Hotel Operations
IN THE COVID ERA
Hotel Operations in the COVID Era

Social distancing has become a norm in today’s COVID-19 world and hotels need to re-evaluate and update their SOPs to adapt to this change.

HVS has prepared this document to help hoteliers in the planning process regarding the formulation of SOPs on how to operate their hotels once the lockdown has been lifted. We strongly recommend that hotels always follow the guidelines provided by the Health Department and the state and central Government, including guidelines on maintaining records etc. based on local authority requirements, to formulate their SOPs.

The first step is to make a Guest Booklet or Communication methodology to be handed over to the Guests at their first touch point, so that they are very clear on what is expected of them for their own safety and also the mandatory requirements as per the health authorities.

Identify and set-up a Safety Team with a Leader, who will be responsible to ensure that all measures are being implemented and recorded. Ensure that you conduct a detailed workshop for Associates, maintaining Social Distancing.

You should have a ‘Crisis Management’ documented plan in place and methodology of reporting any issues that arise in the hotel. A quarantine policy, if required, for the Associates should be clearly defined. Also, have procedures of reporting any suspected cases or possible issues to the Safety Team.

We have divided this report into two parts which cover the Front & the Heart of the house under various groups.

‘Namaste’ should be used as the greeting for all Guests at all touchpoints to maintain Social Distance.
GUEST TRANSPORT

- Ensure the driver is wearing protective gear such as mask, gloves etc.
- The car should be disinfected with every arrival
- Check if the driver section can be segregated with a temporary plastic or a transparent sheet
- Driver should be instructed to limit conversations to minimal
- Guest instructions to be placed at the back seat; the information booklet must cover all the steps being taken by the hotel for safety and sanitization along with the operational norms for restaurants, room service, housekeeping & laundry procedures

ENTRANCE

- Temperature checks at entrance should be mandatory
- Guests running a temperature of more than 98.6° F should be politely asked to return or directed to the closest hospital/medical facility
- Disinfect and clean Guest luggage after informing the Guests
- Provide a mask if Guest is not wearing one, if required

RECEPTION

- If the Guest is arriving from restricted countries or regions, ensure that you have detailed information from the Guest upfront before arrival or at time of making the reservation
- For all pre-booked Guests all check-in formalities should be completed online to reduce contact and time at the front desk
- Give safety, hygiene and other instructions to the Guests as per the new SOP
- Ensure markings on the floor at reception to maintain Social Distancing
- Ensure Associates are wearing masks & gloves
- Keep sanitizers for Guests to use
- Keep paper, envelopes and all equipment sanitized
- Keep swabs which Guests can use with sanitizer to clean their phone or credit cards

ELEVATORS

- Ensure that safety instructions, including the number of Guests allowed at one time, is placed inside the elevator and is easily visible; apologize for the delay and inconvenience caused to the Guests due to the new safety norms
- Elevator floor must have markings with directions, so that Guests do not face each other and maintain the appropriate Social Distance
- Ensure elevator floor buttons are regularly sanitized by the Housekeeping Associates
- Keep floor & other area of the elevators that can be touched sanitized
- Install hand sanitizer dispensers in the elevators

GUEST ROOMS

- Signages with information on sanitization norms should be placed
- Due to Social Distancing norms, allocate alternate rooms or leave two rooms vacant in between, based on occupancy levels
- Guests instructions given at the reception should include instructions on how the rooms are sanitized at regular intervals
- May need a tent card or post to say the room & other touch points have been sanitized
- Ensure Housekeeping Associates on the floor are wearing safety gear
- Keep sanitizers at regular intervals on the floor and small dispensers in the rooms
- Inform Guests that newspapers are not being delivered due to safety reasons, but e-papers will be made available through WhatsApp etc.
- Laundry, room service instructions should be available in the room for the new SOPs being implemented
- Room linen to be changed once in two days or ONLY on request; no turn down services to facilitate minimal contact
RESTAURANTS
- Reduce number of tables to maintain Social Distancing norms
- Seating for the tables to be reduced to half of capacity
- Arrival instructions should explain to Guests that they should come down to the restaurants only when a table is available to avoid crowding
- You may wish to avoid buffets initially and include either TDH or ‘a la carte’
- Staff must be trained for minimal contact/communication during service
- Ensure Associates are wearing masks & gloves
- Use disposable napkins which are pre-packed or individually packed serviettes
- Keep sanitizers for Guests to use
- Keep swabs which Guests can use with sanitizer to clean their phone or credit cards

