

COVID-19 Best Practices 2020

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Overview

Purpose

This document outlines Bluewater Adventures' Best Practices as governments and health officials determine when to reopen tourism in British Columbia. It establishes BWA's approach to minimizing Covid-19 exposure risks of crew, guests, and coastal communities. Furthermore, the aim of this document is to promote health and safety throughout the entire travel process from start to finish. This document explains to parents and guardians how Bluewater Adventures (BWA) plans to provide an unforgettable experience to our school and sailing groups while maintaining the highest level of cleanliness, sanitation and safety.

BLUEWATER ADVENTURES & OUR SCHOOL PROGRAM

Bluewater Adventures offers "once in a lifetime" wildlife and coastal First Nations cultural experiences. Our multi-day, live aboard trips explore the remote wilderness of coastal British Columbia and Southeast Alaska. Traveling aboard our live-aboard expedition yachts we keep watch for whales and other marine mammals, coastal birds and bears, old-growth forests, and ancient native villages.

Typically, 5 days long, these trips focus on sailing, wildlife, marine biology, and team building. Daily shore excursions and kayaking opportunities add another element to the trip. We explore intertidal zones by zodiac & kayak and learn a lot about the coastal underwater creatures. Students are involved in all aspects of the trip from navigation to helping prepare meals in the galley.

In our school programs, we promote active participation in all areas by students and supervisors. Students assume leadership, practice group problem solving, communication skills and take responsibility for specific tasks on board. By bringing students in direct contact with the marine environment, they develop an appreciation for ecosystems, and our society's inter-connectedness with nature.

Since 1974, Bluewater Adventures' reputation has brought respected groups and people from around the world. Bluewater Adventures' trips adhere to the principles of ecotourism. Bluewater is a supporter of several local conservation and research groups. Bluewater invests in local communities and is committed to minimizing our operational footprint.

Our Vessels

The Bluewater Adventures fleet is made up of 3, locally built, motor-sailors that are all certified by the Canadian Ministry of Transportation.

Island Roamer – A 68' ketch, launched in 1993, has 6 guest cabins and 3 shared heads. Two forward cabins are quarters for Crew, guest naturalists or group leaders. The spacious and airy wheelhouse is enclosed by canvass. There is plenty of space on deck to keep a look out for wildlife while underway.

Island Odyssey – A 68' ketch built in 1984, Island Odyssey was the second vessel to join the Bluewater fleet. In 2003, she was completely refit from a private luxury yacht to an expedition vessel with the same cabin and head configuration as Island Roamer.

Island Solitude – Launched in the spring of 2018, this 82’ sloop also accommodates 12 guests in 6 cabins with each featuring an ensuite bathroom with toilet, sink and hot shower. The large wheelhouse and aft cockpit supply ample seating for all guests and Crew. This modern hull design was sought to improve sailing performance and fuel efficiency. Island Solitude does not typically host the school program but is available should one of the other vessels be unavailable.

Mitigation Protocols Promoting Health and Safety During COVID-19

Operating in remote areas along the British Columbia Coast for over 45 years, Bluewater Adventures puts health and safety first. All Crew are Transport Canada certified and safety training is at the forefront of our operations.

General Operating Guidelines

EMPLOYEE POLICIES

Employees Must:

- Practice physical distancing by working more than 2 metres (6 feet) apart from co-workers whenever possible. If distancing is not possible, Crew will don a face covering.
- Continue to follow all other safe work procedures. If it is unsafe to work, speak with the Captain
- Stay home if they are sick or might be sick. Use the BC Ministry of Health for self-assessment: <https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en> and advise the office immediately.
- Avoid touching their face
- Wash their hands before eating or drinking, after touching shared items, after using the washroom, after handling cash or credit cards, after touching common items, after each delivery if contact was made, and at the end of their shift. Remove jewellery while washing

Workplace Wellness/Sick Leave Policy

Employers must ensure they have clear policies (*Sample policies can be included*) around that address the following:

- Expectations from employees when they report to work (e.g. Pre-screening questionnaire, washing hands, wearing PPE, undergoing wellness assessment)
- What employees do when they feel sick (e.g. reporting procedures)
- Sick leave entitlement

GUEST COMMUNICATION

All guests will be contacted in the days leading up to their Bluewater Adventures trip. It will be the responsibility of our guests to participate in the following safety procedures leading up to their trip:

1. Passenger & Crew Pre-Trip Screenings Process:

All participants/ Parents or Guardians and Crew will be required to go through a Pre-Trip Screening process prior their trip. Recognize that it is most important that we do all we can to prevent COVID-19 from coming aboard our vessels. Should any one participant arrive with symptoms or exhibit symptoms at any point during the trip, the BC Centre for Disease Control will be contacted, and the trip/s will be terminated.

