

Vermont Ski Resort COVID-19 Winter Operations Guidance

1

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This guidance is designed to ensure Vermonters, ski area guests, and ski area employees remain safe and healthy through the 2020/2021 winter operating season.

This mandatory guidance has been issued in accordance with Executive Order 01-20 issued and amended by Governor Phil Scott. It has been developed by the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development in cooperation with the Vermont Department of Health, Vermont Department of Public Safety and the Vermont Ski Areas Association.

This guidance may change during the 2020/2021 season depending on public health and safety concerns.

CONTENTS

1. Create a Plan in Accordance with State Guidance	3
2. Workforce Considerations	4
a. Employee Training and Education Plan	
b. Health Monitoring for Employees	
c. Seasonal Workers	
d. Health Monitoring for Contractors	
3. Communications	8
a. Internal	
b. External / Guests	
c. Seasonal Workers	
d. Out-of-State Staffing	
e. Health Monitoring for Contractors	
4. Operations	9
a. Operations and Physical Distancing Plan	
b. Ticket Sales	
c. Contact Tracing / Travel Policy Attestation	
d. Rental Equipment	
e. Lift Operations	
f. Day-Use Lodges	
g. Ski School/Children's Programs	
h. Ski Patrol	
i. Lenient Reservation Policy	
5. Appendix	12
a. Trade Associations	
b. Resources	
c. National Industry Guidelines and Recommendations	

1) Create a Plan in Accordance with State Guidance

Vermont's ski areas will create, have on file and follow their own customized winter operating plans built upon this accepted general plan, which includes state regulations and guidance from the Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD), Vermont Department of Health, the CDC and VOSHA. These plans will address employee policies, queuing, recommended distancing, monitoring, and managing guest traffic in designated areas, and cleaning / disinfecting.

Ski areas shall follow existing guidance for portions of their operations covered by existing state and federal guidance, including:

- ACCD [Business Restart](#), [Restart Worksafe Guidance](#) and [CDC Guidelines for Business and Employers](#), [CDC Guidance for Recreational Facilities](#) and [CDC Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting for Public Spaces Workplaces and Businesses](#).
- ACCD's sector-specific guidance: [Outdoor Recreation Businesses](#); [Bars, Restaurants, Catering and Food Service](#) (except for lodges used for day use addressed elsewhere in this guidance); [Lodging and Accommodations](#).
- ACCD's phased restart guidance for: [Outdoor Recreation Businesses, Facilities and Organizations](#); [Retail Operations](#); [Lodging, Campgrounds and Other Accommodations](#); [Restaurants, Catering, Food Service and Bars](#) (except for lodges used for day use addressed elsewhere in this guidance); [Close Contact Businesses Stage 2](#) for applicable activities; and [Event Venues](#).
- Facial coverings mandate as stated in [Addendum 2 to Amended and Restated Executive Order No. 01-20](#), [ACCD Business Customer and General Public Mask Use](#) and according to [VDH Face Mask Guidelines](#)

In the case of extreme weather, sporting injuries or any other risks of physical harm, addressing these life safety concerns takes priority when in conflict with any of this guidance.

2) Workforce Considerations

a. Employee Training and Education Plan

- All employees will receive CDC, OSHA and State-required training during onboarding (including proper distancing, hand washing, PPE use and disposal, cleaning and disinfecting, [COVID symptoms](#) and stay home (or go home) when sick following CDC, VOSHA and industry best practices. At minimum, training to cover the VOSHA [Protecting the Health and Safety of Workers](#) content.
- Employees must pass pre-shift health screenings and obtain PPE necessary for their job duties. Symptomatic employees should not report to work and will be immediately sent home.
- Employees will be required to wear PPE and face coverings as required by ACCD/VDH guidelines and maintain proper distancing.
- Employees will have easy and frequent access to soap and water or hand sanitizer.
- All business operations must have a designated health and safety officer on-site who monitors and has the authority to stop or modify activities to ensure compliance with mandatory health and safety requirements.

b. Health Monitoring Policy for Employees

- Train all staff at on-boarding on mandatory daily self-health check and illness reporting procedures based on ACCD, VDH/CDC guidelines.
- Employees with [COVID symptoms](#) are not to report to work and should self-quarantine/isolate per VDH guidelines.
- Safety officer to be designated prior to the start of each shift to track illness reports of employees that become or are suspected of illness and ensures compliance with VDH/CDC guidelines.
- Prior to the commencement of each work shift, all employees shall complete a health survey either in person at the worksite or prior to arriving the worksite, per guidance listed under the [ACCD Phased Restart Work Safe Guidance](#). See [State of Vermont model pre-screening procedures](#).