POOL, GYM & SPA
- Keep these areas closed till advised to open, as per government norms
- Suggest alternate options / drop to open parks or walks which may be safer
- Include Yoga sessions or health channels in the morning for Guests to follow

BUSINESS CENTRES
- Keep enough space between work desks
- Limit the number of Guests in the area based on maximum allowed
- Disinfect each desk, equipment and work area after the Guest has moved out

MEETINGS
- In case Guests require a meeting area, keep enough space between tables & chairs
- Limit the number of Guests in the area based on maximum allowed
- Disinfect each desk, equipment and work area after the Guest has moved out

CHECK-OUT
- Create a separate check-out area if you think it’s getting over-crowded and wherever possible use e-check out by emailing the bill & accepting online payments
- Advise the Guests to inform their check-out plans in advance so that bills can be made ready
- Put floor markers as in case of check-in
- Provide sanitizers and other swabs in case the Guest requires

OTHER GUIDELINES
- All indoor areas such as entrance lobbies, corridors and staircases, escalators, elevators, security guard booths, office rooms, meeting rooms, cafeteria should be mopped with a disinfectant with 1% sodium hypochlorite or phenolic disinfectants
- For metallic surfaces like door handles, security locks, keys etc. 70% alcohol can be used to wipe down surfaces where the use of bleach is not suitable
- Kindly refer to the WHO guidelines or your local state & central government health authorities for additional information on appropriate disinfectants

Based on the projected Occupancy levels you may wish to define the operational timings of each of the areas and advise your Guests accordingly.
EMPLOYEE TRANSPORT

- Temperature check point for Associates before boarding the bus, where transport is provided
- Ensure that Associates transport is organised in case public transport is not operating in your cities or is not safe
- You may wish to have few Associates stay in the hotel, keeping in mind the Occupancy levels

CLOCK-IN

- Request all Associates to stay at home in case they have any symptoms of flu or are not feeling well
- Alternate methods to be devised for Associates to clock-in and clock-out at the hotel; could use QR code method
- Temperature check for all employee on clocking into the premises of the hotel
- Staff running temperature more than 98.6° F should be asked to return home

EMPLOYEE UNIFORM

- Uniform exchange daily should be the norm
- Uniforms will need to be sanitized properly; steam press or heat iron can be used
- Associates will be given masks and gloves as part of the uniform across all departments
- Ensure that Associates are maintaining Social Distancing during uniform exchange
EMPLOYEE LOCKERS

• The shifts will have to be staggered in various 15 minutes slot to ensure there is no overcrowding in the lockers and the number of employees are regulated with proper Social Distancing norms being followed
• Extensive hand wash and sanitizing arrangements must be made with signages explaining the need
• Regular monitoring to ensure there is no crowding on arrival or at the locker room

EMPLOYEE TOOLS

• Proper tools and gears for Associates which would include masks, gloves and also tools in various departments which shall minimize human touch
• Use disposable masks only
• Associates to wear disinfected & clean gloves
• Associates to isolate themselves in case they have any symptoms of cold or flu

EMPLOYEE DINING

• Shifts must be staggered to avoid cafeteria crowding
• Cafeteria hours should be extended to allow smaller groups over a longer period of time - the usage should be restricted to 33% of its capacity at any given time

KITCHEN

• Operational kitchens must be sanitized at regular intervals
• Limit the number of staff to the minimum required; staff can be organized into teams to reduce interactions between teams
• All staff should wear disposable masks, gloves, hair nets and all other safety gear
• Workstations should be placed in such a way that the staff is not facing each other and can maintain appropriate Social Distance
• Run limited menus and ramp-up in a phased manner
• You may tweak the menus to include more options of cooked food rather than raw food
• Ensure proper cleaning of vegetables, meats and all other materials that are required in the kitchens; use approved sanitizing agents to disinfect
• Ensure all tools get sanitized after each use
• It would be useful to use an Autoclave machine for all cooking equipment, ladles etc.

