



Travel Counsellors for Business

Corporate Travel Policy

Keeping you safe every step of the way

As travel restrictions begin to ease across the globe, we're ready to support you in getting your business back on the road. Understandably, travel bookers and corporate travellers alike will have concerns about what travel looks like as we continue to protect people's health, safety and wellbeing.

As a company community spanning seven countries across the globe, our Corporate Travel Counsellors are dedicating all their efforts to supporting their valued clients in getting back to business in the safest ways possible. Below we outline our focus on the future of business travel, with further advice on how to frame your colleague travel policies over the coming weeks and months.

COVID-19 travel guidelines

The UK Government has confirmed a **list of countries exempt** from advice against all but essential travel, which means they have been assessed as no longer posing an unacceptably high risk to British travellers. The Government has further established **travel corridors** with countries that do not now require self-isolation on return to the UK, plus more information about entering and returning to the UK can be found **here**.

To check the entry status and travel advice for every country, including those that the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) are still currently advising against all but essential travel, click **here**. If you are not travelling from or to the UK, please also check the latest Government guidance for the country you're residing in.

As the situation continues to develop we also recommend checking **IATA's COVID-19 Travel Regulations map**, delivering 'at a glance' information for travel to countries across the globe.

As we navigate through a new era of business travel together, the FCO has provided advice for travelling safely through airports and on flights **here**, which includes frequent hand washing, use of sanitisers and face coverings, what to expect at check-in and security, as well as on board the aircraft.

You'll also notice social distancing and enhanced hygiene measures at your destination, at both hotel and self-catered accommodation types. The Business Travel Association provides the latest updates from airline and accommodation partners **here**, and of course, your Corporate Travel Counsellor can guide you and your colleagues through what to expect at every stage of the journey.

Duty of care

As we prepare to get moving again the obligation to look after colleagues is critical. Travel policies must now go above and beyond the legal requirements to live and breathe traveller care, with more robust pre-trip approval processes and limiting high-risk destination travel.

For over two decades Travel Counsellors for Business has grown through caring for people, which means that looking after traveller wellbeing is close to home. Below we take a look at some of the further factors to consider as part of your duty of care to business travellers.

Risk management

More than ever before, travellers must feel confident that they are supported by people who are ready for every eventuality. Risks are now defined in terms of border closings, changes in quarantine requirements, health screenings or local lockdowns. The decision to travel should be fully informed and prepared for every scenario, with known risks and essential trip requirements communicated before booking. Your Corporate Travel Counsellor can provide travel tips and checklists, and will continuously stay alert throughout the trip for ongoing and potential risks.

Helping you to define 'acceptable travel'

It's key that we support travellers to decide on what is 'acceptable travel' at this time, including whether business objectives support the decision to make the trip, identifying safe airlines, clean hotels, and further systems of support to help them to feel confident about travelling again.

Your Corporate Travel Counsellor can help you to consider:

- A robust pre-trip approval process
- The definition of a 'business essential trip'
- Any quarantine requirements
- Visa restrictions
- Opting for direct flights over connections
- Private transfer over public transport
- Room service rather than restaurants
- Using lounge access away from public spaces

We also highly recommend downloading Festive Road's 'Permissible Travel Programme' in considering your return to business travel: <https://www.festive-road.com/the-permissible-travel-framework/>

Traveller wellbeing

Whilst traveller wellbeing was a growing area of concern before COVID-19, the ongoing impact of the pandemic will ensure that taking good care of business travellers is essential. Ultimately, we recognise that your people are your greatest assets, and an effective travel policy should prioritise their physical and mental wellbeing.

These considerations must go beyond the essentials and what will become 'the norm', which includes being aware of enhanced health and safety measures across the travel supply chain, ensuring enough personal supplies and medicines in case a trip is extended, and the opportunity to supply travel health kits such as face masks, gloves and hand sanitisers. Your Travel Counsellor can also help you to consider the procedures you should have in place if a traveller falls ill on their trip.

Caring for travellers should go beyond physical health to consider mental wellbeing, such as signposting hotel gyms and nearby outdoor spaces or further activities that can be done at a social distance.

Be sure to consult the people who are integral to the success of the trip - your travellers. Ask them how they feel about taking to the road, rails and skies again? Their thoughts and feelings will be vital in forming wellbeing programmes to support their journeys.

The UK Government also offers **guidance for essential workers** on getting tested for COVID-19, as well as their definition of 'essential worker' in the current climate. However, private testing is also available for everyone from a number of sources across the UK.

Caring for people and planet

Many people agree that the crisis has taught us to look after the planet as well as taking good care of each other. The planet on pause has given us time to reflect on our impact and reconsider our environmental footprint.

Your Travel Counsellor can help you to prioritise the most sustainable travel options, supported by the dedicated 'green leaf' certification within our in-house booking platform highlighting accommodation providers that meet the most sustainable criteria.

For any business trip in the current climate it's also sensible to keep up-to-date with the major train suppliers in each country, which not only offer more sustainable travel options, but alternative transport should flights be cancelled or delayed in any circumstances.

Powered by technology

To keep travellers safe we must keep them informed. We recognise that information is the best way to keep colleagues safe on the road. As always, your Corporate Travel Counsellor will be your first point of contact and there for you and your team every step of the way.

Many of your business travellers can also be supported by myTC, our dedicated app and 'Travel Counsellor in your pocket'. myTC houses all supporting travel documentation and preferences in one place, with a secure payment portal and push notifications featuring the latest travel and safety alerts.

If a country announced it was closing its borders due to COVID-19, travellers in that country or with a booked trip would be contacted immediately by their Travel Counsellor and be alerted via myTC.

Championing the human touch

Nurturing trusted relationships with our corporate travel clients has always been incredibly important to us, and we recognise the level of trust travellers are placing with their corporate travel managers at this time. Our clients trust us to look after them, wherever they are in the world, and whatever the time zone. We value this trust and the peace of mind it provides for business travellers, by knowing that a real, caring, human being is there for them at every stage of the journey.

As we continue to navigate through this time together please remember your Corporate Travel Counsellor is always available to discuss any element of your travel policy, traveller health, safety and wellbeing, as well as providing the latest information as travel restrictions ease across the globe.

What it means to be a business traveller may have changed, but our focus on supporting you remains the same. For any questions, thoughts or feedback, please don't hesitate to contact your Travel Counsellor.