

Guyana COVID-19 Update (updated on May 1, 2020)

Visitor safety and security and destination health and sustainability are our highest priorities. With the rapid change in the world since the World Health Organization declared the novel coronavirus a pandemic on March 12, 2020, the Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA) is working hard to ensure travellers and all stakeholders receive accurate, relevant, and up-to-date information online and via e-blasts.

You can get real-time updates on our Guyana Tourism Authority's [Facebook page](#) or opt into our [WhatsApp group](#), text us at +592-688-4155 or emailing us at info@guyanatourism.com.

Below you can find more information on:

- The Coronavirus in Guyana
- International Travel
- Domestic Travel
- Closures and Postponements
- How to Reduce the Risk when Travelling
- Tourism Sector Health and Resiliency
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The Novel Coronavirus in Guyana

Guyana recorded its first case of the virus on March 11th, 2020. There are currently eighty-two (82) active cases, nine (9) recorded deaths and twenty-two (22) recovered cases. The Government of Guyana responded quickly and closed Guyana to all international flights on March 18, 2020.

If someone is suspected as having COVID-19, do not visit any health care facility. Instead make an urgent report to the Guyana Ministry of Public Health via telephone number (592)227-4986 Ext# 215 between 08:00-16:30h or (592)624-3067 between 16:30-20:00h, and a team will be dispatched to the suspected person's home. This will avoid exposing others to the virus if indeed someone is infected.

Travel-Related Updates

International Travel

The Cheddi Jagan International Airport at Timehri and the Eugene F. Correia International Airport at Ogle will be closed to all international flights from March 18 - June 3, 2020. The closure was effective as of March 18, 2020 at midnight. For international travellers, we urge that you check with your respective airlines for direct travel and policy updates in relation to the Coronavirus. For a snapshot of helpful information, please review the following and the links below:

[American Airlines](#): Flights to and from Guyana are suspended from March 16, 2020 to May 6, 2020 from MIA and JFK – New York.

[Caribbean Airlines](#): Caribbean Airlines operated one departure flight daily from the Cheddi Jagan International Airport in Guyana to JFK, New York until Monday, March 23, 2020. Passengers whose travel plans may be impacted by the COVID-19 will be allowed to rebook without attracting change fees if your ticket was issued on/before March 31, 2020 with an original travel date between February 3, 2020 to June 30, 2020.

[Copa Airlines](#): Copa Airlines has cancelled all flights, starting today, March 22, 2020, at 11:59 pm for a period of 30 days. This comes as the Government of the Republic of Panama (their travel Hub of the Americas) has temporarily suspended its airport operations.

[Eastern Airlines](#): Eastern is offering repatriation flights from Georgetown to Miami. Contact the US Embassy in Georgetown (ACSGeorge@state.gov) for more information. In addition, Eastern is waiving change fees for travel to or from JFK – New York and Georgetown, Guyana for passengers with tickets issued from March 4 – 31, 2020. Passengers will be permitted to change free of charge to a flight of equal or lesser value up to 6 months from the original ticket issue date. If the new flight is priced higher, the customer must pay the fare difference.

[JetBlue Airways](#): JetBlue has announced that airline will be pushing back its launch (to October 26, 2020) into the Guyana market as it revises its operations globally because of the coronavirus concerns. JetBlue will waive change/cancel fees for customers travelling March 10 - April 30, 2020. Customers may rebook their flights for travel through October 24, 2020

[Liat Airways](#): Liat has suspended all flights into and out of to the following territories as of March 23, 2020 until further notice due to airport closures in the highlighted regions. These countries include Guyana, Trinidad, Martinique, Guadeloupe and St. Maarten. The airline continues to waive the change and cancellation fees for passengers travelling between March 12 - June 30, 2020 who would have booked their flights before March 31, 2020.

[Surinam Airways](#): Surinam Airways have halted flights to Guyana from Suriname starting March 13, 2020 due to the closer of the Johan Adolf Pengel International Airport (March 14-21) in Suriname.

[Trans Guyana Airways](#): Trans Guyana Airways will give a full credit and waive all cancellation/rescheduling fees to all affected passengers from the closer of Zorg en Hoop Airport and Johan Adolf Pengel International Airport in Suriname (March 14-21).

Domestic Travel

For domestic travellers, we urge that you check with your respective airlines for direct travel and policy updates in relation to the Coronavirus. For a snapshot of helpful information, please review the following and the links below:

[Air Services Limited](#): All passengers will be screened for flu-like symptoms prior to boarding.

[Roraima Airways](#): Roraima Airways has increased the frequency with which they clean their aircrafts.

[Trans Guyana Airways](#): All passengers will be screened for flu-like symptoms prior to boarding. Anyone found with a temperature of 38 degrees Celsius and over will be denied boarding. Passengers who are denied boarding because of health concerns will be refunded their fare or given the opportunity to reschedule their travel plans without charge. Passengers who choose to cancel their reservations between 0 and 48 hours prior to flight will be subject to our cancellation policy but TGA will waive the admin/change fee.

