLOSE CONTACT WITH HIGH RISK EXPOSURE, ON BOARD A VESSEL:

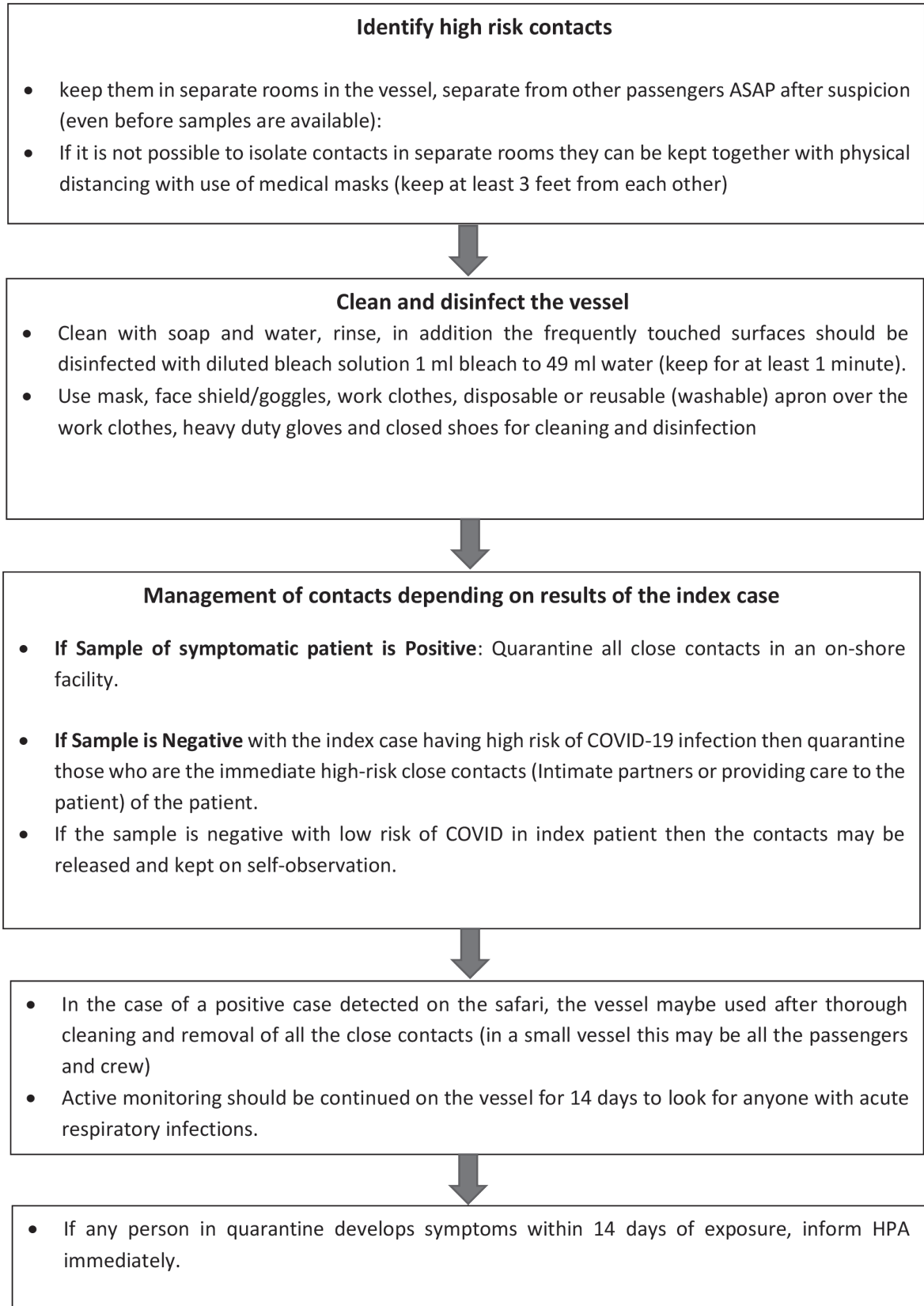
Definition of close contacts with high risk exposure, on board a vessel:

