

PHASE III REOPENING OF TERRITORY'S BORDERS
STEERCO PUBLIC BRIEFING #4 - November 17
GOLD SEAL CERTIFICATION PROGRAMME

Today's update is focused on the Gold Seal Certification programme for Tourism businesses. The impact of COVID-19 has changed the world and the norm of everyday living. The hospitality industry is no exception. As we in the BVI prepare for reopening to visitors on December 1st, we have to ensure that we are all ready to handle the increased risks. We must take all precautions necessary to remain safe while we provide an exceptional luxury hospitality experience for our visitors.

In order for our Tourism businesses to be approved to serve international visitors, the Government has three requirements:

- All staff must undergo Gold Seal COVID-19 Industry Training
- All businesses must pass the Gold Seal COVID-19 Environmental Health Inspection
- All businesses, except Taxis and Villas, must nominate a COVID-19 officer to ensure they are following the protocols and to liaise with the Government on COVID-19 matters.

In addition to the order, to ensure the health and safety of employees and guests, it's imperative that each business in the hospitality sector be inspected and certified by the Environmental Health Division in order to serve our visitors.

Protocols specific to business sectors within the Tourism industry have been developed to assist businesses and their staff in managing COVID-19 requirements and the expectations of the British Virgin Islands.

To this end, there are some Frequently Asked Questions:

- **May I register all staff within my company on one form?**
No, each person must complete a separate registration form
- **I'm a front-line worker, do I need to do both the professional and COVID-19 Staff Trainings?**
No, persons who have completed the professional-level training would have received the COVID-19 staff training during their course.
- **How much does each course cost?**
The Gold Seal COVID-19 staff training is currently free to participants. After the first 1000 persons, the Gold Seal Professional Training will cost \$125.00 for each participant. The Gold Seal COVID-19 Officer Training is free to participants.
- **Is the training refundable?**
The cost of the Gold Seal Professional Training is non-refundable. If you have paid for your training, you can arrange with us to reschedule it for the next time it is held.
- **After completing my certification, will it need to be renewed?**
Renewal training is not required. We do recommend refresher courses. In the future, you will be able to do other levels of training as they are offered.
- **I have an Environmental Health Certificate to open my business; do I still need to be inspected?**

You are required to register for your Gold Seal Certification. The final decision on whether you will need to be more re-inspected will be made by the Environmental Health Division. You will be advised within 3 working days of your registration.

- **Can I be inspected if my entire staff has not yet been Gold Seal Certified?**
Yes, but you must have registered your staff for their training already. While inspections focus on how the operations of the business mitigate the spread of the virus by observing health and safety protocols, it works in tandem with staff training.
- **If I fail my inspection, can I open?**
No, a failed inspection will require any infractions to be remedied. The Environmental Health team works closely with businesses to ensure that they can open as soon as possible.
- **What happens if my business fails an unannounced inspection?**
The business will be required to temporarily close until the proper standards are met.

For more information on the Gold Seal Training, please contact the BVI Tourist board at **(284) 852-6020** or email training@bvitourism.com.

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