



HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Include COVID-19 Protocol

REVISION
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1 Purpose

This policy outlines the minimum health and safety requirements for operating tours under Travel Neutral. It ensures all experiences meet our duty of care to staff, contractors, and travelers, while adapting to the evolving health landscape in Vietnam and globally. The policy includes protocols for managing infectious diseases, safety risk assessments, incident responses, and supplier compliance.

2 Scope

This policy applies to all Travel Neutral departments, staff, contractors, suppliers, and products. Department-level variations may adapt these guidelines for specific contexts—e.g., accommodation, transport, activities, and office environments—but must meet or exceed the minimum standards set herein.

This document is reviewed annually and may be updated by the CEO in response to public health guidance, operational developments, or government directives.

3 Responsibilities

Travel Neutral holds the safety of staff, contractors, travelers, and the public as a shared responsibility.

Tour Operations Manager:

- Oversees health and safety on all tours, including risk assessments, supplier compliance, and training.
- Ensures trip design aligns with this policy and reviews incidents for continuous improvement.

HR Manager:

- Responsible for safety at all Travel Neutral offices, unless staff are working remotely.
- Implements occupational health policies and ensures staff are trained on current health protocols.
- All team members and group leaders are expected to uphold this policy as part of their role.

4 Starting trips

4.1 Insurance

All travelers must carry travel insurance. Proof of insurance must be submitted prior to the start of the trip. Group leaders must verify coverage during the pre-trip check-in.

4.2 Risk assessment and audits

All new trips and products must undergo a documented risk assessment that includes:

- Safety of included and recommended activities
- Transportation (public and private)
- Accommodation standards
- Emergency response access

Ongoing safety audits must be conducted:

- **Annually** for high-risk activities and destinations
- **Every two years** for lower-risk products

Assessments must be led by staff trained and authorized by the Tour Operations Manager and approved before product launch or relaunch.

4.3 Medical facilities

Medical facilities in Vietnam that can provide international standard care with English speaking staff and support travel insurance claim process are listed below.

Hanoi	Hong Ngoc Hospital	No 55 Yen Ninh street, Truc Bach, Quan Thanh, Ba Dinh, Hanoi, tel. (+84) 24 3927 5568 ext 0
Hue	Hue Central Hospital	16 Le Loi street, Hue, tel. (84) 234 382 2325
Hoi An	Family Medical Practice Danang	96-98 Nguyen Van Linh, Nam Duong, Hai Chau, Da Nang, tel. (84) 236 358 2699
Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon)	Family Medical Practice	34 Le Duan street, District 1, HCM City, tel. (+84) 28 3822 7848

4.4 Reporting & Review

Trip incidents and safety issues should be recorded and monitored to identify any emerging trends. All actions to rectify the issues should be documented. When safety issues relate directly to a supplier, the supplier must be informed in writing and the Tour Operations Manager and Commercial Manager will work with the supplier to remedy and ensure the incident doesn't repeat.

4.5 Suppliers

All new and existing suppliers must meet Travel Neutral's safety and hygiene standards, including protocols for infection control, emergency procedures, and first aid.

Suppliers providing high-risk services (e.g., motorbike tours, water activities) must undergo a specific safety assessment and agree to documented mitigation measures.

4.6 Training

Training must be provided for all staff, group leaders, contractors involved in any part of the product design and delivery. Training of suppliers will be provided as applicable.

5 Minimum standard

Travel Neutral adheres to the highest global standards of hygiene, safety, and care. Our approach integrates guidance from the World Health Organization (WHO), Vietnam's Ministry of Health, and leading industry practices.

5.1 Flexible Work Conditions

- Remote work is encouraged where appropriate to reduce unnecessary travel and exposure.
- Leaders and staff must not report to work if they are unwell or believe they may have been exposed to illness.
- Staff with symptoms of infectious disease must seek medical advice and follow local health protocols before returning to work.

5.2 Hand hygiene

Handwashing is one of the most important safety measures to prevent the spread of disease. We will actively reinforce its importance by:

- Educate staff, leaders, contractors and suppliers on the importance of hand hygiene and dictate that handwashing must be carried out for at least 30 seconds under running water,
 - before and after meals,
 - before entering and after exiting public spaces;
- Hand sanitizer is an acceptable alternative to handwashing.
- Ensure that suppliers implement hand hygiene protocols on their premise.
- Ensure that suppliers provide hand sanitizer in public places (where applicable).
- Ensure group leaders carry hand sanitizers and provide to the group as needed.