- Sharing the same cabin as a suspected or confirmed COVID-19.
- They had close contact (face to face contact within 1 metre for more than 15 mins) or were in a closed environment with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case:
- For passengers, this may include participating in common activities on board the vessel or while ashore, being a member of a group travelling together, dining at the same table.
- For crew members, this includes the activities described above, as applicable, as well as working in the same area of the vessel as the suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case, for example, cabin stewards who cleaned the cabin or restaurant staff who delivered food to the cabin.
- A person who provided care for a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case without appropriate PPE.
- Direct physical contact with the suspected case

9.1. Outbreak management plan for SAFARI when COVID-19 is suspected



9.3. Contact tracing and management of contacts in a vessel (e.g. safari)





PCR TESTING :

Any tourist onboard who requires to do PCR Testing has to send the samples through the boat operator to a testing service provider. These Expenses to take the samples and testing charges must be organized by the boat. Under NO circumstances can the traveller visit a hospital or a testing facility to give the samples.

NBAM SAMPLING HUT AT HULHUMALE:

The NBAM with the support of the Ministry of Tourism, Housing Development Corporation, the Health Protection Agency and Maldives Police Service has established a special hut to take samples through a private health care service provider for tourists departing from Liveaboards.

However, it will be operational on prior request and information must be shared with the NBAM in advance via email to info@boating.mv.

Timings should be reconfirmed by contacting the NBAM Hotline by coordinating with NBAM Hotline +960 7970033



COVID-19 PCR testing laboratories for travelers

The boat has to take Samples and send it to any of the Following Facilities. It's not allowed to send the tourist directly.

📍 Indira Gandhi Memorial Hospital (IGMH)

☎ 7916565 - Media coordinator

✉ hawwa@igmh.gov.mv

📍 ADK Hospital

☎ 3300306

✉ covid19@adkhospital.com

📍 Kulhuduffushi Regional Hospital

☎ 9991751 - Customer Relations

✉ em.echh@gmail.com

📍 Addu Equatorial Hospital

☎ 6888661 / 6885555

✉ info@ae.gov.mv

📍 Police Lab

☎ 9790114

✉ dnal@police.gov.mv

Basic documents/Information required:

- ID Card/PP Details
- Contact details
- Travel Itinerary
- Location



DEPARTURE FROM MALDIVES

Tourists who were not in isolation or quarantine will have to undergo an exit screening prior to departure from the Maldives.

The exit screening questionnaire should document any history of fever or respiratory symptoms within the last 14 days. 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 last 14 days, they should undergo PCR testing for COVID-19. This will require the tourists to extend the stay for minimum 48 hours and should be on expense of the traveler or by a covering insurance.

For tourists who require COVID-19 test results to return to their countries of origin or another destination, testing services are available in the Maldives. This can be arranged through the assistance of the cruise manager or the captain onboard.

THE NBAM has established a PCR sampling hut in Hulhumalé dedicated for liveaboard / boating industry tourists who require the test. However, this service must be pre-booked, communicated and confirmed by contacting the NBAM in advance email : info@boating.mv or calling +960 7970033. Samples must be given minimum 38 hours prior to departure.

Tourists who require a negative PCR test result for their outbound flight or onward destination will not be taken to the airport for departure without a negative test result at hand.

Voluntary PCR/Anti Body testing facilities will be made available for exit screen requirement. This can be arranged by NBAM and samples

CONTACT US



**AHMED VISAAM
HUSSAIN**

COORDINATOR



+960 9633361

NBAM Hotline :
+960 7970033



info@boating.mv



NATIONAL BOATING ASSOCIATION OF MALDIVES

G. Maavehi, 2nd Floor, Buruzu Magu, Male 20092
Republic of Maldives

T: +960 330 0640

E: info@boating.mv

W: www.boating.mv