Closures and Postponements

- Under the guidance of the Ministry of Public Health, the Government of Guyana has instituted a mandatory curfew from 6pm to 6am for all businesses and services not deemed essential.
- Essential businesses (including hospitals, pharmacies and hotels) can remain open and operational for 24 hours and are required to take the necessary steps, including social distancing, with staff and clients to help minimise the spread.
- Most restaurants in Guyana have closed their dine-in service and operating curbside pick-ups and delivery from their opening hours until 6pm.
- The [Cheddi Jagan International Airport](#) at Timehri and the [Eugene F. Correia International Airport](#) at Ogle will be closed from March 18, 2020 at midnight to June 3, 2020.
- For the Guyana/Brazil Border restricted access is being granted to the border towns of Lethem and Bonfim for citizens of Guyana and Brazil who are returning home for a period of 15 days (March 20 - April 3). Access to the border towns are being granted during the hours of 7:00am - 10:00am and 4:00pm - 7:00pm. You are advised to walk with proper identification and other related documents.
- The Management of the Guyana/Suriname Ferry Service wishes to notify the general public that the service is suspended until further notice. The MB Sandaka was set to be sailing to Suriname March 18, 2020 to accommodate any remaining passengers. That has since been cancelled.
- [Peanut & Sons Speedboat Service](#) will not be operating its service from Charity to Moruca in Essequibo from March 23 until further notice.
- Cara Lodge and King's Hotel in Georgetown are closed to guests until further notice.
- The Georgetown Zoo closed will be closed from March 17, 2020 until further notice. The National Park and the Botanical Gardens will remain open to the public.
- Flyhill, Kaimcumbay, Quatata, St.Cuthbert's and Yupukari villages are not accepting any visitors until further notice.
- [Caiman House](#) in the village of Yupukari has closed the lodge for three months starting March 12, 2020. They will be taking tentative bookings starting June 15, 2020.
- The [Iwokrama River Lodge](#) will suspend tourism activities from March 19 - April 6, 2020 and will not be accepting travellers during this period.
- [Karanambu Lodge](#) is closing its doors from March 23, 2020 to June 23, 2020 (90 days) or until further notice to help combat COVID-19. They are still offering 'lifetime credit'

to all travellers and guests who opt to postpone instead of cancelling their stay at the lodge.

- The Surana Community is closed to visitors until further notice.
- Most public events have been cancelled or postponed until further notice. This includes the North Pakaraima Mountain Safari (April 5 – 12), Rupununi Rodeo (April 10-13), Sand Creek Rodeo (April 13), Caribbean Urban Forum (June).
- The [U.S. Embassy Guyana](#) is suspending immigrant visa appointments. Applicants will be contacted with instructions for continued visa processing when we resume normal operations.

How to Reduce the Risk when Travelling

As recommended by the [WHO](#), residents and international travellers can reduce their risk of the coronavirus infection by:

- Frequently clean hands by using alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water for a recommended 30 seconds
- When coughing and sneezing cover mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue – through the tissue away immediately and wash hands
- Avoid close contact with anyone that has fever and cough
- Maintain a social distance of 3 feet

The Ministry of Public Health also urges no large gatherings (of more than five persons), have restricted the number of attendees permitted at weddings and funerals, and have reduced the recommended persons allowed in public transportation to half of the vehicle's capacity.

Tourism Sector Health and Resiliency

The Guyana Tourism Authority is increasing collaboration with the [Caribbean Public Health Agency](#) (CARPHA) to improve Guyana's capacity at a destination level to provide cost-effective, quality health, food safety and environmental sanitation (HSE) solutions to the threats impacting our tourism sector.

This is uncharted territory for Guyana's travel and tourism sector, and the situation is changing daily. Tourism businesses and travellers that are flexible and able to make decisions and changes quickly to their cancellation policies are increasing their resiliency and that of their partners. As this is a fluid situation, we strongly encourage leniency with cancellation policies and temporarily modifications within Guyana's tourism sector as necessary to accommodate changing travel plans.