5.3 Sanitation

- Accommodations, transport providers, and restaurants must follow proper cleaning and disinfection procedures using products approved by health authorities.
- High-touch surfaces must be cleaned regularly, and rooms must be cleaned thoroughly between guests.
- Travel Neutral conducts audits to ensure supplier sanitation standards are upheld.

5.4 Accommodation

Accommodation are anywhere the traveler sleeps overnight, such as hotels, campsites, homestays, etc. Overnight boats are both transport and accommodation. All accommodation used must be checked for Health and Safety risks at least once per year. Minimum safety standards must be covered at all accommodation.

The group leader must check the safety standard of each accommodation stop. Refer to Appendix 2 for the checklist.

- All rooms must be thoroughly cleaned between guests.
- Public spaces (lobby, restaurant, public restrooms, gyms, bars, meeting rooms, elevators, etc) are regularly cleaned and disinfected.

- Hand sanitiser should be available in public areas.
- Staff must be trained on safety protocols.

5.5 Transport

Transport includes any land, sea or air vehicle such as trains, boats, airplanes, buses, and taxis. Overnight trains and boats are considered as both accommodation and transport.

General safety

- Group leader must assess the trip transport for any safety issues before commencing.
- All chartered vehicles should be regularly serviced (at least every 6 months). Charter vehicle suppliers should be able to produce documented evidence to confirm proper servicing.
- All chartered vehicles are registered/licensed to carry tourists where required by law.
- All drivers of chartered vehicles must hold the relevant and appropriate local licenses to operate the vehicle.

Seat belt

- Seatbelts should be correctly worn and adjusted wherever available. Leaders must make sure they inform travelers, as a group, to use the seatbelts. Where possible, leaders should check that the travelling group have correctly fastened their seatbelts.
- Group leaders must wear seatbelts whenever they are available.
- Regardless of the type of vehicle, if seatbelts are available/fitted **leaders must advise travelers to wear seatbelts** at all times the vehicle is moving.
- If seatbelts are not functioning the bus line or driver need to have the problem fixed or find an alternate safer vehicle.

Hygiene

- All private buses, vehicles, must be thoroughly cleaned between guests. High touch surfaces must be regularly cleaned and disinfected.
- Close top bins with bin liners should be available on board and disposed of at every stop.
- Hand sanitizer must be made available.

Physical distance

- Using designated seating on transport where the travelers are assigned seats throughout the trip.
- If trip is longer than 15 minutes and air conditioning is available, it must be set to external airflow rather than to recirculation or windows should be opened for the duration of the trip.
- Increasing the size of the vehicle, using multiple vehicles.

Drivers

Group leaders must speak with the driver face to face before taking either public or private transport and assess that the driver is alert, not under influence of drugs or alcohol, and capable of operating the vehicle safely.

- Group leaders must ensure that the driver is driving within safe speed limit. If the driver refused and/or continue to drive unsafely, the Group Leader is authorised to stop the vehicle and arrange an alternative mode of transport.
- If a driver is believed to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the Group Leader is authorised to organise alternative transport for you and your group immediately.

5.6 Restaurants

- Must be thoroughly cleaned at the end of each day.
- Tables and chairs must be disinfected after each guest use.
- Avoid buffets where possible.
- Disinfect shared use objects (e.g. table salt) between guest use.
- Hand sanitizer provided at entrance.
- Follow regulations on table spacing and guest seating in restaurants.
- Wherever possible, ensure groups have their own table without strangers in restaurants.

5.7 Activities

- All equipment must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected between guests.
- Group Leader must participate in all included activities.
- No “high risk” activities are to be offered to the travelers without a Safety Assessment approved by the Tour Operation Manager. Refer to Appendix 4 – High Risk Activities.

6 Incident Management

Travel Neutral is committed to providing a swift, coordinated, and compassionate response to all health and safety incidents involving travelers, staff, contractors, or suppliers.