[Employee screening](#) questions:

- In the past 14 days have you had close contact with a person confirmed to have COVID-19?
- Today, or in the past 24 hours have you had any of the following symptoms?
 - Fever (>100.4°F or greater) or chills
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Fatigue
 - Muscle or body aches
 - Headache
 - New loss of Taste or Smell
 - Sore throat
 - Congestion or runny nose
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Diarrhea

- Safety/Health officer monitors PPE, procedural compliance and illness reporting. Employees who become symptomatic while at work are to immediately report this to safety/health officer. [VDH guidance](#) will be followed if an employee becomes symptomatic on site.
- If an employee tests positive for COVID, [VDH guidance](#) will be followed, including gathering appropriate information for contact tracing, supporting employees asked to stay home from work and CDC guidance for [cleaning and disinfecting the workplace](#).

c. Seasonal Workers

- Ski areas hosting long-term seasonal workers who travel to Vermont must put in place a quarantine process that restricts these workers from interacting with other seasonal workers, employees of the ski area, or guests until the workers have quarantined for 14 days or 7 days and a negative PCR test

d. Out-of-State Staffing

- Resorts shall reduce the number of employees and volunteers who come to Vermont for weekend work – such as ski patrol, ski instructors and other work. They must operate with the minimum out-of-state staff necessary to safely operate the resort.
- The state’s existing travel guidance does not require quarantine for those traveling for work – however, relying on a large number of out-of-state workers who travel from areas with a high incidence of COVID-19 poses additional risk that could inversely impact a resort’s ability to operate.

- When out-of-state staff who have not quarantined do come to Vermont to work, the state's travel policy only allows them to participate in work related activities without quarantining. When not conducting work, they should reduce social contacts and avoid crowds.

e. Health Monitoring Policy for Contractors

- Contractors will be provided ski area COVID Response Plan detailing personal hygiene, self-health checks, PPE and physical distancing policies prior to arrival and again upon arrival.
- Mandatory daily self-health check: Safety/Health officer documents, daily, for contractors while working on site.
- Safety/Health officer to document reported illnesses for contact tracing and assess general contractor compliance.
- Contractors must follow all PPE and protocols for employees including ACCD, VDH and VOSHA requirements, and pass daily health screening.
- Contractors must take online [VOSHA training](#) and provide host ski area with the certificate of completion for each worker to be kept on file.
- Ski area will keep a 30-day log of all contractors working or staying at the ski area with contact information for possible contact tracing.

Out-of-state contractors performing currently authorized work:

- Prior to arrival, ski area provides contractor with letter stating the work they will be doing and the dates; Contractor asked to keep it with them when traveling.
- Host ski area to document each contractor/worker's daily health self-certification; form that the contractor completes and signs each day that is kept on file.
- Contractor must complete host ski area training regarding health self-certifications and work protocols
- Contractors should be encouraged to get tested at one of the pop-up testing sites (not mandatory)

Contractors must self-certify upon arrival by answering [contractor screening](#) questions:

- In the past 14 days have you had close contact with a person confirmed to have COVID-19?
- Today, or in the past 24 hours have you had any of the following symptoms?
 - Fever (>100.4°F or greater) or chills
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Fatigue
 - Muscle or body aches
 - Headache
 - New loss of Taste or Smell
 - Sore throat
 - Congestion or runny nose
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Diarrhea