RECEIVING TOOLS

• Proper cleaning procedures for items being received
• Quarantine & date tag receivable goods before you take them inside the stores
• All supplies need to be fully sanitized before entering the stores and refrigerators
• Use WHO and Health Department approved sanitizing agents for the same
• Ensure area is sanitized at regular intervals
• Vendors should be advised on how you will accept goods and how their staff should arrive with necessary protective gear
SERVICE ELEVATORS

• Ensure that safety instructions, including the number of employees allowed at one time, is placed inside the elevator and is easily visible
• Ensure elevator floor buttons are regularly sanitized
• Keep floor & other area of the elevators that can be touched sanitized
• Elevator floor must have markings with directions, so that employees do not face each other and maintain Social Distancing
• Keep one elevator dedicated to quarantine and evacuate any possible suspected cases for both Guests and Associates
• Install hand sanitizer dispensers in the elevators

EMPLOYEE CLINIC

• Ensure regular health check-ups for employees; can have a well-equipped clinic operational within the hotel premises with a health partner
• Have proper PPE equipment for the Safety Team in case of any requirements, train the Safety Team to handle and wear disposable PPE equipment in case they have to evacuate a potential suspected case
• Check all employee temperatures twice a day

EMPLOYEE TRAINING

• L&D should conduct sensitization classes for Associates on upgraded hygiene standards; they can also have visiting faculty to update Associates on standards
• Employees must be well-informed about all COVID related operating SOPs

SALES ASSOCIATE

• Sales & Marketing Associates who visit various offices can be asked to go home post appointments and submit reports from home
• If they are visiting clients, ensure that they are aware of the necessary safety precautions they should be taking during their meetings

All teams should be regularly updated with the latest guidelines by WHO and your local & central government authorities.

Sources: Indian Ministry of Health & Family Welfare & WHO
Superior results through unrivalled hospitality intelligence. Everywhere.

HVS is the only global consulting firm focused exclusively on the hospitality industry. We provide comprehensive solutions through our single-minded focus; helping you succeed in the complex hospitality area through our global reach and in depth understanding of the local market. HVS has over 50 offices in 5 continents, with 300 industry specialists having delivered 60,000 assignments in over 6,000 markets.

ANAROCK is India’s leading independent real estate services company with a presence across India and the Middle East. The Chairman, Mr. Anuj Puri, is a highly respected industry veteran and India’s most prominent real estate thought leader. The Company has diversified interests across the real estate lifecycle and deploys its proprietary technology platform to accelerate marketing and sales. ANAROCK’s services include Residential Broking and Technology, Retail, Commercial, Investment Banking, Hospitality (via HVS ANAROCK), Land Services, Warehousing and Logistics, Investment Management, Research and Strategic Advisory & Valuations.

The Company has a unique business model, which is an amalgamation of traditional product sales supported by a modern technology platform with automated analytical and reporting tools. This offers timely solutions to its clients, while delivering financially favourable and efficient results.

ANAROCK has a team of over 2,000 certified and experienced real estate professionals who operate across all major Indian (Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Pune, Ahmedabad, NCR – Delhi, Gurugram, Noida, Ghaziabad, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Lucknow) and GCC markets, and within a period of two years, has successfully completed over 300 exclusive project mandates. ANAROCK also manages over 80,000 established channel partners to ensure global business coverage.

Our assurance of consistent ethical dealing with clients and partners reflects our motto - Values Over Value.

hvs.com | anarock.com

Our Services

Brokerage & Transaction Advisory
Consulting & Valuation
Asset Management
Executive Search

HVS ANAROCK Hotel Advisory Services Pvt. Ltd.

GURUGRAM

Level 7, Tower B
Building No. 9
DLF Cyber City, Phase III
Gurugram 122 002

+91 124 488 5580

MUMBAI

1002, 10th Floor, B Wing
ONE BKC, Plot No. C-66, G Block
Bandra Kurla Complex, Bandra (E)
Mumbai 400 051

+91 22 4293 4293

Contact us

Mandeep S. Lamba
President (South Asia)
mlamba@hvs.com

Ajay Mehtani
Sr. Vice President (South Asia)
Asset Management & Executive Search
amehtani@hvs.com

Akash Datta
Sr. Vice President (South Asia)
Consulting & Valuation
adatta@hvs.com

© 2020 HVS ANAROCK Hotel Advisory Services Pvt. Ltd. All rights reserved.

Disclaimer: All information in this report is provided solely for internal circulation and reference purposes. HVS ANAROCK makes no statement, representation, warranty or guarantee as to the accuracy, reliability or timeliness of the information provided. No part of this report may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods without the expressed written consent of the organisation.