6.1 General Protocol

- All incidents—whether minor or serious—must be reported to the **Tour Operations Manager** as soon as possible.
- The **Incident Management Team (IMT)** will assess the situation and determine the required response, including medical support, trip adjustments, and communication with next of kin or agents.
- Group Leaders must document the incident in the incident log and file a formal report within 24 hours.

6.2 Health-Related Incidents

Applies to suspected or confirmed cases of infectious disease, injuries, or other medical emergencies.

Group Leader responsibilities:

- Support the affected traveler in accessing appropriate medical care.
- Isolate the individual if symptoms suggest a contagious condition.
- Notify the Tour Operations Manager immediately.
- Assist with contact tracing, if applicable.
- Record details in the incident log.

Tour Operations Manager responsibilities:

- Notify the Incident Management Team.
- Coordinate with local authorities, health professionals, and the traveler's insurance provider.
- Support communication with the travel agent and next of kin as needed.
- Organize care, replacement leaders, and accommodation changes if necessary.
- Debrief the group and staff, and ensure emotional and logistical support is provided.

6.3 Infectious Disease Response (e.g. Dengue, Flu)

If a traveler or leader shows symptoms of a potentially contagious illness:

Group Leader should:

- Encourage medical testing, if available.
- Isolate the individual and offer a mask if respiratory symptoms are present.
- Inform the group of the situation with calm, factual communication.
- Follow local public health guidelines regarding isolation or quarantine.

In case of a confirmed case:

- Notify local health authorities.

- Inform travelers, suppliers, and relevant staff of potential exposure.
- Initiate sanitation of transport, accommodation, and shared gear.
- The group may need to self-isolate or continue the trip with modifications.

6.4 Incident Involving Suppliers

If a supplier experiences a safety failure or health-related incident (e.g., unlicensed driver, unsafe accommodation, poor hygiene), the following steps apply:

- Immediate suspension of services if traveler safety is compromised.
- Report the incident to the Tour Operations Manager.
- The Commercial Manager and Tour Operations Manager will contact the supplier, investigate, and agree on corrective actions.
- Reinstatement of the supplier will only occur once compliance is confirmed.

6.5 Support for Affected Travelers and Staff

Travel Neutral will:

- Assist affected travelers in accessing quality medical care.
- Provide interpretation or translation at hospitals if needed.
- Support travel insurance claims, agent communication, and rebooking.
- Offer emotional support through group leaders or external providers.
- Maintain confidentiality and dignity for all affected individuals.

Appendix 1 – Transport Safety Checklist

Transport Checklist for Group Leaders	
<p>Ensure you have a face-to-face conversation with the driver! You should speak to the driver before getting on to any transport (public or chartered)</p> <p>Things to check:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the driver speaking strangely/slurring their words? • Can you smell alcohol on their breath? • Are they behaving strangely? Shaking? • Red or tired eyes? 	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>
Are all tyres in good condition? Check for bald tyres?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Are there any cables hanging underneath the vehicle?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Is the windscreen broken, or are there visible cracks?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Is there an emergency door or exit (if travelling on a bus)?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Are there any holes in the floor of the vehicle?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Are there any bolts missing from wheels?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Are the seatbelts working?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>

Vehicle Roofs

Passengers and leaders are not permitted to ride on the roof of any transport. The only exception to this is on boats which have dedicated roof decks such as Ha Long Bay overnight boats. These may be used if there is adequate fencing or passenger barriers provided.

Diving or jumping from these areas is strictly prohibited!

Motorbikes and Scooters

Motorbikes and scooters are considered an extremely high risk form of transport. Most passengers will not be covered by travel insurance. All activities involving motorbikes and scooter is prohibited. The only exception is motorbike or scooter guided tour activity where travelers are passengers **not** drivers.

Boats, Ferries and other water vessels

Life jackets must be available on board all water transport and must be of good quality with straps and buckles in good repair. If there are children under 12, child sized life jackets must be available. Life jackets must be located where it is visible and accessible by the group.

During water activities such as kayak, canoe or SUP, life jackets must be worn by all members with the buckles and straps correctly cinched.

Vehicles on ferries

All group members, group leader and driver must exit the vehicle for the entire time while aboard the ferry.

Weather Conditions

We relies on boat operators (boat captains, skippers etc.) to judge local conditions and determine if they are safe for travel.

