

# Know the rules: The A-Z for tourism in Greece in the Covid-19 era



[Tourism](#) , [Coronavirus](#)

Below you'll find a comprehensive list of all of the key measures to prevent the spread of Covid-19 being implemented at airports, hotels, shops, restaurants, beaches and more in Greece during the summer tourism period.

Please note that all of the measures are subject to change. We will be regularly updating this article as necessary, however measures not listed here may be implemented if this is deemed necessary.

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES**

Archaeological sites now operate on extended summer hours (8 a.m.-8 p.m.) to avoid large crowds from forming. In order to maintain the minimum 1.5m safety distance between people, the number of visitors allowed in at every archaeological site is limited, as is the number of visitors allowed to enter every hour.

Specific routes have been demarcated, the entrance and exit separated and plexiglass screens installed wherever needed and possible – for example, at the Propylaea on the Acropolis. The use of protective masks and alcohol-based sanitizers on site is strongly advised.

## **ARRIVALS**

The tourism period in Greece will officially begin on June 15, with international visitors able to arrive (without being quarantined) at Athens and Thessaloniki airports. From July 1 direct international flights will be permitted at all other remaining airports around the country, allowing tourists to fly directly to tourist destinations. Spot Covid-19 tests for visitors arriving to Greece will be conducted using swab tests and will be mandatory for those selected for tests; visitors will not, however, be quarantined on arrival, as was the case during the lockdown phase.

## **ATHENS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**

The use of face masks is mandatory after entering the airport terminal; a mask must be kept on throughout a passenger's stay in the airport areas, during boarding, and during the flight (domestic or international). Passengers should also be aware that they may be asked to temporarily remove their mask during security processes and identity checks. Hand sanitizer dispensers are available in over 300 spots at the airport, including the bathrooms.

Plexiglass panels have been installed for additional protection in areas where contact with employees is necessary such as ticket desks and information counters. To minimize waiting times, passengers are encouraged to select e-service options (web check-in) prior to their departure for the airport, as well as within the airport areas (self check-in, baggage-tag printing, drop-off baggage, e-parking). Seating in all waiting areas has been re-arranged to allow for safe minimum distances. The current recommendation is that every other seat be left vacant. However, families or couples traveling together do not have to keep this distance.

## **BEACHES – ORGANIZED WITH BEACH CLUBS**

At organized beach clubs, a maximum of 40 people will be allowed per 1,000m<sup>2</sup>; an entrance/exit count will be carried out to make sure this measure is respected. A minimum distance of 4 meters must be maintained between individual umbrellas, each of which will provide shade for two sun loungers at most – this does not apply to families with children. Two sunbeds that are under different umbrellas cannot be placed closer to each other than 1.5m.

Placing a towel on top of sun loungers is mandatory and considered the responsibility of the user. The staff at organized beaches and beach clubs are required to disinfect sun loungers/chairs after every use. Additionally, they must regularly disinfect sanitary facilities and post a schedule of that cleaning for official review.

Cantinas and beach bars will operate on a take-away basis; seating will not be allowed. Customers waiting in line to be served will have to remain at least 1.5m apart. The sale of alcohol is currently forbidden on beaches, but a review of that policy is expected.

## **BOATS (FERRIES)**

Boats (ferries) will travel at 50% capacity – or 55% for boats with cabins on board. Passengers will be required to answer a series of questions and have their temperatures taken before boarding. Passengers who present symptoms or are deemed at risk of infection (e.g. due to exposure to a Covid-19 patient in the 14 previous days) will be refused permission to board the boat.

Passengers inside the boat will have to remain at a 1.5m distance from each other, and the number of aircraft-type seats will be reduced. One person maximum will be allowed in each cabin, except for families of up to 4 people, and people with disabilities traveling with companions.

The use of a mask on board vessels is mandatory. Crews have been trained to respond to potential coronavirus cases, and boats will be disinfected after completing each sea route. Further policy updates are expected as of June 15.

## **CAMPING**

The “golden rule” of maintain a distance of at least 1.5m between people who don’t belong to the same family or friend circle and do not live under the same roof applies here, too.

Tents and camper vans must be at least 5 meters apart on the entrance/exit side, and 3 meters apart on every other side. Upon arrival, customers must agree to and comply with the instructions and safety measures – establishments reserve the right to refuse entrance to anyone refusing to cooperate.

The use of masks is advised in interior covered spaces. Entrance to the site, as well as passage through it and the use of the campground facilities will be restricted to customers only. All common-use areas and facilities, as well as rental equipment, will be thoroughly disinfected on a regular basis.

