

# WEST VIRGINIA STRONG

## *The Comeback*

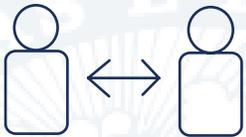


**A Guide to Safely  
Reopening Whitewater Rafting**

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## A Guide to Safely Reopening Whitewater Rafting

Under Gov. Justice's reopening plan, **West Virginia Strong — The Comeback**, whitewater rafting business are to be allowed to re-open. To do so, Gov. Justice has issued the following guidance to mitigate the exposure and spread of COVID-19 among employees and customers. These guidelines, in addition to any and all relevant guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (WV DHHR), will help West Virginians safely obtain the services provided by such facilities. Businesses are strongly encouraged to implement more stringent protocols as they see fit.



**Note:** Effective as of July 7, 2020, all individuals over the age of 9 are required to wear face coverings when in confined, indoor spaces, other than one's residence or while actively engaged in the consumption of food and/or beverage, and when not able to adequately social distance from other individuals who do not reside in the same household, pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order 50-20.

Per CDC Guidance, exempt from this requirement are:

- children younger than 2 years old,
- anyone who has trouble breathing through a face covering, and
- persons who are unable to remove the face covering without assistance.

As your business reviews and implements these new measures, we encourage you to share and discuss them with your employees and your customers. Communicating enhanced cleaning and sanitization practices will make workers and patrons feel more confident in your business.

Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in appropriate enforcement measures. All existing laws and guidelines issued by the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources remain in effect.

## A GUIDE TO SAFELY REOPENING WHITEWATER RAFTING

### PATRON GUIDANCE

- **PPE:** Per Executive Order 50-20, all individuals over the age of 9 are required to use face coverings (masks, bandannas, face shields, etc.) when in confined, indoor spaces, other than one's residence or while actively engaged in the consumption of food and/or beverage, and when not able to adequately social distance from other individuals who do not reside in the same household. Patrons should be required to use cloth or disposable face coverings when safe and appropriate to do so.
- **Self-screening:** Encourage all patrons to self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms with the following questions:
  - Have you been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19?
  - Are you experiencing a cough, shortness of breath, or sore throat?
  - Have you had a fever in the last 48 hours?
  - Have you had new loss of taste or smell?
  - Have you had vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours?
- **Temperature checks:** Patrons are encouraged to take their temperature prior to arriving.
- **Sick patrons:** Any patron or visitor who exhibits COVID-19 symptoms (i.e., answers yes to any of the screening questions or who is running a fever) should seek medical care and/ or COVID-19 testing, per CDC guidelines.
- **Physical distancing:** All patrons must practice proper social distancing, minimum of six (6) feet where practical and safe to do so.
- **Shared equipment:** Rafters are prohibited from sharing equipment with anyone outside their immediate group.

### OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE

- **Limited group size:** Group size cannot exceed eight (8) guests and one (1) guide per raft. Groups are limited to patrons who arrive together and/or reside together. Mixed groups of rafters who do not arrive together and/or reside together are prohibited.
- **Buses:** Groups on buses must be spaced six (6) feet apart, and the maximum capacity permitted on a fifty-five (55) person capacity bus is eighteen (18) guests. Everyone on the bus must wear face coverings, and all windows must be down. Buses must be properly sanitized after each use.
- **Shuttles:** 15-passenger shuttles may only be used to transport one individual group (that is, a group of rafters who arrive or reside together) at a time. Everyone on the shuttle must wear face coverings, and all windows must be down. Shuttles must be properly sanitized after each use.
- **Put-in and takeout schedule:** Outfitters must coordinate to stagger the loading and unloading of rafts and launching and takeout of rafts to maintain proper social distancing. Guests must remain on the buses/rafts until their group loads or unloads.
- **Dispersed groups:** Outfitters should maximize the distance between rafts while on the river.
- **Reservations:** Outfitters must implement an advanced reservation model for all guided trips.
- **Signage:** Post extensive signage on health policies, including the following documents in the workplace to help educate all on COVID-19 best practices:
  - [CDC: Stop the Spread of Germs](#)
  - [CDC: COVID-19 Symptoms](#)
- **Outdoors:** Where possible, all check-out, check-in and payment processing should occur outdoors.
- **Hand sanitizer for patrons:** Provide hand sanitizer for use by patrons, including contactless hand sanitizing stations when available. Hand sanitizer must be available on buses and rafts.

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- **No entry:** Patrons are not permitted to enter or exit facilities except to access restrooms, check-in, check-out or make a payment. Mark ingress/egress to and from all facilities to establish paths that mitigate proximity for guests and staff. Access to specialty retail or dining facilities must meet the previously set forth requirements.
- **Meals on the river:** Individually packaged lunches are encouraged, and buffets are prohibited. Groups must maintain proper social distancing during lunch.

