



REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

**MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES
CONSERVATION & TOURISM**

**PROTOCOLS ON THE INTRODUCTION OF PRIVATE AIR CHARTER
TO BOTSWANA FOR TOURISM PURPOSES**



1.0 Introduction

It is proposed to start allowing the first tourism flights into Botswana on the 1st November 2020. This will be private charter flights bringing tourists to only two ports of entry being Maun and Kasane International Airports. The allowed flights will have to follow the set out protocols.

These protocols were drawn to manage and reduce the risk of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) transmission during the provision of direct flights into Botswana.

The protocols and processes were generated through strong collaboration and input from CAAB, Airport Ground Handlers, BURS, Immigration, Air Charter Companies, Ministry of Health and Wellness' District Health Management Teams and the safari industry, with further input from worldwide hospitality associations such as Relais & Chateaux and National Geographic's Unique Lodges of the World. The involvement of key stakeholders in the makeup of this document, demonstrates the high level of collaboration and commitment to ensure the wellbeing of the citizens of the country as well as the guests.

These protocols allow for the revival of the tourism sector by allowing international guests in the most possible safest way whilst protecting the health and welfare of citizens and visitors.

The below proposed protocols will be applicable to international flights to Botswana as well as any travel bubble if established. The targeted points of entry are Maun and Kasane International Airports as gate-ways to our iconic Chobe Game Reserve, Moremi Game Reserve, Makgadikgadi/Nxai Pan and the Okavango Delta.

The acceptance of international tourists should be informed by the level of risks from the point of departure to Botswana and therefore pre-authorisation should be obtained from the Health Authorities in Botswana before planning any travel over and above the Civil Aviation authorisation for air travel and Immigration requirements such as VISAS.

The following is proposed as the Coronavirus Disease of 2019 (COVID 19) Protocol for allowing international tourists into Botswana;

2.0 Pre – travel requirements

- 2.1 A passenger should be in possession of COVID-19 negative test result based on COVID-19 RT-PCR test and certificates should be for a test taken within 72 hours prior to entry into Botswana.
- 2.2 A passenger should be in possession of travel insurance covering COVID-19 medical disruptions in the event that he/she contracts COVID-19 during the period of travel.
- 2.3 Tourist will only be allowed in Botswana if booked for a minimum of seven days.
- 2.4 A passenger should ensure that all Visa requirements, where applicable, are met prior to departure.

3.0 Mandatory Measures Against COVID 19

3.1 Personal Hygiene

The Golden Rule to prevent exposure to COVID 19 risks as well as other viral or bacterial illnesses includes:

- Frequently wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds;
- If soap and running water is unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand rub with at least 60% alcohol;
- Maintain a social distance of 1 – 2 m;
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands;
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

The following hand-washing protocols should apply;

- Hands to be washed before and after bathroom use;

- Hands should be washed before and after any contact with guests;
- Hands should be washed immediately after any contact with someone with respiratory symptoms (coughing and sneezing);
- Hands should be washed after handling any items that were handled by anyone.
- All hand-washing stations must have suitable supplies of soap and paper towels which can be discarded.
- Posters indicating the appropriate hand washing techniques should be visible for both guests and staff.

3.2 Hand Sanitizers

As it is not always possible to wash hands on a trip environment, alcohol-based hand sanitizer is an alternative.

- Where possible automatic “no touch” sanitizer dispensers should be used;

3.3 Face Masks

Face masks that covers mouth and nose shall be worn at all times in public areas.

3.4 Temperature Screening

Temperature screening for tourists at point of entry of any facility is mandatory. As per COVID 19 protocols, whilst in Botswana the daily screening of tourists and staff temperatures is mandatory (when they report to work and when they depart for the day).

4.0 COVID 19 Cases

4.1 Assessment of passengers onboard / suspect case analysis

- Private charter to notify Duty Air Traffic Control Officer if a suspect is on board
- Health Officials wearing appropriate PPE assess situation from updates from cabin crew.