3) Communications, Postings and Notifications

a. Internal Communications

- Signs will be posted at all entrances clearly indicating that anyone with symptoms of respiratory illness or who has been exposed to another person known to have COVID-19 may not enter.
- All employees receive notification with protocols prior to or when returning to work and training on all CDC, OSHA and State health and safety requirements.
- Employees with symptoms are not to report to work, will self-quarantine.
- Postings in all employee entrances and work areas with CDC, OSHA and State requirements related to safety, health, cleaning/disinfection, self-monitoring, compliance and enforcement. [See ACCD signage guidance.](#)

b. External Communications / Guest Communications

- Ski areas will make every effort to communicate their plans and requirements to guests prior to guest arrival via digital communication channels such as website, email and social media. Communications will stress that guests have a shared responsibility for keeping themselves, other guests and employees healthy. Guests will be made aware of their obligations to self-screen for symptoms and stay home when they are sick, follow state travel restrictions; respect other guests and employees; wear facial coverings except when seated and eating/drinking, maintain recommended physical distancing from other groups and practice good hygiene, including frequent washing/sanitizing of hands.
- **Implement measures, including signage, point-of-sale notifications, and registration processes, that reinforce that the business/activities are open only for Vermont residents and those who have met the state's quarantine requirement.**
- Clearly visible signage in all areas frequented by guests with CDC, State health and safety requirements, sanitation protocols - including registration, check in, activity start points and other public areas. [See ACCD signage guidance.](#)
- Clearly visible signage by delivery entrances used by vendors with CDC and State health and safety requirements.

4) Operations

a. Operations and Physical Distancing Plan

- All CDC, OSHA or State guidelines for physical distancing followed for employees and facilitated for guest queueing, activities, facilities.
- Employee locker rooms, break rooms and designated common areas will have limited occupancy. Shift start times will be staggered to avoid employee gathering. High-touch surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected regularly.
- Use of shared workstations is discouraged; at minimum, area will be cleaned and disinfected before the next employee use.
- Employees who are not essential to work on site will follow state guidelines for remote work.
- Guest shuttle services will follow state operating guidance for capacity and facilitation of recommended distancing between guests of different households/groups. Employees and riders must wear cloth face coverings. Shuttle must be cleaned/disinfected regularly.
- Vendor deliveries will be scheduled and follow ski area requirements.

b. Contact Tracing / Travel Policy Attestation

- Resorts must collect the name, phone number, and email address in an electronic format of all people using the resort each day, and retain the list for 30 days for the purposes of contact tracing. This list must include all guests using the resort, including season pass holders. Whenever possible, the resort should include the guest's physical address.
- Resorts must require guests to attest that the guest will be in compliance with the state's travel and quarantine policies when they use the resort either at the point of sale of a ticket or season pass OR when collecting contact tracing information. Resorts must be able to demonstrate to state authorities that each guest completed an attestation. Attestations must include a warning that failure to comply with the state's travel and quarantine policy may result in the loss of future skiing and riding privileges.
- Whenever possible, a resort should collect the name, phone number, address and email address in an electronic format of all people using any indoor space, such as a lodge or cafeteria, including the time, date and where they sat, and retain the list for 30 days.

c. Ticket Sales

- Contactless reservation, purchase and other processes are recommended whenever possible.
- Sneeze guards recommended to be installed at all in-person points of sale and outside-facing ticket windows should be used for on-site purchases whenever possible.

d. Rental Equipment

- Contactless reservation and purchase processes will be used whenever possible.
- Equipment pick up and drop off processes to allow for recommended physical distancing.
- Equipment rented to guests will be cleaned and disinfected prior to use by the next guest.

e. Lift Operations

- Manage lift line queuing to facilitate six foot physical distancing between parties.
- Facial coverings are required in lift queues and while riding lifts.
- Guests will have the opportunity to ride with members of their traveling party, or load at no more than 50 percent capacity with other skiers and riders.
- Enclosed lifts shall only serve members of the same traveling group or provide 6 feet of distance between traveling groups. Windows of enclosed lifts shall remain open.

e. Day-Use Lodges

- Lodges are multi-purpose buildings used for warming and a variety of services.
- Capacity must be reduced to 50 percent fire occupancy or managed to facilitate 6-foot physical distance between traveling parties (whichever is less) with no more than 75 people in any unique indoor space.
 - Resorts should collect names, phone numbers, email addresses and addresses in electronic form of all users of a day-use lodge, when they used the lodge, and where they sat, and retain the list for 30 days.
 - Safety officers must be on hand to ensure compliance and actively manage capacity.
 - Lodges must have directional walkways in place to reduce close contact between guests (a designated entrance and exit, large aisles clearly marked with directional flow).
 - Systems must be put into place to reduce and manage customer access and ensure capacity limits are not exceeded. These systems shall include one of the following mechanisms or something similar:
 - A reservation system for those wishing to use the lodge.
 - Metered use systems such as:
 - Restrictions for use of the lodge based on first letter of the guest's last name. Allowing A-Ls to use the lodge on even hours and M-Zs to use the lodge on odd hours.
 - Ticketing systems for access to the lodge.