## **CHECK-IN/CHECK-OUT AT HOTELS**

Check-in and check-out times have been changed – check-out to 11 a.m. and check-in to 3 p.m.. The added time between each check-out and check-in is necessary to ensure that each room is thoroughly disinfected between stays, and that the space is adequately ventilated.

You may see a plexiglass screen at the reception desk – their presence is at the discretion of hotel management. Hand sanitizers, on the other hand, are mandatory.

Other measures the hotel must perform include disinfecting all card keys after each stay. Wherever possible, you are encouraged to check in at an outdoor reception station. The use of electronic alternatives to check-in and check-out, such as Mobile Concierge apps, is preferable, as are electronic payments upon check-out. It is likely that any accounts, invoices or receipts will be sent to you via email. Cash will only be accepted under exceptional circumstances.

## **DRINK & EAT**

At present, all seating at restaurants and café-bars is outdoors only; indoor spaces might reopen on June 15. The minimum distance allowed between tables ranges from 70cm to 170cm, and no more than six people are allowed at one table, although these restrictions do not apply to families with children.

Information signs will remind people of individual hygiene rules and of safety measures applying to all spaces. Customers will be encouraged to make electronic transactions. Sanitizer gel will be available at cash registers; if the owner deems it necessary, a protective plexiglass screen will be installed, as well as markings on the floor to delimit safe distances for queuing.

## **EMERGENCY NUMBERS**

The European Emergency Number is 112. For any Covid-19-related inquiries, dial 1135.

## **FINES**

The fine for not using a mask where required is €150.

## **FLIGHTS**

All of the country's airports are expected to open for international flights on July 1. Until then, all international flights to and from Greece will fly in and out of Eleftherios Venizelos International Airport or Thessaloniki Airport (the latter from June 15).

## **GARDENS/ PARKS**

The 1.5m safety distance applies for parks and public gardens, too; the use of masks is advised.

## **HAIRDRESSERS/BEAUTY SALONS**

Hair and beauty salons operate by appointment only, with a minimum 2m distance between stations/chairs. The use of masks is mandatory for everyone, and employees must wear disposable gloves as well. Working hours have been extended from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. on weekdays and 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Saturdays.

## **HOUSEKEEPING AT HOTELS**

Housekeeping will be less frequent during stays, and turndown services have been abolished. Towels and sheets will be changed upon customer request only. As you enter your room for the first time, look for the sign that will tell you when and how your room was last cleaned.

Hotel owners have the choice between two cleaning options: they can either clean it in the usual way after a customer leaves and keep it closed for 24 hours until the next one comes, or perform a thorough cleansing and disinfection using a steam cleaner, UV rays or other such equipment on all room and bathroom surfaces.

Hotel owners have been advised to get rid of decorative objects such as throw pillows. Getting rid of reusable items likely to be shared, such as menus and magazines, is recommended as well. Disposable covers will be placed on TV and air conditioner remote controls. Upholstery fabric must be cleaned with a vapor steam cleaner – at temperatures exceeding 70°C.

## **INFORMATION (HEALTH-RELATED) @ HOTELS**

Upon arrival, you're advised to ask about the establishment's policy in case of health incidents and about the medical facilities in the general area, including the public and private hospitals, Covid-19 referral hospitals, and the pharmacies. Hotels are advised to provide printed brochures with basic health instructions translated into English, French and German, as no such electronic app currently exists.

## **LIVE PERFORMANCES**

Live performances will begin after July 15 and will take place exclusively at outdoor venues. Artists and crew must wear face masks on stage and maintain a distance of at least 1.5 meters between each other. Venues will operate at 40% capacity to allow distances to be kept. The stage will be set at least 3 meters away from the first row of seats; for concerts where the audience is standing, a distance of 1.5 meters must be maintained between members of the audience.

## **MASKS**

The use of disposable or reusable fabric masks is mandatory on the Metro (subway) and all other forms of public transportation, including taxis, shuttle buses, and other tourist vehicles. Face masks must also be worn in shops.

## **MUSEUMS**

Museums are expected to open on June 15. More information will follow on their mode of operation – naturally, visitors will have to keep a distance of 2 meters between each other. Museums can only use air conditioning where these are open-circuit (i.e. allow fresh air to enter the building). A limited number of people will be allowed entry every hour. The use protective masks and alcohol-based antiseptic hand sanitizer is recommended.

## **OPEN-AIR CINEMAS**

This summer delight comes back to us on June 1, but will operate with new safety rules – the most important one being the reduction of the number of seats to 40% of the theater’s capacity. It is likely that ticket offices will open two hours prior to movies’ start times, and stop ticket sales 15 minutes before so that people have time to properly take their seats while maintaining social distancing. Here too, the use of masks and alcohol-based hand sanitizer will be recommended on entry.