- Pilot directed to designated parking bay in close proximity to internal charter aircraft
 - If all passengers are not suspect, disembark the charter.
 - If suspect case, isolate suspect case and contacts for quarantine to an identified location or to health facility should this be necessary

5.0 Aircrafts

5.1 Pre-Flight Actions

- Create physical spacers at check-in areas to facilitate social distancing, in conjunction with airport authorities;
- Daily briefs and updates must be provided to all employees and should include but not be limited to: new or amended procedures, health and safety actions, hygiene reminders, human factors, safety tips, etc (as per IATA guide);
- Plexi-glass shields can be erected at the service desks;
- Where possible, passengers to be seated in such a way that social distancing is created (in line with weight and balance criteria);
- “No-touch” policy: ticketing and in-flight information can be sent to guest phones directly via WhatsApp or email, avoiding the handling of physical tickets, brochures or magazines. Guests can scan their own documents and present passports/IDs without handing anything to a team member;
- Where self scanning machines / equipment are not available, officials handling travellers documents must sanitise their hands before handling documents of the next customer
- Luggage handlers must routinely wash their hands after coming into contact with guest luggage. Guest may wish to handle their own luggage during boarding and or transit, sanitizing wipes must be offered for guests to wipe down their luggage handles;
 - Airport shuttles must ensure the following:

- Guests form a line, with at least one metre spacing when boarding the shuttle;
- Where possible guests are spaced in seating
- Allow guests to board back to front and disembark, front to back;
- All windows should be opened to allow adequate ventilation;
- Before and after transfers, the driver must wipe arm rests and touch areas such as window/door handles with disinfectant.

5.2 Aircraft Cleanliness

- Every aircraft must be deep cleaned every day. This includes the aircraft seats and surfaces being wiped down with sanitizer;
- A disinfectant foggers are used before each departure;
- Each deep clean must be recorded, information on the cleaning record must include: date, time, personnel who cleaned, sanitizer used, and responsible manager sign off;
- Between flights the loadmaster/pilot will use aircraft grade sterilizers and wipe down common touch areas in the cabin as well as the on-board safety cards;

5.3 In-Flight Hygiene Measures

- The pilot/load-master must provide guests with hand sanitizer before boarding the aircraft;
- The pre-flight safety brief must include the hygiene measures both pre-and inflight so as to instil confidence in health and safety for guests and staff. As air ventilation will be a concern as the cabin is unpressurised and guests may specifically feel a risk of poor ventilation during start-up. This brief should include the timeline on the start-up and the use of masks for the duration of the flight.
- Guests should be provided with alcohol wipes to use on surfaces and their seat area, so that they have some agency in the processes of hygiene maintenance;

- After passengers have disembarked, the pilot/loadmaster must do a sweep through the cabin and, using latex gloves, remove any remaining items i.e. masks, tissues, sick bags, etc and place them in a refuse bag;
- During “hot-turn around”, the full cleaning sweep will not be possible and guests should be encouraged to wipe down their seating areas with alcohol wipes;
- As hand washing stations during flight operations are not possible, pilots and loadmaster must carry their own hand sanitizer and regularly use this during their operations. This should be done visibly in front of guests as it also shows adherence to hygiene measures.

5.4 Disembark private charter

- Disembarkation should be performed one at a time, starting with the rows closest to the exits in use, in the aisle–middle–window seat order, or an alternative procedure that would ensure physical distancing to the maximum extent possible and prevent queuing.
- Individual disembarking to reduce queuing outside on the apron.
- Aircraft operators, airport ground handlers and health officials should cooperate and coordinate the disembarking process to ensure that physical distancing is observed as much as possible.
- Airport ground crew not to handle any carry-on luggage
- Passengers disembark the private charter and are guided to the Health Official desk for mandatory hand sanitising procedure, register completion and temperature check on the runway apron.
- Airport ground handlers to assist with passenger luggage with Health Official to ensure effective sanitisation of the luggage. Ground handlers / baggage handlers to be wearing surgical grade gloves which is discarded once all bags successfully transferred to the awaiting plane.
- One by one the passengers should proceed to the Health Official desk.

- Distancing markers on the floor to indicate social distance from Health Official desk.