The group leader, however, must make the judgement call if the conditions may be unsafe for travel and may cancel the boat trip and make alternative arrangements. This decision must be discussed with the Tour Operation Manager.

Small Boats

Group leader must check the boat condition prior to boarding. Particularly any damage to the boat, water in the boat, floatation devices etc.

If the group is split up across two or more smaller boats, keep the boats in eye contact. They should be less than 200m apart at all times.

Appendix 2 - Accommodation Checklist

Always remember to tell your group about any safety risks associated with accommodation before you arrive.

Accommodation Checklist	
<p>Does the accommodation have an emergency escape route that is easily accessible for guests in case of evacuation?</p> <p>The route to safety must not be obstructed and the exit doors must not be locked.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Are all guests rooms free of unventilated, individual, gas heaters in or next to them?</p> <p>No guests should stay in rooms with individual gas heaters.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Does the accommodation have an alarm system?</p> <p>Normally this will be a smoke alarm or fire detector but in some situations, automatic alarms systems are not possible.</p> <p>In that case, there must be an alternative alarm arrangement in place.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Is the accommodation free from any sign of problems with animals or insects?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>If there is a swimming pool, does it have depth markers?</p> <p>All swimming pools must have clearly visible depth makers.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>

Group leaders must stay at the same accommodation as guests whilst on trips when possible. Otherwise, the group leader must within a 10min walk (or equivalent) of their passenger's accommodation.

In situations where the group is split between more than one location/accommodation, the group leader will stay at the accommodation that is the easiest to get to for the entire group.

At all times the Group Leader must provide all passengers with:

- the location of where you will be sleeping, &
- contact numbers in case of emergencies.

Appendix 3 - First Aid

Group Leaders must have a current, company approved First aid certificate.

First Aid Checklist

All Leaders should feel confident that they can manage and recognise the following aspects of First Aid.

Management of:	Unconscious but not breathing person		Unconscious person who is not breathing - CPR		
Recognition & management of:	Choking	Shock	Wounds & bleeding	Burns	Injuries from head to toe
	Exposure to heat & cold	Poisons	Bites & stings	Medical emergencies – chest pain, asthma, anaphylaxis, stroke, seizures, fainting, diabetes	

First Aid Kits & Medication

First Aid kits must be carried on all trips and on all activities and must be readily available at all other times. First Aid kits should be well stocked and any used items must be replaced as soon as possible.

The group must be able to access the First Aid kit at all times.

Only over-the-counter medicine in the list below should be stocked. Medicines **MUST NEVER** be dispensed by the Group Leader at any time. Should any group member require medication, it must be medication they have brought with them or medicine prescribed by a medical professional.

Over-the-counter medicines are commonly used medication that do not require a prescription such as:

- Headache medication such as Aspirin or Paracetamol
- Anti-inflammatories such as Ibuprofen
- Anti-diarrhoea medication such as Imodium or Charcoal tablets
- Anti-histamine medication
- Anti-nausea medication
- Antibiotics of any kind
- Creams of any kind

Appendix 4 – High Risk Activities

Activities that are considered to be high risk are usually either technical in nature and/or judged as high risk due to their locations or the way they are run.

High Risk activities can only be offered to travelers after a risk assessment has been completed and signed off by the company.

The same activity that has been approved with one supplier cannot be offered through a different supplier – if that supplier has not been risk assessed.

Examples of High Risk Activities as

White water rafting, Kayaking or Canoeing	Ballooning
Caving	Motorbike riding
Quad biking	Mountain bike riding
Surfing	Scuba diving
Rock climbing	Abseiling
Bungy jumping	Sandboarding
Skydiving	Paragliding/Parasailing
Base Jumping	Kitesurfing

Appendix 5 - Safety Briefings

Safety briefing must be carried for **ALL** activities. The structure of a safety briefing is as follow provides clear instructions and adequate warning about the risks of the activity

The travelers must read and sign a safety document specific to any included high risk activities. The Group Leader must conduct a safety briefing outlining major points prior to commencing an activity.

It will cover:

- Introduction
- Specific info on the activity (dangers, equipment, etc.)
- Passenger's responsibilities
- Make sure there is time for passengers questions at the end of the talk
- Where the activity is 'outsourced' the instructor will do the safety briefing (you must ensure it is done)

Examples of specific activity briefings will be provided during training.