- Strict limits must be in place to reduce how long guest stay in the lodge (recommend no more than 30 minutes).
- Furniture placement, removal and alterations to help facilitate physical distancing requirements between travel parties.
- Restricting access to the lodge to only those passholders and lift ticket holders actively skiing or riding that day (no loitering by non-skiers/riders).
- Whenever possible, the resort should put contact tracing mechanisms in place to collect the name and phone number of guests using the lodge, including at what time they used the lodge.
- Masks must be worn by all guests and staff in the lodge unless the guest is actively eating or drinking.
- Bathrooms, cafeteria lines, and other congregation points must be actively managed to reduce capacity and ensure 6-foot physical distancing occurs.

f. Ski School/Children's Programs

- Programs must follow the State of Vermont's [Childcare and Out-of-School-Care-Guidance](#). If outdoor temperatures inhibit the functionality of thermometers, programs shall ask customers to check their own temperatures before arriving.
- Encourage use of online reservation processes
- Collect contact tracing information
- Conduct staff training on touchless teaching techniques
- Utilize tactics such as staggered start / end times and dispersed line ups to help guests and staff to physically distance as recommended
- Limit group class sizes to allow for physical distancing
- Offer lesson/experience products tailored to individual family groups
- Utilize non-traditional spaces such as utility buildings and storage spaces or available lodging units for warm up breaks due to capacity restrictions in lodge facilities
- Consult guidance from the [Professional Ski Instructors Association and American Association of Snowboard Instructors \(PSIA/AASI\)](#)

g. Ski Patrol

- Follow guidance from National Ski Patrol (NSP), VDH and/or EMS
- Establish process for admission to clinic and limit access to patient and one family member or friend to accompany patient

h. Reservation Policy

- Resorts shall offer lenient cancellation policies to discourage guests who are sick or those impacted by a change in the state's COVID-19 travel policy from traveling to Vermont.

5) Appendix

a. Trade Associations



[VT Ski Areas Association](#)



[National Ski Areas Association](#)



[National Ski Patrol](#)



[Professional Ski Instructors of America/American Association of Snowboard Instructors](#)

b. Resources

[ACCD/VDH Health & Safety Requirements for All Businesses](#)

[ACCD/VDH Sector Guidance for Outdoor Recreation](#)

[OSHA Guidance for Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#)

[VDH Guidance for Communities and Workplaces](#)

[CDC Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces](#)

c. National Industry Guidelines and Recommendations:



The [National Ski Areas Association \(NSAA\)](#) is responsible for creating foundational best practices for the ski industry, including the nationally-accepted Your Responsibility Code, which defines the basic tenets of slope safety. The ski industry's stable of experts creates _____

[Vermont Ski Resort COVID-19 Winter Operations Guidance](#)
Mandatory Guidance for Ski Resorts



standards for ski, snowboard, and lift safety. NSAA serves as the secretariat of the American National Standards Accredited Committee B77, which develops design requirements, specifications for training and operation and maintenance requirements for aerial ropeways.



[National Ski Patrol](#) is a federally chartered 501(c)(3) nonprofit membership association. As the leading authority of on-mountain safety, **the NSP is dedicated to serving the outdoor recreation industry** by providing education and accreditation to emergency care and safety service providers.



[Professional Ski Instructors of America/American Association of Snowboard Instructors](#)

PSIA/AASI establishes certification standards for instructors and develops educational materials to help its more than 32,000 members reach their certification goals; inspires lifelong passion for the mountain experience and provides members with innovative and practical resources.



[IAAPA](#) is the premier trade association representing the diverse and ever-changing attractions industry. For over a century we have connected companies of all sizes, and people of all levels, to provide meaningful experiences for their guests around the world. [IAAPA Guidance](#)