## EMPLOYEE SAFETY

- **Screen employees:** Screen all employees reporting to work daily for COVID-19 symptoms with the following questions:
  - Have you been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19?
  - Are you experiencing a cough, shortness of breath, or sore throat? ○ Have you had a fever in the last 48 hours?
  - Have you had new loss of taste or smell? ○ Have you had vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours?
- **Temperature checks:** Employees are encouraged to take their temperature prior to leaving for work. If their temperature measures over 100 degrees, the employee should notify management and not return to work that day and any future days when the temperature is over 100 degrees.
- **Sick employees:** Direct any employee who exhibits COVID-19 symptoms (i.e., answers yes to any of the screening questions or who is running a fever) to leave the premises immediately and seek medical care and/or COVID-19 testing, per CDC guidelines. Employers should maintain the confidentiality of employee health information.
- **PPE:** Employees must wear proper personal protection equipment (PPE), including cloth face coverings, wherever safe and appropriate to do so.
- **Physical distancing:** All employees must practice proper social distancing, minimum of six (6) feet where practical and safe to do so. Employees should minimize contact with patrons as practical.
- **Tracing:** Develop and implement policies and procedures for employee contact tracing following employee with a positive COVID-19 test and inform the local health department of such positive test and tracing.
- **Training:** Train all employees on the importance and expectation of increased frequency of handwashing, and the use of hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol; provide clear instruction to avoid touching hands to face.
- **Sanitization:** Disinfecting wipes and hand sanitizer should be made available on buses and rafts or shared spaces among employees. If disinfecting wipes and hand sanitizer are unavailable, ensure an adequate supply of hand soap is available for employees.
- **At-risk individuals:** Consider special accommodations for employees that are members of a vulnerable population, like senior citizens or immunocompromised people, including encouraging teleworking to the maximum extent possible among other measures.

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### CLEANING & SANITIZATION

- **Cleaning solutions:** Cleaning products and protocols shall include [EPA-approved disinfectants](#) that meet CDC requirements for use and effectiveness against viruses, bacteria and other airborne and bloodborne pathogens.
- **Pre-shift equipment cleaning:** Employees shall disinfect touch points on all equipment at the beginning of each shift and on a regular schedule throughout the day.
- **Workplace and equipment cleaning:** Implement workplace cleaning and disinfection practices including sanitizing common surfaces such as rafts, paddles, coolers, bus seats, bus rails, and personal flotation devices at least every two hours or immediately after each use. For more information, please refer to the [CDC guidelines on disinfecting public spaces](#).

### COMMUNICATION

- **Online media:** Outfitters are encouraged to communicate new safety and social distancing measures to patrons through online mediums, including website, social media and email communication. Where applicable, questions from patrons are to be answered over the phone or through an online chat software to reduce face-to-face interaction.
- **Install barriers:** Where practicable, physical barriers such as partitions or plexiglass at cash registers or other areas of interaction.
- **Use technology:** Where practicable, use technological solutions to reduce person-to-person interaction for reservations and payment.

### AMENITIES

- **Lodging:** All lodging providers must follow Gov. Justice's most recent guidelines for lodging providers and campground managers.
  - [Click here to review lodging guidelines.](#)
  - [Click here to review camping guidelines.](#)
- **Food & beverage services:** Onsite restaurants must follow Gov. Justice's most recent guidelines for restaurants.
  - [Click here to review restaurant guidelines.](#)
- **Pools & fitness centers:** Pools and fitness centers must follow Gov. Justice's most recent guidelines for pools and fitness centers.
  - [Click here to view pool and fitness center guidelines.](#)
- Justice's most recent guidelines for outdoor recreation outfitters.
  - [Click here to view outdoor recreation outfitter guidelines.](#)
- **Meeting & conference spaces:** Onsite meeting and banquet arrangements shall allow for physical distancing between guests based on CDC recommendations. Outfitters providers must also follow the group gathering limits set forth in Governor's Justice's Safer at Home Order.
  - [Click here to view Safer & Home Order.](#)
- **Gift shops:** Onsite giftshops must follow Gov. Justice's most recent guidelines for specialty retail stores.
  - [Click here to view specialty retail guidelines.](#)

In addition to the specific guidelines for West Virginia whitewater rafting outfitters above, businesses and their employees should be mindful of the more general guidance issued for small businesses and outdoor recreational [outfitters](#), found at [governor.wv.gov](http://governor.wv.gov)

For more information, visit [governor.wv.gov](http://governor.wv.gov)