6.0 Health Official clearance

6.1 Passengers should be met by Health Official for the following:

- Hand sanitising
- Passengers to show proof of negative COVID-19 PRC test from home country to Health Official
- Passenger undergoes screening (temperature 36.2 – 37.4 °C and symptom check) and/or test *if available*.
- Passengers complete register of details for contact tracing (including allocated seat number).
- Pen to be sanitized between uses.

6.2 Immigration clearance

- All customs and immigration forms should be completed prior to arrival.
- Passenger proceeds to Immigration desk and Officials carries out document verification and stamps.
- Passengers with Visa requirements should complete such requirements prior to arrival in Botswana

6.3 Customs clearance

- All Botswana Unified Revenue Service Declarations Forms should be filled out prior to arrival.
- Any Customs taxes payables must be done through speed point facilities.
- While the passengers are going through the clearance process, their luggage is disembarked by airport ground team and sanitized (passengers must be aware of this process in advance).

7.0 Internal Charter check in

- Charter company may apply for interzonal permits online where applicable using passenger manifest
- Internal Charter Company to coordinate check-in on the apron.
- E-ticket emailed to passenger prior to arrival.
- Internal charter loadmasters to coordinate with ground handler to manage luggage into transit bus or direct to aircraft.

8.0 Movement of passengers from Immigration to internal charter aircraft

- Transport vehicle to be sanitised before passengers embark.
- Spacing of passengers seated in vehicle must adhere to social distancing.
- Windows to be kept open throughout.
- Vehicle driver to wear a mask while driving.
- Assistance to all passengers is permitted where required, with sufficient hand sanitising after.
- Vehicle to be sanitised after guests disembark.
- Sanitiser available for passengers in vehicles.

9.0 Luggage

- Ground handling crew and internal charter loadmaster to wash hands before and after interaction with passengers and/or luggage.
- Once passengers have been cleared, and luggage sanitised, they identify their luggage, which is then managed by internal charter loadmasters and loaded onto second aircraft.

10.0 Airport Lounges

- All lounges should adhere to the same cleanliness standards as laid out in the ‘housekeeping section’;
- Hand sanitizer and tissues must be readily available and visible in the lounges
- Air conditioners: attention should be given, as in normal circumstances, to monitoring the condition of filters and maintaining the proper replacement rate of indoors air.

11.0 Lodging in Botswana

Upon arrival in Botswana, the tourists will be treated as a cohort and their facility used as an quarantine facility. During this period, the cohort can be divided into smaller groups depending on the capacity of the booked facilities. Such groups will not be allowed to separate or mix with any other group that was not part of the original group nor members of the public during their stay in Botswana except the staff that will be servicing them. The tourist will also be allowed to conduct expeditions during their stay as long as they do not separate. ***All tourists and handling staff shall be swabbed for COVID 19 on the fifth to seventh day of their stay in the Botswana.***

Payment for COVID 19 testing for the tourists will be borne by the tour organiser as part of the tourism package.

Whilst in the tourists’ facilities, the following guidelines will be used to handle any suspected COVID 19 case:

- If a guest shows signs of coughing, sneezing, shortness of breath or a fever, isolate the guest to their rooms until screening has been completed and guest cleared.
- Contact the local/district health authorities immediately. Ensure you have the following information on hand to provide to them:
- Guests name, age, vital signs, temperature, their nationality, where they have been travelling to recently and if they have been in contact with a known COVID 19 patient;

- Get the guest to use their own phone or their room phone for consultation, if this is not possible, clean the lodge phone with a disinfectant prior to and after use;
- If the consultation cannot happen in their room, avoid contact with other guests or staff;
- In the event that the guest is asked to self-isolate in their room:
 - Provide them with food, drink and medication (as prescribed by the health official), with as little contact as possible;
 - Elderly staff or those with weakened immune systems should not be involved in assisting the patient;
 - Be extra cautious with following hygiene measures if you are dealing with an infected person.
- Results can take between 24-72 hours. Logistical arrangement may need to be made, and under no circumstances should the guest be moved without the authority and direction of the district health officials.

12. Departure

- Once tourist test results are negative, they shall be free to move around the country subject to local health protocols and applicable laws.