Once dates have been confirmed, our office will contact school/ sailing program organizers to distribute and collect a COVID-19 Questionnaire. It will be the responsibility of the parents to answer all questions honestly.

BWA has updated our Liability Release forms to include a new wording expressly detailing the risks of infectious diseases. These will be distributed to all booking agents and guests for guests to complete once their trip has been confirmed.

“Infectious disease contracted through viruses, bacteria, parasites, and fungi which may be transmitted through direct or indirect contact.”)

Guests will consent to the possible risks imposed by COVID-19 and travel.

Guest travel plans and health will be shared with the BWA crew in advance of their trip.

b) Secondary check in from Bluewater Adventures – 14 days prior to trip departure date:

Crew will be required to complete a COVID-19 Risk Assessment Questionnaire to which one must answer truthfully and submit to the Bluewater Adventures office. Organizers, Group Leaders and parents of participants will be asked to review Questionnaire.

Please contact the BWA office immediately if in questions 1 – 4, Crew or Participant answers “yes”.

If the state of your health changes between submitting this assessment and the start of your travels, please contact the BWA office immediately. If Crew or a Participant feels unwell at any time during this period, we will request that they do not join the trip.

c) Bluewater Adventures will ask all Participants and Crew to take precautions prior to joining a trip:

BWA will advise all parents/ participants and crew to start taking precautionary measures and be socially responsible to minimize their exposure to COVID-19 starting 14 days prior to your trip departure date.

BWA has an obligation to provide a safe environment for all and will be asking parents/ participants and crew to voluntarily take extra safety measures to reduce their exposure to COVID-19 for 14 days leading up to their trip departure date. We feel this is a reasonable request to protect our guests and crew from a potential outbreak onboard.

d) Bluewater Adventures requests that any guests who begin to show symptoms of COVID-19 following their trip, to contact the Bluewater office immediately.

2. Pre-boarding Check-In & Orientation by BWA Crew:

Prior to boarding our vessels, all participants and crew will be required to undergo the following Pre-Boarding Check-In administered by BWA crew:

Pre-Boarding Check-In:

Prior to boarding, the incoming guests and crew will be required to repeat the COVID-19 Risk Assessment Questionnaire (the same questionnaire used during the pre-screening process) to which all guests must answer truthfully. **All guests and crew will have their temperature taken via a non-contact thermometer.**

No person, guest or crew, will be permitted to board the vessel if:

- They are exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms.
- Their Pre-Boarding BWA Risk Assessment Questionnaire indicates they may have COVID-19.
- Consultation with a Local Health Authority or Health Line (811) and the BWA office concludes that they may have COVID-19.
- They have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for or is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.
- They have been refused travel in the past 14 days due to a medical reason related to COVID-19 OR are subject to a provincial or local public health order.

Safety and Vessel Orientation:

- Vessel captains will provide a detailed participant and crew orientation.
- In addition to going over onboard safety protocols, cabin/head orientations, and general health and hygiene onboard, the Captain will inform all participants and crew of further measures to reduce COVID-19 transmission Risk (Section 3).
- Crew will distribute hand sanitizer to guests and other crew prior to boarding.

3. Measures to Reduce COVID-19 Transmission Risk - Onboard:

Although onboard cleanliness is a top priority for the health and safety of crew and guests, BWA must adhere to extra precautionary measures towards our sanitization standards specific to the risk mitigation of COVID-19. We have consulted external guidance from health authorities such as the World Health Organization, the BC Center for Disease Control, BC Ministry of Health, links for further reading are listed at the end of this document

GENERAL INFORMATION – Sanitation and Hygiene

Elevated hygiene and sanitation practices will be expected to be upheld by all aboard.

