



Industry Must Step Up Health Safety and Vaccination Efforts Information You Can Use to Support Tourism's Recovery

The Caribbean is recovering faster than any other region in the world according to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) with tourism's contribution to GDP expected to rise more than 47% this year. In contrast, the global economy is set to receive a 30.7% year-on-year increase from Travel & Tourism in 2021.

Over 70 percent of our region's tourism employees are back at work, and visitor arrivals, hotel occupancies and traveler spending is hovering over 60 percent of pre-pandemic levels. Some jurisdictions are exceeding those numbers while several are still struggling to achieve them.

The region's recovery is not by chance, and can be **attributed to our strong consumer appeal and proximity, and traveler confidence in the safety and predictability of travel to the region.**

Maintaining global positioning and moving to and beyond what some experts are predicting will be an 80-90 percent return to pre-pandemic tourism performance levels in 2022 will be a challenge, particularly with a **potential new wave of Covid-19, with potential new potent variants, and with more global competition for the tourist dollar.**

Caribbean Governments, tourism-related companies, and local and regional organizations like the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA), CHTA, CTO and local hotel and tourism associations have all played a key role in our emerging recovery. But it is **essential that we not let our guard down** and that we continue to **share our successes and appeal with travel partners and travelers** over the coming weeks and months, leading up to what will hopefully be a banner winter and spring season.

CHTA is continuing to reach out to travel partners and the media to tell our region's tourism success story in maintaining among the lowest Covid-19 infection and mortality rates in the world, increasing vaccination rates of our employees, and creating a safe environment for guests and customers with our adherence to health safety measures and entry requirements for travelers. Many of you have done likewise and we encourage you to continue to share the good news.

The following facts and support information are drawn from recent industry research and other sources, aimed at assisting you in your training and reinforcement efforts with employees and communications with Government, media (local, trade, consumer, social media). We welcome your further insights and information and sharing of successful initiatives which are helping your recovery.



Facts About Caribbean Tourism and Covid-19 You Should Know

Fact #1: Health Safety Protocols in the Caribbean's Tourism Industry Are Working

The low positivity rate of tested travelers, and the success of health safety protocols aimed at protecting employees, visitors and residents should reassure travelers, employees and also Caribbean residents that risk levels from tourists are extremely low, and the tourism industry continues to protect lives and livelihoods.

Fact #2: While the Industry's Health Safety Protocols are Strong, Companies and Employees Need to Continue Complying with Health Safety Protocols and Increasing Guest and Team Member Compliance

Covid-19 remains a highly contagious virus and indications point to the need to control the spread, particularly with the more transmissible variants. Globally, there had been a relaxation of health safety protocols, as vaccination levels increased and more travelers and employees to a lesser extent have begun to let their guard down, not adhering to proven health safety protocols. This relaxation is now fueling a resurgence of Covid-19 cases in some parts of the world. Caribbean companies and employees must remain vigilant in consistently following protocols for: wearing of face coverings; physical distancing; hand washing and following sound hygienic practices in accordance with the Caribbean's tourism health safety protocols.

Fact #3: Controlling Covid-19 is the Fastest Path to Recovery, Getting All Employees Back to Work, Ensuring Businesses Survive, and Replenishing Badly Needed Government Revenues

Every resident in the Caribbean possesses the personal power and responsibility to end the pandemic and the impact it is having on the physical and economic well-being of our societies. The data undeniably proves that vaccinations and adherence to health safety protocols successfully controls the spread of Covid-19.

Fact #4: Vaccination Rates for Caribbean Tourism Workers are Outpacing Local Population and Growing

A growing number of tourism-related workers are realizing the safety of Covid-19 vaccinations and how important it is for those who are able to be vaccinated to do so. **Vaccination rates for employees in the region's tourism industry far-outpace those for the general population.** Effective October, 2021, 28 percent of employers surveyed by CHTA reported that 100 percent of their employees were fully vaccinated and an additional 20 percent reported that between 75 and 99 percent of their workforce was fully vaccinated. Expediting our recovery is tied to increasing vaccination rates by employees, their families and friends and the community.



Fact #5: Severe Covid-19 and Death from Covid-19 Diminish Significantly for Vaccinated Individuals

Unvaccinated individuals are 11 times more likely to become hospitalized and die from Covid-19 than those who are vaccinated according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control.

Fact #6: Mandatory Vaccines for Employees and Travelers Has Mixed Support

While there is growing support for becoming vaccinated by Caribbean nationals, the Caribbean is divided on whether they should be mandatory. In some jurisdictions it is difficult to impose a mandatory vaccine due to labour laws and contractual agreements. The CHTA continues to strongly encourage vaccination as one of the tools to mitigate against Covid-19.

Fact #7: Vaccines Provide Added Protection to Those Who Have Already Had Covid

Covid-19 vaccines increase the protection level for individuals already infected and recovered. Even those who have had Covid-19 face the possibility of becoming re-infected. A vaccine lessens the odds of becoming reinfected and of experiencing severe or even life-threatening conditions should one become reinfected.

Fact #8: High Cost and Turn-Around Time of Covid-19 Tests Are a Major Deterrent to Travel and Providing Periodic Testing to Employees

The cost of Covid-19 tests, particularly the more accurate PCR tests, varies throughout the Caribbean with some jurisdictions providing the tests at no cost to residents and visitors, while other areas are charging upwards of \$300 for a PCR test. The high cost is a major deterrent to travel, particularly for intra-Caribbean travel where residents are forced to opt out of traveling due to the higher added cost. The turn-around time for receiving test results can also be a deterrent. While most areas have the capacity to turn around results within the 24- and 48-hour period required to travelers to the US, and Canada and UK, some do not. It will be critical in the coming weeks for health and tourism authorities at the local level to work together to bring down the cost of tests and ensure they are readily available and able to be quickly processed.

Fact #9: The Power to Control Covid-19 and Ensure Our Personal and Economic Health Lies With Every Resident and Visitor

Yes. Thus far, the region's adherence to health safety protocols and testing requirements for travelers have contributed to lower incident rate for the region, vs. most other areas around the world. But there is no guarantee that this will continue, hence the need for every employee and resident to remain diligent in adhering to strong health safety protocols and in becoming fully vaccinated and receiving the booster shot when they are available to protect themselves, their families, communities and our visitors is essential.



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Helpful Links:

[CARPHA Vaccination Support Information](#)

[CHTA Press Conference: Caribbean Tourism Fireworks – Winter Outlook \(December 15, 2021\)](#)

[World Health Organization](#)

[PanAmerican Health Organization](#)

[CHTA Summary of Travel Entry Requirements](#)

[World Travel and Tourism Council's Covid-19 Hub](#)

[CHTA Covid-19 Webinar Resilience Series - July 29: Our Best Shot – A Look at Successful Vaccine Awareness Practices in the Tourism Industry](#)

[CHTA News Release](#)

For Additional Information or to Share Your Experiences to Help Others, Contact:

[Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association](#)

501 East Las Olas Blvd, Suite 200/300

Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301

Phone: 305-428-3982

Email: vanessa@caribbeanhotelandtourism.com