## **PRIVATE BEACHES @ HOTELS & RESORTS**

Seats of any kind must be placed in such a way that the distance between two people sitting under two different umbrellas is no less than 3 meters in any direction. People will be discouraged from placing their towels or beach mats within the “safe distance areas”. Towels large enough to cover all of a seat’s surfaces will be provided and disinfected after every use.

## **QUEUES**

Greeks have recently shown remarkable discipline in complying with the “queuing regulations” now in place (okay, with a few exceptions). The main rule to observe is to remain at least 1.5 – 2 meters from others in the queue. In many shops and other areas floor markings have been placed to aid with physical distancing.

## **RENT A CAR**

Rental cars will be disinfected between uses by different clients. Additionally, the number of passengers allowed will be restricted: For cars with up to five seats, only the driver plus one passenger will be allowed in the vehicle. For those with 6-7 seats, the driver plus two passengers. For eight or nine-seat vehicles, the driver will be allowed to carry up to 3 passengers. These restrictions do not apply for families with children.

## **SHOPPING**

You may need to wait for a few minutes before entering many shops. Smaller ones up to 20 m<sup>2</sup> will be able to host a maximum of 4 people at the same time (including employees). Stores from 20 to 100 m<sup>2</sup> can have a maximum of 4 people inside plus one person for every additional 10 m<sup>2</sup>. Stores 100 m<sup>2</sup> and above will be able to welcome a maximum of 12 people, plus one more person for every additional 15 m<sup>2</sup>. Distances of at least 1.5 meters must be maintained by customers and employees and the use of masks is mandatory.

## **SWIMMING POOLS**

Sunbeds must be placed so that two people sitting under two different umbrellas, or two people staying in two different rooms maintain a distance of at least 2 meters in every direction. Every time a customer leaves, seats, tables, security boxes, menus and any other item the next customer may use must be disinfected. Pools are advised to provide towels covering beds' surfaces as well as to clean every sunbed / chair between uses. It is recommended that cushions and fabric coverings be removed from sunbeds.

The use of indoor swimming pools is forbidden until further notice. Opaque dividers are recommended for swimming pool showers, to allow people to thoroughly wash before entering and after exiting the water. Swimming pools are advised to provide all necessary amenities (soap, shower gel, etc.) as well as antiseptic gel by the shower entrance

## **TOUR BUSES**

All tourist buses are allowed to operate at up to 50% capacity. All passengers must wear protective masks on board. All tour buses must provide hand sanitizer by the entrance. Companies are advised to install transparent protective dividers in buses between the driver and the passengers. On special open-air tourist buses, at stops passengers will only be allowed to embark after all those getting off have done so. After each route, the cleaning of surfaces and high contact spots (e.g. handles) is advised.

## **TRANSFER CARS**

Customer transport will be allowed via private transfers only. Vehicles with up to 5 seats can carry no more than one passenger plus the driver. Companions of people with disabilities are exempt from this rule. 6-7 seat cars can carry the driver plus two passengers, while 8-9 seat cars can carry up to 3 passengers. The passenger limit will not apply if the passengers are parents with their children. The driver and passengers must all wear masks.

## **VISITORS @ HOTEL ROOMS**

Rooms in hotels and resorts, as well as tents and campers at campsites, are for customer-use only. No visitors will be permitted.

## **WATERSPORTS**

Anything that comes in contact with customers – every surface, life jacket, wetsuit etc – must be cleaned and disinfected between each use. Only members of the same family, or individuals able to maintain a 2m distance between them, will be allowed on any single piece of equipment (such as a canoe or inflatable ride).

## **YACHTS**

Faraway destinations where medical help is scant are to be avoided. The maximum number of passengers allowed on board will depend on a boat's size and the number of passengers allowed by its license. On every boat there will be a book with all passenger details and their hours of embarking and disembarking, which must be available in written or electronic form for inspection by port and health authorities. The only people allowed on board will be the people who have boarded from the start of the journey. No other passengers or visitors will be allowed on board at intermediate stops.

Additionally, a log must be kept to monitor everyone's health on board: all crew and passengers will have their temperatures taken once daily and logged. If somebody starts developing Covid-19 symptoms on board – a cough, fever, shortness of breath – this must be logged in the book and a prearranged plan for dealing with a suspected coronavirus case must be activated. There must be sufficient quantities of antiseptic, disinfectant, cleaning supplies and personal protection equipment for all on board.

## **ZEUS**

The God of philoxenia (hospitality) wishes you a great, safe holiday in Greece!

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This article first appeared in [Greece-Is.com](https://www.greece-is.com), an English-language publishing initiative by Kathimerini.