- Cloth face coverings (2 per person) will be added to the suggested BWA packing list
- Daily Check-Ins with participants and Crew/ daily temperature taking with electronic thermometer
- Physical distancing (Min. 2 metres) will be maintained whenever possible. Participants and Crew will don fabric face coverings when sufficient distancing is not possible and in common spaces of the ship in the wheelhouse, in the salon, library and hallway to cabin.
- Bluewater Adventures will maintain constant ventilation through the vessel throughout the day whenever possible
- Personal Care & Hygiene will be upheld, elevating the importance of proper hand washing before eating or drinking, after touching shared items, after using the washroom, and before leaving the worksite. Avoid touching their face.
- Hand sanitizer stations will be situated throughout the vessels. In the wheelhouse, salon, shore bag and near food service areas.
- Increase disinfection of all hard surfaces using appropriate cleaners. If household or commercial disinfectant cleaning products are not available, hard surfaces can be disinfected using a mixture of 5 mL of bleach (5% sodium hypochlorite) and 250 mL of water. Make sure the solution is in contact with the surface for 1 minute.
- Clean salon, wheelhouse, outside seating areas, and workspaces, at least once per day, and more often for high-traffic areas and contact surfaces. Focus on frequently touched and shared surfaces such as, doors, handles, handrails, light switches, shelves, countertops, drawers, keyboards and mice, touch screens, pens, tools, phones, radios, chairs, and kitchen equipment.
- Clean any shared equipment, helm, communication devices, demonstration items, binoculars, phones, or touch screens with alcohol or disinfectant wipes between users.
- Shared heads will be cleaned frequently and will be stocked with full soap dispensers, paper towels, disinfecting wipes and lined waste containers (to be emptied frequently). Crew will be provided with protective equipment required to safely use cleaning equipment.
- Crew and passengers will be reminded to practice good hygiene frequently, including coughing/sneezing into your elbow or a tissue, disposing of tissue and washing hands.
- Signage referring to proper hygiene will be posted in easily seen areas through the vessel.
- Dispose of used tissues, wipes, gloves, and other cleaning materials in a plastic lined waste container.

Daily Check-Ins:

A designated crew member will conduct daily, one-on-one verbal check-ins and temperature takings with all passengers and crew. Similar to the process listed above in the Pre-Boarding Check-In section. Crew will record this information in the onboard Health Logbook. If guests or crew are not feeling well, inform the crew immediately and then follow the direction of the BWA crew.

Physical Distancing:

The BCCDC advises to maintain a physical distance of 2 metres from others at all times.

2 metres physical distancing should be maintained whenever possible - in the vessel, out on deck, when onshore wildlife viewing, etc. When physical distancing is not possible, a cloth face covering must be worn.

When 2 metre, physical distancing cannot be maintained:

Face Coverings:

- Everyone will wear protective face coverings.
- Signage for Proper Face Covering Requirements will be posted in all cabins and common areas.
- Guests will be required to bring their own protective face coverings sufficient for the duration of the trip. A minimum of 2 cloth masks will allow for hand-washing throughout the trip.
- Safety Orientation & Evacuation Drills:
- The general BWA Safety Orientation will take outside if possible or in the wheelhouse and will be conducted twice, if necessary, to accommodate physical distancing.
- Evacuation drills will be delivered verbally. Crew will demonstrate the proper donning of lifejackets as well as assign each guest their own personal flotation device at the orientation.
- Evacuation scenarios, fire drills, fire fighting equipment, etc. will all be reviewed in discussion.

Cabin & Head Orientation:

- Cabin & Head Orientations will now take place as an extended part of the general Safety Orientation.
- Each participant will be placed in one of 7 guest cabins and provided a berth. Double berths will accommodate only one participant. One cabin will be provided to BWA Crew. Group Leaders will sleep in the salon.
- BWA will create infographic signage or video of proper head use and hand washing which will be referenced at this part in the verbal orientation.
- Infographic signage of proper head use and hand washing techniques will be printed and posted in each head.
- Crew will instruct guests to open all cabin portholes when not underway in order to create ventilation throughout the ship.

Mealtimes: Some details still to be determined...

- BWA will encourage people to eat outside while maintaining physical distancing. When eating inside, guests will sit in designated seating areas - Seating maps will be posted for reference.
- At the end of each meal, each person is responsible for discarding their food waste and placing dishware in the tub provided.
- Proper dishware washing protocols and signage as per Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety guidelines.