The GTA is also encouraging the sector to take additional measures, in consultation with global and local public health authorities, to make their cleaning and hygiene protocols even more rigorous. More detailed recommendations follow:

For **Hotels, Interior Lodges and Resorts**, we urge that you:

- Implement more rigorous cleaning and hygiene protocols and maintain the highest standards of cleanliness and hygiene in your vehicles, food services and facilities
- Disinfect and sanitise all rooms, bathrooms and common areas more frequently
- Make takeout meals more accessible
- Double-space tables and chairs if possible
- Try to best accommodate your current guest and though with future bookings for any reservation changes
- For staff working beyond the curfew hours, provide them letters printed on the company letterhead, signed and stamped highlighting their place of work, working hours and reason for travelling during the curfew hours.
- Both staff and drivers need to have their own individual letters. For an example of the letter, kindly email info@guyanaturism.com to request same.
- Keep up to date with the situation and adjust as need be

For **Transportation Service Providers, Tour Operators, and Guides**, we urge that you:

- Implement more rigorous cleaning and hygiene protocols and maintain the highest standards of cleanliness and hygiene in your vehicles, food services and facilities
- Cater to the needs of your guests currently on a tour
- Try to best accommodate your next immediate guest booking changes and rescheduling
- Ensure to disinfect and sanitise all possible points of contact and shared space
- Keep up to date with the situation and adjust as need be

For More Information

The Guyana Tourism Authority will continue to monitor the situation and reliable sources closely and make informed and evidence-based decisions accordingly. The authority is encouraging travellers and the travel and tourism sector to do the same. Below is a list of helpful websites:

- [Coronavirus COVID-19 Global Cases Dashboard](#) from Johns Hopkins University
- The [Pandemic Business Checklist](#) by Action Coach and [COVID-19 Business Continuity Planning Checklist](#) by Social Rank Media are two great resources to help inform your business planning and communications during this time.
- [World Health Organization](#) (WHO)
- [Caribbean Public Health Agency](#)
- [Centres for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [Ministry of Public Health Guyana](#)

Guyana General Travel Advisory

While the interior is one of the safest places in the world, there is a need for travellers visiting Guyana's capital city of Georgetown and other major urban areas to exercise caution due to

crime. The general crime rate in Guyana is above the U.S. national average and below neighbouring countries like Brazil and Columbia.

Foreigners are oftentimes very visible in public and should take precautions when visiting downtown areas. Whenever deciding to travel abroad, we all take responsibility for our own personal safety. If you decide to travel to Guyana, please:

- Be extra vigilant when visiting banks or ATMs. Visitors are advised to change currency only at legitimate exchanges at hotels or airports and are discouraged from exchanging currency on the street.
- Be aware of your surroundings. It's important to be cautious, especially while travelling at night.
- Travel in groups and in general, avoid walking at night and opt to book cabs from designated service providers
- Travelling in the interior is best done with the help of [tour operators](#) who can make all of the necessary travel arrangements.
- Avoid travelling around with large amounts of cash, do not display signs of wealth, such as wearing expensive watches or jewellery, and do not physically resist any robbery attempt.
- Travellers are encouraged to make photocopies of IDs and passports.
- Always have a contingency plan for emergency situations. Purchasing travelling insurance is recommended.

Review our [Travel Tips](#) for a smooth journey to Guyana.

Guyana Health Advisory

The Government of Guyana requires proof of yellow fever vaccination if you are travelling from a country with risk of yellow fever. This does not include the United States, Canada or any European countries. Check the [CDC website](#) for up-to-date information on other vaccines and medicines you should consider prior to your visit to Guyana, and be sure to visit your doctor at least 4-6 weeks before your trip to get the vaccines or medicines you may need.

Contact us About Safety and Security in Guyana

Safety and security are vital to providing a quality visitor experience in any destination. We at the Guyana Tourism Authority are highly cognizant of the fact that more than any other economic activity, the success or failure of a tourism destination depends on being able to provide a safe and secure environment for visitors.

For updated information on travel safety and security, email info@guyanatourism.com or call +592-219-0094.

Healthier, safer tourism in Guyana

The Ministry of Public Health and Department of Tourism in Guyana, as well as the Guyana Tourism Authority, are partnering with the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA),

Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO) and the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) to implement a joint [Tourism and Health program \(THP\)](#) to improve the health, safety, and quality of our tourism product, and the health and wellbeing of our visitors and locals. We care about your health and want to ensure that in addition to enjoying our lovely country, that you are also healthy and safe during your visit to Guyana.

This novel, innovative program is addressing the health safety and environmental threats that impact on the Caribbean to tourism through real-time early alert and response system to tourism health and safety threats., food and environment safety training, hospitality standards and globally recognised certification and branding. You can read more [here](#).

Participating facilities will be branded and accredited by CARPHA, CTO, CHTA as a preferred healthier, safer facility, allowing for a marketing and branding competitive advantage

- Accommodations are encouraged to register now [here](#) to be eligible for recognition as a healthier safer destination.
- Training materials for using THiS system are available [here](#).
- Links to the THP program, the Tourism and Health Information System (THiS.org) system and training materials:
 - Overall presentation on the Tourism and Health program (by Dr Indar) can be accessed [here](#).
 - Tourism and Health program brochure is available [here](#).
 - Presentation on the Tourism and Health Information System (THiS.org)
 - See THiS Live Demonstration Training video [here](#).
 - Step by step Training Instruction for using the THiS (by Dr Alexander) is available [here](#).
 - Registration forms for the THiS can be accessed on this [link](#).