



Monday, March 2, 2020

An open letter to the meetings industry

During tough times, we must continue to follow the facts

Dear meeting and event professionals:

At this time, no federal restrictions are in place to prevent travel within the United States. However, misinformation – in the news, on social media and among colleagues – has led to rising concerns and premature calls for meeting cancellations.

As of now, anyone hosting or attending a meeting in the U.S. may proceed as planned, while continuing to consult information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and local public health authorities. Of note: some companies and city leaders have announced internal travel restrictions, which vary on a case-by-case basis, and primarily involve international meetings.

The situation is evolving rapidly and we expect the influx of questions and need for resources to remain steady, particularly for frontline meeting and travel employees. In addition to providing updates and coordinating with emergency responders from the health and safety community, the Meetings Mean Business Coalition (MMBC) is committed to providing tailored resources and communications assistance to industry professionals.

[MMBC's coronavirus preparedness toolkit](#) has industry-specific messaging and materials, including talking points, template press materials and sample social media content. The toolkit also includes links to issue roundups, webinar recordings, press statements and business intelligence from MMBC member organizations – the U.S. Travel Association, Professional Convention Management Association, Events Industry Council, American Society of Association Executives, International Association of Exhibitions & Events, American Hotel & Lodging Association and Meeting Professionals International.

Moving forward, MMBC will continue to monitor the situation and provide updated information and resources as needed for industry professionals. We will continue to engage with health and safety authorities on any planned or anticipated measures that may impact travel. Currently, authorities are recommending the same personal best practices that are standard for a typical flu season (e.g., frequent hand washing).

As a coalition, we are committed to addressing misinformation and popular misconceptions about business travel in the news and on social media. Our goal is to ensure facts about the coronavirus are understood, and we thank everyone who is assisting in efforts to promote the latest guidance and expert advice.

We recognize the months – even years – of work that precede a major meeting and applaud industry professionals who are managing as best they can through this unfortunate and unanticipated situation. Our hope is that travelers continue to exercise healthy meeting habits and that some reassurance is granted to those hosting and attending meetings in unaffected areas during this time.

Sincerely,

The Meetings Mean Business Coalition, including:

Accor Hotels
AMC Institute

American Hotel & Lodging Association
American Society of Association Executives



Associated Luxury Hotels International
Association Forum
Bloomington Convention & Visitors Bureau
Caesars Entertainment Corporation
Choose Chicago
Conference Direct
Destinations International
Discover Puerto Rico
Events Industry Council
Financial & Insurance Conference Professionals
Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau
Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau
Greater Palm Springs Convention & Visitors Bureau
Hello! Destination Management
HelmsBriscoe
Houston First
Hyatt Hotels Corporation
International Association of Exhibitions & Events
Las Vegas Sands Corporation
Los Angeles Tourism & Convention Board
Maritz Global Events
Marriott International
Meeting Professionals International
MGM Resorts International

Nashville Convention & Visitors Corporation
New Orleans & Company
Northstar Travel Group
NYC & Company
Omni Hotels & Resorts
Philadelphia Convention & Visitors Bureau
Professional Convention Management Association
PSAV
San Diego Tourism Authority
San Francisco Giants
San Francisco Travel Association
Simpleview
Society for Incentive Travel Excellence
Society of Government Meeting Professionals
Society of Independent Show Organizers
U.S. Travel Association
Visit Baltimore
Visit Denver
Visit Fort Worth
Visit Indy
Visit Phoenix
Visit San Antonio
Visit Seattle
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