Zodiacs:

- To safely support guests getting in and out of the zodiacs, crew will provide hand sanitizer to all guests prior to loading and unloading zodiacs. Face coverings will be worn. Crew will continue to need to assist guests in and out of boats.
- 1 m minimum distance between participants in zodiacs will be encouraged.

4. Emergency Response Practices if COVID-19 Outbreak Occurs Onboard:

Should a participant or crew start to show possible symptoms of COVID-19 while aboard:

- Inform the Crew and Captain immediately. COVID-19 symptoms include:
 - * Shortness of breath / difficulty breathing
 - * Undue Fatigue / drowsiness
 - * Loss of taste and smell
 - * Cough, chest congestion
 - * Sore throat, headache, muscle aches and pain
 - * Fever (38 degrees or higher)
 - * Diarrhea

Symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to other respiratory illnesses including the flu and common cold. Symptoms may vary from person to person. Some people may experience mild symptoms, while others have more severe symptoms.

Sometimes people with COVID-19 have mild illness, but their symptoms may suddenly worsen in a few days. People infected with COVID-19 may also experience gastrointestinal symptoms like diarrhea, nausea and vomiting a few days after the onset of the above symptoms. If you only have gastrointestinal symptoms you may not have COVID-19. Group Leaders will be asked to monitor all participants' health and symptoms throughout the trip. Group Leaders agree to report to the Captain if there are any concerns.

To learn more about symptoms of COVID-19, visit the [BC Centre for Disease Control's Symptoms](#) page.

The guest or crew will be instructed to **immediately isolate themselves** in their cabin or a bow cabin, don a face mask, and remain isolated until further medical advice is received.

- On Island Roamer and Island Odyssey, one of the heads will be designated for the isolated individual (as COVID-19 is also transmitted via feces). Clear signage is needed to ensure no one else uses that head.
- The skipper will contact the appropriate **Local Health Authority** or, in some geographic area's **Telehealth Services** (Healthlink service is available in BC by dialing 811) or other designated health professional and consult how to proceed.

- It is advised that all non-British Columbia Residents purchase evacuation insurance should they become ill and require immediate medical attention. British Columbia residents are covered under the BC Medical Services Plan and evacuation insurance is not required.

ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANING

Daily Cleaning Protocols and Disinfecting:

BWA will be launching new Cleaning Protocols with enhanced procedures and guidance on how to clean our vessels with specific information on COVID-19 prevention, such as the use of personal protective equipment, like masks and gloves for crew or cleaners, as well as disinfectants that are approved by regulatory authorities.

- i) BWA will increase the frequency of sanitizing key public spaces and frequently touched surfaces with a virus-killing formula suggested by Health Canada
- ii) Frequently touched surfaces include: handrails, handles, steering wheel, tables, bunk-side tables, countertops, workstations, light switches, porthole latches, electronic equipment such as phones, camera's, GPS, radar, marine radio's, etc. Key public spaces include: the wheelhouse, salon, and Island Roamer and Island Odyssey heads will be cleaned and disinfected more frequently.
- iii) BWA will encourage participants to disinfect heads after every use using the cleaning supplies provided.
- iv) Kayaks and kayak paddles: BWA will encourage participants to use hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes to clean kayak paddles and kayak pre/post use.
- vi) Crew will protect themselves by wearing gloves when cleaning, extra handwashing, etc.

TRAVELING TO AND FROM YOUR TRIP WITH BLUEWATER ADVENTURES:

Before traveling to and from your trip with BWA, please be advised of the most up-to-date travel advice before you depart. [“Know Before You Go”](#). Please be aware of possible travel cancellations outside of BWA. The Bluewater office will be monitoring regular public travel routes often used by guests and crew and will try to advise on travel arrangements when possible.

BWA will advise all participants and Crew to arrange **expedited travel** planning on their way to their trip with us. Expedited travel is the concept of traveling directly from the participant’s or crew member’s home to the vessel in the most efficient manner with the least possible stops or overnights. If people want to plan other activities as part of their holiday, please do so after your trip with BWA.

Useful Links:

<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/symptoms-covid-19>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/prevention-risks/about-non-medical-masks-face-coverings.html>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health.html>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/latest-travel-health-advice.html>

<http://covid-19.bccdc.ca/>