



MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
News Release

Tourism is Everybody's Business!

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MARIANAS' TOURISM RESUMPTION INVESTMENT PLAN LAUNCHED

Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) – The Marianas Tourism Resumption Task Force announced the details of its Tourism Resumption Investment Plan (TRIP) to stakeholders and the community on Tuesday (June 1), detailing a strategy that will maintain the destination's high COVID-19 safety standards while also meeting key expectations of travelers.

Over the initial 2-month pilot period of the program beginning in mid-July, the government will provide subsidies to airlines, hotels, travel agencies, and related businesses to help jumpstart tourism, The Marianas' primary economic driver.

“The Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA) is in full support of the plan developed by the Governor's Tourism Resumption Task Force, led by Kimberlyn King-Hinds, economist Matthew Guerrero in collaboration with MVA Board Director Ivan Quichocho, Managing Director Priscilla M. Iakopo, and Deputy Managing Director Judy Torres,” said MVA Chairwoman Viola Alepuyo, following Tuesday's MVA Board of Directors meeting where the plan was unanimously adopted. “We are confident because it is a plan based on extensive discussions with our major tourism partners and industry experts in both The Marianas and our major source markets.”

Current COVID-19 protocols that have helped The Marianas remain relatively unscathed

during the pandemic will continue to be in place with tourism resumption. All passengers will be required to show a negative PCR test for COVID-19 before boarding their flight, as required by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for any visitors entering the country.

“The Commonwealth Health Care Corp. and CNMI COVID-19 Task Force have done a tremendous job of stopping COVID-19 at our borders, and TRIP will require passengers to have a negative PCR within 72 hours prior to embarkation to The Marianas,” said Alepuyo. “The current two-test policy for arriving passengers from Guam has proven extremely effective, and we only want to broaden that protection with international flights by requiring passengers to test negative before they come to The Marianas.”

The program will start with two flights a week from Korea with an estimated 1,400 total passenger over the two month period. Visitors will still be required to take a PCR test upon arrival and again after 5 days quarantine at a single designated hybrid quarantine resort, where they will be allowed use of the facilities. Visitors will need to show a negative PCR test before leaving the quarantine resort and will thereafter continue to stay within corridor hotels on Saipan, Tinian, and/or Rota. Quarantine hotel employees will be required to stay at the resort during the quarantine period and show a negative PCR test before they are allowed to return home and into the community.

The MVA will support the restart of international travel by providing subsidies to airlines, hotels, and other involved businesses. For example, The Marianas will subsidize airlines that may be less than 40% full, however if tour packages are successfully sold and airlines have more than 40% passenger capacity, there will be no subsidy. To stimulate more economic activity, each passenger will also be provided \$250-\$500 per island (Saipan, Tinian, Rota) in Travel Bucks to spend at qualified businesses, such as optional tours, retail stores, and restaurants. Businesses interested in being a part of the Travel Corridor will need to apply and qualify for the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) Safe Travels Stamp which is a program to ensure businesses are comply with COVID-19 safety protocols enforced by MVA and the COVID-19 Task Force. Information about the WTTC Safe Travels Stamp will be made available shortly on MVA’s website at www.mymarianas.com.

“The main point is that we keep our community safe as we reopen our doors to tourists. Our goal is to make tourism resumption safe, gradual, and sustainable,” said MVA Managing Director Priscilla M. Iakopo. “Federal aid for the pandemic will be running out soon, and the

Tourism Resumption Investment Plan aims to get people back to work, businesses to reopen, and our Marianas economy running again.”

The MVA is preparing to issue Request for Proposals for participating airlines, hotels, and other partners.



FILE – Taga Beach is one of the most popular sites on the island of Tinian in The Marianas. The Marianas expects to reopen to international flights in July 2021. (Junji Takasago)

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